



## **Summit Downtown, Inc.**

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**To:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees  
**From:** Tony Melchionna  
**Date:** November 20, 2015  
**Re:** Summit Downtown, Inc. Board of Trustees  
November 20, 2015

**Members Present:** Bob Conway, Lori Dahl, Mayor Dickson, Al Dill, Sandy Lizza, Rich Lorenson, Tony Melchionna, Michael Rogers, Susan Taylor, and Beth Welsh. Staff: Marin Mixon, Kathryn Best.

**Members Absent:** Kevin Smallwood and Kathryn Werlein.

**Guests:** Paul Cascais – Director, Department of Community Services  
Kathy Clayton – CPA, Spire Group  
Jessica Hobson – Retail Consultant, SDI  
Susie Kelley – Owner, Charleston Shoe Co. of Summit  
Nora Radest – Mayor Elect  
Aaron Schrager – City Engineer

Tony Melchionna called the meeting to order at 8:06am.

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

Tony Melchionna asked if there were any edits to the October 2015 Minutes.

No edits were suggested, so Al Dill moved that the October 2015 minutes be approved, Susan Taylor seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Tony began by thanking all of the guests for attending this month's meeting.

Tony said that he's very happy that the Springfield Avenue entrance to the tiered garage is finally open again. He's pleased that both the City and SDI publicized the reopening.

Tony let everyone know that Robert Weakley had to resign from the SDI Board due to a new job. Tony said that he has been a great member of the Board, and he will be missed.

Tony introduced Jessica Hobson, saying he believes she will be a great asset to SDI. Jessica said she's excited to be involved. She has been working part time for SDI since October. Her main focus has been to bridge the gap between SDI and property owners and brokers. She is also researching other towns to see how they're structured, how they recruit businesses, and to get ideas for businesses that could thrive in Summit. Jessica then gave the Board a little more information on her background. She has worked for Saks, Michael Kors, and Tod's Group in both retail and wholesale. She has also opened stores for high end brands, so she is familiar with managing retail staff, buying,

and negotiating deals for spaces. She would welcome the opportunity to meet one-on-one with any trustee to hear their ideas and suggestions.

Tony finished by sharing an article from the Chatham newspaper about Rainbow Travel. They're a longtime business that has consolidated much of their business onto the internet. This, Tony says, is why we're not seeing a lot of retail stores popping up. Jessica agreed with Tony.

## **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

### **FINANCE – Lori Dahl**

Lori let everyone know that she would be presenting the financials for both September and October 2015. She said that everything is on par. Anything that isn't in-line with what was proposed is a timing issue. The website has been postponed until next year, for example. She then asked for questions on the financials.

Seeing no questions, Lori moved that the September 2015 financials be accepted. The motion was seconded by Beth Welsh and passed unanimously.

Lori moved that the October 2015 financials be accepted. Mayor Dickson seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

The budget is usually presented in November, voted on in December, then sent to Common Council for approval. Now, the budget will be proposed in January and voted on in February. This allows the new treasurer to be involved in the process and the previous year to be completely finished before the next budget is proposed. Lori thanked Michael Rogers for this excellent suggestion.

Sandy Lizza asked if any changes need to be made to the bylaws. Marin answered that no changes need to be made.

### **ELECTION – Marin Mixon**

The ballots have been sent out. They are due back the day before the December Board meeting. Three positions are up for election: one property owner, one retailer, and one resident.

### **EVENTS – Marin Mixon**

#### **Small Business Saturday**

Marin thanked Common Council for approving free parking for November 26-29. SDI has free promotional materials from American Express available for businesses at the office. American Express is no longer offering statement credits like they have in the past. SDI will also be holding a raffle on Small Business Saturday (November 28). For every \$25 spend downtown on November 28, customers will earn a raffle ticket to win a \$200 Summit gift certificate.

#### **Holiday Kickoff Weekend**

December 4 will be the Candlelight Stroll. SDI has asked stores to stay open until 8PM and feature some kind of special: merchandise, menu, promotion, refreshments, discount, etc. There will be over 1600 luminaries throughout the downtown, holiday music, an ice sculptor, and a second raffle with the same rules as the Small Business Saturday one.

December 5 will be Santa's North Pole Party. Nonprofits will have activities in the old Staples building, the Writers Circle will have materials for the children to write letters to Santa, P.A.L. will

provide free hot chocolate, there will be free horse and wagon rides from Lyric Park, and Santa will greet children in the Promenade.

Special thanks to the Suburban Chamber of Commerce and Summit YMCA for cosponsoring these events. Thanks, also, to Mark Yeager and Bert Model for allowing SDI to use their downtown properties.

#### **AUDIT – Kathy Clayton**

Kathy began by passing out a draft of the financial statement and required communication. She reminded everyone that SDI runs on a cash basis. Everything is just cash in and cash out.

She then briefly discussed her report. She found no significant errors, issues, or problems. She again recommended that SDI review the 2008 policy on the surplus. She believes that policy should be changed so that SDI can spend down the surplus.

For her recommendation for improvement, she recommended that there be visible proof that a second set of eyes approves all the bank statements. She knows that both Marin and the treasurer currently review these, but she recommended that the treasurer physically sign the bank statements as a record. She then offered to answer questions, but received none.

#### **EMPLOYEE PARKING CONCERN – Tony Melchionna**

Tony reviewed Gil's resolution to reserve 60 spaces in the East Broad Street lot for employees. Sandy asked Al Dill to give background on the situation. Al said that the last time the General Services Committee discussed this issue, they found that these spaces are essentially available. If an employee goes to the valet, the valet will be able to get him a parking space. Now that Robert Steelman and Gil Owren have made an issue of this situation, the 60 spaces just sit idle all day. Al recommends that SDI not entertain Gil's resolution until the City has had time to fully investigate this issue.

Beth Welsh said that this concept sounds good in theory, but employees need to be informed that the spaces are available, then be able to actually see the open spaces.

Tony said that he holds Gil Owren and Robert Steelman in very high regard and respects their opinions.

Mayor Dickson warned everyone that the way this was previously handled created a lot of bad will. She received several angry letters from nonresident commuters who suddenly were unable to park where they usually did and missed their trains. Mayor Dickson also mentioned the new Uber plan that has been proposed where Summit residents could get a ride from Uber from their home to the train station and vice versa for about the cost of parking in the downtown.

Discussion continued.

Lori moved that Gil's resolution be approved as proposed and Susan seconded the motion. Three trustees voted in favor of the motion and six trustees opposed the motion. The motion failed.

Sandy Lizza said that the City will further review the situation at the East Broad Street Lot and report back to SDI.

#### **DOWNTOWN PROJECT UPDATE – Aaron Schrager**

Now that the tiered garage entrance is open, the developers and the City are working together to ensure that continues to stay open while the construction is finished.

The work on the downtown project is finished for the season other than some sealing and caulking of the sidewalk. A small amount of work may continue during the winter. SDI will be informed and provided with schedules if this is the case.

The bid for the additional wayfinding signs was accepted. The signs have been ordered and will be installed in the next two weeks.

The lighting bid had to be rejected on a technicality. Lighting updates are two months out now.

The next phase of the project includes Kaus Way, Lyric Park, and the southwest side of Union Place by the train station. The plans and designs should be brought to SDI by the January Board meeting.

Aaron said that he will need to know in the next 3 to 4 months how SDI wants to proceed with regard to the conduit.

Marin asked when new signage will be installed at the tiered garage. Aaron answered that new signage should hopefully be installed by Thanksgiving.

Marin asked about the status of the bike closet. Aaron answered that he met with the NJ Bike Walk Coalition. They pitched him a plan similar to what they have in Montclair. When working in tandem with community bike shops, the lockers could be so much more than just lockers. This is an opportunity for Summit to be a trendsetter.

Rich Lorensen asked when work on Kaus Way would begin. Aaron said that it would go out to bid late February, so the work would likely begin late Spring 2016.

Sandy implored everyone to create a schedule for dealing with the conduit issue. We need to know what the deadlines are and work backwards from there. Marin asked who would be spearheading the issue. After some discussion, it was decided that this matter would be dealt with during Marin, Tony, Aaron, and Paul's monthly meeting.

#### **COMMON COUNCIL UPDATE – Sandy Lizza**

Sandy reviewed the Uber proposal again, saying that she thought the plan was innovated and had some real merit. Monday, the Planning Board will meet to discuss the plans proposed for 25 DeForest Avenue. She asked everyone to take a look at the SIDs Assessed Values chart that was emailed out with the board packet.

She reminded everyone that SDI's budget should reflect the organizations goals and objectives. She feels strongly that SDI needs to have a fuller discussion on their goals and objectives.

#### **SUBURBAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE – Beth Welsh**

Beth said that Summit, New Providence, and Berkeley Heights need to work together more to ensure we're not doing events on the same nights as each other. The Tying Communities Together dinner will be held on March 16. She encouraged everyone to come to the First Fridays for great discussion and networking.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Beth Welsh mentioned that the Egyptian Handicraft Sale is still going strong.

Mayor Dickson said that she would be doing a ribbon cutting at Privado in December. She also encouraged everyone to check out the new Tide facility. It's very impressive.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Lori Dahl. Rich Lorensen seconded it, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15AM.

**The next Trustee meeting is December 16, 2015.**