

## **Summit Downtown, Inc.**

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**To:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees  
**From:** Tony Melchionna  
**Date:** November 19, 2014  
**Re:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees  
November 19, 2014

**Members Present:** Bob Conway, Chris Cotter, Lori Dahl, Gregory Drummond, Don Geddis, Rich Lorensen, Tony Melchionna, Jerry Rotunno, Kevin Smallwood, Susan Taylor, Robert Weakley, Beth Welsh and Kathryn Werlein.

**Members Absent:** Ellen Dickson, Annette Dwyer, Toni George, Sandy Lizza

**Guests:** None

Tony Melchionna called the meeting to order at 8:05 am.

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

Tony Melchionna asked if there were any edits to the October 2014 Minutes.

Since there were no edits to be made, Robert Weakley moved that the October 2014 minutes be approved, Kathryn Werlein seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Tony deferred to Marin. Marin informed the Board that SDI is serving as a Small Business Champion for Small Business Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup>. There are a lot of materials in the SDI office including, tote bags, balloons, stickers, and other goodies. Please encourage your merchants to come in and pick up some promotional materials. Kathryn asked if the office has been eblasting this information. Marin informed everyone that several emails have already been sent to the merchants.

Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, will be the last Farmers Market of the season. Next year there will be a welcome breakfast again in March.

The Dedication of Promenade Park will take place November 21<sup>st</sup>. Everyone has been emailed a flier. The red Santa Mailbox will be in place and there will be hot chocolate. Please plan to come if you are able and invite community members.

We have a printed proof for the historical plaques. We are purchasing three signs. The locations and wording will be the same as previously discussed. Chris Cotter asked if these signs will be on pedestals. Marin answered that they would be on pedestals.

The Summit Greek Grill hopes to open soon. No. Eighteen opened at 18 Maple Street and is a high-end women's boutique. Café Alle (behind Investor's Savings Bank) has equipment and will open soon. Photo Op, at 29 Maple, is open, but there is no sign yet. The Halloween Pop Up, Gotham

Costumes, has left and the signage has been removed. Andy at The Luggage Center has said he will close at the end of this holiday season. The occupancy rate downtown is currently at 94%. Once Marin knows anything else about open properties, she will pass the information along.

Kathryn asked if SDI knew how Gotham Costumes fared. Marin said that according to Mark Yeager, it did very well.

## **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

### **FINANCE – Lori Dahl**

October finances look in-line. The only thing that differs from what we expected are the sponsorships. SDI is not receiving banner sponsorships like it used to. We also need to budget more for police for events.

Going forward, the TD Bank account will serve as the operating account and the Haven Savings account will serve as the surplus account. This will serve to streamline everything, as discussed in the financial meeting.

In 2013, the approved budget was for \$47,580 and a surplus of \$110,000. We should keep enough money in the surplus to pay for weekend garbage removal for three years. This way if we ever lose funding, we will have three years to figure out another source of funding. If we remove the amount of money needed for three years of weekend garbage removal, it leaves \$23,000 in surplus. This indicates that while the surplus may look large, it's approximately the amount it should be.

As of 11/19, SDI has not received our last \$44,700 stipend from the city. It was approved at the council meeting though.

Beth Welsh suggested listing committed funds on the finances.

Lori Dahl moved that the October 2014 Financials be accepted, the motion was seconded by Chris Cotter and Beth Welsh and passed unanimously.

### **2015 BUDGET – Lori Dahl**

Thus far there have been two finance meetings and two budget meetings. Regarding the finances printouts, the columns are set in QuickBooks, so sometimes items are put in "other" for consistency. Lori then went through the 2015 budget page by page (see attached):

The Clean Communities grant was pulled out of "SDI Office" and put on its own. Cars and Croissants has its own page.

Taste of Summit and LEGO are little events we support. Some Board members think we should continue to support them and some think we shouldn't. But, we should remember that manpower is a scarce resource. Tagging SDI's name onto an event that serves the community looks good for SDI. If we decide to continue support, perhaps we should look for other groups' events to support. If we decide not to support them, we will tell them in 2015 and cease support in 2016. It isn't fair to pull support for an event in the first quarter of next year without giving the organization advance notice. The LEGO event may be moved downtown next year since the children will be building downtown. Beth Welsh suggested holding the event in the empty Square Yard space. It's big enough, and Mark may be willing to let it be used for free for the LEGO event. Lori replied that the Historical Society is looking at the Elks Club since that's a location where it could be held every year.

Next year, in the months leading up to the Classic/Antique Car Show, all Trustees will be asked to get a trophy sponsor.

There's no event scheduled for Fall 2015 yet. There's a budget similar to Girls' Night Out for whatever event is chosen.

The Farmers Market is a little down from what was budgeted because one purveyor left during the season and two other purveyors used less tent space. No vacancies were built into the 2014 budget. Next year is the twentieth year for the Farmers Market. More money has been budgeted for advertising, promotion, and festivities. There will be a celebration held in June.

The Girls' Night Out budget has been reduced for 2015.

Halloween's budget is the same as 2014.

The expense in the Holidays is because someone recently found holiday dollars from 2013 and turned them in.

The Marketing Committee has built-in finances for the roll-out of the new brand, including a website.

Restaurant Week incentives didn't work, so we won't be doing that again in 2015. We don't have a banner sponsor for Restaurant Week.

SDI Office includes the D & O insurance. A specific breakdown is available if you have questions. At the bottom of that page is a list of committed funds.

We will not be doing Sidewalk Sales in 2015, so the page is blank and nothing has been budgeted. We can use the blank page for a future event.

For the Spring Festival, Daryl reimburses all expenses first, and then writes SDI a check according to the signed contract.

We want to ensure that the tree wells look attractive year-round. Thus, the budget includes enough to decorate them four times in 2015.

Lori pointed out that there aren't committee heads to contribute to the budgeting process anymore. Everything has been compiled by Lori and Marin. Your eyes are important. Call or email Lori if you have any questions. We want everyone to feel comfortable before we vote to approve the budget in December.

Tony thanked Lori for the hard work she put into making the whole budget process easier and much more streamlined.

Beth Welsh asked about potentially making Hilltopper Weekend the fall promotion. She informed everyone that the event is growing legs and getting a new look. Lori answered that perhaps that could be the theme for that season. She mentioned that eventually it would be ideal to send all of the promotional materials and color schemes to merchants ahead of time. Then it would be up to them to participate in Hilltopper Weekend however they see fit.

Marin added that the z-card and brochure are at the printer. The totals in the actual column are as of November 17<sup>th</sup>. The marketing budget has been allocated for paying ITO and will be spent by the end of 2014.

**MARKETING/EVENTS – Kathryn Werlein**

Kathryn told everyone that ITO, Inc. has been retained as the branding firm SDI will use. Marin and Kathryn have met with them and provided background materials so they have a better idea of what Summit is about. As part of the exploratory phase, they will be doing a survey. It's a pilot study, not a definitive town survey. If you receive the survey, please respond immediately.

The Office restaurant was renovated in Morristown. The Summit location is up next. (Fun fact: the Summit location is the original one, per Beth W.) Kevin has seen the Morristown location and says that it is worth SDI helping to push things along as with the city as it becomes possible.

### **BYLAW CHANGES – Susan Taylor**

We have submitted the request to change our bylaws to the city. Several city representative have met with Tony. December 8<sup>th</sup> at 4:45pm there will be another meeting to discuss the bylaws at the SDI office. Before the meeting, a spreadsheet will be sent out summarizing the current bylaws, the city's proposal, and SDI's proposal. SDI hopes to achieve a smaller, more effective board. Elections have been put on hold so that the board can seek the right people and not have to ask additional people to leave.

### **ELECTION – Kevin Smallwood**

Please refer to "BYLAW CHANGES."

### **SPAC UPDATE – Rich Lorenson**

At the last SPAC meeting, the locations for test signs were discussed. A study of space usage on Railroad Ave. will help members decide whether or not to change the space time limit from five hours to three hours. Empty space counts were discussed, as was the possibility of a new parking garage.

Greg Drummond would like a "P with an arrow" for the parking signs.

Marin asked that SDI Trustees sitting on SPAC keep in mind SDI's branding efforts. She asked that parking sign process slow down a little so that SDI can coordinate with the new branding. Right after the holidays, SDI expects to have initial input. Kathryn seconded Marin's thoughts saying that the whole point of branding is to drive the look of the downtown. Within weeks, SDI will be able to provide input on colors, architecture, poles for the signs, shapes for the signs, icons, awnings, etc.

Chris Cotter said that the city intends for there to be a sharing of all details regarding the signs between the city and SDI so that everyone will know what's happening. These test signs are all about getting input. The notice about the signs will go out Friday, Nov. 21 with the locations for the three test signs. He warned everyone that these signs will look like the ones SDI has said they don't want. The purpose of the test is to determine readability of the signs. They're testing for font size, height of the sign, the shortened wording on the signs, etc. They're made of temporary material and will only be up for a few days. He encouraged everyone to go see the signs and provide input. He implored everyone not to take this test phase as a sign that the city has already decided what the signs will look like.

Kevin asked how the city will determine the locations, correct font size, height, etc. Chris replied that a lot of people weigh in on that decision. He cautioned that not every location that looks perfect will work. Some locations have pipes under them, for example.

Kathryn stated that SDI has hired branding experts because they're experts. Important decisions about the signs should not be determined by general input. We should be looking towards experts.

Kevin also expressed concern that there are several spaces on DeForest Ave. with no meters now. Greg and Chris said they would take care of it.

### **DOWNTOWN BIKE RACKS – Bob Weakley**

Last month the Board approved money for bike racks. Aaron Schrager, City Engineer, and Bob Weakley walked around and made some minor alterations to the plan. The city engineer advised them to wait on installing a bike rack in Lyric Park because there will be renovations made to the space in 2015. They also added some locations on the other side of Railroad Ave.

Bob plans to keep the cost within \$10,000 and will buy approximately 15 racks. We received a presentation from three middle school students suggesting some other locations. Bob suggests sending a letter to the students to thank them for their proposal. When we are closer to the date of installation, he suggested putting an article in the paper. Aaron will complete the map with the finalized locations.

Marin added that Montclair has an enclosed shed for bikes. Aaron is going to see this. The bike lockers on Summit Ave. are run by a nonprofit; they are currently fully booked and have a waitlist. These are options to keep in mind for the future. Another possibility would be an overhang that blends with the architecture on the Starbucks side of the station.

### **RECYCLING – Kathryn Best**

Kathryn Best stated that she attends the monthly Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) meetings. SDI, RAC, and the Environmental Commission are working together to create a recognition program for businesses that practice environmental consciousness that will be called the “Green Star Program.” The plan is to go to businesses instead of asking them to fill out a survey and mail it in. Awardees will be given a very classy looking window decal.

RAC is also running a survey to find out about downtown businesses’ recycling habits. Kathryn is working with them on this project. SDI has agreed to send the finished survey out using our email lists.

Kevin asked about the leftover funding. Chris informed him that Paul Cascais has a proposal for ways to spend the funding. Dr. Rubino has interest in creating a Summit Highline that would use the abandoned Rahway Rail Line to connect Bryant Park to the downtown. The tie in would be at Salerno Duane. Paul tried to tie that project in, but Chris said that he is unsure if he will be able to at this time. A possible use for the funding would be for rainwater barrels we could sell. Marin answered that there are very strict limitations on how we are able to use the funding. It cannot be used for recycling, but it can be used for storm water runoff. We have to show how we spend the whole grant. We’ve received \$35,000-\$37,000 each year, even though we only need \$29,000. Hopefully we will receive the same amount or more next year. Marin said that the highline sounds like a great project and is unsure whether we could use the funding for it or not. Kevin suggested using the funding for storm water drainage. Marin and Chris both said that the storm water drainage is addressed each time paving is done.

### **Common Council Updates – Gregory Drummond**

The SDI Board of Trustees Bylaws will be addressed at the second meeting in January 2015. At the last meeting, voting in the schools was addressed. There was a meeting with Chris Cotter, Dr. Rubino, Marin, and several exercise facility owners about parking concerns. He emphasized that parking can only be moved around. A larger structure is needed, but that won’t be built for a few

years. The exercise studio owners were encouraged to appeal to the Common Council at a meeting. The more voices heard, the better. Parking has been added the Common Council goals for 2015. With the downtown shifting and attracting so many fitness facilities (such as the high end Exhale Spa going in where Glass Works was), the parking need is increasing.

Bob Weakly asked what the Common Council is struggling with since the need for parking is evident. Greg responded that the new tiered garage hasn't been discussed yet, although he is in favor of it. Bob asked if there's anything SDI's Board can do to help. Greg encouraged Trustees to come to Common Council meetings to make their voices heard.

Tony brought up the space time limits saying that 1.5 hours keeps lot jumpers out, but new services coming to the downtown have changed the need. Perhaps increasing the 1.5 hour meters to 2 hours would help.

Chris Cotter reminded that parking is a controversy that some people avoid. Before any real planning can happen, there needs to be agreement on the number of spaces needed, the location, cost, etc. Cost is often misunderstood. Some think that it is a burden on tax payers, which isn't true. Parking pays for itself. The most vocal parking opposition is often long term residents who have figured out how, when, and where to park downtown. They are against urbanization.

Kevin mentioned that the first space on Bank Street has been turned into a 15 minute space. Beth answered that the change was to help places that have quick pick-ups, such as Edible Arrangements and The Lost Sock.

Marin reinforced the need for SDI to educate residents and merchants that funds for building a parking structure won't come out of the tax base. She also mentioned that she will be working with the three exercise studios to map out and explain where their patrons can park. The DeForest lots are only a little further.

#### **SUBURBAN CHAMBER – Beth Welsh**

The senate minority leader of New Jersey, Thomas Kean, Jr. spoke on November 7 at the Grand Summit Hotel. It was a full house and a wonderful event that encouraged businesses to mix and mingle. She also handed out two sheets (see attached). She highlighted the Community Together Dinner (3/5/15, 6pm) on the schedule, which will be similar to the event United Way used to hold. The second handout was information on Shop to Make a Difference, an Egyptian craft sale. It started as a pop-up in a vacant space downtown, and is now a permanent event.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Tony. It was seconded by Susan and the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 am.

**The next Trustee meeting is December 17, 2014**