

Flowerpots, trash receptacles aimed at sprucing up, keeping city's downtown clean

By **JIM DINO**

jimdino@standardspeaker.com

Downtown Hazleton is now adorned by new flowers and trash receptacles.

The Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce's Downtown Committee has succeeded in obtaining flowers through the Greater Hazleton Civic Partnership and Hazleton Shade Tree Commission's joint effort in the annual "Paint the Town Red, White and Blue" campaign.

Ellie Whittaker, chairman of the "Red, White and Blue" committee, told Partnership members 26 pots and flowers to fill them were purchased with a portion of a city grant, and were placed in strategic areas of the downtown, along Broad Street and along Wyoming Street.

Chamber President Donna Palermo also said over 50 new trash receptacles – green and white in color, with the words "Welcome to Greater Hazleton" printed on them, to match banners the downtown committee has commissioned – have been placed along Broad and Wyoming streets.

"Hopefully, they will rid the downtown of at least some of the trash," Palermo said.

But at least two of the new receptacles have been damaged, one committee member reported.

Palermo said the receptacles will be emptied on a weekly basis by the city's garbage hauler, as part of the hauler's contract with the city.

Meanwhile, new brochures of downtown Hazleton are being drafted.

Susan Zukovich, an intern with the city's Economic Development office, said she has completed a survey of downtown businesses that will be listed in the brochure.

"The survey not only was of first-floor (street level) businesses, but also second-floor businesses (offices)," Zukovich told the committee.



CAROLINE CIOTOLA/Standard-Speaker

This is one of several flowerpots that now adorn downtown Hazleton. The Greater Hazleton Civic Partnership's "Paint the Town Red, White and Blue" committee, in cooperation with the city's Shade Tree Commission, purchased the large pots and flowers with a city grant. The pots can be seen on Broad Street and along Wyoming Street.

Zukovich is working with Precision Design, which has a schematic of downtown, to come up with a map that will mark the locations of the businesses.

So the new brochures will not only tell where everyone and everything is, but will also advertise the downtown to the rest of the world.

Commercial establishments, as well as professional offices, in the area bounded by Cedar, Locust, Chestnut and Holly streets, will be included in the new publication.

Lena Kotansky, the city's economic development officer, is finalizing paperwork to fund printing 2,500 of the brochures.

The brochure will be included in information packets the Chamber gives out to

new residents or tourists.

Finally, the committee has drafted a letter to downtown merchants to discourage them from parking at parking meters.

The letter, signed by committee chairman Bill Spear, said employees using parking meters "does deter customers from visiting not only your place of business, but your neighbor's as well."

So the committee is asking merchants to either park in the downtown's municipal lots, or the parking garage to free up the meter spaces.

Spear also said in the letter the committee has learned meters are broken. Anyone who knows of a broken meter can tell the committee, and the committee will pass the message on to the city so they can be repaired.