EVA Vision Planning Session
January 19, 2019
Summary of Breakout Session

Group 1: **Communications** (Mark Herold facilitator)

Key Discussion Points
- Emory will increasingly have difficulty competing against other retail villages that have more clearly defined parking - Emory Pointe, Decatur, Toco Hills, Virginia Highlands, Ponce City Market, etc. Emory village is really not well-equipped to commercially competing against these other true destinations.

- Emory Village is really a neighborhood village. A place that is perhaps more informal, less hectic and chaotic. Emory Village needs a brand of it's own that carries with it the image we want to project. A place for neighbors to gather.

- Druid Hills residents want the village to thrive and want the merchants to be successful. Businesses who have owner-visibility and involvement seem to do better and have a more loyal local following - - Saba, Rise 'N Dine, etc. Local residents enjoy the convenience of walking or biking. Some

- Emory students are a factor too. Nothing substantial is being marketed to them.

- Highlight that the village is a good location for a small/medium size audience. Leverage the park asset.

- Explore the Paseo concept and create Paseo event with lights, music,

Actions:
1. Get marketing input and create a Emory Village brand and logo. For instance: "The Village - - Emory University Village"
2. Create social media outreach to students and local neighbors. Use new brand and social media processes to reinforce merchant messages and special events
3. Proactively highlight merchant owners/managers in the village using social media and the existing Druid Hills Civic Association publication
4. Create a village ambassador role that can provide outreach to schools and arts organizations. Also reach for merchants to encourage unique and special events like the Saba Taco Friday event that has been so successful.
5. Plan a Paseo event and get involvement from the key merchants.

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Group 2: **Operations** (Jay Johnson facilitator)

Breakout Group #: 2 – Operations

2.1 EVA Membership - need to identify necessary skill sets and find volunteers to fulfill roles
2.2 Operational Budget - Lack of revenue stream; fundraising, on street parking
2.3 Maintenance - plan for public realm; getting closer with Jimmy's new ideas, sponsorships
2.4 Private Property – full occupancy of businesses, mix of bus, restaurants and shops for both residents and campus uses and affordable for routine weekly patronage
2.5 Business owner involvement - support for changes they see needed

Topic 2.1: EVA Membership – need to identify necessary skill sets and find volunteers to fulfill roles

Ideal: Membership representative of the constituencies of our mission (property owners, merchants, residents, Emory) with energy and the specific skills to accomplish the work of the EVA. (See "Topic 2.5" below, which specifically addresses business owner involvement.)

Impediment: Bandwidth of current members (people have jobs and families versus unlimited time and energy). Finding people with skills that are needed.

Ideas:
- Determine specific gaps in needed skills and viewpoints. Preliminary estimate of specific current skill needs: marketing/social media, navigating County bureaucracy, fundraising.
- Reenergize role of committees to clarify highest priority needs and increase interactions with community members for possible recruitment
- Outreach to community institutions for volunteers (Glenn Memorial UMC, etc.)
- Ad hoc adjunct support for specific needs –
  o Emory Goizueta school for social media needs – tap into annual student marketing competition (is need for plan or implementation or both?)
  o Schwartz Center marketing person for marketing expertise and synergies with Schwartz events

Implementation:
- Review committees for relevance, purpose, membership, etc. and restructure as needed
- Identify most-needed skills/capabilities that we lack
- Reach out to Glenn Memorial UMC ideally via EVA members that are also church members
- Identify and meet with relevant person at Goizueta school for possible marketing/social media support
- Identify and meet with relevant person at Schwartz Center for possible marketing/social media support

Topic 2.2: Operational Budget – lack of revenue stream; fundraising, on street parking

Ideal: Consistent, sustainable revenue source to fund EVA annual operational maintenance and landscaping needs beyond what County or property owners perform.

Impediment: Current voluntary EVA membership fees are too small to cover desired maintenance and landscaping. Requiring EVA membership fees for businesses may discourage joining the EVA.

Businesses already voluntarily contribute significant money to Open Streets and may not be willing or able to contribute more. Various "structural solutions" for a revenue stream have significant issues (creation of a "community improvement district" would require approval of property owners to pay additional taxes and Village is too small for a CID; creation of a business owner's association or BOA would also require approval of property owners for a self-tax; the number of public parking spaces (est. 25-30) in the Village appears to be too few to justify establishing/administering a pay parking operation, and the County currently has no pay parking in any unincorporated area of the County, let alone a system to retain revenues dedicated to needs within a specific community).

Ideas:
- Define and estimate annual expenses for desired operational needs (answer what and how much we need as a preliminary step to answering source of funding)
- Find out what landlords and merchants want and are willing to pay for
- Fundraising campaign / EVA benefits awareness campaign
- Identify or recruit board member with fundraising expertise
- Consult external fundraising expert (friend or hired consultant)
- Sponsorship program for specific needs (e.g., signs stating that company XYC sponsors this landscape strip)
- Parking district that incorporates both private and public parking rather than public alone
- Better promote donating at Open Streets and other EVA events
- Dining coupon booklets (also see "Topic 2.4" below)

Implementation:
- Estimate costs for maintenance and landscaping needs (first create scope – see "Topic 2.3" below)
- Meet with landlords and merchants (see "Topic 2.5" below) to gauge needs and willingness to contribute
- Identify any fundraising expertise currently on board plus suggestions for recruitment of members with fundraising expertise
- Create or reinvigorate EVA fundraising committee

Topic 2.3: Maintenance – plan for public realm; getting closer with Jimmy's new ideas, sponsorships

Ideal: Well-maintained streetscape and landscape administered as efficiently as possible and with County and property owners fulfilling their responsibilities.

Impediment: County is slow, unreliable and unresponsive for maintenance and landscaping. EVA is not satisfied with work County does do (EVA has higher standards). How to make the County more responsive is unclear. Some maintenance (e.g., crosswalks) is expensive and cannot be unilaterally performed by EVA. Some property owners neglect maintenance and landscaping (e.g., Panera, Chang).

Ideas:
- Reengineer and repair crosswalks to be more durable and require less maintenance
- Maximize use of SPLOST money
- Finalize having Emory maintain certain areas since Village is effectively front door of campus (roundabout, plaza, N Oxford ROW)
- Find out what landlords and merchants want and are willing to pay for
- "Self-help" approach for private property problem areas (e.g., via tenant leases for Chang property, via ground lessor self-help for Panera)
- Code enforcement campaign to compel property owners
- Gadfly strategy to pester County for better service

Implementation:
- Finalize agreement with Emory for maintenance or roundabout, islands, plaza, N Oxford ROW (already drafted with expected nominal cost of $100 per month).
- Ensure EVA projects are on SPLOST
- Meet with landlords and merchants (see "Topic 2.5" below) to gauge needs and willingness to work together
- Create or reinvigorate EVA maintenance committee
- Create or reinvigorate EVA landscape committee

Topic 2.4: Private Property – full occupancy of businesses, mix of bus, restaurants and shops for both residents and campus uses and affordable for routine weekly patronage

Note: Suggest renaming this topic to something more applicable than "private property." Perhaps "Economic Development," "Economic Vibrancy" or "Village Vitality"??? Also, it was reported during breakout session that Village is currently well-occupied and that merchants are doing well, so emphasis was on sustaining current vibrancy, with focus on increasing weeknight business (i.e., marketing support), and filling remaining vacancies at former Slice-n-Pint, former Keba, 1399 N. Oxford, etc. and development of former BP site. Also, this is a complex topic that we didn't fully address before the breakout session ended.

Ideal: Well-occupied, vibrant commercial area with mix of businesses patronized by all groups within the community on a weekly basis.

Impediment: EVA has no control over how Village is tenanted, which is solely the responsibility of private property owners (overlay district restrictions notwithstanding). Market conditions may not support redevelopment of vacant or underutilized parcels, though it is not clear if current market conditions are an impediment (they may be favorable!). Vacancy at former Slice-n-Pint is prominent and affects efforts to tenant other vacancies???
Ideas:

- Meet with property owners to discuss best ways to support leasing/redevelopment efforts and make clear that EVA wants to assist economic vibrancy and does not want to obstruct it
- Collaborate with Emory Schwartz Center and Carlos Museum to promote dinning opportunities/discounts in the Village
- Dining coupon booklets (also see "Topic 2.2" above)
- Properly understand property use restrictions within overlay district

Implementation:
- Meet with property owners
- Meet with Schwartz Center and Carlos Museum
- Create or reinvigorate EVA Economic Vibrancy committee

Topic 2.5: Business owner involvement – support for changes they see needed

Ideal: All property owners and merchants see value of EVA, have open channel of communication and input with EVA, and support initiatives both financially and with their own time. A cross section of owners and merchants are board members and actively participate in EVA committees.

Impediment: Discipline and time of EVA members to communicate with property owners and merchants. Time availability of landlords and merchants. Timing of EVA meetings versus schedules of restauranteur merchants.

Ideas:

- Regular communication with landlords and merchants, including distributing EVA meeting minutes and other communications, and also spotlighting each individual landlord and merchant throughout the year
- "Your Emory Village" campaign – via "neighborhood visuals" publicly communicate EVA initiatives, success and benefits throughout the Village (e.g., CVS windowfront, which is required to allow public announcements, interior lobby of Majik Touch Cleaners, etc.)
- Buddy system to match an EVA member with each business

Implementation:

- Meet with landlords and merchants to gauge needs and willingness to work together and contribute financially
- Create or reinvigorate EVA merchants committee

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Group 3: **Physical Improvements** (Jean Welsh facilitator)

Topic 1. Infrastructure
i) Ideal:
- Well-maintained sidewalks, streets, and surfaces. Safe crossings.

ii) Impediment:
- Difficult to do quality repairs due to inability to stop traffic
- departments are "siloed".
- Dekalb, as a county, not structured to provide municipal services.
- All volunteer composition of EVA is limiting

iii) Ideas:
- Need to learn more about how the county works. . . how to navigate.
- Need to find out if EVA can do our own project management-- if not, what are the barriers?
- Does EVA need an Executive Director? To be a membership organization?
- Install brackets for banners (and possibly signs at the entry points) to promote a sense of community
- Better documentation of issues might help, use of ARC GIS that Mike Glafinakis has been using to document the condition of sidewalks.
- Better marking of cross walks. Suggestion to provide flags at key crossing points (CVS/Panera) for pedestrians crossing N. Decatur.
- Paint bike lanes green

iv) Implementation:
- See support/advice from Atlanta Regional commission on EVA structure

Topic 2: Design Implementation
i) Ideal:
ii) Impediment:
iii) Ideas:
iv) Implementation: Need to follow-up to ensure the SPLOST funding is provided for North Oxford project and other previously requested projects.

Topic 3: Base map files (see also Topic 5)

i) Ideal:

ii) Impediment:

iii) Ideas:

- Need to create 3D maps using topography to model what is possible with the overlay

iv) Implementation:

Topic 4: Traffic calming

i) Ideal:

- Bike path very clearly marked

ii) Impediment:

iii) Ideas:

- Better striping material (thermally applied)

iv) Implementation:

Topic 5: Overlay district.

i) Ideal:

- Increased density. More people living in the village.

ii) Impediment:

- Issues with financing builder financing
- Assumptions that DHCA/historic commission is too hard to deal with
- Lack of understanding of how to work with the overlay
- Multiple owners to deal with
- Footprint is small
- Lack of support for overlay from property owners

iii) Ideas:

- Talk to Minerva (developer)
- Possible neighborhood real estate development trust.

iv) Implementation:

Topic 6: Greenspace.

i) Ideal:

- Unobstructed pedestrian and cycling access to village from multiple directions
- Creek as a draw, possible recreation area

ii) Impediment:

- Retaining wall at Dominoes

iii) Ideas:

- Next 5 years, clean-up creek from Clifton to Oakdale.
- Promote idea of creek view deck on restaurants
- Need official greenspace maintenance plan

iv) Implementation: