

DNA BUILDING BLOCKS

Celebrate the vernal equinox!

DNA event to highlight Franklin's spring social scene!

Daffodils and croci are beginning to bloom throughout historic downtown Franklin, and downtown neighbors are emerging from their holes to enjoy the sun and the warmth.

Come help the Downtown Neighborhood Association celebrate the vernal equinox with a gala social Sunday, March 21, at Sandy's Downtown Grille, from 4 to 6 p.m. The price is right! The spring social is free to all paid-up DNA members (DNA leg-breakers will be at the door to ensure that everyone is paid up). Annual dues are a mere \$15 per family, the best deal anywhere!

The menu includes some of Sandy's finest: smoked salmon, sliced pork loin, veggie trays, cheese, fruit, mushrooms in puff pastry, rumaki, chips with queso dip, and petit fours. A cash bar will be open for business.

Admission to this highlight of Franklin's spring social scene is highly selective: Only DNA members can attend. To join DNA, all you have to do is either live in or love Franklin's unique fifteen-block original downtown area.

In addition to exchanging ideas, meeting new neighbors and catching up with old-timers, DNA members will get an update on the latest public and private initiatives that are continuing to polish the crown jewel of historic Franklin: our neighborhood.

Reservations are mandatory for the spring social. Call Dick Thuma, DNA president, at 591-5017, or better yet, email him at dickthuma@worldnet.att.net so he can add you to his email list and keep you posted on future DNA events and issues.

A lot is happening downtown!

The old Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times," is coming true for Franklin's 15-block original downtown area. Change is occurring almost everywhere we look, from new neighbors moving in to private restoration projects to massive public projects like the county Judicial Center nearing completion on Fourth Avenue and the parking garage beginning to emerge from the hole in the ground next door. Let's work hard together to ensure that these changes are a blessing, not a curse!

In addition to the judicial center and the parking garage projects, the Dan German Hospital will be restored, the "green house" on Second and Church will probably be restored (rather than demolished for police parking), and the city is taking ownership of the junk yard on Second Avenue North.



Could the Second Avenue North junk yard some day be a riverfront park? The new Central Franklin Area Plan suggests we stop turning our back on the Harpeth.

Major redevelopment projects for the north end of downtown, including the long-awaited bicentennial park and the junk yard/boot factory area, are under discussion. The city has begun to discuss adding floors to City Hall, while the county is deliberating about what to do with the old library property at Five Points. Currently used for parking, the vacant lot between First and Second on Church is also the subject of intensifying discussion.

Meanwhile, both Williamson County Schools and the Franklin Special School District have taken actions that directly affect our neighborhood. Franklin High will be rebuilt with a design much more in keeping with our historic community, while the FSSD has engaged in intensive and painful negotiations about rezoning to achieve ethnic diversity and balance in the elementary schools that serve downtown.

Some of the most exciting news concerns some public open space possibilities near downtown. Stay tuned to local media and come to the March 21 meeting to catch up on the breathtaking pace of change in downtown Franklin.

COME TO THE DNA SPRING GALA MARCH 21!

Downtown Neighborhood Association of Franklin, 214 Third Avenue South, Franklin, TN 37064

Planning for the next 200 years!

We're the bulls-eye at the center of the target in the draft land use plan McBride Dale Clarion has presented to the Central Franklin Area Plan (CFAP) committee. Online on the city's Web site at http://www.franklin-gov.com/pdf/cf_area_plan_draft_2_04_04.pdf, the plan makes a host of recommendations for the protection and enhancement of our neighborhood, which city planners describe as "the symbolic and historic heart of the community."

The CFAP committee encourages us to read and comment on this draft. Send your comments to Shanon Wasielewski, Franklin's preservation planner (shanonw@franklin-gov.com) by 5 p.m. Friday, February 27. You might send a cc to Dick Thuma, DNA president, at dickthuma@worldnet.att.net so DNA can track the concerns of its members.

This plan will shape our future. It has dozens of specific recommendations for land use downtown. If implemented, these will change the use of key parcels downtown. Pay particular attention to the "land use strategy" recommendations on pages 54-59 and then on page 61, and also to the "non-zoning implementation initiatives" on page 67. The plan also recommends new zoning for downtown.

The DNA board has urged the CFAP committee to protect our historic neighborhood (see below). Does the draft CFAP plan go far enough? Does it go too far? Be sure to read the plan and send your comments to Shanon Wasielewski by February 27, and be sure to attend the March 16 CFAP meeting, which is slated to approve the draft (with amendments, possibly amendments you suggest) and forward it to the Planning Commission.

The first rule is, "Do No Harm!" City (we hope) puts design before asphalt.

City government is carefully shaping two major initiatives to protect Franklin's historic downtown. Action on a curb and gutter project for Second Avenue South, which will serve as a potential template for streetscape improvements throughout the 15-block downtown area and beyond, has been put on hold to ensure it's the best possible design to enhance the downtown area. The proposed design was scheduled for consideration by the Historic Zoning Commission Monday, February 23.

Meanwhile, Fourth Ward Alderman Dan Klatt has led a vigorous effort to amend the Major Thoroughfare Plan that in its current proposed form would call for such drastic neighborhood-destroying projects as the expanding to four lanes (plus median strip) of Murfreesboro Road.

Klatt called for context-sensitive design that takes "into account not only the need to move cars, but also the impact

of facilities on the surrounding and contiguous environment, community and established character." The Board of Mayor and Aldermen unanimously adopted his recommendation, which will travel with the proposed thoroughfare plan to the Planning Commission for action.

The entire text of Klatt's memo is on the DNA Web site at <http://harpethcommunications.com/DNA-home.htm>. The Major Thoroughfare Plan is also online at <http://www.franklin-gov.com/mtpu.aspx>. Downtown residents might also be interested in the proposed bicycle and pedestrian plan online at <http://www.franklin-gov.com/bppu.aspx>. We have also linked these important documents to the DNA Web site, <http://harpethcommunications.com/DNA-home.htm>

Buy a paver and save the Dan German Building!

For a mere \$50, you can leave a lasting message for future generations – and also leave them an architectural legacy they'll always appreciate. Restoration of the historic Dan German Hospital Building on the corner of Church Street and Fourth Avenue South will be funded by the sale of brick pavers to be installed in a permanent walkway to the building, formerly a hospital where many Williamson Countians were born.

For their \$50 gift, donors will have custom inscriptions of up to three lines with 13 characters per line on their pavers. All proceeds will go to restoration of the building, which occupies an important corner lot in our downtown neighborhood and was in danger for a while of becoming a parking lot.

Williamson County government owns the Dan German Building but granted a long term lease to the Heritage Foundation to preserve the structure and renovate it for a non-profit, public use.



DOWNTOWN **N**EBHORHOOD **A**SSOCIATION
OF FRANKLIN

Building Blocks was written by Peter Jordan and edited by Bev Roberts

DNA recommends development principles for downtown

Dick Thuma, DNA president, sent the following memorandum to Julian Bibb, Central Franklin Area Plan (CFAP) committee chairman, urging his committee to adopt a set of development principles for the protection of downtown Franklin's core historic area. Bibb read the memorandum at the beginning of the CFAP meeting February 12.

As the organization representing the residents of Franklin's original 15-block downtown area, the Downtown Neighborhood Association salutes the members of the Central Franklin Area Planning Committee and its subcommittees for their dedicated efforts to preserve and enhance the unique character of downtown Franklin. As the draft land use plan states, "Downtown is the symbolic and historic heart of the community."

The subcommittee reports -- especially those of the 15 Block Subcommittee, the Infill Subcommittee, and the Battlefield Subcommittee -- propose some exciting ideas for the future of our neighborhood. We support many of these ideas enthusiastically, but in order to protect our neighborhood, we urge you to apply the following principles to all land use recommendations for the heart of downtown Franklin:

- Expand the historic zoning overlay to cover the entire 15-block original downtown area and all properties across the street from and/or adjacent to this area. This overlay should apply to all redevelopment and renovation activity in this expanded area.
- Seek open space and passive recreation opportunities in and near downtown in addition to residential and commercial development.
- Expand Streetscape improvements throughout the downtown area, with priority given to those blocks in and near current public constructions.

- Aggressively pursue a definitive plan for underground utilities throughout our historic downtown.
- Carefully review any plan for redevelopment, renovation, or land-use changes for its impact on the quality of life of residential life in historic downtown Franklin. Parking is an especially important consideration.
- As part of this plan or as a separate planning and visioning process, develop a long-range plan for governmental facilities downtown, especially for City Hall but also including other city functions and properties. We strongly encourage the City to work with Williamson County to develop a cooperative vision for public property downtown, including the Five Points property, the Church Street property between First and Second Avenues, and the Courthouse.
- Maintain the delicate balance of residential, office, religious, and commercial uses downtown. Without careful planning, downtown residential areas can be threatened by commercial, office, or church expansion.

The heart of our community has been beating for more than 200 years. Your committee's recommendations will help ensure the continuing vitality of our historic downtown.



DNA president Dick Thuma (left) greets Alderman Ernie Bacon, County Commissioner Bob Barnwell, Alderman Dan Klatt, Alderman Robert Kriebel, Mayor Tom Miller, and First Lady Lydia Miller at the November DNA social. Other elected officials attending included Aldermen Dennis Phillips and Pam Lewis and State Representative Glenn Casada.

Making downtown Franklin even better

The Downtown Franklin Association wants to know what downtown residents think about several proposals for the improvement of downtown, so they've asked DNA members to participate in a survey. Please fill out this DFA survey and mail to DNA or bring it to the spring social at Sandy's on March 21.

DFA Survey

1) What goods/services would you like to have available in Historic Downtown Franklin? _____

2) How would you rate the availability of parking in Historic Downtown Franklin (on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1="no problem" and 10="unbearable")? _____

3) What type(s) of restaurant(s) would like to have in Downtown Franklin? _____

4) Which events have you attended in the last two years?

- Main Street Festival
- Rodeo Parade
- Summer chamber music concerts
- Fiddlin' on the Harpeth
- Pumpkinfest
- Wine Down Main Street
- Christmas parade
- Dickens of a Christmas

5) What would entice you to spend more time in downtown Franklin? (check all that apply):

- Main Street Festival
- More Family events like Dickens of a Christmas and Pumpkinfest.
- More arts and craft events like Main Street Festival
- Additional Parking
- Free Valet parking during peak times
- Trolley service to your neighborhood
- More variety of stores (List types) _____

- More restaurants
- Special evening events with free entertainment, extended store hours.

6) What is the best way for us to let you know about what is going on in Historic Downtown Franklin?

- In the Review Appeal
- In the Tennessean/Williamson A.M.
- Local radio - WAKM
- Nashville radio – please specify station(s)

TV, please specify station(s)

Direct mail or newsletter

Website

Dickens of a Christmas

E-mail Other(describe)_____

7) What is something you wish you could buy in Downtown Franklin that is not currently available? _____

8) What makes you want to shop in Downtown Franklin? _____

9) What makes you NOT want to shop in Downtown Franklin? _____

10) Please mark all the things you would like to see in Downtown Franklin:

- Bike Racks
- Shelters for trolley stops
- Information kiosks on special events
- More public restrooms
- More special events
- More trash containers
- More Benches
- Better maintenance
- More parking
- More shopping
- More restaurants
- Other_____

11) How do you feel about special events, such as Main Street Festival, in Downtown Franklin? _____

Thanks for your help! Please add any more thoughts you have that would improve Historic Downtown Franklin for the downtown residents. You may mail the survey to Downtown Franklin Association, P.O. Box 807, Franklin 37065 or give it to any DNA Board Member.

Why DNA?

The purpose of the Downtown Neighborhood Association is to provide a means by which the citizens of Franklin's original 15-block downtown area "may exercise greater control over the economic, political, environmental and social forces that influence their ways of life; to promote understanding among property owners, residents, government and business interests; to foster neighborhood identity and a sense of community; to cooperate and affiliate in appropriate ways with other local, state and national organizations having compatible goals."

The DNA has a Web site at <http://harpethcommunications.com/DNA-home.htm>. If you have suggestions for material that ought to be on this Web site, email peterjordan@mindspring.com.