



MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Steven McDowell welcomed members to the meeting at 8:35am. Members present: Steven McDowell, Evie McNiece, Jay Shell, Ann Pullen, Steve White and Barbara Ware. Absent: Alice Herring. Staff: Ann Arnold, Becky Smyth, Amber Moreland. Media present: Doug Walker, Rome News Tribune and Tori Hughes, WRGA. March Minutes were approved on a motion by Pullen, second by White.

ACTION ITEM

Design Recommendations - Pullen presented a façade grant recommendation from the Design Committee for \$2000 requested by El Zarape, 429 Broad Street to add awnings. Pullen asked for board to approve request on the basis that El Zarape removes one sign, and meets HPC approval. Awnings will be Captain Blue, no lettering or scallops. On a motion by White, second by Shell, the grant was approved with all members in favor.) 208 Broad Street Cevian Design-Pullen asked for committee to reconsider reallocating \$2000 grant to Cevian Design for 208 Broad Street for second floor windows. On a motion by McNiece, second by White, the grant was approved with all members in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach - Ware stated the previous Coffee Break was hosted by Rome Cleaners. Improvements to water main for East 1st through East 6th to take place in April were discussed. The next Coffee Break will be hosted by Rome News Tribune. Ware stated that they are trying to gain two volunteers from each committee for concerts.

Design - Pullen discussed that last meeting was spent on grant projects. Planning Department's Bryan King, continuing to work on Historic Preservation project for May. Plans to replace banners on period light poles are being worked on in stages. They are moving forward with plan to add animal topiaries for holiday decorations.

Promotion - Shell stated that May First Friday Block Party will have two stages. Brochures with band lineup are currently at print, will have in hand in approximately one week. Block parties will take place in May and July, while having Bridgepoint Plaza concerts in June, August and September. The Apocalyptic block party is set for October. Shell said that by keeping bands local, committee was able to spread money further to increase security. Ware commented that she has had several inquiries interested in the concerts. McDowell asked for any volunteer information to be given to staff.

Parking - Parking decks will be staffed for graduations. Staff working with forum to create media release on dates for parking. Planning Department is working to create parking guide for parents of graduates. *We Validate* Parking signs have been posted at businesses that validate. Office has seen an increase in parking. This has also encouraged three additional businesses to participate in program. There has also been an increase in pre purchase of vouchers for downtown weddings. Leased spaces in parking facilities are up. Contractor passes are in force with no issues. Business visits to start back up. Staff is to attend Parking Association of Georgia conference on April 21st, and rescheduled the Parking Committee meeting for April 28th. This year's conference is at a record high for attendance. Committee is continuing to work on action plan.

Business Development - McDowell stated a lot of great things happening with upper residential. White discussed upcoming loft tours that will be a fundraiser for Cancer Navigators.

BID - McDowell provided list of current status of petitions. Committee currently at 55% of target goal of 65%. It may be presented at City Commission meeting April 27.

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Reports - Staff received positive feedback from the Wyoming group. The focus was on the Riverwalk/Town Green, Housing, Parking, and Hotel Development. Staff attended the Main Street National Conference. This is the first time Georgia has hosted the national conference. Arnold spoke at conference with the focus of loan programs, and growth resulting from loans. Conference attendance was at record high since recession. Rome will host the Heart & Soul Bus Tour on May 13 and 14. This is Rome's third time hosting.

Other - Pullen stated the International Festival will take place at Bridgepoint Plaza on April 18. Students are to travel to Japan and Commissioner Davis will renew Friend Agreement May 28. Downtown Art Walk May 9.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:39am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Moreland, Recording Secretary