

AGENDA



DNN Advisory

Members:

Christopher Billmeier • Daniel Drent • Latesha Lipscomb • Kelli Jo Peltier • Neil Sly • Kathy Steindler • Eddie Tadlock • Jim Talen • Mark Tangen • Celeste McDonald • Paul Skentzos • Emma Suarez Pawlicki • Teresa Haggerty • Hal Froot

March 03, 2022

11:30pm- 1:00pm

29 Pearl Street NW, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

1. Introductions (5 mins) All Members
2. Approve February 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Community Norms (3 mins) Kendsie Channing
4. Project Updates (15 mins)
 - o Hill + River Network Connection Neil Sly
 - o Van Andel Alleyway Daniel Drent + Paul Skentzos
 - o Other organizations/committees/groups?
5. Retail Strategy for Downtown (45 mins) Richard App
6. Public Comment
7. Adjourn
8. Periwinkle Fog visit! (20 mins, leave from there)

*Our next meeting will be held **in-person** on April 7, 2022, at 11:30 am.*

The DNN exists to foster a community of downtown neighbors that are connected, informed and empowered to improve downtown living.





Downtown Neighbor Network Advisory

February 3, 2022

1. Call to order: Ms. Peltier called the meeting to order at 11:40 am.
2. DNN Members Present: Celeste McDonald, Daniel Drent, Kelli Jo Peltier, Christopher Billmeier, Kathy Steindler, Jim Talen, Eddie Tadlock, Latesha Lipscomb, Paul Skentzos, Hal Froot, Teresa Haggerty, and Emma Suarez (remote).

DNN Members Absent: Mark Tangen and Neil Sly

Others Present: Danielle Friedman (Network180), Tammy Britton (City of GR), Kendsie Channing, Amanda Sloan, Corey Mathein, Mandy McDaniel, Melvin Eledge, Marion Bonneaux, and Sam Suarez (DGRI Staff).

3. Introductions
4. Approval of January 2022 Meeting Minutes
Kathy Steindler supported by Kelli Jo Peltier, motioned to approve the January 2022 meeting minutes. None opposed. Motion passed.

5. HOT
Danielle Friedman, from Network180, serves on the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) with a focus on mental health. Other staff includes local police officers, firefighters, social workers, recovery coaches and a pure support specialist. HOT is working hard to bridge the mental health gap by connecting individuals to substance use services and other treatment providers. Staff members are in the field conducting screenings and working closely with individuals until treatment is received. HOT takes a proactive approach to build relationships to better understand the individual needs.

Hal Froot asked how many people have been helped by HOT and how success is measured. Danielle stated prior to HOT, individuals would have assessments done but for a variety of reasons were unable to stay connected and follow through with treatment. HOT has helped over two dozen individuals receive treatment. Success in mental health is hard to measure

because every case is unique. Tammy Britton, from City of GR, stated a dashboard has been created and is constantly evolving to assist tracking efforts. Once more data is collected, then goals will be set.

Kathy Steindler asked what efforts have been done to prevent those that are homeless from getting COVID. Danielle stated HOT has partnered multiple times with Kent County Health Department and Cherry Health to give COVID vaccinations, flu shots, and there are regular testing locations.

HOT operates from 6 am to 6 pm. Network180 is only until 4 pm. Neighbors are encouraged to call HOT at 616-456-4240 if they encounter a homelessness issue. 211 will give you access to coordinated entry and has an outreach specialist to connect to housing resources.

Contact information and presentations from HOT: grhot@grcity.us

- a. Netowrk180 - 616-825-5868 or email danielle.friedman@network180.org
- b. Sgt. John Wittkowski – GR Fire Department - jwittkow@grand-rapids.mi.us
- c. Tammy Britton – City of Grand Rapids - tbritton@grand-rapids.mi.us
- d. [Presentation to City Commission](#) (starts on slide 47)

6. Downtown Improvement District

Mr. Eledge presented an overview of the Downtown Improvement District (DID), which is a place management tool to help keep downtown beautiful and welcoming. The DID is funded proportionally by office buildings, retails shops, restaurants, and apartment dwellers. In addition, Mr. Eledge reviewed recent survey results from downtown neighbors. Key takeaways include residents feel the general appearance/cleanliness is better or the same. Safety, homelessness, and panhandling were thought to be worse/much worse. The top priorities for neighbors are pedestrian safety, improved quality of life services, and increased safety/security.

Mr. Eledge stated, residential property owners currently do not serve on the board and ultimately aren't included in the decision-making process. However, residents live, work, and play downtown and have a big stake in the vitality of downtown. Services specific to residential property owners require their unique perspective and input. The goal is to include residents and help direct services toward resident specific focus.

It is recommended to include residential property owners in the DID assessment. By assessing \$10 per month, billed \$120 annually, this would generate \$43,500 in new revenue earmarked for resident specific services. By including residents, the funds generated would be used to expand the maintenance and beautification of downtown and open spots on the board for

resident representation. In addition, DGRI/DID would provide an additional \$50,000 matching funds to expand and diversify service opportunities.

Questions:

There was confusion among members regarding condo owners already paying assessment fees passed down by condo associations. Melvin Eledge stated residential property is not currently assessed in any capacity. When the DID assesses a mixed-use building, the residential floors are excluded.

Celeste McDonald asked what the next steps are. Melvin Eledge stated the next steps are to include as many residents as possible in the conversation and spread the word. The end of February is the target date for DID Board approval for final recommendation to the City Commission.

7. Pedestrian Safety Feedback

Kathy Steindler recommended the assessment be delayed until there is warmer weather. At the time of her observations, there was hardly any pedestrians.

Celeste McDonald stated she was surprised at how many pedestrians were out during the assessment.

Jim Talen stated the issue he observed were for cars to see if it was safe to turn right on red, drivers would drive across pedestrian crosswalk to see beyond buildings.

8. Member Discussion

Jim Talen stated he has 5 years of experience in coalition on homelessness. If anyone would like more information or more details pertaining to that type of work, please contact him.

9. Public Comment

None.

10. Next meeting March 3, 2022

Adjournment: 1:03 pm

Minutes taken by:

Mandy McDaniel

Administrative Assistant

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.