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DOWNTOWN PEORIA

NEWSLETTER

May 2021

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Downtown Development Corporation of Peoria (DDC)

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DDC ACTIVITIES

DDC Annual Meeting

Officer and Director Appointments

At the 2021 annual meeting held on May 6th, the DDC board approved the reappointment of board members to new terms and approved the slate of candidates, which includes new board member, **Michael Maloof**, filling a vacant at-large seat.

The board also authorized the reappointment of officers as follows:

Jeff Kolbus, Chairman; **Bob Anderson**, Vice Chairman;

Jon Williams, Treasurer; and **Karen Jensen**, Secretary.

Michael Freilinger remains as President/CEO.

Committee appointments were also approved at the annual meeting.

To view the complete listing of DDC board members and officers,

visit the DDC web site at www.downtownpeoria.us/ddc-board.

DDC Board Member Spotlight



Zach Oyler

We are pleased to introduce to you one of the newest members of the DDC Board, **Zach Oyler**, who was appointed to the board last month. Zach is an At-large City Council member and represents the City of Peoria on our board. He is a Real Estate Broker with REMAX Traders Unlimited, focusing mainly on residential but also commercial sales in the Peoria area. In addition, Zach sits on the Peoria City/County Landfill Committee and is President Elect for the Peoria Historical Society.

When we asked Zach what DDC accomplishments he is most proud of, interested in, and/or affected by, he replied, **“With great excitement, I look forward to being a part of helping to solve the parking needs in the Warehouse District, which will pave the way for continued expansion and also the revitalization of the Main Street corridor.”**

As far as his vision for downtown Peoria, Zach stated, **“A vibrant downtown is key to the success and economic growth of our community. Downtown is the first way we invite people to our community as they cross the Murray Baker bridge; and the success, attractiveness, and safety are key to growing our population and business community. Visionaries have spent the last several decades breathing new life into heritage properties, and it is our responsibility to help ensure those opportunities continue to expand.”** We welcome Zach to the DDC Board as he brings new perspective and insights from his history of serving the City of Peoria not only from a City Council view but also as a trusted real estate broker. His interests in preserving the rich history of downtown Peoria and enabling redevelopment fit nicely with the mission of the DDC.

Warehouse District



Michael Freilinger, President/CEO of the DDC, recently spoke with Nick Vlahos, a reporter for the Peoria Journal Star, regarding a look at the past and future of the Warehouse District.

April represented the 14th anniversary of the city's recognition of the Warehouse District as a potential growth area.

Residences, small businesses and restaurants and bars have begun to populate the historic area located just southwest of Downtown Peoria.

The DDC is instrumental in the planning of more developments. The DDC considers the Warehouse District to be anything south of Kumpf Boulevard and the Bob Michel Bridge, north of MacArthur Highway, east of Jefferson Avenue and west of the Illinois River.

To read the article, **“14 years in the making: A look at the past, future of Peoria’s Warehouse District”** posted on April 13th, visit www.pjstar.com.

Grand Opening: LOFTIE Spaces & Events



The DDC is looking forward to hosting the grand opening of downtown Peoria's very own multi-service AirBnB!

The property, located on Washington Street in the Winkler building, offers 32 upscale short-term residential spaces along with meeting and event rooms, a coffee shop, gift shop, and selfie room.

We are excited to be working with Tia Bailey, the property manager, on the grand opening coming soon!



Grand Opening: 812 Historic Peoria Lofts

We are working with a Chicago developer who is renovating the former Builders Warehouse building on SW Washington Street. They are turning this space into 126 amazing, affordable residential apartments.

We are excited to see this project take shape, incorporating many of the historical features of the building. Watch for information coming soon on the grand opening/ribbon cutting as we welcome yet another historic redevelopment in the beautiful Warehouse District in downtown Peoria.

Contributor Spotlight

Peoria Area Association of REALTORS® (PAAR)



PAAR serves its membership (800+) in developing and promoting essential and unique business programs and services and is committed to providing ethical and professional services that strengthen and inform our members and our community through involvement, education and the protection of private property rights. PAAR has invested in the DDC since the early days. According to Regina Tuttle, PAAR CEO, **“Since we represent a**

large percentage of the residential and commercial real estate agents in the area, we felt it important to step up and contribute to the DDC on their behalf. The Illinois REALTORS® have partnered with us to make this investment possible.” She went on to say, **“The work that the DDC does on behalf of our community has quietly made the Peoria Area a better place to live, work, and play.**

The quality of life has thus improved and has made one of a real estate agent's jobs easier. being an advocate for our community. We are proud of Peoria, especially of our downtown, which continues to grow and increase the places to live, work, play, and dine! We are thrilled that the DDC is bringing new life to the Downtown area and making it an inviting place to visit and socialize with family and friends!"

As far as new development and businesses in the Warehouse District, Regina says they are very excited to see all of the residential growth expected for this year. **"The 138% increase in downtown units over the past 6 years speaks volumes to the potential that Downtown has as a place of living."** When asked about improvements and new business in the downtown, Regina said they would love to see the continuation of locally owned businesses, stating that the DDC has done an exceptional job with promoting and highlighting local in the area, and they want to see more of that in the way of restaurants, venues, bars, and downtown businesses.

PAAR's vision for Downtown Peoria is to become a thriving and safe community for living and growing. Regina states, **"We're off to a great start and can't wait to see more of Downtown's growth in the coming years!"** The DDC is committed to continued growth and would like to thank PAAR and our many contributors that help make that possible through their generous contributions each year.

Visit www.downtownpeoria.us to contribute to the DDC, or contact Michael J. Freiling at michael@downtownpeoria.us or 309-369-6038.

Regional Attraction Plan



The DDC is in discussion with the Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitors Bureau on a talent attraction program and a welcome wagon program for the greater Peoria area, "GP2030." These programs are in the early stage of formation. We are looking forward to collaborating on these essential programs to attract new talent and businesses to the Peoria area.

Property for Sale

724 SW Adams Street, Peoria, IL



Originally built as the Mitchell Hotel, this three-story, 18,000 SF, building was originally built in 1895. It has also been known as the Julian Hotel, Ray Hotel, and Grace Hotel.

This property is available “as is”, for vertical development. Historic Tax Credits would be available for redevelopment of this historic icon. The asking price is \$200,000.

This development opportunity is located in the heart of the historic Warehouse District with many restaurants nearby. Across the street from Dozer Park, home of the Peoria Chiefs, it is conveniently located two blocks from the Peoria Riverfront where you will find shops, restaurants, coffee shops, art galleries along with the Peoria Riverfront Museum, the Spirit of Peoria and much more!

This building features a rich history and many architectural details, such as original exterior/interior brick surfaces, one-over-one wood sash windows on the second and third floors, and central bay windows grouped together under one lintel. The central bay has a parapet with a rectangular inset and concrete scrolled caps. These caps are repeated at the roofline’s corners of the building. On either side of the entrance bay is an original fluted iron pilaster, and above the first floor is a sheet metal cornice with dentils. The building also boasts a cornice of low-relief brick modillion blocks above the third floor; above this row are dentils; above this is a brick soldier course at the roofline.

For more information on this property, contact Michael J. Freilinger at (309) 369-6038 or michael@downtownpeoria.us.

Downtown Resident Spotlight



Mary Jo Papich

We recently had the pleasure of meeting with Mary Jo Papich, a downtown Peoria resident living in the Twin Towers. She has an upscale, contemporary condo that looks out over the beautiful Peoria skyline and proudly claims to be the Twin Towers social coordinator.

Born and raised in South Central Iowa, Mary Jo lived and worked in Peoria for 21 years as a teacher, award-winning band director, and fine arts coordinator, overseeing

all the schools in District 150. Her professional career took her to the Chicago suburbs for several years until she decided that Peoria students deserve a rich fine arts education, too; and that thought led her “home” to Peoria.

Now retired, Mary Jo serves as the President for ArtsPartners of Central Illinois, whose mission is to build awareness and strengthen the arts for the economic and cultural enrichment of Central Illinois. She also enjoys teaching Olli (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) jazz appreciation classes for Bradley University.

Upon returning to Peoria five years ago, Mary Jo knew that she wanted to live in downtown Peoria, and the Becker Building, currently known as the Twin Towers, was appealing to her. She likes being where the action is, and she finds plenty of action downtown with the Civic Center, Dozer Park, Riverfront events, and the many restaurants within walking distance. She had the privilege of participating in the opening events for the Civic Center so she has a special affinity for it. One improvement she would like to see is a marquee on the north side of the Civic Center so that she could look out her window and know what’s coming! She cannot wait for Civic Center events to begin again.

Mary Jo likes the vibrancy of the city center and would like to see even more dining options, especially more waterfront restaurants. She loves the farmers' market on the riverfront, spring through fall, and looks forward to the proposed year-round indoor market. As for downtown conveniences, she says, **“Sous Chef is a great little market that serves downtown residents. A downtown drug store is first on my wish list.”**

When asked about new development downtown, Mary Jo says, **“I am always happy to see businesses start up and sad to see them close, as a few did in 2020 during the pandemic. I am thrilled to see that the DDC exists to help with the redevelopment and promotion of new businesses.”** She feels that more people should be encouraged to live downtown, knowing that the DDC is actively working to provide more for downtown residents, workers, and visitors. As for her vision for downtown Peoria, Mary Jo says, **“I am looking forward to the city becoming vibrant once again with riverfront festivals, a variety of arts and entertainment activities, and new residential living spaces on the horizon.”** Follow Mary Jo downtown **“where the action is”!**

Mary Jo Papich was featured in Peoria Magazines December 2020 “Women of Influence” issue. To read how she has empowered generations of youth to pursue the arts with passion throughout her extraordinary career and her worldwide influence on arts education, visit www.peoriamagazines.com.

New Development

InterPlay Park



Entrepreneur and philanthropist Kim Blickenstaff and his KDB Group team have unveiled his proposal for an elevated multi faceted park over Interstate 74 through Downtown Peoria. The park would be suspended over 4.5 blocks of Interstate 74 – between Adams Street and Perry Avenue. According to the press release, the park could be a cultural hub and a contemplative retreat.

Visit www.kdbprojects.online/interplay for more information.

Historical Spotlight

Dozer Park



Photo courtesy of Chris Khoury Productions

Dozer Park, originally O'Brien Field and formerly Chiefs Stadium, is a baseball field located in downtown Peoria, Illinois, at 730 SW Jefferson St. It is the home of the Peoria Chiefs, the High-A Central affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals; the Chiefs previously played at Meinen Field. The college baseball team of Bradley University also uses the field.

Official groundbreaking ceremonies for the \$23 million multi-purpose stadium took place on August 16, 2001. The stadium opened on May 24, 2002 as O'Brien Field, with a game between the Chiefs and the Kane County Cougars. O'Brien Auto Team held the original naming rights to the facility. In 2011, the stadium hosted the IHSA Class 1A and 2A baseball state finals. This was the first year the games were played at the facility. On May 10, 2013, Caterpillar and the Chiefs announced that the stadium would be renamed "Dozer Park", a reference to Caterpillar bulldozers. (wikipedia.org)

It's been 610 days since the Peoria Chiefs last took the field against the Clinton Lumberkings. Over a year and a half later, the Chiefs will return to the diamond as they open the season with a six-game road trip at Cedar Rapids.

Downtown Activities

Peoria Area Restaurant Week

What is Restaurant Week?



It is an event hosted by the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (PACVB) that runs May 10-16, 2021. Participating restaurants will craft a prix fixe menu based on the following price-points: \$15 for a Lunch Meal, \$30 for a Dinner Meal. A prix fixe menu is a sampling of pre-existing items that create a complete meal. The restaurants are asked to

provide a Repeat Business Incentive (RBI) for customers ordering from the prix fixe menu. These benefits encourage guests to return after Restaurant Week ends. For more information visit www.peoria.org/restaurant-week.

Visit Downtown Peoria!

The DDC web site is a valuable resource for development information in Downtown Peoria. We also collaborate with Peoria Riverfront Association to keep an updated pulse on downtown activities. If you are looking for ideas for things to do, be sure to visit www.downtownpeoria.us/play! Peoria Riverfront Market OPENS MAY 22, 8 am - noon along Peoria's beautiful RiverFront, 200 block of Water Street. Vendors old and new are signing up so look for your favorites! Follow the market on their Facebook page.

Recognition

City of Peoria Leadership

As Mayor Jim Ardis ends his 22-year run in public office, the DDC thanks him for his leadership and congratulates Rita Ali, newly elected Mayor of Peoria. We thank Denise Moore and Jim Montelongo for their council representation and congratulate new councilmembers Denise Jackson (1st District), Andre Allen (4th District) and all returning council members. We look forward to working with all City Council members to further the development of Peoria. Visit www.peoriagov.org for complete listing.

