



## **Summit Downtown, Inc.**

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**To:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees

**From:** Tony Melchionna

**Date:** June 23, 2015

**Re:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees  
June 23, 2015

**Members Present:** Bob Conway, Chris Cotter, Lori Dahl, Mayor Dickson, Rich Lorensen, Sandy Lizza, Tony Melchionna, Kevin Smallwood, Susan Taylor, Robert Weakley, Beth Welsh, and Kathryn Werlein.

**Members Absent:** Al Dill and Toni George.

**Guests:** Beth Kinney – Director, Department of Community Services  
Dr. Robert Rubino – President, Common Council  
Rick Matias – Assistant City Engineer  
Rita McNany – Parking Services Manager  
Judith Josephs – Director of Community Programs

Tony Melchionna called the meeting to order at 8:07 am.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Tony Melchionna**

Tony Melchionna asked if there were any edits to the May 2015 minutes.

No edits were suggested, so Robert Weakley moved to approve the April 2015 minutes, Rich Lorensen seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – Tony Melchionna**

Tony welcomed all of the “heads of state” present and thanked them for their continued open communication with Summit Downtown, Inc. Tony asked that these channels remain open, especially with regard to the upcoming road closures and construction. SDI receives calls regularly, and we need to be able to dispense the correct information.

The Mayor answered that occasionally JCP&L needs to close a road in the case of an emergency, but she has reminded the police chief to contact SDI. Marin reminded property owners that they, too, should let SDI know if they will be doing any work that will affect the rest of the downtown.

Rick Matias said that the work on DeForest Avenue from Maple Street to Norwood Avenue on Park and Shop Lot No. 1 will be done from October-December 2015. The parking lot won't be shut down the whole time, and even if the road is closed, the parking lot will remain partially open. Rita McNany added that she requested the work be done on Mondays and Tuesdays, the least busy days downtown. Rick assured Marin that SDI would be kept in the loop with regard to all the work on the parking lot.

Tony announced that there is a vacancy on the SDI Board for a property owner. If anyone knows someone who would be an asset to the Board, encourage him or her to contact the office. In this case, a replacement trustee would be appointed by the Executive Committee and would finish out Toni George's term. He or she would then have the option to re-run for a full term.

Tony asked if there were any updates on the Morris Avenue Bridge. Sandy Lizza answered that the traffic patterns aren't ready for public release yet.

### **PARKING SERVICES UPDATE – Rita McNany**

The Summit Parking Advisory Committee (SPAC) started looking at downtown parking in 2013. In 2014, SPAC focused on creating more short-term parking. Now, SPAC is looking for a longer-term solution. Adding levels to the parking garages already in existence is the most difficult and expensive option. The tiered garage already needs work. Parking Services will be putting in new lights, a new sign, and a new elevator. This work will cost approximately \$1.5 million and is slated to be completed in 2016.

SPAC is now considering the Post Office lot and Park and Shop Lots Nos. 1 and 3 for a parking garage. The parking studies concluded that Springfield Avenue and Union Place have the greatest need for increased parking. SPAC has narrowed the choices down to Park and Shop Lot No. 1 and the Post Office lot, with that majority of the committee backing Park and Shop Lot No. 1. Rita explained that many feel that the Post Office is too far from the heart of the downtown. Others are concerned that it is right across from the Fire Department. Rita said that there's also a need for more employee parking, although shopper parking is their number one priority. She feels that once more parking is added, Parking Services will be able to adjust the system so that there will be sufficient employee parking. Rita encouraged all trustees to come to the next Common Council meeting to voice their opinions on parking. The goal is to have the new parking garage finished by the end of 2016 or beginning of 2017.

Kathryn Werlein expressed concern that there doesn't seem to be an overarching strategy for parking. Summit has a bad reputation regarding parking, and she feels that the City needs to develop one, three, and five year plans. She also strongly urged everyone not to count Park and Shop Lot No. 2 out saying it would likely be the least visually impactful on the downtown. She asked that someone approach Bank of America again.

Dr. Rubino said that he talked to Bank of America with Chris Cotter and Mayor Dickson. They spoke with the decision-makers, and Bank of America definitively told them that they were not interested in selling or making any deals with the City.

Rita added that current parking garages don't look like they did 20 years ago. They can be very visually attractive, and can even look like store fronts.

As chairperson, Tony asked the Board to talk to everyone they could. Council needs to see that SDI, our constituents, and Summit residents agree that there's a need for more parking. Talk to your neighbors, tenants, and council people.

### **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

#### **FINANCE – Lori Dahl**

Lori Dahl announced that the finances look right on par, as per usual. Any item that seems off is just due the timing of invoices received.

Lori asked if there were any questions. Seeing no questions, Lori moved that the May 2015 Financials be accepted, the motion was seconded by Mayor Dickson and passed unanimously.

#### **EVENTS AND UPDATES – Marin Mixon**

Marin let everyone know that the Summit Farmers Market is going very well. The Blueberry Pie Contest will be on July 12. We could use a couple more hands from 10AM-12PM, so if you will be in town, please sign up on the sheet being passed around. Amy Currie, Mayor Dickson, and Bob Conway will be judging.

Work has begun on the Car Show. Hopefully the addition of the British Car Club will increase spectators. We will soon be asking for your help with securing trophy sponsorships.

We are considering doing a music event in August or October. We've sent out a survey to the businesses to see if they would be interested in participating in the event. Robert Weakley said that a music event is a wonderful idea. Westfield does music nights weekly in the Summer and they are very successful. Lori asked that if anyone on the Board knows any musicians who would be interested in performing at an event like this to please let the office know. It's a great opportunity for up-and-coming musicians to market themselves and a great way for SDI to keep the cost down for the event.

NJ Monthly is featuring Summit in their September issue. Mayor Dickson added that NJ Biz Magazine is interviewing her regarding Summit's stance on chain businesses. She thanked Marin for helping to prepare her for her interview.

Judith Josephs announced that the Summer is filled with fun activities from the Department of Community Programs (DCP) thanks to their generous corporate sponsors. If any Board member or one of their tenants would be interested in partnering with DCP, please let her know. There are many opportunities, even for small businesses, including product sampling. Also, downtown employees and business owners are still eligible to pay the resident rate to join the Aquatic Center and the Municipal Golf Course.

#### **COMMON COUNCIL –Sandy Lizza**

Joint dispatch for 911 calls will begin soon.

#### **SUBURBAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE – Beth Welsh**

The Suburban Chamber has begun organizing their annual Golf Outing, which is always a lot of fun. It will be in October. As always, excellent speakers are lined up for the First Friday series. She encourages everyone to come to the meetings. It's a great way for business owners to get their story out and to network.

#### **DOWNTOWN PROJECT UPDATE AND DISCUSSION – Beth Kinney and Rick Matias**

Rick Matias reviewed the project scope and limits with the Board, saying that none of them have changed since the last SDI Board meeting. The City received three bids for the project. Cifelli and Sons had the lowest bid. The City has worked with them in the past. They are masons who are known for their excellent brick work. Once the project is awarded the City Clerk's office will begin

the contract process. That process will take about a week. Then, the City will have a preconstruction meeting with the contractor where they will receive the start date and hear how exactly they intend to complete the project. Ideally, Rick said that the project will start with work on drainage, sidewalks, and landscape and finish with the milling and paving process. They are aiming to begin work in mid-July. The contract will be officially awarded at the Council meeting tonight, June 23.

Rick then shared the alternative bid amounts. Decorative pavement for the roundabout will cost approximately \$40,000. Running the dark fiber conduit from Woodland Avenue to Springfield Avenue will cost approximately \$22,500. Decorative pavement for Beechwood Road from Union Place to DeForest Avenue would cost approximately \$320,000. The bollards would cost about \$24,000. Since the City is allowed to change the contract by up to 20%, Rick looked into running the conduit throughout the downtown. He projects that it would cost about \$105,000.

Rick clarified that the wayfinding cost just includes posts and foundation, not the signs. That cost is about \$9,500 and includes 20 units. Marin said that Ray Gonzalez of ITO, Inc. is finalizing all of the wayfinding signs and asked where the cost of the signs would go. Rick answered that SDI would be paying for those, so they could either choose to pay for them directly or they could be put to bid and bonded. Parking Services has discussed contributing to the cost of the signs outside of the district, but they have not decided how much they will contribute.

Marin asked that the new sitting walls in the Lyric Park have rounded corners for safety. She also asked that the walls in the Promenade be retrofitted. Rick said he would discuss that with Marin. Kathryn Werlein asked that SDI be involved in all the aesthetic decisions for the project, including the masonry and the walls. Rick assured her that they're always open to new thoughts and ideas.

Tony asked for clarification on the conduit. Rick said that the price listed for the conduit is to allow Parking Services to put cameras on that one block. But, since the conduit is an existing item on the bid, we could change the quantity if we wanted to extend the conduit for the whole downtown. Marin asked if there has been any discussion with the police to see if they would be willing to share in the cost. Beth Kinney answered that it's up to Common Council if they want to share the cost. Beth said that as of now, there are no specific plans to put additional cameras downtown. That would be discussed separately and would cost about \$7000/camera plus the additional fiber extension.

Robert Weakley expressed concern that Wi-Fi was initially the center of the discussion about the conduit. Beth Kinney said that the Technology Committee ultimately decided that Wi-Fi has passed its time of usefulness, but having the conduit as infrastructure would be useful. Neither Verizon nor Comcast have shown any interest in participating. Kathryn Werlein asked what other communities have done with their conduits. Beth answered that some other communities have been able to bit out and resell their conduits.

Dr. Rubino said he's unsure about the necessity of Wi-Fi, especially after hearing the Technology Committee's opinion. The police haven't come to Council with a need for more cameras. The Mayor answered that the police would love to have more cameras, but the cost for cameras is still being determined.

Robert Weakley partially agreed, saying that this is a lot of money to spend without very many answers. But, he doesn't want this opportunity to pass Summit by. If we need answers, he feels we should hire a specialist to figure everything out. Beth Welsh asked if the City is working with a security company. Bassett and Assoc. worked with a company to put their cameras in. For a project this large, she feels a specialist would be necessary. Mayor Dickson asked Chris Cotter to look into having someone at the City do a study.

Tony reminded everyone that SDI last agreed to fund Column E on the cost estimate chart, which included the signs. It is less now because it does not include the signs.

Kevin Smallwood made a motion that SDI would pay for 50% of the conduit for the whole downtown, and Bob Conway seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Sandy asked Rick how long SDI and the City have to procure an expert opinion on the conduit. Rick said that SDI and the City ultimately have 2 months maximum to decide whether or not to move forward with the conduit.

Kathryn Werlein said that SDI needs more information before we can proceed.

Susan Taylor suggested that SDI waits to vote on whether or not to pay for a portion of the conduit.

Kevin Smallwood withdrew the motion.

Tony thanked his dear friend Chris Cotter for everything he's done for SDI, the City, and Summit. Chris came to every SDI meeting and was always a levelheaded voice of reason. On behalf of SDI, Tony wished him well in his retirement. Chris received a standing ovation from the Board.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mayor Dickson. It was seconded by Bob Conway, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am.

**The next Trustee meeting is July 29, 2015.**