

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT

OCTOBER 3, 2018

8AM

WORK\_SPACE

901 MAIN STREET, MANCHESTER, CT 06040

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don DuBaldo, Chairman  
John Tunila, Vice Chairman  
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary  
Winfried Quast  
Robert Sulick

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

ALSO PRESENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Bayer  
Rebecca Gentile  
Tammy Gerhard

EX OFFICIO ABSENT: April DiFalco, President, GMCC

STAFF ABSENT: None.

#### Call to Order

Mr. D. DuBaldo called the meeting to order at 8:02 AM.

#### Roll Call

Mr. D. DuBaldo confirmed those present and absent.

#### Minutes

September 5, 2018

September 13, 2018

Mr. Tunila moved to accept the minutes. Mr. Quast seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The minutes of both meetings were approved. (5-0-0).

#### Public Comment

None.

#### New Business

**Discussion of Wall Signs and Outdoor Merchandise Displays, Gary Anderson**

**Outdoor Merchandise Displays** – Mr. Anderson inquired if there was any interest in or concern regarding display of Downtown business merchandise along Downtown sidewalks. He will research the topic.

**Wall Signs** – Mr. Anderson reported that the issue of size of exterior wall signs has recently been raised. There is currently a maximum square footage for all signs. Several Downtown locations have recently expanded their businesses and now have double bay frontage on Main Street. Lucky Taco and Touch by Jeicoby are two examples. They do not feel that the current maximum square footage of signage for an individual business location with two bay frontage is adequate. Mr. Anderson advised the Planning and Zoning Commission that a request for change will be coming before them.

Mr. Tunila asked if this could be dealt with as a variance as opposed to a change.

Ms. Parseliti inquired if Mr. Anderson looked into best practices in other towns? Mr. Anderson indicated that most towns have specific regulations for their Downtowns. In Manchester many of the current signs are grandfathered.

Signage will be a part of the scope of services for the consultants who will work on the Downtown Architectural Guidelines.

Noting that the property at 991-989 Main Street had recently been sold to a law firm, Mr. Sulick expressed concern that the windows fronting Main Street at 991 Main not be closed-off and bricked-up by the new owner. The alleyway between 991 and 981/985 Main is belongs to both properties in different proportions. He hopes that the new building owners will be willing to keep the alleyway open and that the new owners will help to maintain the alleyway.

Mr. D. DuBaldo questioned if we could approach the new law office principals to ask if they would be open to using the first floor street front for some type of retail. Mr. Sulick said he will have a conversation with them.

Mr. Tunila noted that currently retail rental value is not high enough to displace an office use. Ground level retail is not renting at a high enough rate.

#### **Property Sale, 991-989 Main**

Ms. Parseliti reported that the property at 991-989 Main St., formerly the East West Bridal Boutique, has been sold to new owners. Planned use is as a law office.

#### **Old Business**

##### **Roles and Responsibilities Update, Don DuBaldo**

Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that the Roles and Responsibilities Task Group met. The Downtown initiatives being recommended by the group include:

- A Downtown grants and loans incentive program
- A Downtown Capital Improvements Program
- Restructuring of the SSD.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that the Town Board of Directors is aware of the discussions.

The initial strategy being discussed by the Town to introduce the Downtown initiatives is an economic development meeting convened by the Town. This would reinforce the economic development nature of the program.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that the Downtown Economic Development Committee and the Town Economic Development Commission have essentially merged.

Commissioners had some additional questions for Mr. Anderson regarding the building at 942-974 Main (aka the Tong Building). He noted that they are currently under court order to fix the building roof. They were issued a stop work order for work done on the building façade without a permit. Until various building issues have been resolved an occupancy permit will be issued for new space.

## **Officers and Committee Reports**

### **Report of Officers**

- **Donald DuBaldo, Chair** – No report.
- **John Tunila, Vice Chair** – No report.
- **Nick DuBaldo, Secretary** – No report.

### **Finance Committee**

#### **FY 18-19 Monthly Report**

#### **FY 19-20 Budget Preparation**

In Ms. Gentile's absence Ms. Parseliti distributed the FY 18-19 Monthly Report. There were no questions.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted preparation of the FY 19-20 Budget is beginning. A rough draft will be prepared. Commissioners are asked to send in any suggestion. Mr. Sulick volunteered to help with budget preparation. It is likely that two different budgets will be prepared- a budget reflecting the proposed restructured SSD and a budget reflecting no restructuring changes.

### **Marketing Committee**

**Website Redesign Progress Report** – Mr. Quast reported that the committee is close to finishing the website.

#### **Upcoming Events, Tana Parseliti**

**Scarecrow Festival** – Ms. Parseliti reported that scarecrow artists are being recruited and scarecrows will be on display from Oct. 13 thru 27. A People's Choice and Facebook Favorite will be selected.

**Safe Downtown Trick-or-Treat, Oct. 27** – Activities will include Chalk the Walk at Center Memorial Park, a magic show at the Mary Cheney library, Pumpkin Decorating for children, the Safe Trick-or-Treat and group photo.

Ms. Parseliti is conducting outreach to Downtown businesses to distribute candy.

On the topic of the Downtown Tree Lighting on Nov. 29, Mr. D. DuBaldo volunteered to contact the Manchester Fire-Rescue-EMS Dept. to request assistance placing and removing the holiday lights from the St. James Christmas Tree.

### **Parking & Maintenance**

**Monthly Parking Violations Report** – Ms. Parseliti distributed the Fiscal Year to Date and Year to Year Comparison Reports.

Mr. Quast recommended that the SSD look into applying new technology to parking enforcement. Ms. Parseliti will send information from past studies to Mr. Quast for his review.

### **Other Reports**

#### **Director of Planning & Development, Gary Anderson**

**Pop-Up Outdoor Dining Project** - Mr. Anderson reported that the project was very popular. His department received positive emails. Improvements to accommodate outdoor dining are also planned for:: White Porch Brewery, Silk City Coffee and 21 Oak.

#### **Consultant's Report on Pinewood Furniture**

A report funded by the Downtown Mini Grant to assess code compliance issues was completed by Alan Lamson. The report found some market gap. The prospective buyer of the property appears to be a good candidate for the new loan program proposed by the Roles and Responsibilities Task Group. Anderson will send a copy of the report to the commissioners.

**Administration**

**Manager's Report** – Ms. Parseliti reported on the sale of 989-991 Main and the new owners and use. The new owners are Barry, Barall & Spinella, LLC. The planned use is as law offices. They have begun extensive renovations, both inside and outside.

SMs. Parseliti is working with a retail art studio, The Claypen, to locate an approx. 3,000 sf space on Main Street.

Preparations are well underway for the three upcoming Downtown special events: The Downtown Scarecrow Festival, Downtown Safe Trick-or-Treat and Downtown Tree Lighting.

Annual Performance Review of the SSD Special Parking Constables will be conducted over the next two months.

Finally, cornstalks and orange bows are being placed on all Downtown street signs and the large "Picture Pumpkin" will be in place next to the library.

**Public Comment** – None.

**Adjourn**

Mr. Quast moved to adjourn. Mr. Sulick seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried (5-0-0). The meeting adjourned at 9:00AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager  
Recorder