

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES –FEBRUARY 16, 2018**

Present:

Anthony Durante/chairman
Barry O'Donovan/business owner
Jean Maisonneuve/Township Commissioner
Chris Ashrafi/resident
Joe Colangelo/resident
Tom Connolly/business owner
Paul LaCorte/property owner
Kristin Mider/resident
Steve Needle/property owner
Clara Nunziato/business owner
Margaret Sacco/property owner
Terence Wall/Township Administrator
Kathleen Miller Prunty/Director
Michelle Stavrou/social media coordinator
Ellen O'Donnell/administrative assistant

Absent:

none

Public:

Gabe Bailer

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ***Motion to approve January 19, 2018 minutes by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. Connolly, all in favor.***

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS - Commissioner Maisonneuve

- Announced that he invited Township Committee to the public Strategic Plan presentation.
- Responding to Mr. Durante's request for an update on North Ave. East, Commissioner Maisonneuve said eminent domain language was stripped from the study in a 3-2 vote and private properties were removed from the study.
- Noted that the North Ave East corridor is still an area that can be redeveloped and the township is essentially hitting a reset and discussing next steps.
- Stated that he will continue to work more closely with North Ave E property owners and leverage Strategic Plan as an overlay going forward.
- Discussion followed regarding the potential of allowing a private developer to independently redevelop North Ave E. and steps required.
- Introduced of Gabe Bailer, newly hired Downtown Director,

CHAIRMAN REMARKS – Anthony Durante

- Distributed article "Deteriorating former A&P site could be seized through eminent domain".

Downtown Strategic Plan

- Reminded board that the public presentation is February 22, 7pm at the Community Center.
- Decided that board members will meet at 6:30pm to prepare.
- Confirmed the presentation will be recorded but not televised live on TV35.

- Reminded board members that they were asked to review the Strategic Plan and identify one or more strategies they would be willing to champion.
 - Ms. Sacco chose the goal of indentifying locations, purchasing and installing bike racks and the mid term objective of creating a business attraction plan.
 - Ms. Mider identified creating a downtown cultural arts committee and permitting pop up businesses in vacant spaces as areas to champion.
 - Mr. Durante is championing pedestrian safety; additionally provided an overview and status of ladder striping and next steps with the county.
 - Mr. Connolly identified parklets as his interest.
 - Mr. Connolly reported that he has reached out to Green Acres for possible grants but hasn't heard back.
- **Action item:** Remaining board members asked to review the strategic plan and notify Mr. Durante via email of any strategies/goals they are interested in championing.

❖ **Motion to go into closed session at 9:05am to discuss budget/personnel issues by Mr. Durante, seconded by Mr. LaCorte, all in favor.**

❖ **Motion to go into open session at 9:20am by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. O'Donovan, all in favor.**

Board sub-committees

Finance – C. Ashrafi, P. Lacorte Proposed 2018 Budget; Reserve Funds

- Ms. Prunty distributed the proposed budget for review.
- Mr. Connolly inquired about P.O. Plaza funds and if maintenance funds still available; Mr. Durante said P.O. Plaza status can be discussed at the March board meeting.

❖ **Motion to accept 2018 operating budget by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. O'Donovan, all in favor.**

Business Development – Mr. Ashrafi, Ms. Mider, Ms. Sacco

- Reported that the sub-committee met and outlined preliminary goals that include organizing focus groups by business category and creating stronger attendance by business owners to the DMC events, business owner meetings.

Maintenance – T. Connolly, P. LaCorte

- Reported 10-12 Victorian lights still need to be replaced, looking for a status; locations included lot 7 and Walnut Ave under the train trestle.
- Ms. Prunty responded that parking lots were not in the scope of the project and that 6 under the trestle are PSE&G and also not included in the light upgrade.
- Ms. Prunty said any light out has since been reported to engineering.
- Agreement that parking lots need to be better lit and situation addressed and inconsistent light heads are unacceptable.
- Mr. Wall reported that 15 lights have been identified as needing to be replaced and there is a change order in place, any light that needs to be swapped out will be.
- Reported 90-95% of flag holders are missing from the light poles; Ms. Prunty to follow up with DPW.
- There is no status update for when DPW will be painting the light poles.
- Several areas in need of paver repair:
 - North Union (Tablespoons) – Rui has begun the repair; Ms. Prunty noted that an additional area can't be completed immediately because of digging requirements, per the DPW.
 - South Ave. (Hardware Store) – paver piles remains from water company repair; no status update.
- Mr. Wall notified the board that 18 dimmers were installed on Miln Street from Alden to Springfield; next step is for Township Committee to approve a full rollout which will be done by the DPW.

Marketing & Communications – C. Nunziato, M. Sacco

- Met with office staff on February 6 to finalize event schedule.
- Decided to hold off on logo, branding discussions until new director starts.

SID Assessment

- Mr. Durante announced an additional sub-committee that will be tasked with addressing the current SID tax and any plans to change the assessment.
- Ms. Prunty, Mr. Needle and Mr. O'Donovan volunteered.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Stressed the importance, along with the support of Commissioner Maisonneuve and Mr. Wall, of continuing the weekly Business Team meetings that include building, zoning, health departments and fire as needed.
- SID businesses/property updates to be emailed.
- Block by Block: new Facebook series beginning February 20 starting with Walnut Ave.; will include retail and professional offices in both 1st and 2nd floor spaces.

OLD BUSINESS

- Follow up on providing strategic plan to Judy Swick of Chapman Brothers.
 - Completed by Mr. Durante

NEW BUSINESS

Municipal Parking Lot 3: maintenance & improvements.

- Agreement among board members that lot 3 needs to be addressed in terms of paving and lighting but not a DMC responsibility.
- 2017 revenue from parking meters & parking permits - \$800,000
- Ms. Prunty introduced the idea that parking revenue can be shared and go towards lot maintenance; current parking revenue goes toward general municipal fund.
- Commissioner Maisonneuve reminded the board that the township continues to go through the 2018 budget process and encourages the DMC Board to make recommendations in areas such as parking lot improvement.

Request from Cranford Historic Preservation Advisory Board to present phase I survey

- To be included in the April agenda

PUBLIC COMMENTS

none

- ***Motion to adjourn by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. O'Donovan, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:35am.***

Respectively submitted,
Ellen O'Donnell, Administrative Assistant