

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT

JULY 12, 2017

6PM

AXIS901

901 MAIN STREET, MANCHESTER, CT 06040

MEMBERS PRESENT: Donald DuBaldo, Chair  
Stephen Carter, Vice Chair  
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary  
William Bayer  
Rebecca Gentile  
Bob Sulick  
Winfried Quast

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS  
PRESENT: Gary Anderson, Director Planning and Development

ALSO PRESENT: Representatives of Art Fud:  
Chris Huestis, Julie Kristoff, Jordan Smith  
Lynn Sottile, Schultz Design

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Tunila, Esq.

EX OFFICIO ABSENT: April DiFalco, President, GMCC

STAFF ABSENT: None.

#### **Call to Order**

Mr. D. DuBaldo called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

#### **Roll Call**

Mr. D. DuBaldo confirmed those present and absent. Mr. Sulick arrived at 6:01PM and Ms. Gentile arrived at 6:10PM.

#### **Minutes**

June 7, 2017 – Mr. Bayer moved approval of the Minutes of June 7, 2017. Mr. Carter seconded the motion. Under discussion Mr. Quast requested a correction to the spelling of his name. All present voted in favor. (5-0-0)

#### **Public Comment**

No report.

## **Outside Events Requests**

**Art FUD Event on Sept.16, 2017 in Purnell Place Lot** – The order of business was adjusted to move this agenda item to the beginning of the agenda. Representatives of Art Fud were invited to present their special event request for a music and arts festival on Sept. 16 from 2PM to 8PM in the Purnell Place Parking Lot. They represent a new nonprofit that's mission is to use art to build community. The event they are proposing is supported by a Town of Manchester grant. They are continuing the arts events begun by Silk City Fest. An event application was distributed to the commission. The beer tent will feature beer by Labrynth. This will be a kid friendly event intended to promote the Downtown. There will be live music, a live feed radio station presence, beer tasting, food trucks and artisan vendors. It will be free.

Commissioners posed the following questions:

- Is the power in the Purnell Lot adequate for their needs? Mr. D. DuBaldo encouraged them to confirm with the Town.
- Mr. Sulack inquired if they will hire police officers? They have budgeted for hiring the necessary police.
- They are amenable to moving the food truck location if it is an issue with emergency vehicle access.
- Beer will be sold to benefit their not for profit.

The commission agreed on the following action:

- Ms. Parseliti will send a letter to abutting businesses advising them about the proposed event and requesting feedback if they see a problem.
- The commission will sign-off on the event provided that there are no issues raised by neighboring businesses.
- The Art Fud representatives will check on their power needs and let us know.

Mr. Bayer moved provisional approval of the Music and Arts Festival as presented subject to no major objections from neighbors. Ms. Gentile seconded the motion. All voted in favor (7-0-0)

## **Old Business**

**Strategic Planning Follow-up Planning Meeting Update** – Mr. Anderson reported that we need more RSVP follow-up. As of now there are 14 positive responses. The Planning Dept. is developing the format and set-up. They plan to have tables/stations that people can self-select to visit. Each will feature a different aspect of the strategic planning process, People can learn about recommendations from the February Workshop and offer their own recommendations. Some of the ideas for tables include: Downtown Vision Statement; Visual Engagement/Physical Design; Next Steps/What Kinds of Businesses Do We Need.

Tammy Gerhard is coordinating the food and refreshments.

The intent of the gathering is to spread the word and invite others to help move the Downtown forward.

## **New Business**

**Action on New Maintenance and Landscape Contract** – Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that the current maintenance and landscape contractor, The Yard Group, informed us they were going out of business effective June 29. He collaborated with Ms. Parseliti to work through this situation. We were advised that we are required to either go out for a new contract bid or offer the contract to the next low bidder. Going out to bid would take more time than we could afford given this is the middle of the summer season. We offered the contract to CDM Landscape, the second lowest bidder, who declined the contract terms we presented and declined to perform time and materials work.

We moved to offer the contract to Mountain View Landscapes, the third lowest bidder. They are more expensive but are prepared to accept the contract terms we offered and they were agreeable to performing interim time and materials work until the commission met to act on the situation. A copy of the terms offer to Mountain View in a letter dated July 7, 2017 was provided to the commission.

Mr. Sulick moved to give the contract to Mountain View per the terms outlined in the letter. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion. All voted in favor (7-0-0).

**Consideration of Office Space at Axis901-** Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that the commission had discussions over the past year regarding upgrading our current office or moving to a new office. The Town offered the SSD the opportunity to rent a front office at Axis901 at a rental cost of \$800/month. This amount is all inclusive of phone, wifi, electric, heat and ac. Ms. Parseliti provided a spreadsheet comparison of the difference between the rental cost cost of our current office (\$300/month plus electricity, and cable) and the cost of the proposed office at Axis901. There is a difference of \$244/month.

Mr. D. DuBaldo asked if the Town would be willing to split the difference. Mr. Anderson indicated that this is not possible as the Town's priority in renting these spaces is to make money.

Mr. Sulick noted that the Axis office looks more professional and provides the opportunity to interact with others. Mr. D. DuBaldo asked that the Town consider a \$100 to \$150 discount per month on the rent to bring the rent in at \$700/month.

Mr. Carter suggested we look at the less expensive offices on the first floor of MCC on Main. The commission took a quick look at the office in Axis and the office options at MCC on Main.

Commissioners were asked to give their opinion.

- Mr. Carter did not want to vote tonight. He expressed a preliminary preference for the MCC on Main offices.
- Mr. Quast felt that the upstairs office is more integrated and not as isolated.
- Ms. Gentile expressed a preference for the Axis office.
- Mr. Sulick expressed a preference for the upstairs office.
- Mr. N. DuBaldo asked if we have enough space in the upstairs office.

The commission agreed to table the decision rather to move into new office space. A Special Commission Meeting will be scheduled for Tues. July 25 at 8AM in Mr. D. DuBaldo's office at 16 Harrison St. to review the current office options.

**Meeting RE Downtown Road Race Promotion** – Mr. N. DuBaldo, Mr. Quast, Ms. Sottile and Ms. Parseliti were invited to a luncheon meeting with members of the Manchester Road Race Committee to discuss the possibility of collaboration between the Manchester Road Race and the Downtown on a Downtown promotion on Nov. 18, 2017, the day of the Little Manchester Road Race. The Little Manchester Road Race takes place at Charter Oak Park and attracts 1,000 kids and 1,500 adults. Other events on that day include a Sports Expo at Bennet Academy and a Silk City Striders Know Your Pace Race.

The Road Race representatives expressed the initial goals of the collaborative promotion as:

- 1) Increasing business for Downtown businesses.
- 2) Increasing positive exposure for the Downtown to event attendees.

The Road Race Committee is willing to participate in the planning of the promotion and provide some funding.

The commissioners express support for the concept and referred it to the SSD Marketing Committee.

## **Officers and Committee Reports**

### **Report of Officers**

**Donald DuBaldo, Chair** – Mr. D. DuBaldo deferred his report to the Downtown Economic Development agenda item.

**Stephen Carter, Vice Chair** – Mr. Carter deferred his report to the Finance Committee agenda item.

**Mr. Nick DuBaldo, Secretary** – Mr. N. DuBaldo deferred his report to the Marketing Committee agenda ite.

### **Finance Committee, Steve Carter/Rebecca Gentile**

**Budget Report** – Mr. Carter reviewed the most recent budget report. He noted an approximately \$160,000 surplus. The preliminary estimates are good. He hopes to have a final budget report for FY 16-17 for the August commission meeting.

**Marketing Committee, Nick DuBaldo** – Mr. N. DuBaldo asked the following to report:

**Downtown Commercial Airing** – Mr. Quast reported that 191 commercials produced by the Downtown District aired in June and 175 in July. They ran across many time slots on a variety of channels. Facebook logged 2,247 views. He suggested spending \$100 over seven days to boost the viewings on Facebook. Mr. D. DuBaldo referred that option to the Marketing Committee noting that we have money in that budget line item. Mr. Quast offered to survey store owners to see if they report any increase in business as a result of the commercials. His suggestion to produce a second commercial was encouraged and referred to the Marketing Committee.

**Cruisin' on Main Report**, Tana Parseliti – Ms. Parseliti reported that event planning is moving along nicely. Sponsorship sales are brisk and expected to set a new record.

**Imagine Main Street** – Ms. Parseliti reported that the July Party in the Park was well received and attended.

### **Parking & Maintenance**

**Monthly Parking Violations Report** - Ms. Parseliti provide the most recent Parking Violations and Waiver statistics, noting that violations decreased over May but waiver requests increased.

### **Downtown Economic Development Committee, Don DuBaldo**

**Discussion of SSD Funding of Preliminary Design Service Program** – Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that after meetings, research and discussion the committee has identified a direction. The committee proposes a three part program to encourage Downtown development.

- 1) Help potential businesses establish what it will take to get them into their desired space i.e code review.
- 2) Develop gap financing resources.
- 3) Secure abatement and tax credit programs

Mr. Carter suggested the commission consider funding an SSD Grant Program for Code Review that businesses could apply for. He suggested that the commissioners think about funding this program by taking \$40K from our surplus. The SSD would hire the architect and own the code analysis.

Mr. D. DuBaldo said it is important that the SSD participate in funding if we are going to approach the Town for monies for abatement and tax credit programs. He feels this would be an investment in the Downtown.

### **Other Reports**

**President, GMCC, April DiFalco** – Absent.

**Gary Anderson, Director of Planning and Development** – Mr. Anderson reported that the Wayfinding sign bids came in much higher than anticipated. The Town will rebid the program next week. They are looking at separating the manufacture of the signs from the install. The parking lot hours signs are an alternate that the Town sign shop may be able to fabricate.

### **Administration**

**Manager's Report**- Report attached.

**Public Comment** – Ms. Sottile questioned rather landlords would have any financial obligation for the code compliance analysis grant program? Mr. D. DuBaldo responded that the SSD role is to spur development. She asked rather taxes would go up? Mr. D. DuBaldo answered, yes. However, part of what the Downtown Economic Development Committee is working on is a tax deferral agreement as a part of the program.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Gentile moved to adjourn. Mr. Quast seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried (7-0-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:12PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager  
Recorder

**Manager's Report  
Downtown Manchester Special Services District  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
July 12, 2017**

**ADMINISTRATION**

**CONSTITUENT CONCERNS/REQUESTS**

Complaint by Ken Burkamp that Parking Lot Improvement Project plantings were very sparse at the north end of the Purnell Lot. Project plans also represented plants on Purnell Place that are currently nonexistent. Mr. Burkamp asked the SSD to add planters to Purnell Place and some plantings to the north end of the Purnell Lot.

**PARKING**

**Parking Committee**

No report.

**St. James Lease**

Month to Month Lease of St. James Parking Lot continues.

**Parking Tickets**

**Issued:**

June - 115

**Waivers Requested by Parking Committee:**

June - 66

**Waivers Denied by Parking Committee:**

June - 4

**Waiver requests from Silk City Coffee:**

June - 34

**Wayfinding Sign Program**

Bids received were above anticipated costs. The bid specs will be reworked and a new bid will be issued. This is expected to push back install time until the Fall.

**MAINTENANCE & BEAUTIFICATION**

The Downtown District office received a letter from The Yard Group on June 29 giving notice that they would be going out of business effective June 30, 2017. The original contract bidders were offered the opportunity to take over the remaining 5 months of the contract. The second low bidder, CDM Landscape, was offered the opportunity to take over the contract but we were unable to agree on terms. The third low bidder, Mountain View Landscapes, was willing to take over the contract and agreed with the terms we presented. They have been performing interim landscape and maintenance services for the past two days. We reviewed the process and payment schedule with the Director of Purchasing and the Town Attorney. A proposed contract with Mountain View will be presented for action at tonight's commission meeting.

**Parking Lot Improvement Project**

Work has been completed.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Business Openings and Closings**

#### **Closings**

Lin's Garden  
Landmark Cafe

#### **Openings**

Eleganza Moda  
Teriyaki Box

## **MARKETING**

### **Special Events**

#### **Beller's Summer Concerts**

July 20, 27; Aug. 3, 10.

#### **2017 Imagine Main Street Events**

August 3 – Join-Up, A Celebration of Volunteerism

Sept. 7 – Steam-punk – Rollin!

#### **Cruisin' on Main - August 6**

Letters to Downtown business and property owners advising them of event details and advertising opportunities are being distributed.

Letters to Downtown churches advising them of road closing during Cruisin' are going out this week.

I will write an article for the Cruisin' Program about the Downtown.

#### **Outside Event Requests**

One - Art Fud event.

#### **Advertising & Promotions**

**Downtown Food & Beverage Guide** - Updating of the Downtown Food & Beverage Guide is in progress.

**Downtown Commercial** - The Downtown commercial produced by Quast Media began running in June with 191 spots and will continue in July with 175 spots.

**Downtown Passport** - Members of the Strategic Planning Committee suggested that the SSD put together a promotional piece – a Downtown Passport – to stimulate patronage of Downtown restaurants. An email has been sent to all Downtown restaurants inviting their participation.

**Road Race Saturday Promotion on Nov. 18** – I attended a luncheon hosted by the Road Race Committee to explore how the Downtown District could benefit from and add to the Little Manchester Road Race on Saturday, Nov. 18. Other Downtown Marketing Committee Members: Lynn Sottile, Nick DuBaldo and Vinni Quast, were also in attendance.

## **OTHER**

None.

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