

**City of Abondale Estates**  
**Downtown Development Authority**

**January 13, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Jill Joyner-Bush, Chair  
Don Connelly  
Steve Grubenhoff  
George Kennedy  
Allan Kirwan  
Laura Leckband  
Bart Webb

**Staff Present:** Clai Brown, City Manager  
Karen Holmes, Administrative Assistant

*Item No. 1* Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Jill Joyner-Bush

*Item No. 2* Adoption of Agenda  
A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Allan Kirwan, seconded by George Kennedy; passed with all ayes (7-0)

*Item No. 3* Development Agreement Update-Clai Brown  
City Manager Brown provided the following information:  
On January 5<sup>th</sup> the BOMC conducted a public hearing for the conditional use application for Publix Grocery. The board will vote on the issue at the regular meeting on Monday, January 26.

Century has submitted an amendment to the Development Agreement as follows:

The posting of one performance bond instead of three separate

Deferring of the first Admin fee payment until the filing of an application for a Land Disturbance Permit or October 15, whichever is first

The BOMC will conduct a Special Called Work Session and Meeting on Wednesday, January 14 to address these amendments.

Century is trying to secure the finances to start the project.

Laura Leckband asked if zoning issues would be discussed at the Special Called Work Session. City Manager Brown responded that it was on the agenda and that all the outstanding issues from other boards and the Education Association have been submitted to the BOMC for consideration. He also stated that the BOMC will have one more public hearing before acting on the ordinance.  
(City Manager Brown left to attend the AEBA meeting)

*Item No. 4* Support for existing businesses

Chair Jill Joyner-Bush suggested that, if annexation happens, a percentage of the additional tax revenue be used to fund an economic development position for the City. It could be a part-time position. She would like the board to consider making a formal proposal to the BOMC.

Allan Kirwan asked about an earlier plan to develop a checklist of items for a new business. Chair Joyner-Bush responded that she and Bonnie Kallenberg meet once a month to insure the exchange of information between the DDA and AEBA. The next step is to include City Hall. They have been working on developing an information package for new and potential businesses. It involves organizing existing information and assembling it into a useable form.

George Kennedy stated that it would be good to have the information package with the marketing package to officially start the “Avondale is open for business” campaign.

Steve Grubenhoff stated that other cities programs and services to help businesses and asked if the AEBA, based on membership concerns, could suggest ways the DDA could help. Also, other business associations use funds for joint advertising and community activities.

Allan Kirwan agreed and thought there was a need for a business ombudsman. Also there was an opportunity to market the City and its businesses through advertising in the Decatur Living magazine. Don Connelly is still planning to run an ad in the spring. He is also going to work with the City to design a new map. Allan Kirwan stated that he is continually trying to get press coverage to promote businesses in the City. He has been successful in getting the AJC to do stories on several of the existing businesses.

Steve Grubenhoff asked about scheduled events that could be marketed. Bart Webb advised that Rail Art District show was scheduled for February. Don Connelly stated the Arts Alliance will again have AvondaleinBloom, Arts in the Afternoon and AutumnFest. George

Kennedy suggested using Creative Loafing to advertise events because of its widespread circulation.

Allan Kirwan stated that he, Don and Jill were working on an event to honor Bill Anderson, country singer. There are plans to rename Sweet Gum Hollow after him. BOMC approval will be needed.

Laura Leckband felt that the primary responsibility of the DDA was development; her concern was that their focus was shifting. Supporting the existing businesses is necessary; however, they reestablished the AEBA to provide that function. In discussion, the consensus was that the functions overlapped. If existing businesses are not happy here, there will be little success in attracting new ones.

In light of the anti-annexation position, Laura Leckband felt the DDA should communicate with the property owners to address their issues. Allan Kirwan thought Mayor Rieker had already responded well to those who voiced opposition.

Allan Kirwan discussed the possibility of the DDA recognizing businesses in the City. The BOMC awards a “Best in Business” at the State of the City meeting; however, it is usually consumer-oriented.

Steve Grubenhoff asked about the make-up of the AEBA. Allan Kirwan responded that of the almost 200 businesses in the City, the membership is only about 25. Laura Leckband suggested that the DDA might assist in recruiting membership. Steve Grubenhoff also suggested that there be a directory of businesses so that residents and other businesses know what services are available locally.

*Item No. 5*

Master Plan

Laura Leckband presented a proposed location for the Charter School. It was the consensus of the board that, regardless of the land use, pedestrian and traffic access is important to the development of downtown. There cannot be development without parking and a good traffic flow. It was suggested that a traffic engineer be consulted.

Don Connelly also expressed the importance of annexing the mill property and working with a developer to achieve what is wanted in the area. Chair Jill Joyner-Bush stated that the DDA should be prepared for the possibility that some property may become available that would be of interest to them.

(Allan Kirwan left to attend AEBA meeting)

Chair Jill Joyner-Bush will investigate ARC funding for road/traffic improvement projects. She suggested that lines of communication be maintained with MARTA, the Fenner-Dunlop owners and other area property owners.

*Item No. 6*      Committee Discussion  
Deferred to January 27 meeting

*Item No. 7*      Discussion of Board Members  
Deferred to January 27 meeting

*Item No. 8*      Public Comment – None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. was made by Steve Grubenhoff, seconded by Don Connelly; passed with all ayes.