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"Your City for Family Living"

City of Trenton

Incorporated 1854

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To: Commissioners – City of Trenton

Subject: Downtown Development Authority Monthly Status Report for March 2005

General Downtown Development Authority Items

Board Membership

Fred Stephens, Chairman of the Downtown Development Authority, resigned from the Board as of March 31, 2005. Fred is moving out of the City much more quickly than he originally thought. Given the requirement for four City residents to be on the Board, Fred reluctantly needed to resign. Fred has pledged his ongoing support of the DDA, even though he is no longer a formal member of the Board.

A search has begun for a new Board member from the City of Trenton. After a successful search, the DDA Board will make a recommendation, for the appointment of a new Board member, to the City Commissioners, for their consideration and vote.

March 2005 Board Meeting Votes

1. Accepted February meeting minutes
2. Agreed to sign engagement letter with David Smith as DDA attorney
3. Accepted the resignation of Fred Stephens from the DDA Board

Promotion Committee

Rex Harrison is the chairperson of the Promotion Committee.

Spring Festival – “Family Fest”

The Promotion Committee of the DDA has undertaken the creation of a new annual festival to be called “Family Fest”. A festival was one of the priorities that came out of the Visioning Process. The festival name is building on the City motto of “Trenton, Your City for Family Living”. The

festival will always be the same weekend as Antique Alley. This year it will be May 13 and 14. It will start with a parade on the 13th and teen night that evening around the square. There will be musical entertainment, food, games, arts & crafts and other events. Weekly Tuesday evening meetings will take place up and until the actual event.

Street Banners

Seasonal and event street banners will become part of the overall promotion of Trenton. Initially, street banners have been ordered to advertise Family Fest. They will fly around the courthouse and up and down highway 11.

Chickamauga Civil War Trail

The trail project is well underway. The research is being done and the web site has begun to take shape. A very rough version can be seen at <http://www.chickamaugacampaign.net> .

A grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for \$25,000 is being applied for. Additionally, Senator Mullis has arranged for a \$10,000 grant from the state for this effort. These funds will be used for the website, brochures and mailings. With financial participation from the sponsoring communities, of which Trenton is one, the \$10,000 state grant and the \$25,000 ARC grant, this project will have a \$50,000 budget.

The key for us is to take advantage of Trenton as being the first stop on this trail. There are up to 18 other sites in Dade County alone. Taking advantage of this opportunity will be the responsibility of the Dade County Chamber of Commerce and the DDA.

Press Coverage

We have had excellent support from the Dade County Sentinel and The Independent for the beginning. On March 30, 2005, the Chattanooga Times Free Press covered the Trenton in an article called "Improving downtown (sic) Trenton". All papers have asked to be kept abreast of what the DDA is doing.

Design Committee

Don Townsend is the chairperson of the Design Committee.

1998 Design Project

The Design Committee has reactivated the 1998 Design Project that was led by the architect Richard Rothman. The committee has worked with Mr. Rothman to have the results of the project updated. The committee plans to evaluate how much of that project is still relevant and can be used as a framework for moving ahead. Presentations to key community stakeholders are planned. A presentation, for interested commissioners, can be arranged.

Street Banners

The Design Committee will be responsible for street banners going forward. They have started a banner project whose theme will be “Trenton, Your City for Family Living”. Designs will be sought that support that theme.

City Entrance Signs

The Design Committee has undertaken a project to have entranceway signs for the City designed and erected. They would be at the four entrance points to the city. The design will be consistent with the natural beauty of the area and still meet DOT requirements. No firm end-date has been announced. However, a target of the summer is under evaluation.

Other Signage

The Committee believes additional and better signage is required at the I-59 exits and elsewhere in town.

Economic Restructuring Committee

Sydney Lynch is the chairperson of the Economic Restructuring Committee.

New Small Business in Trenton

Two potential new small businesses have been supported this month. Both businesses are interested in being in Trenton and are seeking retail space that meets their need. One, a regional clothing firm, is in negotiations with Soloff realty. The second is a food establishment that has had difficulty finding adequate retail space.

Existing Business in Trenton

There is an active project underway regarding a relocating existing business in Trenton. As a result of talking with the owners, the Better Hometown program will have an opportunity to show what is possible in storefront / building design in Trenton.

Planning

The committee is evaluating the creation of a “New Business Package” that would be used for new potential retail business owners. The package would provide relevant information about the City and its environs that would be critical to any business owner wanting to open a retail business in Trenton. Such information as demographics, income, traffic, available retail space etc would be part of this package.

Organization Committee

Janet York is the chairperson of the Organization Committee

Downtown Development Authority Legal Team

The Downtown Development Authority has signed an engagement letter with David Smith of the law firm of Brinson, Askew, Berry, Seigler, Richardson & Davis of Rome, Georgia.

Downtown Development Authority Board Insurance

The Board members must have Directors' and Officers' Liability insurance. We are in conversation with Flegal on acquiring a policy.

Traffic (The Number 1 Issue from the Visioning Meeting)

On Wednesday, March 9, 2005, The Mayor and the Better Hometown Manager were in Atlanta to start lobbying our elected representatives and other State officials for help in solving our traffic challenges here in Trenton.

Additionally, a meeting was held with Coosa Valley RDC regarding DOT and TEA Grants. Two potential projects were identified. It is anticipated that work will be done to allow us to submit 2 projects for grants, one a streetscape for downtown and the other for a Town Creek walkway and Park improvement. Additional information will be provided to the Commissioners as plans firm up as City approval must be obtained for both of these projects as a 20% City match would be required for these grants.

Other DOT related work items are underway.

Comprehensive Plan

The 10-year comprehensive plan for the City must be updated by mid next year. The DDA is involved to insure that the plan reflects a consistent view with all DDA plans and visions.

Downtown Development Authority Meeting Schedule

The regular monthly meeting is the third Thursday of every month here at City hall from 6 to 7 PM. The next meeting is April 21, 2005.

Peter Cervelli
Better Hometown Manager
City of Trenton