

**Summit Downtown, Inc.**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**December 15, 2021, 8:00AM**  
**Hybrid In-Person and Virtual Meeting**

**Members Present:** Leslie Herman, Nora Radest, Karen Schneider, Bob Conway, Kim Hamilton, Greg Vartan, David Naidu, Claire Toth, Antonietta LaVecchia (zoom), David Bernat (zoom). Staff: Nancy Adams and Amanda Lynn

**Members Absent:** Matthew Strauss, Lauren Decker, Ray Merritt, Michael Rogers.

**Members of Public:** Tony Melchionna

Bob Conway called the meeting to order at 8:10am.

**Approval of Minutes – Bob Conway**

Minutes were presented for approval. The approval of the October minutes were moved by Karen Schneider and seconded by Claire Toth, and unanimously approved.

**Presentation by Summit Public Art on Fountain Art – Estelle Fournier, Vivian Furman.** SPA explained the process of review and interview rounds that the committee went through to choose an artist for the permanent installation at the promenade fountain. They chose Philadelphia artist Ray King who has done installations all over the world and known to have completed all projects on time and on budget showing that he's a seasoned professional. He uses special dichroic glass (invented by NASA) in his installations and typically they are in the half million-dollar range, not the \$85k like the one we're doing at the promenade, so they're very pleased to have him. The sculpture will activate the space with colors blue, magenta, greens and yellows; the glass will be cut into louvers as an homage to Summit he is creating a mountain effect. The louvers will extend out 10 feet and angled so it's catching light in different directions. The existing walls of the fountain will be lined with large pieces of light gray slate and the top step will be covered with bluestone suitable for seating. The piece will be illuminated at night also. The city will be sealing the exterior walls of the fountain and installing lights in the pool area over the winter while the fountain is off. SPA thanks SDI for its contribution of \$20k toward the installation expected to be completed by June of 2022 and they'll do an event around that unveiling. Claire raised concerns about kids and people trying to climb the sculpture or otherwise damage it; SPA responded that it would be very, very sturdy and the artist has no concerns about it as it will be secured to the walls and the fountain and he's used to

Bob thanked David Naidu for his service on the Board and for his service to the city as he concludes his term on Council.

**Financials – Claire Toth**

Claire presented the financials through November. We received the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter payment from the city but that was in early December so is not in the financials yet. Karen moved the financials, David Naidu seconded, unanimously approved. Claire presented the draft budget for 2022. Farmers Mkt Comm voted to increase the fees for 2022 season, giving us \$28k more and some more was budgeted for Family Fun Night, which we'll hopefully do in 2022; more can be spent in cooperation with the city for placemaking if the city closes Maple Street permanently. Budget was moved for approval by David Naidu and seconded by Karen Schneider and approved unanimously.

**Board Elections – Nancy Adams**

Nancy reported that out of 47 ballots submitted, Bob was top vote-getter with 41 votes; Esperanza ran for the same seat and received 7 votes. Property owners Leslie Herman (28 votes) and Tony Melchionna (18 votes) were both elected to the Board. Resident Ray Merritt was reelected with 36 votes and there was a write-in for Eileen Kelly who received 2 votes. Executive Committee elections will be held in January; anyone interested should notify Nancy.

**Board Business & Meeting Dates 2022 – Bob**

Bob reported that next year he would like to eliminate one meeting and hold 10 Board meetings with a combined July/August meeting and a combined November/December meeting. Claire Toth moved the motion and Leslie Herman seconded, Board approved unanimously.

Bob reported that he wants all Board members to sign up for at least one committee next year. The Committees are:

Farmers Market Committee, Design & Beautification, Budget Committee, SDI/DCS (Dept of Community Services of the City) and would like SDI to be represented on the city's Economic Development Committee. David Naidu commented that it makes a lot of sense for SDI to have a representative on that committee and Nancy should send a formal request to the Council President to have a seat on that committee.

## **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

**Events** – Amanda updated the Board the work in preparation for holiday events. The return of the HillTop Elf Scavenger Hunt is going well and the final horse & carriage is Dec 18<sup>th</sup>. We have Santa and Ice Carver this Saturday too and a new element of Santa Photo Booth sponsored by Christie's Realty. Looks like it may be a rainy day on Saturday, unfortunately, so keep an eye on our social media about cancellations. Amanda also reported that she's begun work on Family Fun Night for June and booking acts and entertainment.

**DCS/SDI Updates** – Tony reported sewers are still running well and salt supply is good. Downtown cleanup is happening and will be a little more frequent to compensate for the windy days and extra litter in the tree wells. PSEG will be upgrading powerlines in downtown and notifications will go out; this will likely take place in March. Tony discussed his idea to have a sidewalk machine to put brine on the sidewalks; Nancy clarified that concrete doesn't respond well to salt so magnesium needs to be used, so the brine would have to be made with magnesium rather than salt. He thought maybe SDI could buy such a machine and Aaron would look into it. He reported that the sidewalk café application does not specify the requirement of the restaurant to show proof of power-washing 2x year even though the ordinance was changed. Aaron was going to mention to the clerk and Nora said she would follow up.

**Design Committee Updates** – Claire reported that we had approved a mural for the back wall of Ani Ramen in 2019, but they changed the design and already painted it so Design Committee decided to give Ani 50% of the original approved grant. Nancy reported that we also need the Parklet subcommittee to meet again, Claire will set one up.

**Summit Public Arts** – Leslie Herman reported that Summit was recognized as an Arts City in NJ Digest recently, which was nice. SPA looking to do a fundraiser to get the remaining funds for the fountain art project.

**Common Council Updates** – Greg reported that the vaccine clinic is up and running at the Community Center for boosters too; people who live or work in Summit are eligible. He reported that Council has begun talking about capital budget for 2022 and that may include investment in the downtown if we close Maple. Last night was David Naidu's last meeting and everyone wished him well. David mentioned the city needs advice from SDI on the closure of Maple Street and if it's desired because they've heard from some people that they don't want it closed; Nora mentioned it's from 2 people on social media. Bob suggested getting an expert on public spaces in to educate and opine on the parklets and closure of Maple Street and we have either a public meeting or separate presentation about it. Tony mentioned he's very much opposed to permanent closure of Maple Street and there are a lot of customers and businesses who are opposed. He stated he missed one meeting all year and was livid when he heard that SDI voted to support a year-round closure. He questioned who started talking about this; Nancy read minutes of October meeting pertaining to it and that the vote was unanimous in support. Nora stated that the city was discussing it and it wasn't initiated by SDI. Tony recollected that year's ago the city talked about closing Beechwood and people went nuts; he asked Bob if he'd like Beechwood closed, Bob said he wouldn't mind. Tony said he'd be fine with closing for the summer, but no longer. Nora told Tony that this issue is not decided here at SDI's Board meeting and she welcomes him coming to council meeting to comment there; it is being seriously considered.

Nora reported that Broad Street West redevelopment negotiations are going well and that construction for the new firehouse is underway. Vaccination rates in Summit over all ages (not included under 5) 80% are vaccinated, those 12 & over 96% are vaccinated, which is very good! If you're vaccinated and get sick, you're not getting extremely sick, it's easy to get this new variant and those who aren't vaccinated are the ones getting more sick and ending up in the hospital.

### **Public Input:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07am.

**The next BOT meeting is at 8AM January 26, 2022, in person at City Hall. Masks required.**