

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – APRIL 8, 2022**

Present:

Anthony Durante/Resident
Joe Colangelo/Business owner
Dennis Concha/Business owner
Tammie Crispino/Business owner
Paul LaCorte/Property owner
Kristen Mider/(Chairwoman) Resident
Kendall O'Brien/Resident
Steve Oliveira/Property owner

Caren Demyen/Director
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Kathleen Miller Prunty/Mayor
Matt Nazzaro/Cranford Police
Ed Davenport/Cranford Police
Graham Petto/Topology

Penny Andrews/Business Owner - The Mane
Event, 107 N. Union Ave.
Susan Delaney-Choma/Property Owner - 34 N.
Ave. East
Dianne Denommee/Business Owner – 201
Walnut Ave.
Franco Vitella/Business Owner – Venue 104, 104
North Union Ave.

Absent:

Paul Gallo/Resident
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner
Brian Andrews
/Commissioner/Liaison

Ms. Demyen called the meeting to order at 8:30am. Announcement was made that the meeting was posted as required by law.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve March 2022 minutes by Ms. Mider. Mr. Colangelo seconded. Minutes were approved.

TOWNSHIP MAYOR REMARKS – Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Ms. Prunty congratulated Ms. Demyen on being recognized with the PBA Silver Award.
- There was a request from Project Graduation to hold a food truck festival Downtown. There is a Township ordinance prohibiting food trucks in the Special Improvement District. Ms. Prunty said that this serves as a reminder that the purpose of the DMC is to support the businesses in the Special Improvement District.
- Next week, the North Avenue gateway redevelopment plan will be on the Township Committee agenda to be introduced. If it is introduced, then it goes to the Planning Board before going back to the Township Committee for adoption.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider thanked the committee members for their hard work.

PARKING STUDY – Captain Ed Davenport, Cranford Police Department

- Capt. Davenport said that in 2020, Downtown Cranford put in a capital budget request for a parking study, which was approved. The Cranford Police Department believes that doing a parking study now would be very helpful. A study was last done 18 years ago in 2005.
- CPD uses the parking study to look at allocation of spots, when downtown has high foot traffic, hours of enforcement, and more. Commuter parking is a small part of the overall parking downtown. Currently, commuter permits are down about 30%. CPD recommends moving forward with a parking study so the town has knowledge in regards to new projects and redevelopment, as well as current issues with delivery services and double-parking.
- Ms. Mider asked if the studies look ahead. Capt. Davenport said there are forecasting studies, though studies usually look at what's currently in place versus what's in need.
- Mr. Durante added that the parking study will look at trends and offer ideas about managing what the town currently has.
- Ms. Crispino asked why the pay stations don't use license plates, as opposed to space numbers. Capt. Davenport said the parking space number technology was what was available when the current pay stations were purchased. He said it's expensive to put a camera on the parking enforcement car to read license plate numbers.
- Motion to approve the parking study and send the proposal to the Township Committee. All were in favor.

SIGN ORDINANCE – Graham Petto, Topology

- Mr. Petto thanked the DMC sub-committee, Zoning, and Township Attorney Ryan Cooper for working with him on the sign ordinance.
- Mr. Petto said that one of the first things they needed to do was make sure that the design standards are in the right place. Design standards weren't part of Zoning so violations weren't enforceable. Sign requirements have now been placed into Zoning.
- Definitions for Façade and Business Directory Signs have been added.
- Approval from the DMC has also been added as a requirement.
- Language relating to temporary signs has also been expanded and cleaned up.
- Sidewalk signs will require a certificate of insurance and there will be a Zoning permit needed for A-frame signs.
- New sign approval will start at DMC, then go to Zoning.
- Mr. Colangelo would like to see a compromise in regards to temporary signs so it's not a hardship for business owners. Mr. Petto said that can be worked on. Mayor Prunty suggested that temporary signs advertising events such as anniversaries and sales go through the DMC.
- Ms. Mider would like to see balloon sculptures, especially those attached to Township property, addressed. Mr. Petto said there is existing language related to this elsewhere, but it can also be added to the sign ordinance.
- Mr. LaCorte said they must make sure that the Prosecutor is on board so the ordinance can be enforced.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

- The relationship with UCEDC is going very well. The DMC office continues to work with them on one-on-one and training sessions.
- A business and property owner meeting will be held the morning of April 12.
- There are a few ribbon cuttings on the horizon. The office has been receiving inquiries from potential business owners but there aren't many spaces open.
- The Downtown Cranford gift card program was reviewed.
- Ms. Demyen offered a preview of upcoming events.
- In regards to parklets, the Township Committee will be voting on them on April 12. Ms. Demyen is working with Engineering on obtaining DOT approval.
- Maintenance
 - There's a concern that not all businesses have trash removal contracts. This is required for all businesses.
 - There's an issue with people using chalk at Eastman Plaza, making it hard for people to sit in certain areas.

- Ms. Demyen plans to meet with the Township Committee CFO to review the level of SID assessment.

COMMITTEES

- Redevelopment:
 - Mr. LaCorte said that the Township Committee will be meeting next week and adopting on first reading the North Avenue Redevelopment plan. His understanding is that all of the property owners in that area are on-board, but he would like to see that in writing. If the ordinance isn't adopted, then Cranford will miss the court-ordered deadline and will be subject to a Builder's Remedy lawsuit. He urged the Board members to attend the Township Committee meeting.
 - Mayor Prunty believes that the North Avenue Redevelopment Plan is the right thing to do. She said that continued investment in Downtown is vital and that there are provisions in the law to protect business and property owners.
 - Mr. LaCorte spoke to a few property owners on the other side of North Avenue who are also interested in redevelopment and they feel as if they're in limbo.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Ms. Andrews said there's an issue with cars idling downtown and not paying meters. She believes there should be a designated area. Ms. Andrews said she's uncertain if anyone inspects the parklets.
- Ms. Mider said that the Township Attorney stated the parklets meet legal obligations. She asked Ms. Andrews to forward the information so she and Ms. Demyen can review it.
- Mr. Vitella said that the parklets will have to be safe and compliant.

Motion to adjourn at 10:05 am by Ms. Mider. Seconded by Mr. Colangelo, all in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator