UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
May Meeting
5/24/16 6:00 PM

Present: Darren Cotton, Jonathon Welch, Tess Morrissey, Matt Kopalek, Sal Sayad, Mickey Vertino, Yrma Mrowinski, Dan Domino, Linda Garwol

Guest Speaker: Carly Battin, Elmwood Village Association

- Incorporated in 1994
- Always a community association - both residents and businesses
    - Not all business associations combine with a community association. Hertel Ave Business Association, which is closer and more comparable, remains a separate entity. More models for business associations must be sought before this decision can be made
- Represent Elmwood and the surrounding residential neighborhoods
- Volunteer board - 15 people on the board
    - Volunteer committees - professional expertise
    - National Main Street Model - approach to organization
    - Four committees
        - Design - design standards, focus on people and not parking
        - Economic development - resource to landlords and tenants, building grants
        - Events and programming - farmers markets, outdoor concerts, festivals
            - An established arts festival is already in place which includes outdoor concerts and other entertainment, free activities and a farmer's market
        - Communication - website, social media, email, newsletters, host public meetings
    - Physical infrastructure - slowing traffic down (expand sidewalk and narrow roadway)
    - Banners, benches, recycling stations, bike racks, sculptures, flower baskets
- Originally was funded through discretionary funding in the 90's (state, county, and local gov't)
- In 2000, LISC funded the first executive director of the EVA for three years and it was their prerogative to find funding after that period
- Oishei Foundation in 2006 (three year grant for branding and marketing)
- Membership and fundraising (67%) provide majority of budget
    - About $250,000 annual budget
    - Councilmember provides discretionary funding
- New York Main Street Grant
    - Leverage for additional match funding
- EVA pays for all of the garbage cans - $400 per spin bin
    - Cans are replaced every year
- Seasonal employee to maintain a lot of the streetscape
    - Watering the flower baskets, watering the trees, cutting down old trees
- Installing something in front of the business - need to get buy-in from the business

- Business Association developed around the same time as the Community Development Association
- No real counterpart to the EVA around the city
    - Commercial corridor consortium run by City Hall has been helpful to bring different community development groups together
- Fundraising and membership drive is a lot of staff time
- Business Improvement District - special tax on businesses/property owners to help maintain streets
- Parking benefits district - paid parking on the street/municipal lots - portion of proceeds would return to the neighborhood
- Venue from moving violations to be returned to the neighborhoods where they happen
- Increasing cost of paid parking and using the extra revenue to support the community
- Do we think charging for parking on Main would dissuade people from visiting businesses?
- Main Street does not have paid meters - a potential source of revenues?
- Perceived vs. reality parking problem
    - Who is taking the spots on Main Street?
    - Eliminated alternate parking on side streets
- No meters on Bailey Avenue either - people parking all day
- Opportunities to collaborate across neighborhoods on the same issues
    - Commercial corridor consortium
    - Green Code - advocate for change

Membership Drive Update

- Annmarie from Parkside Candy would be potentially interested in a position
- We now have 21 paid members
- Old Molly's Pub - interested in joining once the business gets up and running
- Owner of 3rd Base is interested
- Need more members at the actual meeting for a vote

Nominations to the Board

- Aim to have elections by the end of summer/beginning of fall
- Need more time to coalesce
- Need to get a solid group of people to show up at each meeting

UB Office of Community Relations Updates

- UB on the Green - 7/20, 7/27, 8/3
- Welcome Back Club Club - introduce the students to the neighborhood
- Tess Morrissey is the new Director of Community Relations and Deputy Director of State Relations
- Opportunity to have a shuttle/bus to move students into the commercial corridor?
    - Added new stops to Galleria, Eastern Hills Mall, AMC

- Symbiotic relationship between businesses and students in University Heights

Garbage can rehab status (replace or repair?)

- Darren to follow up with Miranda on status of garbage can - one in front of AMAK Healthcare was taken for refurbish
- City came out and fixed the one in front of Just Pizza, but haven't been responsive to other
- City has been coming out to clean the garbage cans more often

Flower planters - strategy for watering

- UHC and Business Association paid half and half for plant material
- All planters have been planted over the weekend by Linda and Daughter
- Used drought tolerant plants
- Golf cart with a tanker
- Mike Miranda has the equipment to water the planters, would it be possible to contract with him?

Bike racks

- Take an inventory of existing bike racks along Main Street
- See where there are gaps (especially with Rails to Trails nearing completion)
- Business Association to potentially sponsor the installation of additional bike racks
- See if there is money available through GObike/City of Buffalo

Any old/new business

- Need to get bylaws revised and adopted
- Medians will be repaired sometime this year