

Summit Downtown, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 30, 2018 8:00AM
City of Summit City Hall, Whitman Room

Members Present: Pat Angelo, Steve Bowman, Bob Conway, Andrew Genualdi, Beth Little, Tony Melchionna, Nora Radest, Michael Rogers, Karen Schneider, and Claire Toth. **Staff:** Nancy Adams, Kathryn Best, Leticia Lucaj, and Marin Mixon.

Members Absent: Susan Alexander, David Gittleman, Joseph Hamilton, and Beth Welsh.

Guests: None

Bob Conway called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Bob Conway

Minutes were presented for approval. Tony Melchionna moved that the April 2018 minutes be approved. Pat Angelo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – Bob Conway

Last Sunday was the sixth week of the Summer Farmers Market. It has rained for five of those weeks. Despite that, everything is going well; customers are finding their way back to the market and attendance is increasing. It's all about re-establishing their Sunday routines. Bob feels that building a routine will also be important to the success of Summit Street Sounds, which will be held every Thursday evening in June. The idea is to get people into the habit of coming downtown on Thursday evenings. Bob acknowledged that it will also be a challenge to get people to keep their stores open late for this.

COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS

FINANCE – Claire Toth

Claire presented the financials for April 2018. We received quite a bit of the entry fees for the Farmers Market. We did a media purchase that is divvied up into the various events it will advertise. That's why there are expenses showing for some events later in the year. Nancy confirmed with Michael Rogers that she will send an email to the City requesting SDI's first and second quarter tax revenue.

Pat Angelo moved to accept the April 2018 financials as presented. Karen Schneider seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DCS/SDI MEETING REPORT – Tony Melchionna

- Current estimate is that the Morris Ave. Bridge will be open by the end of June.
- The Hometown Heroes banners look fantastic, and Tony praised everyone who was a part of that initiative.
- Some of the trees in the downtown have grown to touch some of the buildings, which can cause issues. A tree service will be coming around to trim them early in the morning this week or next.
- There's also discussion about a pilot program using Flexi-Pave in some of the treewells. It's a permeable cover that looks natural, is hard enough for people to walk on, and is easy to clean and maintain, making it ideal for very narrow treewells or treewells where plants don't grow.
- Tony has discussed the possibility of using this year's leftover Clean Communities money on new trash bins for the downtown, including big bellies for the Promenade and by Starbucks.
- The alleyways were paved, and they look fantastic! Let's keep them clean and not pour grease into the sewers.
- The light poles in Park and Shop Lot #2 still haven't been installed. JCPL has been backed up from all the storms in March, but Paul Cascais will reach out to them again to see when the new lights will be installed.
- Aaron will be researching the reusable bollards.

WINTER MARKET SURVEY – Bob Conway

The results of the Winter Farmers Market vendor survey were distributed with the Board packet. 64% of vendors said that the market isn't financially worth their while. But, almost 60% of the vendors said that they would participate in the Market next year if it's held again.

Marin Mixon, Farmers Market Administrator, and Leti Lucaj, who was the Winter Market On-Site Manager, were in attendance to comment on the Market. Marin underscored what Bob mentioned: the vendors didn't make enough money to make the market worth their while, but most said they would participate again. Marin explained that this is probably because the vendors like to maintain a connection and presence in Summit during the winter. Marin also underscored some of the negatives of the market: we lost about \$600 on the market after lowering the vendor rates to be very reasonable, the market is a huge amount of work, and there was some issue or problem every week of the Winter Market. Leti agreed saying there was always something going wrong, whether it was the weather, a vendor, or something else. Marin feels that it's a toss-up if the Winter Market is worth all the resources SDI puts into it.

Bob explained that vendors participate in the Winter Market out of a sense of obligation. No one wants to be the one who isn't at the market. From his perspective, Bob believes that we've tried the Winter Market for two years and given it a good chance. At this point he doesn't think we should continue with it in 2019. Discussion continued.

Bob said the question is whether to continue the Winter Market or not. Nancy added that it's a question of what the Board wants to provide for Summit and if it's something that benefits the downtown. Or, is it something we want to do as a one-time outdoor event in February? Tony said that he likes the idea of doing a one-time outdoor event in the winter. Beth Little said that doing the Winter Market once a month or once a year is a good compromise for those who really enjoyed the market. Pat asked if it would be possible to extend the summer market earlier and later a few weeks. Bob answered that that probably wouldn't work since the farms wouldn't have much to sell any earlier. Bob said his recommendation would be not to do the Winter Market and to look into a one-time winter market festival event. Steve Bowman agreed with Bob saying a one-time event would be better than a monthly event. A monthly market would be difficult to advertise and difficult for people to remember which week it would be held. Claire agreed as well, saying that although she personally enjoyed shopping at the Winter Market, there are better uses for SDI's resources.

Dr. Genualdi made a motion for SDI to look into holding a one-time event instead of the weekly Winter Market. Claire Toth seconded the motion. Discussion: Tony likes the idea, especially if we can make the event a big splash. The motion passed unanimously.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY AND BOARD COMMITMENT STATEMENT – Bob Conway

Copies of the Conflict of Interest and Board Commitment forms that were discussed at last month's board training were distributed for trustees to sign. The Conflict of Interest form is based off the IRS's. It basically says that no Board member should profit off being on the Board. Bob asked if the trustees found the training to be useful. The consensus was that training was useful.

Bob informed the Board that the Exec. Committee discussed whether or not the Board should have a policy that we don't hire Board members. Nancy said that it could also be on a case-by-case basis, such as we only hire Board members if no one else locally can provide the service or if no one else locally can meet their price.

PROMENADE PLANTINGS – Nancy Adams

Nancy informed the Board that she and Aaron Schragger met with Annette Dwyer who asked said the beds in the Promenade are looking a little tired. She had a landscaper draw up plans for the beds and is wondering if SDI would be willing to contribute towards the cost of the plantings. Annette wants to put \$1,500 toward the project. The estimate Aaron got for the project is \$3,343. The plan Annette proposed suggested removing and replacing the two trees on the Springfield Avenue side of the Promenade. Nancy, Aaron, and Bob agree that removing the two trees in the front isn't necessary. You can still design a very nice Promenade with those two trees. The recommendation to remove them seems to be mostly based on personal taste. The two trees in the back, however, are storm-damaged and bent over, and should be removed. The total would be higher if the two back trees were removed; Annette would still contribute \$1,500. It's up to the Board whether or not to fund the balance of the project. Bob said that there was discussion about this at the Exec. Committee meeting. The Promenade is a public space that lots of people use, but there may be the perception that it's benefitting one business more than the others, so it should really be a full-board decision. Mayor Radest said that it does get a lot of use and people from the Wine List use it too. Nancy added that SDI uses the space for our events as well. Beth Little said the Promenade is very visible and in the middle of downtown, so it seems reasonable for SDI to pay for half of the improvements. Discussion continued. Pat asked if it would be possible to pipe music into the Promenade via speakers on MONDO. Mayor Radest and several trustees thought this was a great idea. Opinions differed as to whether or not that would be allowed. Nancy said she would look into whether it would be allowed or not. Claire Toth made a motion for SDI to contribute \$1,843 toward the plantings in the Promenade. Karen Schneider seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EVENT UPDATES – Nancy Adams and Kathryn Best

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Family Fun Night will be held from 4-8pm on Thursday, June 14! We hope to see everyone there! The SDI office has been busy booking lots of entertainment: children's music, a magician, live animals, a photo booth, caricaturist, face painter, remote control car racing, balloon artist, etc. The Summit YMCA will be providing the "Game Zone" in the Bank Street Parking Lot with foosball, air hockey, foot darts, and more. Bob said that it should be a fun night and he hope that businesses will stay open. There's no rain date, so we're really hoping for good weather.

SUMMIT STREET SOUNDS

Every Thursday night in June there will be live music at several locations in the downtown from 5-8pm. Locations will include Lyric Park, Starbucks, the parklet, the horse trough, DUE 360, and Winberie's. Claire mentioned that the Promenade could

be the “dance floor” if the music is dance-able for kids and/or adults. Nancy said that next year we could even look into hiring some dancers.

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING AND WEBSITE LAUNCH – Bob Conway

We will be having the Stakeholders Meeting on Tuesday, June 26 in the evening. We’re shooting for June 26 with the hopes that we will be able to debut the website at the Stakeholders Meeting. The June meeting is typically in the morning, but with the website launch, it seemed best to hold it in the evening, probably around 6pm. We do still need a location, since the Wine List isn’t really set up with A/V equipment. Bob asked Karen if she would be willing to let us hold the meeting in the Lois Schneider conference room since she has those great screens for projecting. Karen answered that she would be willing to host the meeting. Nancy thanked Karen saying they would discuss the additional details later. Bob said that Nancy and Kathryn have been working really hard to get the website ready and it will look great, so he encourages as many people as possible to attend the Stakeholder Meeting. Compared to our current website, it’s like night and day. Tony suggested making decals to direct people to our new website once it’s ready. Nancy said that’s worth looking into.

GIFT CARD UPDATE – Bob Conway

Bob said that the gift card has been a long laborious project. Spitball, the company that is doing our new website, will be designing the physical gift cards. As of yesterday, all the insurance issues have been taken care of, so hopefully it will move forward to implementation relatively quickly now. EML will be sending representatives to go around to all the businesses to capture their POS systems so that we will have a closed-loop system. Since we will be including businesses outside the downtown, having the EML team onboard those businesses we don’t have a relationship with will be key. EML will also train the SDI staff on how to add a business to the program, so we will be able to add new businesses when they open.

COMMON COUNCIL UPDATE – Steve Bowman, Beth Little, Mayor Radest

Steve Bowman informed the Board that the Memorial Day Parade was a success. There was an excellent turnout, partially due to the new Hometown Heroes program. The City finished their tree plantings on Maple Street. The Mayor did a great video on the work on the new Community Center, so if you have a chance to watch that, please do. Road work around town will begin soon.

Beth Little said that the other big issue to address is always parking. At the next General Services and SPAC meetings, they will be discussing whether or not to change the time “limit” for the DeForest lots from 5 hours to 6 hours before the rate hike goes into effect. Currently, anyone parked for 5 hours or more must pay a \$50 fee when leaving the lot. The City is still getting a lot of complaints, and the tone in a lot of those complaints is that Common Council is making all these changes for some self-serving reason, when in reality, the only goal is to open up parking spaces in the downtown. Beth implored the SDI trustees to help businesses, employees and customers understand that the City is trying to manage a limited resource, and all these changes are intended to benefit them. These changes are designed to increase turnover by encouraging employees and long-term parkers to park elsewhere so prime spots are available for downtown customers. If the changes don’t work, they’ll revisit them.

Summit has a major train station, so we have to be careful not to have our streets filled with people parking to take the train into the City as well. In June, the on-street meters will increase from \$0.50 to \$1. The first 15 minutes will still be free. Beth Little said that as a consumer coming downtown to shop, she wouldn’t think twice about that. But someone paying to park for a whole day might. Nancy clarified that the 90-minute meters’ rate will be doubling. Nancy said that we’re still getting complaints about the increase, but since the meter rate increase will coincide with the installation of the pay stations downtown, it will be much less noticeable. Beth Little said that the City has also received a request to look into putting another 15-minute spot on Union Place, so they will be evaluating that as well. Beth Little also reminded everyone that if they have someone coming into the downtown to park long term for a day, you can purchase a scratch off hang tag from Parking Services ahead of time. Those allow you to pre-pay for the person to park in the Tiered Garage, Broad Street, etc.

Mayor Radest reminded everyone that the second public meeting on the Broad Street Redevelopment Project will be 7pm tomorrow evening at The Connection.

NEW BUSINESS – None; PUBLIC INPUT – None

Dr. Genualdi made a motion to adjourn, and Tony Melchionna seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49am.

The next Trustee meeting is June 27, 2018.