



**City of Avondale Estates Downtown Development Authority  
Regular Meeting  
February 21, 2023**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Dave Deiters  
Leigh Lynch  
Tom Trocheck  
Lisa Shortell  
Jennifer Joyner (via Zoom)

**Staff Present:** Shannon Powell  
Ellen Powell  
Gina Hill  
Kyle Williams, Attorney

**Absent:** Stacia Familo-Hopek  
Walter Barineau

Dave Deiters call the meeting to order. *A motion was made to approve the agenda and January 2022 Minutes Tom Trocheck moved to approve. Leigh Lynch seconded. All ayes.*

City Development/Business Update (S. Powell)

- Olive and Pine opening this spring. City is permitting tenants. Mr. John's Music will have their grand opening this Saturday (the first O and P business to open).
- Fabric Development is moving forward.
- 278 ROW should be finalized in a couple weeks. After GDOT certification, the project will be put out to bid.
- The Laredo project looks promising and will likely be picked up by GDOT; the city is still waiting for confirmation of this. The road will be repaired, repaved, restriped with a bike lane, and a flashing Beacon will be installed on Clarendon.
- The city is still waiting for the hydrologic study report. Once received, the Washington/Pine stormwater project will move forward.
- Other small projects are being completed such as replacing the gates on Maple Street.

## State Downtown Development Low Interest Loan Approval (S. Powell, T. Means, C. Atchison)

Both the Georgia Cities Foundation and the Department of Community Affairs issue low interest loans to qualified business applicants. The application process requires that the DDA send a letter articulating the business use and location is a strategic investment for downtown.

Banjo Coffee has applied. They are growing and need more seating. A loan would help them buy the entire building and expand into the old Beer Growler space with more seating and a bar serving light bites, cocktails, and craft beer in the afternoons.

Taylor Means has applied for a loan to help retrofit and improve the three new Globe Arts Center buildings behind Little Tree Studios. The plan is to build new studios, redo the façade, and create a 1/3 acre green space.

A motion was made and approved to authorize the DDA Executive Director to send letters in support of Globe Arts Center and Majestic Banjo International, LLC. Leigh Lynch moved to approve. Jennifer Joyner seconded. All ayes.

## 84 North Avondale Repairs (S. Powell)

There is damage in the building due to pipes breaking and flooding. The insurance company, even with no estimates, sent the DDA a check for \$64,000 (which remains undeposited). In the meantime, the repair company discovered a mold issue. Ms. Powell will get estimates on mold removal and remediation as well as other estimates for repairs and circle back with the DDA and insurance company. Discussion considered the possibility (but not certainty) that the building may be torn down in the near future and the requirements of the insurance company.

## Main Street Update (E. Powell)

- City business applications and renewals will be moving online (including online payment) through Civic Optimize. Main Street programming has updated their criteria, moving from ten to six standards.
- Main Street has asked members for support of Senate Bill 126, also supported by the Georgia Downtown Association. The bill would prohibit credit card companies from charging fees and would help small businesses.

A motion was made and approved to direct Shannon Powell write a letter from the DDA. Lisa Shortell moved to approve. Leigh Lynch seconded. All ayes.

## Placer: AI Discussion and Request for Funding (E. Powell)

Placer AI is a market intelligence program that uses mobile phone data. Ellen Powell heard about this tool at a conference she attended and the city is also considering using it. The \$14,000 cost would be split by the city and DDA.

Placer AI has already mapped our city. Ms. Powell shared data such as visitor trends, visitor origination, and audience profile with the DDA. Geofencing can define specific areas for event data. Applications for the DDA would include retail recruitment, event analysis, travel and tourism, marketing reports, and information supporting local businesses. The information automatically updates every three days. A customer service assistant would help Ms. Powell in creating a mapping plan for DDA uses.

This program is used by quite a few businesses and cities including the GA Power economic group. The DDA discussed the potential of the program and evaluation at year's end. Chair Deiters emphasized that information from the program be made completely available to businesses.

A motion was made and \$7000 was approved to purchase AI Placer for one year. Tom Trocheck moved to approve. Leigh Lynch seconded. All ayes.

## Events and Programming Application and Planning (E. Powell)

### Events:

- **FruehlingFest:** The Town Green will be used for kid events, music, and a beer garden. The DDA will split the cost and contribute \$2000 to the concert. A parade will be led by a band from Wild Heaven to the Town Green before the concert. There will be 14 food vendors, 81 artists, German autos and auto art.
- **Museum School Fundraiser :** On April 13 the Museum School will hold its fundraiser, Art in the Park at the Town Green.
- **Earth Day** will be celebrated on April 22. There will be activities at the Town Green and throughout the city including electronics recycling, an Eco Garden Tour sponsored by the Avon Garden Club, tents/tables of environmental organizations, and a bluegrass band in concert that evening.
- **Town Green Concert:** The spring and fall (hiatus in heat of the summer) will kick-off in May with a Mother's Day concert and run through November 12. Sponsor application will be available soon.
- **Yoga:** Yoga on the Town Green will happen on every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday evening and one Monday lunch per month. These sessions will be free to anyone who wants to join courtesy of the sponsorship of the Homegrown Realty team.
- **Smara:** A dance event will be held in on the Town Green in May.
- **Beats and Brews,** a heavy metal and craft beer festival, will also be repeating with a ticketed event in the Town Green. This will require fencing off the Town Green. Staff is working with the group to determine how best to hold this event and what price and deposit to charge them. Allowing a fenced event will be a one-time trial for now and will allow the city to determine feasibility and desirability.
- **Callanwolde Concert Band** performance and once a month *karaoke sing-a-long* are also being considered. The city will be starting discussions with the AE Farmers Market in March regarding a move to the pavilion.

### Grant Applications:

Wig Wam has requested \$3000 to hold an event at Methane Studios on May 13. After discussion, the DDA voted.

*A motion was made to approve \$1000 in funding for this event. Jennifer Joyner moved to approve. Tom Trocheck seconded. All ayes*

### Announcements:

- The city will be hiring a marketing coordinator to help Ms. Powell. This position will be paid for by the city.
- Atlanta Magazine will be featuring Avondale Estates in its April issue.

## Finance Report (T. Trocheck, S. Powell)

Mr. Trocheck and staff shared copies of the month's income statement. Not spending much right now. Gained \$33,000 in interest income.

After public comment the DDA went into a brief executive session. Jennifer Joyner moved to enter executive session. Leigh Lynch seconded. All ayes.