

Mount Airy Main Street Association
May 16, 2006

1. Introductions

Attendee List:

Mike Eacho	Rob Scranton	Jessica Windsor
Amy Lubick	Chris Bernido	James Holt
John Cherry	Debbie Holt	Catherine Nazarene
Patty Williamson	Ben Gue	Carolynne Fitzpatrick
Joann Rockwell	Dan Rockwell	Vicki Neuman
Dalia Schulman	Joanne Sapp	Jay Neuman
Kristen Ellis	Pat Ellis	Jim Gangawere
Pat Rockingberg		

Following the May 1, 2006 town election, all elected officials were invited to attend tonight's meeting to learn more about the Main Street program and MAMSA. The following elected officials joined us this evening:

- John Woodhull (Town Council Member)
- Dave Pyatt (Town Council Member)
- Gary Nelson (Town Council Member) – MAMSA Liason
- Frank Johnson (Mayor)
- Wendi Peters (Town Council Member)

2. Announcements (Amy Lubick)

- a. Cake Walk event sponsored by MAMSA during May Fest
- b. Celebrate Main Street Event at Lorienzo's, June 12, 2006 (5:30 – 8:30 pm)

3. MAMSA History, Accomplishments, and Activities (Jim Gangawere)

- a. Overview: Jim and Amy provided an overview of how MAMSA was established; circulated a map of the downtown zone; attendees presented their views of downtown and why it is important to them.

Jim described MAMSA's National Main Street membership and the four-step approach; discussed Main Street Maryland and the training opportunities that they provide as well the availability of grants; Jim reviewed MAMSA's vision and the mission statement; Jim provided 2004 statistics from National Main Street on reinvestment in downtown: the return on investment is \$26.67 per dollar invested; \$4000 matching grant from the State to purchase trashcans, benches, and planters to improve the streetscape

b. Façade Improvement Grant Program: Amy provided details of the façade improvement program; we are in the beginning stages of the process; four businesses have been approved; applications have been submitted to the state for review; businesses will be reimbursed half the cost (up to the MAMSA approved amount); Applications include window replacement at the Iliano firehouse building; Browning Insurance – to remove the cedar siding and improve windows; and Blossom & Basket Boutique for improvements on the side of the building visible from Main St.

c. Design Guidelines: Voluntary guidelines prepared by MAMSA's Design Committee that businesses can use if they choose during renovations.

d. Signage: MAMSA worked to acquire historic district signs through the state. These signs have been posted on I-70.

e. July 1 – Olde Fashioned Fourth of July Weekend: JoAnn (Déjà vu) is planning this new downtown event.

f. Summer Dance: Another family event in the early planning stages; planned for the parking lot area in front of Town Hall.

g. Website: MAMSA has a new website with URL: mountairymainstreet.org; site is under construction.

h. Scenic Byways: MAMSA has made efforts to get Mount Airy included in the Scenic Byway program, which would include the town on the Scenic Byway maps.

i. Journey Through Hallowed Ground: MAMSA invited the president of the program to speak at a monthly meeting; 15 +/- main streets are involved in the program; we anticipate significant cross-promotion.

j. Prospect Mill Plans: Rob Scranton presented some plans on Prospect Mill for redeveloping the streetscape from Prospect up to the rail line. Façade is designed to fit in with the current appearance of existing buildings. The project was a finalist in the state's Priority Place program but it did not go through because of the town's water situation; Regarding parking, a 2-story parking deck (no ramps, but access to the different levels from Main St. and Prospect) with 163 spaces is currently in the plan.

k. Illiano Property: Jesse presented plans for renovating the area between the Firehouse and Flat Iron buildings. Could include a sidewalk area with outdoor seating.

l. Mt. Airy Museum: Mike E. stated that the renovations are underway; aiming to reopen by the end of June or early July. Grand reopening will be publicized.

m. B&O Historical Society: Looking to relocate from Arbutus. Mount Airy is one possible town for relocating their operation. Could include a restored rail car as a downtown attraction.

Discussion Points:

- Question raised about the effects on Main St. residential properties. Amy replied that a domino effect could benefit other properties; could lead to more awareness about tax credit opportunities and state/federal designations.

Next meeting is scheduled for June 20th. Location will be confirmed via email.