

# Mount Airy Main Street Revitalization Commission

## Minutes for the September 16, 2003 Committee Meeting

### Attendance

Chris DeColli	Allison Schaefer	Sandra Dion
Aaron Lubick	Connie German	Wendi Peters
Amy Lubick	Ben Gue	John Cherry
Kris Haydon	Jay Neuman	Mayor Holt
Matthew Smith	Charles Beck, II	Melissa Clark
David Chernov	Billy Wagner	Gary Pozzouli

### Opening

Mayor Holt opened the meeting at 7pm.

### Introductions

### Invited Guest

Craig Ward of Frederick Ward Associates (410.879.2090) was invited to the monthly meeting to discuss his experiences with Bel Air's downtown revitalization efforts and their participation in the Main Street Maryland program since 2001.

- § Mr. Ward is the volunteer president of the private non-profit 501C3 Bel Air Downtown Revitalization Alliance
- § Mr. Ward indicated that Frederick Ward Assoc. is interested in contracting with Mt. Airy to assist with the Main Street Maryland application process.
- § He described his initial impressions of Mt. Airy as "historic," "fairly consistent architecture," "definite downtown district," and "compact."
- § The Bel Air downtown district is significantly larger than Mt. Airy with about 4,000 employees and an area comprising eight blocks by three blocks.
- § They raise money through membership dues, business sponsorship, and two annual events (a "Barbecue Bash" and a chocolate festival). They have about 100 members who pay dues of about \$50 per year.
- § They began their revitalization efforts in 1999; were designated a Main Street community in 2001; and received funding for façade improvements in 2002.
- § Bel Air has had success with a street redesign program (new curbs, sidewalks, "pocket parks," narrower lanes in high speed areas, and islands to split the street and slow traffic)
- § Bel Air hired a full-time program manager to direct the revitalization efforts.
- § Bel Air has an 18 member Board of Directors comprised mostly of business owners. There is a push to diversify the board with other members of the community. The Executive Board is a subset of the Board of Directors including the Alliance's president, VP, secretary, treasurer, and the four committee chairpersons.
- § As a non-profit, the alliance is able to receive grants/funds that would not be available to the town. Mr. Ward noted that Community Legacy Grants are a valuable resource for funding revitalization efforts.
- § Mr. Ward provided a copy of Bel Air's Main Street Maryland application package. He will also provide a copy of the job description used to hire Bel Air's program manager.

### Committee Reports

#### 1. Promotion Committee

Aaron Lubick circulated a sign-up sheet for volunteers to staff the information booth during the Fall Festival. John Cherry circulated draft copies of flyers developed by the Promotion sub-committee for

Mount Airy Main Street Revitalization Commission  
Minutes for the September 16, 2003 Meeting

the Fall Festival booth.

2. Design Committee

Melissa Clark will present a slide show on design issues/considerations to the committee at the next meeting.

New Business

1. Maryland Main Street Program

Amy Lubick reported that the Main Street program is not accepting applications for 2004. The program is being redesigned to tackle under-served communities. The new program is called the "DHCD Catalyst" program.

2. Non-Profit Status

Based on discussions with Mr. Ward, the commission decided to further pursue establishing a non-profit organization, similar to the Bel Air 501C3 Alliance. Chris DeColli will look further into obtaining the non-profit status.

3. Book Boss

Jay Neuman suggested keeping a book boss to organize the commission's ideas. Chris DeColli recommended using the book to begin answering the Main Street Maryland application questions. Even though the State is not accepting new applicants to the program, the application will help the commission organize and gather important information. He said the commission should focus first on application questions 11-15 which cover the commission's organizational structure.

4. Web Site

A suggestion was made that the commission have it's own .org website, especially if the commission is to become a distinct entity, separate from the town.

5. Traffic Calming

Speeding was identified as a definite concern in the downtown district. Craig Ward discussed some street redesign efforts that were implemented in Bel Air to calm traffic, such as narrower lanes and islands. Cobble cross walks were mentioned as another effective method for slowing traffic.

Old Business

1. Official Commission Designation

Chris DeColli brought the commission to the attention of the Town Council during the last meeting; however since the commission is considering becoming a non-profit organization, official designation as a town committee may not be necessary.

2. Vision

Connie German circulated a draft of the Mt. Airy Vision.

Minutes prepared by John Cherry