

Downtown Neighborhood Association
October 2, 2024
Des Moines Public Library

Meeting called to order at 6pm.

In attendance: Jordan Locke, Doug Selsor (treasurer), David Jennings, Luke Iland (vice president/membership), Deb Madison-Levi (president), Julie Feirer, Christine Comito (secretary), Absent: Jon Cahill
Seventeen community members, including City Council members Carl Voss and Michael Simonson, in attendance as well.

Deb noted the updated agenda was to include Larry Smithson to talk about 310 Court Ave (Spaghetti Works), but he arrived at the meeting and left as he was uncomfortable with press presence.

Sgt Mark McKinney

Crime data last 30 days: down about 450 trips, cases down about 80, arrests down about 100 due to loop-scoop squad no longer in effect. This trend is typical of a summer season moving into Fall. Maj. Taggart suggested the idea of a homeless coordinator within Sgt. McKinney's unit to best direct resources. Interviews held; expect new hire to start Oct 14. This is a police officer. Will likely report to Sgt. Lorna Garcia, mental health police officer.

City of Des Moines updates

Homeless ordinance– will take effect 2 weeks after last council reading. Carl Voss noted that a few things are still getting into place before they move forward, Mike Simonson listed ARL shelter available for pets, secure storage for belongings, process for transportation to emergency shelter, addition of public restrooms, additional outreach workers, opportunity for nonprofit or church to help out.

EMT medics available (Acute Care Station) at shelter helps prevent many emergency calls. Hailey Van Pelt at CISS is the coordinator of this program. Saw 187 people in June with only 27 transports to ER. The mobile medical unit is reaching out to prevent emergency calls by proactively dealing with issues.

310 Court Ave / Zoning Board of Adjustment – Zoning request was on agenda for Sept 25, but has been continued to Oct. 23. Mr. Smithson had indicated he'd like to meet with downtown neighbors as well as Hubbell. Councilman Simonson noted that City Boards take Neighborhood Associations' opinions seriously. ZBOA staff recommended denying zoning change primarily due to there being 51 apartments upstairs from the location that would not have any sound proofing.

Community member Randy Richardson shared some concerns at the Edison Condominiums' neighborhood (SW 7th St), regarding some traffic safety issues. Motorcycle accident hit a corner unit a few months ago. Fast traffic along that street and close-to-street buildings are causing problems. Would like some kind of barrier, reduced lanes, reduced speed limit, something to help mitigate this problem. This may be a Traffic & Transportation Dept issue. Carl Voss suggested that the Neighborhood Association has stronger weight than a group of neighbors.

Julie made a motion that the DNA requests a traffic calming study on SW 7th from MLK to Indianola Rd/Thomas Beck Rd. David seconded, motion carried. Copy Councilman Voss and the ward Council person, Josh Mandelbaum, also.

Status of Kaleidoscope space at 6th & Walnut – Des Moines Register reported that the owners are waiting for interest rates to drop. City has a million dollars of the owners in reserve but neighbors are concerned about blight.

Business Reports

Sept. 4, 2024 minutes, Jordan moved, Luke seconded, all approved.

Treasurer's report – Doug reported bank account balance and spending and income amounts. Overall up by \$9.

Membership– Luke said current membership at 167, up. Tupelo Honey newest business to join. Will offer a member discount of \$10 off \$30 spend for starter promo, likely to follow with permanent % discount. Will be referenced in upcoming newsletter. Happy hour at Royal Mile last Tuesday was well attended. Luke working on future similar events. Jimmy Olson of DM Chamber would like to partner up. DNA members invited to Chamber's Gala event on Oct. 31 at a discounted rate. Will be referenced in the DNA newsletter. Luke talking to Orchestrate and the Surety as well.

Downtown Chamber invited DNA members to join them in ringing the bell at the Farmers Market this Saturday, Oct 5 @ 8:00 a.m.

Architectural Walking Tour, Sunday Oct 13, 1 pm. Registration link available on DNA's Facebook page. Meeting at Capital Square, east side entrance.

Capacity Building Grant –Luke worked with previous DNA president last year on this grant. Luke will write up something and share with the board.

Marketing/Communications

Logo changes–no new news

Julie attended a city workshop from Des Moines Neighborhood Services discussing neighborhood associations membership fees. Julie said about 30 in attendance (of about 50 neighborhood associations) and it was very interesting/informative.

Zoho email. DNA has changed our website so we now have full control of all parts. Would like to migrate to Google, away from Zoho, which was tied to the old website. Luke will work with Deb as president to claim the collection of emails we already have so that we can make the change with proper timing of all exec board members doing it at once. Julie will coordinate this meeting.

Jordan moved to adjourn, Deb seconded, all approved, meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.