

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Greater Hidden Hills Community Development Corporation (GHHCDC)

Mainstreet Community Center, Jan. 18, 2014, 10 a.m. -12:15 p.m.

Attending: Nadine Rivers-Johnson, Calvin Sims, Phyllis Frierson, Charlene Taylor, Jan Costello. Joyce Russell is out of town on family business.

1. Welcome

Updates for new year –

Nadine Rivers-Johnson reported on the new Vacant Property Ordinance signed into law Dec. 9, 2013. It requires owners of vacant property to register with the county and pay a fee of \$100. Fines result if the owner does not register within 60 days of the property being vacant or abandoned. The program is expected to begin April 1. Seven more code enforcement officers will be hired (bringing the total to 29).

The county is considering starting a new program in March called Operation Fresh Start. This program will allow the county to maintain lawns and board up vacant and abandoned property AND attach a lien to the property for the cost of maintenance.

Calvin Sims noted the increase in business activity. Caesar's Pizza is opening at Redan/Hairston shopping center. Outside of immediate area but near – Wesley Chapel/I-20 – Dunkin' Donuts and Krispy Kreme are opening.

2. Update from Committees

Marketing and Communication.

New website: The board approved the new website. Visit it at GreaterHiddenHills.org.

Flyer: The board liked the flyer and suggested a few tweaks. Jan will get out the new version as soon as possible.

New slogan considered: Communities coming together. Will try to work it into communications.

Discussed creating a piece that illustrates with photos desirable mixed-use options.

Newsletter: Calvin Sims will work on the newsletter prototype. He will consider an advertising fee structure that will give preferred membership rates to businesses that commit to bigger and frequent ads.

Finance and Budget. Secretary-Treasurer Phyllis Frierson presented the Treasurer's Report. We have not spent or received any money since our last meeting. We have \$108.2.

Charlene Taylor prepared a budget template. She requested that we each submit projections of how much we will need for each item.

Calvin Sims reported that local banks will not give a discounted checking account rate to nonprofits. We asked that he call Georgia United Credit Union and see what rates are available.

Nadine will contact a CPA and solicit help in finding pro bono consultation so that we set up our financial reports appropriately.

Streetscape Committee. Charlene Taylor will continue to work with her committee on setting priorities. Nadine suggested that we increase our efforts to motivate all residents and businesses to pick up illegal advertising signs. Launch a "War on Signs" campaign.

Fundraising. Calvin Sims plans to raise funds through advertisement sales. Once we get the checking account set up, he suggested that we establish a PayPal account for donations.

Membership Development. We will work next meeting on a plan for increasing membership. We are waiting until we can establish a budget and appropriate fee structure. Each member committed to contacting specific neighborhood business alliances to find out what they charge and what members get for the money; they will report next meeting. (Phyllis has Tucker; Jan has Wesley Chapel and Northlake; Nadine has N Druid, Decatur, and Lithonia; Charlene will do two of her choice.)

3. Jan reported on Commissioner Gannon's Alliance Conference with Vaughn Irons, Development Authority of DeKalb County held Dec. 17, 2013. The Authority and the DeKalb Economic Development Department are in the process of merging. This will lead to one economic development body with 12 employees by the end of 2014. Irons has great ideas for stimulating business – one is to give a 5% mortgage or refinancing credit to people who both live and work in DeKalb County. She also attended a neighborhood forum with the new economic development consultant, Angelos Angelou, from Austin, Tx., on Dec. 17. He is gathering data and information and will prepare an economic development strategy for the county. The neighborhood representatives at this meeting told him they have seen lots of plans but little implementation.
4. **What next?** We discussed a kick-off meeting in the second quarter. It will be both motivational and informational. Jan will contact Irons about being the keynote speaker and Berean about hosting the meeting.
5. **Date for next board meeting** – Feb. 22, 10 a.m., Mainstreet Community Center.

