

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

**DOWNTOWN NEWARK PARTNERSHIP BOARD
MEETING SUMMARY**

Thursday, October 13, 2011

6:00 p.m.

**City Manager's Conference Room
Municipal Building
220 Elkton Road**

Board Members Present:

Marilyn Minster, Chair
Bob Ashby
Carol Boncelet
Bob Chadwick
Joe Charma
Fred DeMicco
Vance Funk
Patrick Harker (Rick Armitage)
Kat Hutchison
Kay Snelling
Kyle Sonnenberg

Board Members Absent:

Ryan German
Ken Godwin
Roy H. Lopata
Sally Miller
Suzy Rogers
Kristen Short

Staff Present:

Maureen Feeney Roser, DNP Administrator/Assistant Planning and Development Director

The DNP Board meeting was called to order by Chairman Minster at 6:00 p.m.

1. Review of minutes of DNP Board meeting held Thursday, July 14, 2011.

On motion by Mr. Charma, seconded by Mr. Sonnenberg, the minutes of the July 14, 2011 DNP Board meeting were approved as received.

2. Items submitted by Board:

A. Taste of Newark recap (Funk)

Mayor Funk reported that the Taste of Newark event went very well and that having the Battle of the Chefs in the auditorium worked out well. Next year the Battle will be 40 minutes instead of one hour. He reported that ticket sales were down for this year's event but that the increased cost of the tickets made up some of the revenue. Tentatively, without knowing all the bill totals for the event, Mr. Funk thinks that the Downtown Newark Partnership will receive approximately \$22,000. (Secretary's Note: Official Taste of Newark donation to the DNP was \$24,507.00! Thank you Vance!) The Board members were thrilled with the possibility of receiving that amount but told the Mayor they appreciated any amount that would benefit the Partnership. Ms. Boncelet said that it was a great community event. There was some discussion about the sponsorship of the event. Ms. Minster thought that the event was lovely even though it had to be held at Clayton Hall due to the bad weather. There was also discussion about the logistics of the event.

B. Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Reception – 11/17/11, 5- 7 PM (Minster)

Ms. Minster stated that the Annual Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Reception is the event where the Board thanks all of their many volunteers who have worked so hard throughout the year. The event was especially exciting this year because the DNP won the Great American Main Street Award for 2011. The 2011 Annual Report will be shared and the Volunteer of the Year will be honored the evening of the event. [The volunteer of the Year was Board member and Planning and Development Director Roy Lopata]. Ms. Feeney Roser reported that Annual Meeting sponsorship letters had been sent out and that so far \$600 in sponsorships had been received. (Secretary's note: A total of \$3,100 in sponsorship monies was received to support the event). Ms. Minster told the Board that Mid Atlantic Ballet would be running the Silent Auction and providing Ballet entertainment with RoseMarie Sullivan providing vocal entertainment.

Ms. Minster stated that the event would be at the Courtyard by Marriott from 5-7 p.m. and Ms. Feeney Roser told the Board members that the event was free to attendees.

C. Technical Assistance Offer from Downtown Delaware (Minster)

Ms. Minster stated that Downtown Delaware has offered to provide technical assistance to the DNP. There are several categories where the Board could take advantage of this assistance. Ms. Feeney Roser discussed what technical assistance might be available to the DNP. Two possibilities would be market analysis (the Downtown Delaware Program would train the Board members to do their own market analysis) and business retention and recruitment. There were several other categories of assistance available but Ms. Feeney Roser felt that the Board was doing a good job

in the other areas. Mr. Charma wanted to know if the market analysis would be geared toward businesses (development of retail) or would techniques be able to be used to analyze any market? What does the analysis focus on? He wondered if a downtown market analysis of downtown housing could be done to entice a different market sector to live downtown. He feels that that would benefit downtown as a whole. There was more discussion about the market analysis and also what kind of literature should be provided to potential businesses. Eventually, the Board determined that assistance with the business recruitment packets would be helpful. Further, the Board agreed that a market analysis would be beneficial but very time consuming, so they preferred to focus on the recruitment package and strategies for using it.

D. Committee Reports

E.

(1) Design (Charma)

Mr. Charma reported that the Design Committee completed reviews of South Main Street Plaza (Elkton Road) and 132 E. Delaware Avenue. He reported that the 132 E. Delaware Avenue project was reviewed by the Planning Commission and was tabled and South Main Street Plaza had not gone to the Planning Commission yet. He also reported the 2012 Work Plan had been completed and had been sent to Committee members for their review. The Committee was working on some fundraising ideas for future beautification projects downtown. They have not decided what the projects will be or where. Mr. Charma told the Board that they have started a subcommittee to review the Design Guidelines because the Guidelines have been in existence for five years and it is time to think about updating them. The first subcommittee meeting will be later in October. He also reported that the Community Bulletin Board on the side of the Switch (formerly Rainbow Books & Music) establishment is in need of repair. It will be replaced with a sustainable product. Mr. Charma also reported that the pergola alleyway project from Parking Lot #4 has been completed and they are now working on signs to direct people from the parking lot to Main Street. The Committee has also been working on the way finding signage to show people how to get to the downtown parking lots. Ms. Minster asked about lighting in the alleyway project. Mr. Charma told the Board that the Committee did want to work on getting LED lighting on the pergola but that they had not done that yet. Ms. Minster said that it does need lighting not only for safety but also for aesthetics, and Mr. Charma stated that the side of the building had lighting but they were working on more lighting for the area. Mr. Charma is going to bring the lighting issue back to the Design Committee. Mr. Charma told the Board that if they had any ideas for the Committee that they could let him know or they could come to a Design Committee meeting. He told the Board that he had a very hardworking Committee.

(2) Merchants (Snelling)

Ms. Snelling reported that the August promotion was an advertisement in Clipper Magazine which the Board members had in their packet. Ms. Feeney Roser stated that 23 businesses participated and that a survey had been sent out to the participating businesses to see how they felt about the promotion. She said she had gotten surveys back that said it was the best promotion ever, and also those that weren't happy with it. Very few businesses responded to the survey. Ms. Minster said that she was pleased with the promotion, that people did use the coupons and the first sale paid for the participation fee. She thought that the promotion should be done again next summer. Kristin Short reported that Grassroots did get some coupons but was not sure how many. She suggested verbiage be added that stated that only one coupon per transaction could be used because some people wanted to use more than one coupon in her store. Ms. Feeney Roser said that she wanted to get more surveys back to get a sense of how the merchants felt so that it could possibly be used in February. There was more discussion about the promotion and how they were delivered to patrons and suggestions about how to get increased circulation.

Ms. Snelling also reported on last year's Downtown Gift Card Giveaway that customers shopped at downtown stores and could turn in \$250 worth of receipts for downtown purchases to receive a \$25 downtown gift card. She reported that last year the participating merchants paid \$125 to participate in the promotion. Ms. Feeney Roser reported that 133 gift cards were given away and it generated \$33,000 pre-holiday sales and \$3,300 post-holiday sales. This year the fee for merchants to participate will be \$150 with six or seven businesses already registered with the deadline being in November. (Secretary's Note: A total of 33 downtown businesses are participating this year).

Ms. Feeney Roser reported that the free Saturday Movie Matinees would be done again this year at 11:00 a.m. on Saturdays in the month of December. Admission is free with a non-perishable food item to help the Newark Area Welfare Committee. This promotion draws families to Newark for movies, shopping and dining. At this point, only one movie has been sponsored at \$350. (Secretary's Note: All four movies have been sponsored).

Regarding the Storefront Window Decorating Contest, Ms. Feeney Roser reported that DNP Board Member Suzy Rogers was going to work with the Merchants Committee on it. Last year's contest was held too early so this year's contest will be judged the week after Winterfest (December 2nd).

Ms. Minster reminded the Board that after last year's Winterfest event, it was determined that a DNP Board presence was not necessary at this year's event.

3. Items submitted by Staff:

- **Main Street Mile**

Ms. Feeney Roser reported that this year the Main Street Mile was reorganized so that expenses were cut and income was increased. She provided an income expense analysis in the Board members' packet. Net proceeds for this year's race was \$9,500 for the K-9 Program (more than enough to purchase a new police dog). The event also raised \$4,273 for the Downtown Newark Partnership. There were 340 runners and walkers (Note: In previous years, walkers were not included in the race). This year's race was geared more to the community. The street was closed for 40 minutes (7:45 a.m. – 8:25 a.m.). Ms. Feeney Roser reported that this year's race net proceeds (combined with the guest bartender event held in August) are \$13,700, compared to last year's combined event total of \$4,400. The Board was very pleased with the Mile. There was some discussion about the advertising for the event and what might be done differently for next year.

4. Next Meeting Date – Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Reception – 11/17/11.

Ms. Minster invited all the Board members to attend the Annual Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Reception which will be the next Board meeting date. Ms. Feeney Roser told the Board that invitations should go out the week of October 17th. **[The next regular meeting date for the Board will be on January 12, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room, Municipal Building, second floor].**

Ms. Feeney Roser introduced Bob Chadwick to the Board members. Mr. Chadwick represents the New Castle Chamber of Commerce. The Board members then introduced themselves to Mr. Chadwick. Ms. Minster welcomed him.

5. Public Comment.

Mr. Armitage announced his retirement from the University of Delaware (July 6, 2012). The Board congratulated Mr. Armitage.

There being no further business, the DNP Board meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.