

## Old Fort Mountain Heritage Alliance

June 17, 2009 3:00

### Members Present:

Dru Heldman, Carol Price, Terry Wilson, Nada Carroll, Brigette Walters, Scott Swickle, Debbie Smith, Terrell Finley

Visitors: David Quinn, Jenny Moore from Handmade in America

Standing Committees: Economic Development, Heritage and Preservation, Promotion, Design and Beautification

### Minutes:

Terrell Finley -Museum

- Live concerts each month during the summer
- Concerts draw in approximately 350-500 people
- Craft demonstrations located in different parts of town on Saturdays
- Hopefully will get some funds to have other programs
- Could coordinate arts expo with museum activities

Dru Heldman -Catawba Vale Café

- Live band performances
- Have exhibit with free wine/beer refreshments

Carol Price - county wide activities

- Working on motor bike trail called "Diamond Back" to draw motorcyclists
- Website up and working on editing and eliminating bugs
- Oral history project Saturday June 20
- NC Birding Trail launching for WNC through Arboretum
- Will send out RFP (feasibility study) application for Creek Walk

Terry Wilson-beautification

- Improvements with more flowers and pots around town
- Lesley Bradsher donated plants around the Depot
- Painters will keep pots trimmed and kept up
- Suggested having a membership drive with an ice cream social and live music
- Suggest combining with arts festival and museum activities to maximize participation

Scott Swickle-Andrews visit

- Andrews is a good model for town improvements

- Proactive community
- We could gain insight from their experiences and collaborate
- Could set up “sister” township
- Grants are available for small towns
- broadband money can be applied for
- Broadband would be a good draw for other businesses
- McDowell, Cherokee and Rutherford counties have the most unemployment in the State

#### Davidson Fort meeting reports

- Having difficulty raising funds.
- Gave up 25 acres
- Gary Jones allowing 6 acres to be used payment free if finished by Thanksgiving 09.
- Need more manpower to get walls up
- Suggested inquiring about using inmate labor
- Possible grant \$35,000

#### NC State report

- Signage and city emblem should be priority to go forward
- Need to check to see if there is any way to partner with Marion for possible cost reduction in ordering signage and also being consistent with Marion signage
- Need to identify ownership of sign locations and permission to remove/change current signs
- Information presented to the town from the NC State team is for the use of the town

#### David Quinn and Jenny Moore from Handmade in America

- Old Fort, Bakersville, Mars Hill, Hayesville have been selected for Small Town Initiative
- Need to choose a consultant to make a survey to create a business and development plan
- Hope to bring new jobs to the community
- Study will include consumer survey, merchant survey, GSI mapping, ESRI data (national data)
- Dru will chair a committee to work with a consultant to develop the survey
- Surveys could be done online, through regular town mailings, through merchants
- Need to work in partnership with board of Alderman and Chamber of Commerce
- June 2010 is deadline to have surveys completed
- Need to develop a timeline as soon as possible

Adjourned 5:10

Minutes taken by Debbie Smith

