

Main Street Advisory Board
Minutes - April 6 2023

1. Call to Order : Chairman Cossart called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Roll: Chairman Cossart; Directors Gordon, Jones, Moore, Lay, and Presswood were present. Director Loudermilk was absent.

Staff: Alicia Hartley – Downtown Manager, Bryan Wood – Community Development Director, Holly Wharton - Economic Development Director, and Christine Sewell – Recording Clerk

Guests: Christy Sheridan, Cody Durden, Bryan Fountain, Clay Rucker, Greg Boike, Terre Walker, and Robbie Russell

2. Guests/Speakers
 - a. Middle Georgia Regional Commission – Downtown Parking Study

Mr. Greg Boike presented the study which included the methodology overview, summary of findings, summary of finding for the peak areas, summary of findings in underutilized spaces, parking management and use of underutilized spaces, parking management and creating a shift in demand

3. Citizens with Input – None

4. Old Business
 - a. Certificate of Appropriateness Revision – 805 Commerce Street

Mr. Wood advised at the March meeting installation of a new window was approved to fill the former window opening on the Commerce Street side of the building; the window glass was required to extend the full height of the opening. The new window must meet current energy code and wind load requirements. Bryan Fountain received a quote for full-height glass at~ \$18,000. It is my understanding that constructing a full height frame with 8' tall glass with integrated solid panels above costs about the same. If the glass portion of the window extends 8' in height with wood framing above, the cost drops to about \$10,000. A center post exists in the window opening, which will be boxed in and wrapped with metal matching with window frame. Mr. Fountain is requesting you reconsider your requirement for the full-height glass and has submitted the attached "Requested" drawing. If the Board is willing to allow less than full-height glass, Staff recommends that the solid panels above the glass be constructed of a smooth surface material trimmed with the same metal elements as the actual window frame, spaced to reflect the width of each glass panel below. The solid panels should be constructed so the header directly above the glass panels is not visually represented. See attached "Suggested" drawing. The solid panels should be painted to match the window frame color (#40 Dark Bronze). Chairman Cossart asked for the board's input. Mr. Wood further advised the black column in the center has to remain wrapped in metal in the same color of the window frame and suggests panels at the top to look like a full height window. Mr. Wood noted hardiboard comes in full solid panels. Mr. Fountain advised the window can go up to ten feet; there is a substantial difference in cost. Chairman Cossart asked if the change met the design guidelines; Mr. Wood advised the change is reasonable and appropriate due to the age of the building. Ms. Hartley also noted the guidelines keep the integrity of historic preservation. Ms. Hartley asked Mr. Durden if the location of the smoker was changing; he advised it was not.

Director Presswood motioned to recommend approval of the change as submitted; Director Jones seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

5. New Business

a. Review Certificate of Appropriateness – 933 Carroll Street

Mr. Wood advised the applicant proposes installing a 5-foot-tall white vinyl privacy fence behind the Swanson House Restaurant to enclose service area. Mr. Wood noted this request was previously approved in 2017 and the COA expired. The request complies with design standards and the design guidelines for walls and fences and staff recommends approval.

Director Gordon motioned to approve as submitted; Director Presswood seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

b. Review Certificate of Appropriateness – 760 Commerce Street

Mr. Wood advised the applicant proposes replacing a copper awning with a fabric awning over the back door of the building. The awning is navy blue with a white scalloped detail along the bottom edge and is visible from Jernigan Street. The awning complies with design standards and the design guidelines for awnings. Mr. Wood noted the awning is already installed; there had been one previously but this replaces it.

Director Moore motioned to approve for the awning replacement that was already installed; Director Jones seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

The board asked Ms. Hartley to remind the district of the requirements of COA's and inquired if there was a penalty for.

c. Review Certificate of Appropriateness – 907 Jernigan Street

Mr. Wood advised the applicant proposes installing a freestanding sign adjacent to the driveway entrance at 907 Jernigan Street. The sign structure is made of three metal gears attached to a metal base. The overall size of the sign structure is 6 feet in height by 7 feet wide. The actual sign face is an outline of a T-shirt suspended in the larger gear. The material of the actual sign face is not clear. The sign face appears to be suspended by rope. The sign face is not attached at the bottom, allowing the sign face to sway in the wind. The size of the sign complies with sign standards for the Downtown Development Overlay District. Mr. Wood advised approval is recommended subject to the sign face being attached at the top and bottom of the sign structure by metal chains welded to the inside diameter of the gear.

Director Lay motioned to approve as submitted with the condition that the sign not be secured with string as noted by staff; Director Presswood seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

d. Review of Façade Grant – 805 Commerce Street

Ms. Hartley presented the application for the window which is in within the guidelines and is recommending approval in the amount of \$2500. Director Lay motioned to

approve for \$2500; Director Moore seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

e. Historic Tours Signage

Ms. Hartley advised signs will not be placed on actual properties, but in centralized location in downtown. Ms. Turpin would like to eliminate the redundancy of the QR codes. Mrs. Walker advised she does not want a sign on her property and printable maps should be made available. Chairman Cossart asked if the QR code will provide the entire tour; Ms. Hartley advised it would and reiterated signs will not be placed on private properties. Ms. Hartley further advised the staff at CVB are still working on the project and trying to navigate the platform to make it user friendly. Options were presented on the sign face and pole. After discussion it was the consensus of the board to recommend sign option #2 and pole sign option #3. The board also asked staff to research styles other communities use and determine if there will be any placement of a sign on private property.

f. Approve March 2,2023 Minutes

Director Presswood motioned to approve as submitted; Director Moore seconded; all in favor and was unanimously approved.

g. Approve March 2023 financials – tabled to May meeting

h. Bench/Bench Plaque Fundraising

Ms. Hartley advised she has received numerous inquiries about bench plaques. The program had been done in 2016-2018 and was a \$500 donation. There are currently no benches available. Ms. Hartley is asking if this is a program the board would like to do again. The board asked Ms. Hartley to find out who would provide the benches.

6. Chairman Items – reminder of Wine Tasting on April 21st.

7. Downtown Manager's Report

Downtown Projects update – Solid Waste: new toters are in; new program to roll out week of April 24; restaurants will have two pickups a day instead of the one pickup initially discussed; Thornton's Closet building: new windows have been installed; progress continues; Swag items for Jr. High Rodeo Finals and other events/pop-ups; Downtown Athens Eat and Drink Promotion; Sign for leasing Wingate Property; Working with CVB on map for navigating to Downtown from Fairgrounds; Spring refresh of Downtown Planters completed. Ms. Hartley requested authorization to pursue some promotional items for the downtown; the board concurred.

a. Strategic Plan Update – No new updates.

8. Promotion Committee Report – Ms. Hartley advised 406 tickets sold to date; and promotion is in full swing and the budget is in line with what was anticipated.

9. Update on Downtown Development Authority – Ms. Hartley advised staff met with the development group for the proposed new administration building and the project has

been put on pause until a residential housing study has been completed, which a consultant has been chosen and staff will meet with them next week.

10. Other – Ms. Hartley advised Cory Jones has been appointed to the board as Ms. DeShazier is now the Asst. City Clerk.
11. Adjourn: there being no further business to come before the board the meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

Approved 05.04.23