

**City of Abondale Estates  
Downtown Development Authority**

**March 10, 2009  
6:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

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

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

*Item No. 1* Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Jill Joyner-Bush

*Item No. 2* Adoption of Agenda  
The following additions to the agenda were requested:  
DDA Website – Steve Grubenhoff  
Possible Use of Vacant Century Properties – Jill Joyner-Bush  
Resolution in support of Waffle House Museum – Allan Kirwan

A motion to adopt the agenda as amended was made by Allan Kirwan, seconded by Don Connelly; passed with all ayes (6-0).

*Item No. 3* DDA Website – Steve Grubenhoff  
In response to a solicitation by Allan Kirwan for a volunteer to help create a DDA website, James Burns offered his assistance. Steve Grubenhoff advised the board they would have to select a domain name and hosting service. He distributed examples of Commercial Listings in use by other cities.

He suggested a page listing the businesses already in the City. Jill Joyner-Bush stated that the AEBA plans to have links to the businesses on their website. Steve Grubenhoff will contact Bonnie Kallenberg and see if there is way to piggyback with the AEBA. If they have a business listing the DDA could concentrate on an available properties listing.

Allan Kirwan stated that there are very few vacant buildings in the CBD. All of Franklin Street is occupied. It was noted, however, that the vacancies were high profile, such as in the Tudor Village.

Steve Grubenhoff stated that he had spoken to Louis Pichulik. He would like to see a restaurant in his property. Also, he has learned that Trader Joe's has frozen development plans and will not be opening any more stores in metro Atlanta. Don Connelly suggested Oak Grove Market as a possibility for the Pichulik property.

It was the consensus of the board to use avondaleDDA as the domain name. Creation of a website is important step for the DDA. Working cooperatively with the business association could mean wider coverage.

George Kennedy reported that Emory University had frozen their development plans because of funding cutbacks. He also reported that renovations on Alan Gay's property (Hairston Building) were progressing. Much effort and expense has been put into the project to restore the building. When completed Mr. Gay plans to have an open house so that the City can see the facility.

*Item No.4* Use of Vacant Property owned by Century Retail - Jill Joyner-Bush  
There is a program currently used in Philadelphia in blighted areas. Vacant buildings are being offered to artists for studio space; they pay no rent, but are responsible for their utilities. The leases run one or two years. Jill Joyner-Bush asked if the board is interested in trying to implement a similar program. She would be willing to draft a letter to Century Retail asking for their participation.

It was suggested that this should include other owners of vacant buildings. The DDA would announce the program, acting only as liaison. The actual contract would be between property owner and occupant.

If such a program could be implemented here, it would reinforce Avondale Estates as an arts district. Jill Joyner-Bush agreed to contact the coordinator of Philadelphia's project to obtain the details to determine if this is a doable project here.

*Item No. 5* Resolution Supporting Waffle House – Allan Kirwan  
The DeKalb County Historic Preservation Committee will meet to consider an application from Waffle House to restore the original building sign. Because of the association between the City and Waffle House, Allan Kirwan felt that it would be a nice gesture if the DDA sent a letter of support for this application.

A motion to issue a resolution/letter of support for Waffle House was made by Steve Grubenhoff, seconded by George Kennedy; passed with all ayes (6-0).

*Item No. 6*      Committee Discussion  
**Don Connelly** – Nothing to report

**Allan Kirwan - Annexation**

Decatur and Avondale Estates have agreed to move forward with annexation. Stephanie Stuckey-Benfield will introduce legislation; Carla Drenner is in support. The area of interest is the East College Avenue corridor.

The building at North Avondale Road and Olive has been approved for demolition. There are no plans for a new structure at this time.

**Bart Webb – AEBA**

The Grand Opening of Pine Street Market is Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. He is hosting a fundraiser for the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus on March 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a silent auction and art show.

Allan Kirwan suggested that the DDA send flowers for the Pine Street Market opening and CEO Motorsports, a new business on Franklin Street.

Don Connelly suggested that a note of condolence be sent to Officer Findley on the death of his son.

**George Kennedy** – Nothing to report

**Steve Grubenhoff** – Nothing to report

*Item No. 7*      Discussion of Board Members

Jill Joyner-Bush stated that the DDA had submitted Layne Lee's name to the BOMC to fill the DDA vacancy. Steve Grubenhoff advised that Hal Johnson had also applied for the opening.

DDA training in Atlanta is scheduled for October.

Don Connelly stated that, in preparation for the meeting with the BOMC, they should list their accomplishments for the year and what is planned in the future.

Jill Joyner-Bush corrected the agenda information. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the DJJ building. Some of the BOMC members expressed interest in attending. The joint meeting will be held on April 1<sup>st</sup> at a time to be determined.

Don Connelly stated that the Arts Alliance declined the DDA offer to sell t-shirts.

Allan Kirwan stated that Premium Roofing has filed for Chapter 11. They have 150 employees. They have been working under government contracts and apparently, payments have been slow. They do expect to recover.

Steve Grubenhoff advised the board that he was continuing to work with Laura Leckband to help find a location for the Charter School. He asked if there had been any BOMC directive to secure MARTA property. Jill Joyner-Bush responded that the subject would be discussed at the joint meeting on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Allan Kirwan there is no plan for a new fire station. He suggested a location near the Kensington MARTA station that could be annexed into the City. Chair Jill Joyner-Bush added this to the items for the joint Work Session with the BOMC.

*Item No. 8*      Public Comment

Unidentified gentleman stated that he was from Alabama and new to Georgia. He hoped to learn about the area by attending local meetings.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 7:05 p.m. was made by Don Connelly, seconded by Allan Kirwan; passed with all ayes (6-0).