

MINUTES

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT**

MARCH 1, 2017

6PM

AXIS901

901 MAIN STREET, MANCHESTER, CT 06040

MEMBERS PRESENT: Donald DuBaldo, Chair
William Bayer
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
Rebecca Gentile
Bob Sulick – arrived at 6:20PM
John Tunila, Esq.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Lynn Sottile

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stephen Carter, Vice Chair

EX OFFICIO ABSENT: April DiFalco, President, GMCC

STAFF ABSENT: None.

Call to Order

Mr. D. DuBaldo called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

Roll Call

Mr. D. DuBaldo confirmed those present and absent.

Minutes

Mr. Bayer moved to accept the minutes of
-February 1, 2017

Ms. Gentile seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried (5-0-0).

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

- February Strategic Planning Workshop, Gary Anderson
Mr. Anderson expressed pleasure in the workshop. There was good discussion. The right people were in the room. Five members of the board of directors attended for all or part of the workshop. Members of the Economic Development Commission and a representative of Manchester Memorial Hospital were in attendance. Live, Work, Learn, Play (LWLP) did a good job structuring and facilitating discussion. The

visioning discussion of “who do we want Downtown” elicited participant ideas and brought out new ideas from the outside. LWLP will send out a summary.

Some highlights of topics discussed:

- incentives needed to bring buildings to code compliance
- TIF financing
- challenge of Main St. configuration
- consider short range changes ex: create seasonal dining areas in parking spaces along Main St.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that key people were talking about gap financing needed to utilize Main St. to its fullest.

Mr. Anderson encouraged the commission to embrace a short term project that can show immediate results.

LWLP staff said economic development is not what it used to be. Companies look at downtowns and their amenities when they make their location decisions.

Ms. Parseliti noted that LWLP pointed to the importance of social media and regularly scheduled special events.

Mr. Anderson asked how we can encourage small scale, independent special events. Ex: dog walking groups, walking groups.

- Proposed Amendments to Bylaws and Ordinance, John Tunila
Tabled until April 5, 2017 meeting.

New Business

- Acceptance of Downtown Banner Bid – Mr. Tunila moved acceptance of the bid by Downtown Decorations to fabricate and install street pole banners. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor. The motion carried (6-0-0).
- Appropriation of Funds from Fund Balance to Pay for Strategic Planning Consultants – Ms. Parseliti reported that the invoice will not be available until the April commission meeting.
- Request by Sen. Steve Cassano to Meet with DMSSD Board of Commissioners – Ms. Parseliti reported that Sen. Cassano’s office requested an opportunity for the senator to meet with the Downtown District to discuss opportunities and obstacles for the Downtown. In particular, any infrastructure need the Downtown may have. The commissioners asked Ms. Parseliti to undertake the proper notice for a Special Meeting of the commission and arrange for a date/time/location with Sen. Cassano’s office.

Officers and Committee Reports

- Report of Officers
 - Donald DuBaldo, Chair – Mr. D. DuBaldo commented on the Strategic Planning Workshop earlier in the meeting.
 - Stephen Carter, Vice Chair – Absent.
 - Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary – No report.

Marketing Committee, Nick DuBaldo

- Business Spotlight Digital Series – Mr. N. DuBaldo presented a proposal by Quast Media to produce a series of videos that promote Downtown Manchester by telling the stories of successful Downtown businesses. A description of the project is included in a letter of support prepared by Ms. Parseliti to send to targeted businesses. The commission endorsed the project and the letter.
- Request to Provide Financial Support to GMCC Manchester Promotional Commercial Series – The commissioners requested additional information on the commercial series. Ms. Parseliti will request additional information for the April commission meeting.

Parking & Maintenance

- Approval of Increase in Time Limit for Downtown Municipal Parking Lots – Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that Chief Montminy approved our request to increase the parking time limit from 2 hours to 3 hours in Downtown municipal parking lots. The increase can go into effect as soon as parking lot signs can be changed to reflect the extended time limit. Mr. D. DuBaldo asked Ms. Parseliti to get estimates from two sign companies for the necessary vinyl patches for the signs.
- Banner Sales – Ms. Parseliti reported that 25 of 28 potential banner locations have been sold to sponsors.
- Parking Lot and Public Area Maintenance and Landscaping Contract Bid – Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that he and Ms. Parseliti met with Director of Purchasing, Jerry DuPont, to rework this bid as a lump sum bid. The thinking behind the lump sum bid is that if the bid specs are too specific and complicated it may drive up the bid costs. In a lump sum bid we lay out the services to be performed and our expectations and have the bidders respond with a lump sum cost. We will carefully vet the low bid contractor.

Downtown Economic Development Committee

Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that another meeting will be scheduled to identify target buildings for development so that the cost of code compliance for various potential uses can be estimated and addressed.

Outside Events Request

There were no requests presented.

Other Reports

- Director of Planning & Development, Gary Anderson – Mr. Anderson reported that CBDG funds were appropriated for new bus shelters in the Downtown. Bus shelters by Bennet Apartments and Center Park will be replaced. Three new shelters will be added.

Mr. D. DuBaldo suggested lighting the shelters for safety – a Phase Two initiative. Mr. N. DuBaldo suggested using people sensors.

Mr. Anderson further suggested piloting the Strategic Planning Workshop idea to create seasonal dining areas in Main St. Parking stalls. Ex. In front of Lucky Taco.

Mr. D. DuBaldo stated it is important to set standards: look and cleanliness.

Mr. Sulick notes that the Town requires sidewalk dining furnishings be taken in at night.

Mr. Tunila pointed out that food trucks may apply for the spots.

Ms. Parseliti noted that abutting businesses may not like having their customer parking taken-up.

Mr. Tunila suggested poling our restaurants.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that our biggest concern is parking and our biggest goal is bettering the Downtown.

It was agreed that Mr. D. DuBaldo and Mr. Anderson will work together to assess potential areas for this use.

Mr. Anderson further reported efforts to place bike racks at various locations Downtown. Mr. Sulick expressed interest in a bike rack in front of Mulberry Street.

- President, GMCC, April DiFalco – Ms. Parseliti reported that Ms. DiFalco is experiencing difficulty attending commission meetings. She asked if she might have a member of her board assume the Chamber

seat on the commission. It was suggested that Ms. Parseliti request a letter from Ms. DiFalco expressing her difficulty and her suggestion for a Chamber board member replacement.

Administration

- Manager's Report – Report attached.

New Business

- Wayfinding Sign Design – Ms. Sottile showed examples of font and text designs for Downtown Wayfinding signs. There was discussion regarding including use of the term “Historic” in the sign copy. Mr. Bayer felt that the Downtown was not historic. Ms. Parseliti pointed out that the Downtown is a National Register Historic District with many contributing buildings. Ms. Gentile felt that use of the term “Historic” will help to brand us and draw people to our Downtown. No decision was reached.
- Board Vacancy – Mr. Vinne Quast, a property owner and owner of Quast Media, expressed a desire to serve on the District board of commissioners. Mr. D. DuBaldo will meet with him. Other commissioners are invited to participate. Ms. Parseliti will setup a meeting.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

Mr. Tunila moved adjournment. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor.
(6-0-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder

**Manager's Report
Downtown Manchester Special Services District
Board of Commissioners Meeting
March 1, 2017**

ADMINISTRATION

CONSTITUENT CONCERNS/REQUESTS

Tattoo Parlor recently began operating on second floor of Johnson Block property. Request to contact town to see if is properly permitted.

Request to contact property own regarding safety of exterior mounted AC unit.

New business referrals RE Town permitting.

PARKING

Parking Committee

No formal meeting took place in February.

St. James Lease

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

Parking Tickets

Issued:

January-184

February- 145

Waivers Requested by Parking Committee:

January - 84

February - 78

Waivers Denied by Parking Committee:

January- 1

February - 9

Waiver requests from Silk City Coffee declined from 53 in January to 27 in February.

Wayfinding Sign Program

The Wayfinding Sign Committee comprised of Lynn Sottile, Bob Sulick, Tana Parseliti and TOM Planning Dept. staff member, Matt Bordeaux met with consultants KMS over the past several months to develop and select a design for wayfinding signs in the Downtown (parking identification, parking lot identification, pedestrian signs, small scale wayfinding signs and pedestrian directory signs) and sign locations. The committee recommended a sign design that is currently under review. Samples of the designs will be available at the March 1 BOC meeting.

MAINTENANCE & BEAUTIFICATION

Beautification

Banner Program

Low bidder on the Downtown Banner RFQ was Downtown Decorations, our current contractor. 25 of 28 banners have been sold to date. The difference in cost for Year One of the Banner Program, based on 28 banners, is \$2,632.00. Banner installation will be completed by March 31.

Maintenance RFP

I met with Mr. D. DuBaldo and the Town Purchasing Director to review the bid specifications and format for the RFP. Changes to the format of the bid and bid proposal were recommended that removed unit and frequency pricing and instead define expectations. The RFP will be published in the JI the week of March 6.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Openings and Closings

Closings

- Lion Heart Fitness (2 years)
- J.G. Tagliere Upholstery (25 years)
- In Between Convenience (less than 1 year)

Opening

- Maureen O’Connell Therapeutic Massage
- Dirk Heidemann Studio of Ballroom Dancing

MARKETING

Special Events

2017 Imagine Main Street Events

- May 4 – Focus on Youth
- June 1–Pride in Manchester – Strollin’ on Main
- July 6 – Party in the Park
- August 3 – Join-Up, A Celebration of Volunteerism
- Sept. 7 – Steam-punk – Rollin!

Outside Event Requests

Awaiting application from Taste of Manchester.

Advertising & Promotions

Silk City Success Stories – Videos of the stories of successful Downtown businesses produced by Quast Media. Seven businesses have been selected to participate in this project:

- Silk City Antiques & Decor
- Harvest Beads and Silver
- The Grid Games
- CT Valley Coin
- Bray Jewelers
- MCC on Main
- Ruff Cuts

The goal is to show business success that will encourage other businesses to consider locating in Downtown Manchester. Introductory letter attached.

OTHER

None.

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