



Norm Pernick, Downtown Visions Board Chair, and Managing Member of the Wilmington office of law firm Cole Schotz and Martin Hageman, Executive Director, Downtown Visions

A Vision of the Downtown Business District

Walking down Market Street, Norm Pernick is reflective: “You know, when I take the time to walk here, I realize how much this landscape has changed.” He’s talking about the ongoing residential, entertainment, dining and retail growth on Wilmington’s Market Street and downtown business district. He knows this from experience walking the downtown; his family owned and operated H. Feinberg Furniture Co., a Wilmington icon, founded in 1892.

Pernick heads up the Board of Downtown Visions, the management company for the Business Improvement District, known as “the BID” by its members. The downtown BID covers roughly 70 blocks and 730 properties. Its mission is to help to create, manage and promote a quality environment for people who live, work and visit downtown Wilmington.

“We’re working to improve the pedestrian experience,” says Marty Hageman, director of Downtown Visions, which was founded in 1994. And that they have; at the core of Hageman’s first accomplishments in the downtown is the clean and safe initiative. You’ve likely seen the staff of Downtown Visions dressed in easily identifiable yellow jackets or shirts.

Downtown Visions also keeps an eye on downtown happenings via 25 cameras monitored 17 hours a day, seven days a week. Overseen by retired police officers, the system feeds information in real time directly to

the police department. “We’re the eyes and ears for the City of Wilmington Police Department,” Hageman says.

But that’s not all that Downtown Visions does to fulfill their mission. Here are a few recent initiatives:

- Economic restructuring and retail recruitment and retention program
- Façade improvement program for storefronts within the BID
- Deployment of the “Wilmo Wagon,” a city transportation system to conveniently transport people between downtown neighborhoods
- Event support; staging infrastructure and foot patrol for guests attending live events in the BID

Minster Jewelers business owner Will Minster, a self-described “champion” of creating a thriving downtown, says: “We are in lock-step with the business community’s needs because we are literally ‘feet on the street.’ That’s the key to our success.”

**For more information
about Downtown Visions:
(302) 425-5370
www.downtownvisions.org**

