



Central Business Improvement District

Meeting Minutes

February 20th, 2008: 10:00 a.m.

First National Bank 8th Floor Board Room

Attendance: Sam Sicard, Chairman; Richard Griffin, Vice Chairman; Birnie Pryor, Phil White, Bennie Westphal & Jayne Hughes.

Absent: Rodney Ghan,

Others in Attendance: Linda Gurlen, David Harris, David Kerr, Bill Black, David Overton, Ben Boulden.

Call to Order:

Chairman Sicard called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the February 20th, 2008 CBID Meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer's report will be distributed at the March meeting.

Director's Report:

A copy of the Director's Report is available in the CBID office.

A list of Downtown and Historic property renovation incentives was handed out. This is a rough draft and a starting point to begin the process to hopefully add to this list. Ms. Hughes attended a meeting in North Little Rock with other Downtown activists from the State to discuss the possibility of creating additional incentives which can be introduced at the 2009 General Assembly. Winn Dooley recently did a Federal Historic Tax credit and reported on the ease of filling out the paperwork. He noted there were very few qualifying criteria for the structure. There was some discussion about the Preserve America Project and the Planning Grant for marketing historic properties in a district. The deadline for completion of this project is November 2008.

New Business:

At the request of Ron Vargas with Sparks, Mr. Griffin and Ms. Hughes have had separate meetings with him. Mr. Vargas had learned of our plans to expand the district from Randy Reed and he wanted to discuss our expansion plans. They are interested to hear how we intend to improve the area as they want to create a medical community in this area. Additional information is needed before a decision can be made. Mr. White brought up the point that as we become successful in improving Towson the residual effect on the properties Sparks is interested in will happen anyway. He mentioned there is not really a need to include them into the expansion. Bennie Westphal reported about the possibility of fencing along the Westphal property on Clayton. He also briefed us on plans to clean up the property to the south of the West End Lofts. Bennie asked for ideas on a use for his property at 5th and A. Mr. White mentioned the skate park for Downtown. The estimated costs for a bowl style skate park similar to the one recently built in Fayetteville was 150,000 to 200,000. A slab style similar to what we have here in Fort Smith would be less.

Old Business:

An update on the expansion was given. At this time we are waiting for a few property owners to make a final commitment and sign the appropriate documents. Sam Bowden spoke and said that he was going to take a look at the possibility of signing on again. He said he could possibly have an answer for us next week.

It was determined that a letter will be created to notify the property owners in the district of the expansion and ask for their signatures. A map will be included as well as a copy of the petition. Flowers Baking Company has announced they will be reopening their business in their location in Downtown. This will be called the Fort Smith Baking Company. They are included in the proposed expansion area but have not signed.

Mr. Griffin asked about the Grand Avenue entrance and plans for future electrical needs. The possibility of Holiday Lighting and lighting the trees were discussed.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jayne Hughes