

RHM board posts set

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MARTINSVILLE

With a full board elected, Rediscover Historic Martinsville can now set about the task of finding grants to revitalize downtown Martinsville, according to the chairman of its organizing committee.

Elected as new members to the city's Main Street board were Jackie Blackwell, Eric Bowlen, Art Brill, Joanne Stuttgen and Kenny Hale. They join John Badger, promotions chairman, Karen Melaniphy, design chairwoman; Ron Stanhouse, economic restructuring chairman, DeI Chafey, organizing committee chairman.

The establishment of the full board, Chafey said, will enable the group to move ahead with its mission.

"Having the board means we're organized and that's what we needed to start looking at grants," Chafey said.

RHM wants to take a look at "downtown and hire people to do a streets, the way it looks now as opposed to an artist's concept of what it could look like," Chafey said.

RHM also want to have a structural engineers look at the buildings on the Public Square.

"Some buildings have problems and are crumbling a bit and need to be shored up," Chafey said.

State officials said in November that Martinsville would officially become a part of the Indiana Main Street program in December. The state Office of Community and Rural Affairs gives extra points to grant applications from communities with Main Street programs.

An application was prepared and submitted by Stuttgen, a historic preservation specialist and city plan commission member, on behalf of residents and business owners seeking to enliven downtown Martinsville.

The Indiana Main Street program has four approaches: design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring, according to the state. The four committee chairmanships reflect those approaches.

Administered by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, the Indiana Main Street program was established to provide economic revitalization and professional assistance to participating communities, according to the state Web site.

Indiana Main Street encourages the revitalization and restoration of downtown areas in Indiana cities and towns. As the traditional heart and hub of government, commerce, justice and social interaction, the downtown business district portrays a city's overall image, its Web site states.

RHM calendar

Among the activities tentatively scheduled for downtown Martinsville by Rediscover Historic Martinsville include:

May 9 — Picking Petals for Prizes, Shriners fish fry, craft vendors

June 6 — Summer Fest, Lions fish fry, craft vendors, sidewalk sales

July 4 — Car show, First Baptist fish fry, pie auction, Scott Manley disc jockey, crafts

Aug. 15 — Concert on the square, free to the public

Sept. 19 — Apple Fest Street dance, starts at 4 p.m. on the Square, featuring swing/ballroom and hip hop music

Oct. 31 — Halloween on the Square pumpkin carving contest, apple dunking, costume contest, trick a trunk

Nov 14 — Holiday open house

Dec. 5 and 12 — Country Christmas. Santa House pictures with Santa and possibly other activities weather permitting

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