

DDMO meeting notes from January 21, 2025

Attendees: Bill Robins, Heidi, Nicole, Lauren, Chris Cotty, Jalessa, Theresa Albertson, Derryck White

- Introduced all members

- SID - Special Improvement district - meeting has been postponed from January 15, 2025 to a later date, not yet scheduled. The meeting would discuss the special improvement district concept, the benefits, and other towns where it has been successfully implemented.

- review of 2025 events in process:

- 5K run - is scheduled for Sat March 29 This event is being sponsored by Middlesex County, and is being done to raise awareness to the watershed and the litter trap which is in Dunellen. The event would kick off Saturday morning, with registration, music, artists, and performers at the gazebo in Washington Park. Middlesex County will invite a sculptor who works with debris to create sculptures, and will invite other artists to set up in Washington Park that day. The 5K route is still to be determined, as there is concern over crossing North Washington Avenue on a Sat for the runners. We would like to keep the runners on the east side of North Washington Avenue.

Discussed potential routes with the committee.

- Spring into Wellness - is scheduled for May 4th. This event provides a forum for health focused businesses in town to participate and display their services. In the past, Yoga Essence, All Day Fitness, GDC, and other health related businesses in town were invited to participate in performances, or encouraged to set up tables to provide awareness of their services. This event coincides with the first day of the open air market. This event is a joint effort between DDMO and the Friends of the Dunellen Library.

- Rope lights - DDMO funded and Chris Cotty hung the rope lights which are on the decorative lamp posts in town. They have been up for 3 years or more and are starting to dim a bit. Also, the rope lights are disrupted when DPW puts up new wreaths and banners. Peg to discuss with Alex to see if we should invest in new rope lights and if there is a better way to team with DPW on this effort. DDMO members noted that it would be a shame to remove the rope lights because we have received such positive feedback on their presence, and marking the downtown business area.

- Harvestfest - 2025 is scheduled for Sunday October 12 of this year. Committee discussed costs for the tables. Committee unanimously agreed to increase the table rates to \$35/table for earlybird, \$45/table for vendor tables, no charge for non profits. Committee unanimously agreed to retain the food vendor prices, as we only attract 4 to 5 food vendors each year., and do not want to increase their costs. Heidi will begin early bird marketing for the event. Heidi will reach out to Rutgers Mental Health services, and

other Rutgers health related services to invite them to attend.

- holiday trees - for downtown have been removed. Will check with Alex and DPW on the storage of the ornaments. In the past the trees were purchased through the firehouse. This year the firehouse did not sell the trees, so we purchased them through Vinnie Russomano, who secures them for the Boy Scouts. Peg will follow up with Vinny and Alex on payment of the trees, to allocate appropriate tree costs to DDMO.

- Heidi had discussions with Small Business contacts at the State, who can present their services to us at the next meeting. Heidi will schedule.

- 2025 DDMO officer elections will be held at the February meeting

- **NEW ITEM NOT DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING** - yesterday we were asked if we would like to team to schedule a car show in May. Peg will reach out to Karl to get more details and potential dates so we can discuss at the next meeting.