AGENDA

DOWNTOWN
NEIGHBOR
NETWORK
Advisory

Members:

Amy Skentzos • Bill Coyne • Daniel Drent • Drew Terwee • Eddie Tadlock • Jane Reynolds • Kathy Steindler • Kelli Jo Peltier • Latesha Lipscomb • Laurie Craft • Mark Tangen • Michael Dorney • Robert Van Driel • Wilma Banks • Myric Harris • Christopher Billmeier •

June 11, 2019
11:30pm- 1:30pm
29 Pearl Street, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

1.	Call to order/ introductions	Kelli Jo Peltier
2.	Approval of minutes	Kelli Jo Peltier
3.	DNN Newsletter statistics	Annamarie Buller
4.	New potential board member Rose Aura Martinez White (Westside Resident)	Annamarie Buller
5.	DNN Working Group Updates	Annamarie Buller
	• Events Working Group	
	• Communications Working Group	
	• TBD Engagement Working Group	Annamarie Buller
	• Evening availability last week of July (July 29, 30, 31)	
	• Or first full week of August (6, 7 only)	
6.	Next meeting August 1, 2019 11:30am-1:30pm	
7.	Advisory member discussion	
8.	Public comment	
9.	Adjournment	

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

Downtown Neighbor Network
June 6, 2019

1. Call to order:
Kelli Jo Peltier called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

2. Members Present:
Kelli Jo Peltier, Kathy Steindler, Mark Tangen, Amy Skentzos, Jane Reynolds, Drew Terwee, Laurie Craft, Christopher Billmeier, Myric Harris, Mike Dorney, Daniel Drent and Wilma Banks.

Members Absent:
Eddie Tadlock, Latesha Lipscomb, Bill Coyne, and Robert Van Driel.

Others Present:
Annamarie Buller and Amanda Sloan (DGRI).

3. Approval of Minutes: May, 2019
Laurie Craft, supported by Kathy Steindler, motioned to approve May 2, 2019 Meeting Minutes as presented. None opposed. Motion passed.

4. DNN Newsletter Statistics
Ms. Buller stated we are holding steady at 717 contacts (up from 443 in February). The open rate is 42% and the click rate is a higher than industry average of 10.7%. A few of the top links clicked were the Istagram photo of Sweet House (23), the DNN project page (10), the DASH detour map (10), and The Lit GR's website (10).

5. DNN Talking Points
Ms. Peltier stated we would like to spend time today to finalize our talking points in order to develop palm cards to pass out at upcoming events. Ms. Buller read the mission statement that was determined by the DNN steering committee last year. **"The DNN exists to foster a community of downtown neighbors that are connected, informed, and empowered to improve downtown living."** Talking points were derived from this statement.

The DNN helps the community: Get connected, Stay informed, Know your neighbors, and Get involved.

Ms. Steindler stated she would like it clarified that this is a voluntary board. Mr. Tangen suggested changing the order and placing "Know your neighbors" first. Mr. Drent agreed. Ms. Buller read the next statement. "The Downtown Neighbor Network is an affinity group for people who identify as downtown neighbors. The DNN is a pilot project that partners with Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc. serving downtown and downtown adjacent neighborhoods with a focus on neighbors living in multi-unit buildings." Ms. Craft stated this is too many words. Mr. Terwee agreed. Mr. Tangen stated he would like to include, "be a voice for people living downtown." Ms. Reynolds suggested adding, "improve downtown living by communications, events, and engagement."

With group collaboration this statement was updated to: **"The Downtown Neighbor Network is for people who identify as downtown neighbors with a focus on multi-unit buildings. The DNN partners with Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc. for communications, events, and engagement to improve downtown living."**

Mr. Harris suggested altering the "**How to learn more**" section to name Annamarie Buller as the Manager of Neighbor Experience. He also suggested changing "Visit our project page" to "If you like what you see" or "if this interests you and you want to stay informed." Ms. Craft agreed with adding Ms. Buller's name as the contact and suggested we remove "set up a meeting" so people didn't feel that they would be required to commit to that option. Ms. Skentzos stated less is more. Ms. Reynolds agreed. Mr. Billmeier asked if we had a Facebook group page to add to this card. Ms. Buller stated, not yet, but that is something to consider potentially in the future as well as other social networking options.

Ms. Buller stated the **Key Programs** are stated for our use but are not intended to be listed on the palm card. Communications: share information and develop tools to deepen communications with neighbors. Events: organize events that educate and connect neighbors, for example Mix Mingle & Share events held throughout the year to combine social networking with information sharing about downtown developments and events. Engagement: Develop tools to help neighbors organize and increase opportunities to inform policy and projects impacting downtown.

Ms. Craft asked if this language is approachable. She suggested simplifying these statements. The group agreed and edited the statements.

Communications: Sharing information to help neighbors connect.
Events: Organize events that educate and connect neighbors.
Engagement: Develop tools that help neighbors organize and increase opportunities to impact their neighborhoods.

Ms. Banks stated she doesn't see residents in her building appreciating these cards. Ms. Croft stated high turnover in multi-unit buildings will be an on-going issue.

Ms. Buller stated the print pieces we develop will be similar to the Downtown Ambassador card and the target audience will include: downtown and near downtown neighbors, event attendees, property management (for welcome bags) and the real estate community. Potentially we can adapt this into a poster for mail rooms as well as create a downloadable copy to post on the project page. Ms. Buller stated the communications working group will continue to move forward on this but we need to set up a meeting for June to do a final review of the print piece and have a social networking discussion.

6. Events Focus for Summer/Fall

Yappy Hour for the new downtown dog park took place on May 22nd. Ms. Buller stated she talked to a lot of neighbors. The Grand Opening on June 1st had a terrific turn out. The DNN will plan to host an event there twice a year to assist with clean up efforts. Ambassadors will empty trash at the park every other day. Ms. Steindler asked how many entrances there are. Ms. Buller stated 2, both with double gates. Mr. Terwee asked if we have a partnership with dog treat vendors and stated Purina may be interested in a sponsorship.

Tabling at Movies on Monroe – Ms. Buller stated this is a great opportunity to meet downtown residents. The DNN tent will be set up for each event with a table, chairs, and supplies. You will need to bring your own cooler with personal food and drinks. Please arrive at 6 pm and plan on talking to folks that approach. Be sure to ask if they are a downtown resident or just interested in learning more. Encourage downtown and near neighborhood residents to sign up for the newsletter if they haven't already! The first movie in the double feature is generally family friendly whereas the second movie crowd is typically very different so be sure to stay at least until the start of the later movie.

Ms. Buller listed possible themes for **Focus Group Town Hall/ Meet ups:** No theme meet up on a patio/bar, Fresh Food Access (August/Sept), Yappy Hour Clean up (Sept/May), and Downtown Safety with Ambassadors and GRPD (annual). Mr. Drent suggested a non-alcoholic event option. Mr. Tangen stated introverts are possibly more like to attend an event with a theme whereas extroverts might be more likely to attend an event with no theme. Ms. Buller stated we'll try to capture both!

Ms. Buller stated the downtown safety event should be held annually. Mr. Terwee commented that he has never seen a community officer engaged on Monroe Center and it is ridiculous that ambassadors do more work than the GRPD to address panhandling. Ms. Craft recalled Grand Rapids used to have a much more active community police officer. Mr. Tangen suggested attending the Heartside coffee with a cop event. Mr.

Drent stated that the Heartside Downtown Neighborhood Association event is open to all and a great opportunity to talk to GRPD. Ms. Buller confirmed this reoccurring event meets the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Harris Building (111 S. Division). The next meeting will be held on June 26th at 9:30 am.

The Westside Streetfair will take place on September 14th at noon. This Mini Downtown Rummage Sale will be held on Bridge Street and Winter Avenue. We are looking for about 10-16 sales tents and hoping for heavy participation from Westside Buildings including: 420 Alabama, Riverhouse, The Rowe, and Barley Flats. This event will be a test to determine potential ongoing or future events of this kind.

(New Business) Openings: Ms. Buller stated we are working on preview opportunities for Studio Park this fall and Sweetwaters Coffee and Tea in July. Maya Buzz will open in The Harris Building soon. If you become aware of openings please share so we can create unique participation opportunities. Ms. Steindler asked about a preview for The Hyatt. Ms. Buller stated we may also want to consider planning a Crosswalk Dedication for the Michigan Crosswalk (and others) upon completion this year.

7. Ad Hoc Project Committees

Ms. Buller passed around a sign-up sheet for focused working groups. Please choose from the following committees: Communications/Marketing, Events, and Advocacy. Communications & Marketing will need to meet in June to finalize our talking points, elevator speech, and motto. They will also have a hand in the DNN Newsletter and promotional pieces. Events will lead the quarterly focus group/town hall events by selecting projects of interest, find venues, and work events. They will select engagement events, coordinate volunteers and support signature events as they arise. Our Advocacy working group will manage the Downtown Resident Survey project from implementation to design, promotion, and reporting; they will also oversee Resident Leadership Development.

8. Fresh Food Access Update

Ms. Buller stated the Veggie Van will be at Pekich Park (on the corner of Cherry and Division) from 6-7 pm on Wednesdays starting June 19th through October 9th. This park will soon be considered the fresh food access hub. Heartside Gleaning Initiative will also be at Pekich Park on Saturdays from 2:30 -3:30 pm June 8th through October 12th to give away food gleaned from the Fulton Street Market. Their focus is to provide for those in need but no income documentation is required.

Mr. Dent stated Pekich Park has been a thorn in the side of the neighborhood. Volunteers have been trying to reclaim the park with clean up efforts. He stated folks that previously would have contributed to the mess are now contributing to the clean up efforts.

9. Advisory Member Discussion
Mr. Denton stated the 3rd Tuesday of every month is the Heartside Downtown Neighborhood Association Meeting. The next meeting on June 18th takes place at the Harris Building at 6pm.

Mr. Harris stated he facilitates a social media production Monday nights from 9-10 pm on Facebook through The eMPowrMent Network. If anyone in this group would like to make an appearance in this podcast please let him know.

Mr. Tangen is excited about the newly installed lights on Division Avenue.

Ms. Craft asked what the construction in Ah-Nab-Awen Park will be. Ms. Buller stated this will eventually be construction staging for river work but likely not until next year. Ms. Skentzos asked if the river construction will be covered during The State of Our Downtown. Ms. Buller stated, yes, and reminded the group to save the date for this informative event on September 5th 5:30 – 7:30 pm.

10. Next Meeting July 11, 2019 11:30-1:30pm

11. Public Comment
None.

12. Adjournment
Ms. Buller adjourned the meeting at 1:13 pm.

Minutes taken by:
Amanda Sloan
Administrative Assistant
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.