



Alliance for Livability

“Purpose: Advise on DGRI-related programs, services, and investments related to cleanliness and safety, mobility, beautification, asset management, and urban recreation.”

January 25, 2016

11:00am – 12:30pm

29 Pearl Street, NW Suite #1

Agenda

Main work item: *Work group project development.*

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment, Current Business – 3 minutes per person
3. December minutes, GRPD report – 10 minutes **action required**
4. Calder Plaza (Wells) – 5 minutes
5. Downtown Ambassador: Annual Review Presentation – 15 minutes
6. Working Groups (Full Alliance) – 25 minutes
 - a. Clean/Safe/Beautiful – Monroe North Gateway: RFP goals, proposed steering committee
 - b. Engagement – Signal Box Art Project: concept goals/parameters, partnership scan; Residents Council: re-engagement plan (Annamarie Buller will lead discussion)
 - c. Mobility – Local sidewalk closure policy review and comparison, plan development for policy enhancements; update on Downtown mobility initiatives (Kirk)
 - d. Urban Recreation – Skatepark update and planning discussion, design RFP goals
7. Public Comment, Old/Other Business – 3 minutes per person
8. Adjourn



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

Alliance for Livability

November 23rd, 2015

1. Call to order: Wells called the meeting to order at 11:05am
2. Members Present: Amy Baas, Shaun Biel, Trevor Bosworth, Robert Dean, Johannah Jelks, Matt Koning, Marcia Rapp, Jenn Schaub, Jay Schrimpf, Lynee Wells

Members Absent: Asante Cain, Kim Dabbs, Joe Elliot, Stephen Faber, Dr. Wendy Falb, Christian Frank, John Helmholdt, James Hurt, Lance Marconi, Chris Muller, Nate Phelps

Others Present: Annamarie Buller, Melvin Eledge, Andy Guy, Bill Kirk, Jennie Kovalcik, Captain Matt Ostapowicz, LaTarro Traylor, Aaron Terpstra, Erika Hanson

3. Public Comment/Current Business:
Captain Ostapowicz did not have anything specific to report. Ostapowicz said the department is preparing for a busy Wednesday night before Thanksgiving, adding more staff and resources to maintain the busy events. Eledge said the ambassador will finalize details and training of the Clean Team. Eledge added that the entire ambassador staff was preparing for winter, and a final move to the new office location. Buller asked if they were able to hire any of the original staff of the Clean Team. Eledge said that they had retained one of the original staff members.
4. Consent Agenda Items:
Unable to approve October minutes due to lack of quorum
5. DGRI Engagement Plan Overview:
Guy said that one of DGRI's original goals was to build a more welcoming and inclusive community. Guy added that progress has already been made; and with the addition of a staff member to focus on this initiative, LaTarro Traylor, more progress is on its way. Guy said that the goal of the engagement plan is to strengthen our residential, employment, and visitor relationships, along with building new ones.

Guy stated that Gustavo Rotondaro's census data presentation is helping determine areas of focus for the future. Traylor said her goal is to be connected to/or aware of any organizations or events in the community that DGRI can support or be a resource to aid in diversity and inclusion efforts. Traylor added the support does not always have to be a monetary contribution, but also resource sharing and marketing. Traylor said that each table had a matrix calendar of community engagement events that will help with awareness of upcoming happenings and how DGRI could be involved. Traylor asked the Alliance to add any information that they are aware of and may help expand reach. Traylor said she will be compiling all of the information into a calendar format, to help plan ahead for upcoming months. Schaub said it would be interesting to break down the list into different groups to see how collaborations could take place in the future. Jelks said that it may be redundant to act as a marketing liaison for these groups that should or do already have marketing strategies. Jelks added that fostering general awareness may aid in accumulating diverse economic strategies. Traylor explained that the matrix is primarily used internally for all general events to give DGRI lead time to impact an event or decide their course of action. Wells asked if the goals and incentives of the other alliances would change to support the diversity and inclusion efforts of DGRI. Traylor said that she is trying to connect with anyone interested to get new and fresh ideas on diversity to discuss impacting this goal

6. GR Forward Discussion: Housing and Diversity/Inclusion/Equity Initiatives:

Kirk stated that there are specific parts of the GR Forward Plan that offer opportunities for input and attention from the Alliance for Livability. Kirk highlighted implementation steps that he felt were specific to the Alliance. Kirk added that incentives regarding housing are usually detailed by Alliance for Investment; however, the Alliance for Livability can offer suggestions and support moving forward. Kirk said this goal in the plan focused on trying to build more mixed-income and culturally diverse housing options. Kirk asked how this Alliance could support the goal with ideas to make Downtown a more appealing and safe place to live through beautification, mobility, and other livability efforts. Wells said that there was a gap between amenities offered in visitor and residential areas. Wells added that the same and more resources could be added in residential areas. Wells asked if the Alliance would be responsible for starting and being on the resident's council. Kirk said we act as a launching pad for this, but the goal is to have an independent council. Rapp said it may be hard to get a residential council together because there have been a few attempts already. Rapp added that maybe there should be an online resource with data from all of the housing efforts. Wells said that we could use more downtown resident input on the Alliance to help with focus efforts. Kirk said that he will facilitate collaboration between the Alliance for Investment and Livability, and that he could show the Great Housing Strategy presentation with upcoming housing initiatives. Kirk said another goal that the group could focus on from the GR Forward Plan is diversity, inclusion, and equity. Kirk said that the Alliance could focus on promotion of the census data that Gustavo Rotondaro had put together. Kirk said that this piece has been a priority for DGRI since its beginnings; and from a livability aspect, this Alliance needs to offer input on how to positively affect these goals. Baas added how the space of livability needs to reflect residential families, singles, and other demographics from an affordable living standpoint. Kirk said he will work on the collaboration efforts, and gather other presentations that are necessary for a general overview.

7. Working Groups:

**The Alliance broke into working groups.*

- a. Clean/Safe/Beautiful – Monroe North Gateway goals and concepts
 - Schaub said that there is potential for lighting and art by the overpass of the Monroe North Gateway, including murals that represent the different parts of downtown on either side. Schaub said that walkability and transportation numbers in the corridor could be measured overtime to show impact.
- b. Mobility – Protected bike lane/cycle track on Ionia: goals and concepts
 - Hanson said that her group discussed bike lanes on Ionia, and how the visibility from the biker and vehicle would be influenced. Hanson added that they may not be able to see one another, which would be an issue caused from two-way bike lanes on a one-way street. Hanson said that if implemented, the goal could be measured by how safe cyclists feel to be encouraged to take longer trips.
- c. Engagement – WMCAT signal boxes project review, next steps/new project ideas
 - Dean said that more local organizations could control the art in parts of the city, using the art to express how they are diverse and how they influence the area. Dean added that more artists and curators could be involved next year, to create a city-wide interest. Dean said that the number of positive comments on social media and number of completed sites by organizations would determine measurability.
- d. Urban Recreation – Winter Livability ideas

8. Public Comment, Old/Other Business:

Schaub introduced her new intern, Jamie Hock. Wells said that the Alliance may cancel their next meeting in December; no opposition from the members. Wells stated that the next meeting would occur in January. Kirk added that there are winter event fliers and information available for those interested.

9. Adjourn:

Wells adjourned the meeting at 12:31pm

Minutes taken by:
Jennie Kovalcik
Administrative Assistant
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.