

**Summit Downtown, Inc.**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**March 22, 2023, 8:00AM**  
**In-Person/Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:** Karen Schneider on Zoom, Bob Conway, Beth Welsh, Antonietta LaVecchia, Greg Vartan, Mayor Nora Radest, Tony Melchionna, Lauren Decker, Lisa Allen, Claire Toth, Leslie Herman, Ray Merritt. Staff: Nancy Adams and Amanda Lynn

**Members Absent:** Michael Rogers.

**Members of the Public:** Aaron Schragger

Chair Bob Conway called the meeting to order at 8:05am.

**Approval of Minutes – Bob Conway**

February minutes were presented for approval. The approval of the minutes was moved by Ray and seconded by David Bernat and unanimously approved.

**Special Report – Aaron Schragger, City Engineer and Director of Dept of Community Services**

Aaron stated there would be a large construction project taking place downtown this season. PSEG will be replacing gas mains throughout the downtown including Springfield Avenue, Maple Street, the northern portion of Beechwood Road, Woodland Avenue and some on Deforest and Kent Place. Aaron noted the complexity of utility projects, and that PSEG will only provide the amount of days, not an exact time for the work to take place. They are already 4 days behind. He expects the project to take longer and set pavement for the fall. Ultimately the work will switch to nighttime as it gets closer into the downtown. The city system will send any pertinent notifications. They are not moving gas meters to the sidewalk. NJ American Water will be replacing some valves at night during the process. The city will be replacing two traffic lights at Beechwood & Springfield and Maple & Springfield in the fall. A phone number to report needed construction cleanup is available. Nora added the Communications office would be sending updates every Friday during the project. Small discussion about the confusion from PSEG about the project timeline. They will first be replacing the mains and then working with the businesses to swap out service lines. There will also be some sidewalk disruption. 375 Springfield to be developed, the façade of the building will now line up with the other buildings and retail space will be included. Ray brought up the temporary fencing issue for the Summit Farmers Market and SDI's possible wishes to permanently fence the lot. An extended discussion ensued; council was previously not supportive of this idea. A concern was a lack of consistency between the lots. Greg said he was personally coming around to the idea and that a discussion could be initiated with the city again.

**COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

**DCS/SDI Updates – Tony**

Tony stated that he, Nancy, Mike Caputo, Aaron Schragger, Lisa Allen and Ray Merritt meet once a month ahead of the board meeting. Tony reported that the sewers are running okay still. Mondays, Wednesday & Fridays downtown is blown and swept, there is a walking crew that cleans up around town. Discussion about the Edison lights on the trees with a meeting to be held with DPW & the town arborist about their future service. Greg stated the "safety stick" project was on hold regrading some of the legalities of ticketing. Further research is needed to go forward with the project. Painting of curbs and restriping of crosswalks will happen after the construction projects this year. Discussed the possible inclusion of the alleyway behind Bank Street being paved as part of the paving project in the fall.

**Financials – Claire**

Claire stated we had \$218k in the bank at this time which is on track for amounts this time of year. We hold reserves to cover expenses while we wait for city payments. We do not receive any of our assessment until the city budget is approved. The P&L is related to our proposed 2023 budget. The Maple Street work grant has not yet been reimbursed. A note was made about checks that were forged in December and reflect a negative item on the balance sheet. The amount fraudulently stolen has been reimbursed by Regal Bank; the authorities are working on the case, Nancy opened a new operating account and once all checks clear, the old one that was hacked will be closed. The budget was presented last month with a 2% increase and the board requested it to be reworked with only a 1% increase. We reduced the amount we are paying for accounting services; the services needed do not require the scope originally noted. Rita has asked for possible reimbursement of lost parking revenue for Family Fun Night; SDI

has asked for reports of the lost revenue and to consider the Deforest Street lots being full on that night thus negating any loss by the city for Bank and Beechwood. The budget does not reflect this possible change. Tony again asked if had been considered to move the event to a Sunday. Ray expressed the reason for the event is to draw families into town after work during the week. Sunday would create interference with other events and family needs. David also expressed how events like this help all businesses not just the businesses in the closed area. Nora said she would discuss with Rita. The last change made to the budget was to reduce the amount of the surplus we would make available for capital projects downtown. This is due to the possible closure of Maple Street delayed for this year. Any proposed improvements are on hold for the Maple Street common space. Tony put on the record his opposition to any money being spent on Maple Street projects. Claire moved that the budget be approved and submitted to council. Tony asked about the change in retirement contributions, Claire and Nancy explained that it was how expenses and reimbursements are accounted for, that the total is in Quickbooks instead of separating the employee and employer contributions; this will be rectified but the SDI contribution is capped at 2 or 3%. The motion to approve financials was seconded by Ray and approved by entire board.

#### **Event Updates – Amanda**

We just spotlighted Women in Business in downtown Summit on social media to celebrate Women’s History Month. The HillTop Bunny virtual event will be hosted March 27-April 4. The photos have been taken and will be posted on our social media channels. The evolution of Design Day, Summit Design Week will run April 21-28. This event was created to highlight and celebrate the home design niche in downtown Summit. Each day will feature posts about specials and events in all the businesses. Robyn has been gathering content and it has been well received. Family Fun Night plans are in process with some exciting new additions and high-level sponsors. Amanda expressed her pride in the evening and presenting this event for the second year in a row after a covid hiatus.

**Summit Public Arts** – The signage for the fountain project is complete and will be installed in the coming weeks. This year’s art installations are called “Heavy Metal” features all types of metal media. A gala is being planned to kick off the season. SPA is also working with the high school on an interactive art project. Nancy stated that she appreciated the communication on the locations of the installations in the downtown, which didn’t happen last year; there is only one downtown this year.

#### **Common Council Updates – Nora**

Nora stated most was included in Aaron’s report about PSEG; no action on Maple Street for this year; movement ahead with conversations about Broad Street West with no action taken.

**New Business** – Beth suggested a map for the design district.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10am.

**The next BOT meeting is at 8AM April 26, at City Hall.**