

MINUTES

Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation 2013 Planning Meeting

December 3, 2012 7:30-8:45 pm Jake's 4680 Prospect St

(330)-274-4040, DMRCemail@gmail.com

dmrcgroup@googlegroups.com goes to all contacts interested in DMRC

dmrcboard@googlegroups.com board members; dmrcofficers@googlegroups.com officers only

Board Present

	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Michelle Barnauskas	Y		Rick Frato		N	Ellie Stamm	Y	
Keith Barton	Y		Jim Oster	Y		Joan Sweet		N
Eddie Benner	Y		Jim Rogers	Y	exFL	Lisa Zamecnik	Y	
Jodie Fiala	Y		Aaron Snopek	Y				

Advisors Present

	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Linda Clark		N	Marty Hura		N	Linda Schilling		N
Linda Ehlert	Y		Tia Knipper		N	Caren Stutzman	Y	N
Sandy Engelhart		N	Melissa Lyle	Y		Terri Vechery	Y	
Anthony Fiorilli		N	Christine Pitsinger	Y		Jeff Wilde		N
Patsi Gast		N	Ben Prescott		N	Carl Zeleznik		N
Helen Hazlett	Y							

Others Present

	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Mark Brown	Y		Randi Lyle	Y		Juli Robine	Y	
Ruth Brown	Y		Jason Pitsinger	Y		Kate Rogers	Y	
Mickey Fair	Y		Jeff Robine	Y		Jeff VanAuken	Y	
Liz Jones	Y							

Mission: Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation works with the Village of Mantua to lessen the burdens of government by engaging the citizens, civic organizations, business community and property owners to develop and implement a plan to reverse blight and improve accessibility of the historic Village to promote the health and well-being of the community.

Objectives

- Make the Mantua area a welcoming destination
- Encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the Mantua area, including:
The Headwaters Hike & Bike Trail ~ Cuyahoga River ~ Shops ~ Eateries ~
Parks ~ Service Providers ~ Historic Architecture ~ Rural Character
- Plan, secure financing, and facilitate capital improvements

Edie welcomed all and asked, "Why are you here tonight? What interests you in DMRC?"

- Aaron Snopek – Village resident since 2007. Mantua is like many small towns in Midwest, suffers from same problems; some towns are worse & unnecessarily so, it's a matter of choice. We need to add to the group of people wanting to do something.
- Helen Hazlett – 12 year resident of Hiram. Property values have been declining; Village properties over \$130,000 are not moving, yet this is such a neat place to live.

- Terri Vechery – born & raised here; dad owned Mantua Lumber; Township zoning for 17 years. Mantua Township has a vested interest because the township doesn't want growth. Remember the vibrancy of the Village in the past, we can bring that back.
- Linda Ehlert – VP of Mantua Historical Society. We need to preserve old buildings. Would like to see money infused into Village to bring buildings back to life.
- Lisa Zamecnik – lifelong Village resident. River & trails are sorely under-used; need to bring attention to recreational assets and return to vibrant downtown like when she was young.
- Caren Stutzman – looking for “consistent & concrete” to build confidence; property owners need to know they can invest in property, know they will be able to rent, making more improvements possible.
- Mickey Fair – Village used to be closest for shopping, convenient. Hope to increase Art on the Hill traffic with wine tasting.
- Jim Oster – Township resident since 1964, kids grew up here, saw downtown's heyday. Already invested a lot of time and intends to continue...to see success. Big picture is still to find millions of dollars; in the meantime, stay alive. A few have been able to keep the revitalization effort alive.
- Jeff VanAuken – lifelong resident, lots of history here. Purchased Mantua Grain building with intent to revitalize it and hopefully town.
- Jeff Robine – 40 years of history here.
- Juli Robine – owner of Advanced Rehabilitation & Health Specialists in town for 14 years. Wants to see a healthy community with people walking, running, taking advantage of recreational opportunities. Village needs a place to buy fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Kate Rogers – buying home/farm on Canada Rd. Looks forward to learning about DMRC & meeting people.
- Ellie Stamm – long family history in Mantua, current Chagrin Falls resident. Mantua has sidewalks; it's a walkable community. Other towns don't have that advantage. Town needs a grocery store; needs something good (big) to happen; “should I move back?” or is Mantua on its way to becoming a ghost town?
- Keith Barton – Township resident with law office in Village. Don't want Mantua to turn into a ghost town.
- Mark Brown – grew up in Auburn, 12 years in Shalersville, outdoorsman, mountain-biker. Parents shopped in Village, always chose mom & pop shops; unfortunately, some stores are not here to patronize.
- Ruth Brown – from Auburn, Shalersville resident with 2 boys in Primary school. Wants good schools. Likes small, cozy atmosphere vs. cities/Streetsboro, yet need more stores in Village.
- Liz Jones – recently moved to Shalersville, from Ravenna where there are many closed-up buildings; doesn't want to see that in Mantua.
- Missy Lyle – works for Buckeye Pipeline & had retail store in town, VP of Chamber. Need more businesses. Need to stick with it to see success.
- Randi Lyle – CHS student; helped get Xmas décor up. Before getting driver's license, walked to town from school every day; nothing for youth to do.
- Michelle Barnauskas – lifelong Township resident. Doesn't want sprawl; businesses should be concentrated in Village. Historic buildings need protected, yet property/business owners need return on investment. Wants grocery store, fresh produce from local sources available in town; attractions for youth.
- Edie Benner – wants to fill “the hole” and stimulate growth around it; look to National Trust for Historic Preservation & Main Street Program as resource.

Michelle reviewed DMRC mission and objectives, highlighting key points

- DMRC formed when Village working on 20-year growth plan
- works WITH Village to lessen burdens... offering time, money, know-how
- promote community involvement
- develop and IMPLEMENT a plan to reverse “blight” – don't want to think of Mantua as blighted
- preserve local history

- promote health & well-being of community
- highlight downtown assets & create new attractions to bring people to town
- ultimately accomplish infrastructure & streetscape improvement project

Keith gave treasurer's report:

- \$19,800 gross income - \$14,700 expenses = \$5,100 net income in 2012
- About \$21,700 in cash
- Around \$2,000 income from donations and \$14,000 from fundraising activities; two categories of events
 - Program events relate directly to organization's mission
 - Fundraising events do not relate to mission; should be kept to a minimum to protect 501(c)3 status

All participants took part in discussions about annual events and projects:

Events

- Annual Board Meeting is a requirement
- Town-hall/community meetings no longer well-attended
- Spring & Fall Spruce-up
 - A few days of hard work 2 times per year, followed by nothing; town looks shabby most of the time.
 - Need someone on payroll emptying trash cans, cleaning-up mini park, keeping sidewalks clear, shoveling snow in winter, etc.
 - Main Street Wooster's first initiative made program visible and drastically improved town – hiring a window washer; either building owners kept windows clean or paid to have it done.
 - SADD and CHS classes have been very helpful.
 - Contact Courts re. community service program?
 - Needs to be regular, scheduled, not ad-hoc
- Art on the Hill is successful and will be continued; \$3 return on each \$1 spent
 - Needs more sponsorship income
 - Wine tasting 2013
 - Beer tasting?
 - Add sidewalk art
 - Do more to get Headwaters Adventure Race participants to attend
 - Wine tasting may bring them back after freshening up from race
 - Give them raffle/Chinese auction tickets in registration packets
- Music in the Mini Park attendance down, barely breaks-even
- History Walk/Event
 - Very intense effort, building owner involvement
 - Feature one building at a time by holding an event there (ex. dinner, dance)
 - Possible driving tour, incorporating Mantua Center School, one Village property, Shalersville property (Lakeside?) to minimize burden on one group
- Major Fundraising program needed
 - Reverse Raffle first held March 2012
 - Less than \$1 profit per \$1 spent
 - Much less effort than other events – sell dinner tickets
 - Texas Hold 'em
 - Night at the Races
 - Casino Night
 - Beer Tasting
 - Dance/lessons – theme? line, square, USO
 - Sell memberships
 - Community Development Corp? at least to fund regular maintenance

- Team-building/volunteer appreciation
 - Informal gatherings at Jake's
 - Beer tasting at Granary
 - Dance

Projects

- Wayfinding signs, businesses and parks/trails – Lisa is committed to finishing parks/trails and promoting recreational activities
- SR 44 Sidewalk/TEP grant may require more investment, property owners need to determine feasibility; landscape grant will follow
- Trailhead parking area – concept provided at no cost by landscape designer; will funds/timing/resources be available to pursue?
- Prospect Street esplanade is huge project that will inch along as property owners complete their own projects – Granary ready for patio/lighting design, hope to match what will be in rest of town
- Flagpole at administration building was unaffordable by Village in 2010; would be visible, impactful project for DMRC and partners (American Legion, VFW, Scouts) to pursue at approximate cost of \$10,000.
- Light key buildings
- Install hardware for hanging banners across Main Street – charge organizations to hang
- Regular downtown maintenance paid position/committed, schedule volunteers
- Membership drive
- Promote and take advantage of CLG - prestigious designation, more than just historic grants; some downtown buildings on National Trust of Historic Places since 1970s, time to further what was started then.
- Ensure greater visibility of DMRC, had a knock-out 2012 with SR 44 grant, Village relationship, CLG, signage, trailhead clean-up, movement on grants never-before considered...further enhance trailheads, flagpole