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Facelift sought in downtown Mantua

Don Jovich
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By Don Jovich

Record-Courier staff writer

MANTUA -- The newly-formed Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee has named E. G. & G., Inc. as the lead consultant to assist with planning public improvements in the village.

Committee vice president Michelle Barnauskas said the selection of E. G. & G., Inc. followed many months of effort by individuals, community groups and government entities in and around the village.

E.G. & G.'s goal in community revitalization is to recreate prime real estate value in worn-out areas by enhancing the appearance of public areas.

The Akron-based firm specializes in planning, landscape architecture and civil engineering.

Committee president Edie Benner said in addition to public-input sessions sponsored by the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce and Mantua Village Planning Commission, civic-minded individuals who were most interested in pursuing revitalization eventually formed a separate entity to continue the work they had begun -- the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee.

Represented on the committee are members of Rotary Club of Mantua, Mantua Historical Society, Mantua Village Council, the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce, business owners, property owners and residents.

"(We) all share a common goal -- improving the appearance and infrastructure of downtown Mantua to make it a better place to live, work and play," Barnauskas said.

She said many residents moved to the Mantua area from neighboring towns and suburbs to get away from noise, pollution and sprawling development.

"Residents of the area say they like the rural charm and small town character of Mantua," Barnauskas said.

Following the guidelines of a 2001 S.R. 44 corridor study for the Mantua-Shalersville area, Barnauskas said the committee hopes to create a climate conducive for business within the village as one step in steering development away from rural areas and into a commercial corridor.

"With gas and food prices leaving consumers with little disposable income, the area's small businesses especially need our support," she said.

For Immediate Release

June 22, 2007

For additional information, contact:
Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee President
Edie Benner at 330.274.2747

Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee Selects E. G. & G., Inc. for Downtown Improvement Plan

The newly formed Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee recently named E. G. & G., Inc., – a planning, landscape architecture, and civil engineering firm out of Akron – as lead consultant to assist with planning public improvements within the Village of Mantua.

The selection of E. G. & G., Inc. followed many months of effort by individuals, community groups, and government entities in and around the Village of Mantua.

In addition to public-input sessions sponsored by the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce and Mantua Village Planning Commission, civic-minded individuals who were most interested in pursuing revitalization conducted research, visited other communities, met with area non-profit organizations, interviewed consulting firms, and eventually formed a separate entity to continue the work they had begun: the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee.

Represented on the Committee are members of Rotary Club of Mantua, Mantua Historical Society, Mantua Village Council, the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce, business owners, property owners, and residents.

All share a common goal – improving the appearance and infrastructure of downtown Mantua to make it a better place to live, work, and play.

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Residents of the area say they like the rural charm and small town character of Mantua. Many moved to the Mantua area from neighboring towns and suburbs to get away from noise, pollution, and sprawling development.

Following the guidelines of a 2001 State Route 44 Corridor Study for the Mantua-Shalersville area, the Ohio Main Street Program, the Smart Growth Network, and state and national Historical societies, the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee hopes to create a climate conducive for business within the Village of Mantua as one step in steering development away from rural areas and into a commercial corridor.

Community members and business owners have already contributed seed-money toward the revitalization project. This summer E. G. & G., Inc. will conduct background research and the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee will invite members of the community to another public-input session to form a collective vision of the future, so downtown Mantua will truly be a reflection of the entire community.

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E. G. & G., Inc. was founded in 1981 and is based in Akron, Ohio. The multi-disciplinary firm specializes in comprehensive downtown and neighborhood improvement programs with a staff of urban planners, landscape architects, and engineers. The firm's goal in community revitalization is to "Recreate Prime Real Estate Value" in a worn-out area. Visit www.EGGco.com or call 330-379-2790 for more information on E. G. & G., Inc.

The Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee was incorporated in the state of Ohio in April of 2007 as a non-profit corporation. It is managed by a volunteer slate of officers with a 12-member volunteer board of directors overseeing activities. For more information, visit www.MantuaShalersvilleChamber.com and click on Downtown Revitalization on the right side.

Fact Sheets



Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee Mission Statement

The mission of the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee is to empower the people, government, organizations, and business and property owners to develop and implement a consensus-based plan to enhance the appearance of downtown Mantua. This plan's intent is to bring shoppers, pedestrian traffic, and residents downtown to enjoy our historic district, bustling with eateries, professional offices, niche shops, and downtown living spaces, which support our river and planned growth to preserve our rural character.

Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee Board of Directors

Edie Knowlton Benner, President
Michelle Barnauskas, Vice President
Ellie Stamm, Treasurer
Becky Newell, Secretary
Melanie Miraclefox, Co-Secretary
Jim Rogers, Liaison to Village Council
Joan Sweet, Liaison to Chamber of Commerce
Eric Hummel
Jim Oster
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Monetary and In-Kind Donors

The Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee thanks these generous supporters for their inaugural donations:

Stamm Contracting
B&H Rentals
Village Tavern
TL Express
Joan Sweet
David Benjamin
Business Image Solutions
Elk Creek Trading Co. LLC
Middlefield Banking Company

Revitalization Effort Milestones

- ♦ Fall, 2005: The Mantua Village Planning & Zoning Commission began working with the Portage County Regional Planning Commission on a Comprehensive Growth Plan.
- ♦ March, 2006: Mantua Village and Portage County Planning Commissions joined the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce for a community-input session attended by over 100 people.
- ♦ May, 2006: The Chamber joined the Main Street Network to benefit from its resources and learn from other communities that undertook revitalization and economic development initiatives.
- ♦ May, 2006: The Ohio Department of Development designated the Village of Mantua as a Community Reinvestment Area.
- ♦ September, 2006: Another community meeting allowed the public to learn about possible solutions to problems they identified in March.
- ♦ November, 2006: A revitalization steering committee was formed to conduct in-depth research and determine future direction.
- ♦ February, 2007: Mantua Village passed resolution of support and pledges financial support to cover 1/3 of revitalization planning costs.
- ♦ March, 2007: Steering committee interviewed consulting firms.
- ♦ April, 2007: Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation was incorporated in the state of Ohio.
- ♦ May, 2007: E. G. & G., Inc. was selected as consultant for streetscape project.
- ♦ June, 2007: Revitalization Committee members began full-scale fundraising for streetscape plan.

Past Projects

E. G. & G., Inc. has completed projects in these Ohio communities:

Kent
Ravenna
University of Akron
Wadsworth
Medina
Canal Fulton
Wooster
Orrville
East Liverpool
Lisbon
Seville
Salem
Elyria
Oberlin
Port Clinton
Bowling Green

For a complete list of E. G. & G., Inc. projects, including case studies, examples, and awards, visit www.eggco.com.