

Summit Downtown, Inc.

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To: Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees
From: Tony Melchionna
Date: December 14, 2016
Re: Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees
December 14, 2016

Members Present: Pat Angelo, Bob Conway, Lori Dahl, Sandy Lizza, Tony Melchionna, Nora Radest, Karen Schneider, Kevin Smallwood, Richard Sun, and Susan Taylor. **Staff:** Kathryn Best, Jessica Hobson, and Marin Mixon.

Members Absent: Andrew Genualdi, Michael Rogers, and Beth Welsh.

Guest: Ryan Mallach, Ester's Treats
Rita McNany, Parking Services Manager

Tony Melchionna called the meeting to order at 8:08 am.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Tony Melchionna

Tony Melchionna asked if there were any edits to the November 2016 minutes.

Since no edits were suggested, Kevin Smallwood moved that the November 2016 minutes be approved, Susan Taylor seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – Tony Melchionna

Tony welcomed Karen Schneider to the Board of Trustees, saying he looks forward to having her on the board. With Lori Dahl going off the board, it will be nice to continue to have the perspective of a realtor on the board.

Tony also thanked the Search Committee and announced that Nancy Adams has been hired as the new Executive Director. Nancy has an enormous amount of experience and expertise, and Tony looks forward to working with her. Nancy's father is very ill, so she is unable to attend today's meeting. She will begin in January.

Tony thanked Sandy Lizza for serving as SDI's liaison to council, saying in all his years, Tony has never had a more attentive or thorough liaison. She's always welcome at SDI.

COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS

ELECTION

The election closed yesterday at 5pm. Marin and Kathryn counted all the ballots. Over 65 ballots were received, which is a significant increase from previous years. It's encouraging to see interest in the election.

Joe Hamilton has been elected to the property owner spot. Susan Alexander has been elected to the retail/first floor business spot. Claire Toth has been elected to the upper/lower business spot.

Tony reminded everyone that with the change to SDI's bylaws, if we are unable to fill one of the specifically designated trustee spots, we will have the option to appoint a "floater." Tony thanked Beth Welsh again for that idea.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Marin let everyone know that SDI's Goals and Objectives are still in draft form. The Board can either vote on them now or in January. The goals and objectives will help Marin and Lori to build the 2017 budget.

Bob suggested that SDI consider creating an app instead of spending all that money on the website. If we could create an app where stores could take orders and customers could actually purchase goods, it would be very beneficial to the downtown. Everyone does everything on their phones these days, and it would be good to tap into that. Sandy suggested SDI bring the idea of an app instead of a new website to the Technology Committee. They have a wealth of knowledge that SDI should consult. Marin said that she would revise the line item on the budget to "website/app" to reflect this discussion. Tony asked if the app would conflict with Close.By. Sandy suggested talking to Main Street NJ to see if they had any insight into downtown apps or companies to recommend.

Marin let everyone know that Main Street NJ has been defunded, effective January 1. Bob said that downtown communities will still have the option to participate in the national Main Street organization.

Sandy asked that the new SDI trustees receive hard copies of the master plan in January. Marin agreed, saying both the master plan and Level G study would be informative for them.

Susan moved to finalize the 2017 Goals and Objectives with the corrections, Kevin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

BY-LAW CHANGES – Susan Taylor

Common Council approved the changes to SDI's by-laws. Thankfully we don't need the option to appoint a floater this year, but it will be very helpful to have if we need it.

FINANCE – Lori Dahl

The bank statement just came in the mail, so the November and December financials will be presented in January.

EVENTS

Summit Arts Festival

Kathryn let everyone know that planning for the festival continues to go well. Mel will meet with Nancy and Kathryn in January to start planning some of the specific dates, such as when to begin advertising, when to send out the applications, etc. Again, if the Board feels strongly that there should be music at the event, that will be up to SDI to organize, book, and pay for the music.

[Richard Sun arrived at 8:24am]

2017 Draft Events

Marin let everyone know that the document has been revised since the board packet was sent out. We have added 3 Stakeholder Meetings: one in the evening in January, one in the morning in June, and one in the evening in September. All three meetings have specific purposes. January will serve as a wrap up of the previous year, a look forward to planning for that year, and a thank you to everyone for their support. In September, it will be a good time to discuss that year's holiday plans and to discuss plans for 2018.

Three dates have been added in for the Design Series, and a date has been added for a fitness and wellness event in the fall.

We've also considered moving Restaurant Week from February to July. We would like to do it in coordination with Edible Jersey's Eat Drink Local Week. It would bring a much needed new feel to the event and the partnership with Edible Jersey would also bring some new publicity to the event. Pat Angelo said that he liked the idea of tying in "eat local" because farm to table is very in right now. Pat also said that one of the main problems he sees with Restaurant Week is that it's too free-form. It works much better in NYC when they set exactly what the deal is. Marin reminded everyone that the freedom was incorporated to allow more businesses to participate. Some of the smaller eateries and food shops didn't really have a deal that would be appropriate for \$20.17. Jessica Hobson added that SDI is talking to Edible Jersey about featuring Summit as one of their "Fork in the Road" destinations, which would be great to help brand Summit as a food destination. Pat said that he's going to Charleston for their Restaurant Week, so he'll let the board know if he sees any good ideas down there.

Marin said that one of the other items that needs to be discussed is a rain date for Girls' Night Out (GNO). In the past, SDI has never had a rain date since there's entertainment booked, the stores buy food, etc. Kathryn reminded everyone that having a rain date and not having it on the same night as other towns' GNOs were the two top requests on the participant survey. Marin said that Millburn is not having a GNO this year, and Westfield is having theirs on May 11. So, if we were to have a rain date, the two options would be the following day (Friday, May 5) or the following Thursday, May 11 (same night as Westfield). The Mayor said that if having a rain date was the number one request, we should seriously consider it.

Both Karen Schneider and Jessica Hobson said that Friday nights aren't good for Girls' Night Out.

Sandy said that Summit has a huge opportunity now that Millburn isn't having a GNO. We should do a little additional advertising targeting the Millburn crowd, such as on their town's TapInTo.

Winter Farmers Market

We had the first meeting with the vendors in the church and met the property manager. The posters are printed, and signage will be created soon. We are hoping to reprint the postcard with all the trustees' comments taken into consideration. Hoboken Farms has offered to pay one of his employees to hand the postcards out at the Train Station during the evening commute.

Tony introduced Ryan from Ester's Treats. Ryan apologized that Ester was unable to attend the meeting. Their baby was born only 12 days ago. Ester's Treats has been at the Summit Farmers Market for 9 years. They consider the Summit Farmers Market their home since they have no bricks and mortar location. They're happy to be at the Winter Farmers Market every other week since they have a new baby. They have an email list of over 1,000 email addresses and they're happy to remind them to go to the market, even on the weeks that they won't be there. Ryan said that only selling vegan goods is a little limiting. He would like to add a few things that their regular customers depend on and look for every week in the summer, like their gluten-free items, such as their quinoa blondie. He would

want to add these items as benefit to the customer. These additional items actually wouldn't bring in any more profit for them as a business.

Tony said that the limitations placed on the vendors for this market are to prevent conflict with the downtown businesses since this market will be on Saturday.

Mayor Radest said that the board had a very spirited discussion last month, and voted to allow Ester's Treats in, but only to sell vegan goods that were labeled as such. The Mayor said that she understood Ryan's position, but feels strongly that we need to protect our downtown businesses.

Susan Taylor also said that she also understood Ryan's position, but given last month's discussion and the fact that this is the first year for the market, she feels that the board's decision from last month should stand. If we need to reevaluate for 2018, then we will.

Tony said that reconsidering decisions regarding the vendors is a slippery slope. Already, one of the farmers is asking to be allowed to bring carrots, squash, and root vegetables when they were originally told they wouldn't be allowed to sell those. Jessica asked if they're the only organic farmer at the winter market. Marin said that they are. Bob said that the wording is important. Poplar Wood is not certified organic, but his produce is grown with organic methods.

The Board reached the consensus to allow Poplar Wood Farm to bring carrots, squash, and root vegetables to the Winter Farmers Market.

Richard Sun said that he felt the Board made a decision after a really thoughtful discussion, so we should stay the course for 2017 and revisit in a year.

Sandy said she would like to encourage Ester and Ryan to consider a bricks and mortar space in downtown Summit. Ryan answered that he and Ester have been considering a bricks and mortar location. Sandy also said that the board would welcome his insight and suggestions regarding the summer market since they're such a successful vendor and attends multiple markets.

Tony said that perhaps we should be looking for a space that would allow us to hold the Winter Farmers Market on Sundays.

GRANT WRITER – Kathryn Best and Marin

Marin and Kathryn had a long phone conversation with Chris Sprague from Millennium Strategies. Chris is beginning to understand SDI as an organization so he can be on the lookout for grants that would benefit SDI. Chris is verifying with Michael Rogers and Megan Champney that he is allowed to work with SDI.

Sandy and Mayor Radest both said that it was clear from the beginning that SDI was to be included in the City's contract with Millennium Strategies.

DOWNTOWN PROJECT UPDATE – Aaron Schrager

Aaron wished everyone happy holidays. DPW has installed all the holiday decorations. The decorations are 20 years old and use non-LED lights, so they do really need to be replaced. DPW has also put lights up on the trees on Beechwood Avenue, the tree in the roundabout, and the trees in the Union Place islands.

Just a reminder that magnesium and calcium are better for the sidewalks than rock salt. Please don't throw rock salt into the streets either. Please don't use trucks to plow the sidewalks.

The downtown project has been substantially completed. Work on the punch list continues. If you know of something that needs to be added to the punch list, please let Aaron or the SDI office know.

Over the course of the downtown project 14 parking spaces have been added to the downtown.

Marin, Lori, and Jessica all agreed that the crosswalk at the corner of DeForest Ave. and Maple Street is very dangerous. Aaron said that new traffic signals with the countdown will be installed. Marin asked if there's anything that we can do about that before that happens? Aaron said that he would talk to the police to see if they want to put the yellow cross walk signs in the street.

The sidewalk café permit packet will be sent out by the clerk's office soon. Aaron encouraged everyone to send them in ASAP. Marin and Tony asked if applicants are allowed to resubmit the same application if nothing has changed. Aaron said that he would look into it.

Discussion continued.

SPAC UPDATE – Rita McNany

Rita said that she has been notified that work on the Tiered Garage elevator will begin on January 9 and will last at least 90 days. Parking Services will be coming up with a plan and will let everyone know once it has been decided.

Valet service is going well. The most cars that have been valeted in one day so far is 15, so they are opening it up to the public after the morning rush. Mayor Radest asked if SDI would be willing to send an email blast out. Marin said that we would. Rita asked SDI to wait for a redesigned email from Parking Services or Amy. Sandy suggested a more visible sandwich board that says it's only \$4.

In the first few months of 2017 all lots and garages except the DeForest Park and Shop lots will be going to license plate recognition. Sandy thanked Rita for her hard work and expertise, since this is a very big step for Summit.

Discussion continued.

COMMON COUNCIL UPDATE – Sandy Lizza

Sandy let everyone know that there was a presentation from the software provider who will be doing the online permitting process. Sandy thanked DCS and the Technology Committee for all the hard work they put into this process. No program is perfect, but this will be a huge step forward.

Sandy thanked everyone for volunteering their time for public service. She's seen renewed energy and focus in the last few years. She thanked Kathryn Werlein in particular and other members who are no longer on the board. Thank you to Marin and Kathryn Best for all the hours they put in outside of the work day.

OTHER BUSINESS

Marin asked if the City has received any feedback on the parklet. Marin said that just from the businesses on that block, she has received 75% negative feedback. She said that there was confusion from the public about who could sit there, despite the signs, since it was in front of two restaurants.

Pat Angelo mentioned that it might be a good idea to have some kind of packet for parents of babies born at Overlook.

Tony thanked all the trustees for their time this year, especially Lori and Susan, who will be going off the board.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Sandy Lizza. It was seconded by Richard Sun and the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am.

The next Trustee meeting is January 25, 2017