



Economic Enhancement Committee 2010 Accomplishments

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

The Economic Enhancement Committee works continually to improve its recruitment efforts and attract businesses to the downtown Newark area. Since our last Annual Report, the Committee is pleased to welcome 15 new businesses to downtown. In addition, several more new businesses are in various stages of opening.

New Businesses in Downtown Newark since last Annual Report

- Catherine Rooney's, 102 E..Main Street
- Claymont Steak Shop, 57 Elkton Road
- Flip Flop Shops, 148 E. Main Street
- Golden Sun Retails, 172 E. Main Street
- Groucho's Deli, 170 East Main Street
- Hot Bagel, 17 N. Chapel Street
- Louviers Federal Credit Union, 185 Elkton Road
- Main Street Computers, 218 E. Main Street
- Main Street Sliders, 133 East Main Street
- Main Stream Nutrition, 163 E. Main Street
- Mediterranean Grill, Newark Shopping Center
- Monument, Newark Shopping Center
- Moxie Boutique, 48 East Main Street
- The Main Squeeze, 131 E, Main Street
- Zahara International Food and Halal Meats, Newark Shopping Center

Coming soon

- Cheeburger Cheeburger, 137 E. Main Street
- Delaware Running Company, 129 E. Main Street
- Heavenly Yogurt, 129 E. Main Street
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Outreach efforts continue to attract businesses to add to the retail/restaurant mix as follows:

- Apparel and Accessories (Men's, Women's and Children's)
- Home Accessories
- Gourmet Grocery
- Shoes
- Art
- Small Boutique Hotel/Inn
- Craft Stores With Lessons
- Party Supplies
- Paint Your Own Pottery
- Adult Destination/Restaurant
- Gifts, Stationary, Cards

DNP Business Recruitment Packages

The committee developed a Business Recruitment Package, which provides detailed information about downtown Newark and the advantages to operating a business here; the community's demographic profile; the full calendar of events; Downtown Newark Partnership activities; parking opportunities, including the parking validation and gift card programs; incentive programs and positive press about downtown. Over the past year, 42 of these recruitment packages, with personalized letters, were sent out by the Committee to targeted businesses since November 2009. A host of other inquiries into the business climate and opportunities in downtown were handled on the phone and via e-mail. This information is also available at special events and for distribution on a regular basis to inform the public of the DNP, its structure and goals.

Business Start-Up Grants

Grants are available to cover \$1,500 in utility expenses for eligible new businesses. Eligible businesses are those listed above which have been targeted by the Downtown Newark Partnership as adding to the retail/restaurant mix. This year, two new downtown businesses took advantage of this recruitment tool: Main Street Computers at 218 E. Main Street and Moxie Boutique at 48 E. Main Street.

In addition to these grants, the Newark Façade Improvement Program offers loans for up to \$2000 at 0% interest for façade improvements to downtown business properties. Loans may be either deferred payment or monthly pay back loans.

BUSINESS RETENTION

The Economic Enhancement Committee is always working to provide the best possible information, opportunities and technical assistance to the downtown businesses in order to help them grow and prosper. To this end, the committee has been working in a number of different formats to disseminate information and help businesses, such as creating welcome packets, electronic newsletters, and providing technical assistance to businesses on a regular basis.

Business Technical Assistance

The Committee encourages and promotes attendance at SCORE, SBA and SBDC technical workshops offered on a regular basis, including an SBA session entitled Money! Money! Money! For your Small Business during which the SBA, SBDC, Innovative Bank, First State Community Loan Fund and local banks provide information on loan products and how to access capital for businesses.

“The I’s have It” – Innovate, Inspire, and Influence Workshop

In early June, Downtown Delaware and the Downtown Newark Partnership co-sponsored a free workshop for downtown businesses with guest speaker, Margie Johnson, a nationally renowned retail consultant. (To learn more about Margie & her expertise, please visit:

www.shoptalk.org.) The session was designed to help equip business owners to think creatively about applying Innovative thinking to their business. We looked at examples of how many small businesses have been inspired by the challenges and used this inspiration to aid in making a "course correction". Ms. Johnson focus was on the opportunity for businesses to Influence consumers' purchase decisions and strategically marketing their business. This session assisted owners and managers to turn Inspiration into profitable Innovations. This session also challenged business owners to think creatively about their marketing, selling and service styles, inventory, customer relations, presentations, etc.

25 downtown business people took advantage of the session and a wonderful breakfast

provided by Caffe Gelato. After the formal presentation, Ms. Johnson met one-on-one with three retail business owners to provide individualized retail strategy consultation. These one-on-one consultations, also provided free of charge, were enthusiastically received by retailers.

Welcome to Newark Packets

Thanks to Economic Enhancement Committee efforts, out of town guests are welcomed warmly by the DNP whenever we are made aware of their presence. For example, since the last Annual Report, participants of participants in several UD conferences and exchange, received welcome packets from the DNP. These packets included a welcome letter, a calendar of events, coupons for downtown businesses, and flyers about upcoming events and activities. Several hundred packets have been stuffed and delivered this year all geared to having visitors patronize our existing businesses downtown and ring their cash registers! Another goal of these efforts is to help bolster the growing conference trade in Newark, by insuring that conference participants enjoy their stay in Newark. In this regard, the committee works closely with the Newark Destination Partners organization.

This approach to ensuring visitors enjoy their stay in Newark is also used for special events, where customized flyers are designed tailoring the promotions offered by downtown businesses to the event participants. Examples of this activity include the DNP's "Coupon Corner" promotions at Newark Nite, Community Day, and Winterfest.

Newsletters

The Downtown Newark E-Newsletter was created as an electronic means of getting information about Downtown Newark to the community in a fast and efficient manner. The e-newsletter is prepared and sent at the end of a month to highlight the activities, events, cultural opportunities, etc. in downtown the following month. The mailing list for this subscription e-newsletter grows daily, and currently reaches nearly 1,400 interested individuals. New e-mail addresses are gathered at each downtown event, and often by referrals. The Downtown Newark E-Newsletter is an important business retention tool because it is a coordinated and comprehensive clearinghouse for downtown activities which helps to promote downtown Newark as a retail, dining, cultural and entertainment destination for the region.

Another important E-Newsletter is the DNP E-News You Can Use, which was created specifically for downtown businesses. This newsletter is a vital tool for the Committee, as it fosters better communication between the DNP and downtown businesses. The newsletter provides important and timely information to businesses about opportunities to promote themselves through participation in events, activities, group discounts and advertising, and to keep them informed about other issues of importance such as road construction and lane closures. 200 businesses currently receive DNP E-News You Can Use, which supplements the Merchants' Committee's Block Captain System.

The business e-newsletter system was particularly helpful in quickly disseminating important information about how to identify counterfeit currency and what to do if you suspect a bill is counterfeit, during a recent counterfeit crime spree. The crime spree was brief in part due to the actions of informed merchants. E-News was also helpful this year getting information out about shoplifting prevention and graffiti vandalism – how to prevent it; what to do if you fall victim and how to get reimbursed for clean up expenses.

Web Page Improvements

Downtown Newark's web page is the district's window to the world, and as such, the Economic Enhancement Committee works hard to keep it updated. In addition to schedules and calendars of events, the website contains leasing opportunities and links to downtown

businesses' websites so that residents and visitors, as well as current and potential merchants, can have a great deal of information at their fingertips simply by logging onto the website. The Committee works hard keeping the information current and adding other information whenever it is available. Check it out at: www.enjoydowntownnewark.com; or at our other domain names: www.eatdowntownnewark.com and www.shopdowntownnewark.com. A major overhaul of the web site is planned for early next year to include the branding recommendations and to make the site more user friendly.

Facebook

In another effort to get the word out about why downtown Newark is a wonderful place for people to eat! shop! and enjoy! themselves, the Committee Maintains a Facebook page. We've found this social medium a great way to allow people (our "fans") to connect with downtown events, participate in discussions, and be part of the Downtown Newark Community. We also list downtown businesses' Facebook pages as favorites, providing them with exposure to our fans. Visit us on Facebook!

Gift Card Program

The Economic Enhancement Committee was instrumental in getting the Downtown Newark Gift Card Program up and running. The Committee also manages all Gift Card sales for Downtown Newark. More than \$16,000 in gift cards have been sold since the program went live on December 17, 2009. More detail about the Downtown Newark Gift Card Program may be found below under Merchants' Committee accomplishments.

The Committee is very pleased to administer this gift card program for the Downtown Newark Partnership as it is one of the very best Business Retention strategies ever to be implemented by the DNP. In fact, the State of Delaware recently recognized the Downtown Newark Gift Card as the Best Economic Restructuring Story 2010 at the joint Delaware/Maryland Revitalization Conference held in September in Rehoboth Beach. Accepting the award, presented to the DNP by DEDO's Ken Anderson and Diane Laird were: Maureen Feeney Roser, City of Newark Assistant Planning and Development Director/DNP Administrator, Marvin Howard, City of Newark Parking Administrator/Gift Card Coordinator, Kyle Sonnenberg, Newark City Manager and Jim Shanahan, President of Maverick Network Solutions.

Advertising

The Economic Enhancement Committee strives to market downtown as a shopping and dining district and destination as part of its Business Retention efforts. The effort this year included Downtown Newark ads in all UD Football and Basketball Programs, the Newark Film Festival Program, Philadelphia City Paper, Newark Life Magazine, and the Newark Morning Rotary Club Annual Report. In addition, two special editions of Delaware Today magazine featured multiple page spreads about Downtown Newark.

This year the committee also sponsored summer and holiday shopping commercials to be used in web advertising, on Channel 22 and in cable TV commercials.

Branding

This summer the Downtown Newark Partnership received branding/marketing technical assistance services from Arnett Muldrow & Associates as part of our participation in the Delaware Main Street Program. The site visit with us was held from Tuesday, August 17 – Thursday, August 19, 2010.

The Committee assisted Arnett Muldrow in their process, which included:

- Pre-visit Information Gathering and Background Review, in which Arnett Muldrow reviewed all relevant material, provided by the Committee, related to downtown's marketing and image including: community histories, all promotional publications that involve the downtown and the community, attraction promotions, countywide marketing including other municipality and community efforts to learn context, economic development and tourism publications, website information, commercials (if applicable), and any other related information. They also worked with Downtown Delaware's consultant on business development to review his market assessment data for Newark so we better understand target markets and potential to recruit customers and businesses. We will thoroughly review this information prior to the resource visit.
- The Resource Visit - Modeled after a community design charrette or a resource team visit, the branding resource visit was designed to immerse the project team in the community in a rapid way in order to produce a branding program quickly and efficiently. To this end, the committee made arrangements for focus groups made up of local stakeholders to meet with Arnett Muldrow and discuss their ideas about downtown Newark. The response to the focus group opportunity was overwhelming, with 62 people participating over two days in August. In addition to the focus groups, a general public session was also held. Arnett Muldrow was very impressed with the number of individuals who were interested in downtown Newark and the quality of their input.
- The finale of the process was a downtown Newark Branding Presentation held Thursday, August 19th from 5 – 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers, where Arnett Muldrow unveiled their branding recommendations. The presentation provided the Downtown Newark Partnership with a solid direction for the brand and allowed Arnett Muldrow to garner feedback for further refinement to come after the workshop.

The branding presentation was well attended and the recommendations well received. Arnett Muldrow provided a power point demonstration which walked attendees through the process they used to develop their recommendations for the Downtown Newark Brand and the reasoning behind it. In a nutshell, Arnett Muldrow indicated that they were impressed that downtown Newark was vibrant and eclectic, steeped in history and yet constantly changing. Their recommendation is that Newark should embrace the fact that we are Delaware's College Town and so much more – and that we have much to celebrate ... we have buildings that are 300 years old and ones that are just 10 minutes old; there is constant movement ... change ... always something new and exciting happening everyday ... new stores, new restaurants, new art, new events, new students, new opportunities! Downtown is alive and vibrant! They also recommended that we embrace Elkton Road as part of downtown Newark, but recognize that it is not Main Street ... has its own feel, its own identity but is an integral part of the overall downtown experience. They provided templates and ideas and color schemes for our products -- banners, web page, map and guide, events, ads ... it is an impressive compilation,

The Brand Statement

We are Newark, Delaware

We are Delaware's college town, where new faces and historic places combine to provide our residents with diverse experiences around every corner,

We are rich in cultural offerings that begin with the University of Delaware and continue downtown with the Newark Arts Alliance, Mid-Atlantic Ballet, Chapel Street Community Theater

, Delaware Dance Company, and multiple music venues.

We are an eclectic blend of businesses. Whether a designer jeweler who has served the community for over a century or a comic shop, down Main Street or Elkton Road, we offer something for everyone.

We feed not only the mind but the body. In a place where hips meets historic, there are over 60 restaurants constantly providing residents with new flavors to enjoy plus a unique food cooperative that has been serving the community for 35 years.

We are the culture and the class. We are the future and past. We are the best of both a college town and a hometown.

We are Newark, and it's a new day, every day.

Arnett Muldrow provided extensive and detailed information for the DNP regarding the brand, including logo and logo variations with size and spacing controls, color palette, and fonts – including information on incorrect usages. They gave detailed instructions on brand extension, usage control and suggestions for advertising. They provided templates for street banners for Elkton Road and Main Street, public parking way-finding signage, validation and change decals, web page design, map and guide and Annual Report cover designs, event logos and cooperative advertising ideas. They provided all graphic designs in vector and raster formats and offered on going technical support. They also provided the DNP with an extensive photo catalog!

The DNP Board is currently reviewing all this information and will develop a plan for implementation – look for our new brand and products early next year!

The DNP would like to express its sincere gratitude to Downtown Delaware for funding this extensive Branding Resource Visit and the resultant recommendations, reports and tools. Downtown Newark has long-struggled with brand identity, but our budget would not support which resulted in professional brand development. Through our participation in the Delaware Main Street Program, we were able to take advantage of this targeted and professional technical assistance at no charge to the DNP. Our only obligation is to implement at least a portion of the recommendations totaling a minimum of \$2,000! This assistance underscores Downtown Delaware commitment to revitalizing Delaware downtowns.

We are also grateful to Mr. Ben Muldrow and Mr. Aaron Arnett of Arnett Muldrow for the thorough job they did immersing themselves in our community, sorting through divergent and strongly-held opinions, to identify and focus on the positives of being in downtown Newark. Not only were they able to identify our strengths and provide us with our first-ever professionally developed brand, they supplied all the tools we need for execution. We look forward to implementing Downtown Newark's new brand.