

DBDA Monthly Board Meeting

September 8, 2015

Board members in attendance: Tucker Deal, Lynne Mason, Andy Stallings, Chris Grasinger, Eric Plaag, Monica Caruso, John Bond, Jamie Goodman, Anna Roseman, Colton Lentz, Loretta Clawson, Kendra Sink

Also in attendance: John Cooper, Anna Oakes, representatives with Winkler properties, John Ward

Staff in attendance: Virginia Falck, Pilar Fotta

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

There was continued discussion about the possibility of creating a festival for 2016.

Tucker mentioned how other communities that host festivals have set up stand-alone committees made up of community members, rather than draining existing resources like Virginia and Pilar. He also mentioned the 90s Boone Music Scene Facebook group that has sprung up and is very popular, maybe devising a festival around that.

Virginia will research other towns more and pull all of these ideas together into a proposal for the October board meeting.

FINANCIAL

Virginia noted that she would like to switch from receiving PNC statements on paper, as that incurs a fee, and instead download them from online.

Eric moved to start getting PNC statements online rather than on paper to avoid the fee. Tucker seconded, all approved.

Eric passed around some brochures and discussed a survey of historical properties that will be conducted by the Boone Historic Preservation Commission under the Town of Boone and Planning & Inspections department. The HPC will conduct an initial visual survey, then a more extensive recon survey that includes taking photos of the building, followed by approaching the property owners of a final selection of about 5 or so structures to conduct a more intensive survey (which would include an interior visit if allowed). There will be a meeting from 5:00 – 7:00 pm on September 23rd at the Watauga Co. Library to provide further details for property and business owners.

According to Eric, places with historic downtowns see a dramatic increase in visitation when historic designation is applied.

PROMOTIONS

The ASU Homecoming Parade will take place on the same day as the October First Friday. Virginia will send out an email to DBDA members with the planned route info and other details.

Virginia and Jamie had brainstormed ideas for new identifiers for First Friday participants, perhaps a colorful small spinner flag, but Virginia noted that cost was limiting the options. She noted that we could either just have the businesses buy their own, or by 20 or so to start and have the businesses pay us the cost for theirs.

Anna asked about the original flags that were used several years ago, Virginia noted those were fairly expensive, and Jamie mentioned that as they were muted colors, they did not stand out very well from the street. Virginia will do some more research to come back with suggestions.

DOWNTOWN STREETScape

Town Manager John Ward presented on a new development proposal for the downtown block where Cilantros is (the old ESC building next to Murphy's) along with Jason Gaston, local engineer and John Winkler, property owner of the current building and parking lot. They took into consideration the 2030 vision plan, and drew some concepts. The building they are suggesting would be mixed use, and include retail spaces, a parking deck, and multi-family housing on the top three floors. The building size they are proposing would be 4 stories above ground on King Street, 5 stories on Howard Street, which is 1 floor fewer than proposed in the 2030 plan.

Mr. Winkler presented on the physical details of their original concept, which would include 10,000 sq. feet of retail, approximately 70 bedrooms, 450 parking spots, and an electric car charging station, bicycle parking, and an undetermined amount of setback with landscaping to meet Town of Boone's downtown landscaping standards. The building will be approximately 45 feet tall along the King Street side, 55 feet on Howard Street. Mr. Winkler demonstrated this would be shorter than several other buildings around town, including the back side of Farmer's Hardware and several buildings on ASU campus.

During the q&a which followed, the presenting team noted they are willing to work with the Historic Preservation Committee to make sure their proposal blends well with downtown Boone on materials and other considerations. They also noted they have talked with McLaurin parking about possibly managing the parking.

Several suggestions from those in attendance included condominiums targeted to non-student adults (John Cooper), restaurant space (Anna), hotel rooms (Lynne), including solar on the rooftop (Eric)

Eric asked how many of the parking spaces would be for the public... John Ward said that likely there would be a fair number that are reserved for long-term parking for downtown business employees, venue parking for events at the Theater, et cetera

A board member asked how many parking spaces would be hourly, Mr. Winkler said that hasn't been determined yet, as this is in such the concept stage

Chris asked what barriers are in the way to move the project forward... Mr. Winkler responded that the height is the biggest barrier, and they are just waiting for approval.

A board member asked that there be a spot for a restaurant, Jamie asked that there be some "soft" features such as benches and balconies to make the building more visually welcoming.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Jamie Goodman