

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – MARCH 15, 2019**

Present:

Joe Colangelo/resident
Anthony Durante/chairman
Paul LaCorte/property owner
Ashley Legg/resident
Jean Maisonneuve/Township Commissioner
Kristen Mider/resident
Steve Needle/property owner
Barry O'Donovan/business owner
Margaret Sacco/property owner
Jaime Cryan/Township Administrator
Gabe Bailer/Director
Caren Demyen/Administrative Assistant
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Absent:

Tom Connolly/business owner

Mr. Bailer 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 February 2019 minutes by Mr. Durante, seconded by Ms. Sacco. All members were in favor.***

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS - Commissioner Maisonneuve

- Commissioner Maisonneuve updated the Board on the capital budgets and a few of the things on the DMC side may be approved. Commissioner Maisonneuve explained that the Township has a reserve where a lot of the items can be paid for, such as painting the light posts and some of the paving projects. However it still needs to be approved by the Township Committee. One of the items on the budget that shouldn't have been on the DMC side is the steps at Eastman Plaza since that is an engineering project. Commissioner Maisonneuve mentioned that there has been some noise about it on social media. The only way the project will happen is if the Township gets \$190k in grant money where it will only cost the town \$10k. It was also brought up that a lot of light posts are still out. Commissioner Maisonneuve says that we need to figure out a solution, especially since money will be spent to get them repainted. A lot of street paving will also be getting done but Commissioner Maisonneuve doesn't feel that it will affect the SID. Bar Americana is putting in a proposal to the Zoning Board and Commissioner Maisonneuve will speak with the Township Administrator about some concerns. Mr. LaCorte asked Commissioner Maisonneuve how they will spend \$190k on the steps. Commissioner Maisonneuve said that they need to make the steps ADA compliant so they will need to tear the majority out. Mr. Bailer feels we should stress the entire redesign. Ms. Mider mentioned a lot of friends reached out to her with concerns about the cost and feels it needs to be clarified. Mr. Bailer mentioned that they are also ordering a survey to find out who those steps belong to.

CHAIRMAN REMARKS – Anthony Durante

- Mr. Durante thanked everyone for being there. He announced that Ms. Nunziato resigned for professional and personal reasons. He mentioned if anyone had questions they could always reach out to Ms. Nunziato directly. Mr. Durante spoke with Ms. Nunziato and said she speaks very highly of the Board and everything that we do. Ms. Nunziato suggested the owners of Annealed for replacements. Mr. Durante mentioned the Board will need to find a replacement for her position

and if anyone has suggestions to email him or Mr. Bailer. Mr. Durante did let everyone know that he thanked Ms. Nunziato for her time and dedication during her years as a member of the DMC.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Gabe Bailer

Monthly Project Report

- Rescheduled the meeting that was set on Good Friday (4/19) and moved it to April 12th.
- Mr. Bailer recapped his discussion at the capital budget meeting. He requested paving for all parking lots downtown, the Eastman redesign, painting of the Victorian light poles. He also brought up the intersection of North Avenue and North Union and potential beautification projects down the road.
- Mr. Bailer has been in discussion with Mr. Cryan and Maser Engineering regarding the NJDOT but Mr. Bailer is hoping to be involved since it affects the Downtown.
- Video series will be released in March called "Meet the Merchants". Cake Artist, River & Rail and King Strength & Fitness will be some of the first videos shared. The office is also working with TV35 to do some information clips with businesses – the first one being Golden Touch regarding how to pick a diamond.
- Meeting is set with the Township Committee for 3/25 to discuss MotionLoft and the garbage situation at Lot#7. As of now, one property owner does not want to sign up with the new hauler. With that, the owner would have to have bins outside the back of the property. RND will also be present at the meeting.
- Restaurant Week feedback was positive. There were 18 restaurants signed up which was more than last summer. Overall feedback was positive.
- Mr. Bailer introduced a new event, \$26 on the 26th Shop Local. If you spend \$26 in a retail establishment, you will be eligible to attend the reception at A La Mode where they can get a free ice cream as well as a raffle opportunity for a gift certificate for the downtown business of their choice.
- The DMC office and the Downtown Arts Council are working with New Version Movie Theater and every month we will have a movie series. In April, we are showcasing sports movies for kids on Saturdays at 11am– The Sandlot (4/6), Kicking & Screaming (4/13), Bad News Bears (4/20) and League of their Own (4/27). Movies are \$8 for adults, \$6 for kids.
- Planning an event on June 9th called Celebrate Cranford in collaboration with Cranford Community Connections, Chamber of Commerce, Jaycees, Newcomers Club. Will be featuring Cranford Fit Fest, live music at Eastman Clock, kids activities, arts & crafts, sloppy joe eating contest and more.
- Working on getting an outdoor movie for the evening of July 24th. Working with New Vision theater to sell popcorn and snacks.
- Ms. Mider mentioned that the Arts Council is working on a Gallery walk.
- The public piano will be coming out in May. Focusing on having set people perform once a month. Ms. Mider suggested moving it to April since it gets so hot in May.
- The office is also working with the Cranford Dramatic Club to do a performance at the clock.

NEW BUSINESS

- Little Scoops building will be leased to a nail salon – the lease has been finalized.
- Glow Beauty Bar is moving along as well as Cranford Station. Timeline is still a few months away.
- Alfonso's is staying open but will be the Cranford Bakery in April. Mr. O'Donovan suggested reaching out to Riverfront to get more contact information.

BOARD COMMITTEES

- Application Review Committee – Ms. Durante mentioned that he is working with Mr. Bailer and Mr. Connolly to set up a meeting schedule for the year as well as goals for the committee. Some of the goals include reviewing different business proposals, large and small. He also wants to focus on reviewing all of the different ordinances. Mr. Durante feels some are vague and he wants to make sure that businesses understand the ordinances and what they need to do so no one gets frustrated with the process. Mr. Durante hopes that by the fall they will have suggestions for the land development ordinance updates to be put forward for adoption. Bar Americana has submitted plans to build up a second and third floor. Objectively there are a lot of red flags – from a design

standpoint, shared entrance for the units and rooftop bar, front door is on the parking lot side instead of North Avenue, etc... The Dunkin Donuts is also looking to go in on South Avenue and Lincoln. Currently looking to do a drive thru, gas station and walk-up – Mr. Bailer feels that there are concerns with the amount of signage and space.

- Business Development – Ms. Sacco said that they had a committee meeting to reestablish their goals. They would like to work with existing businesses and set up some round table discussions. Considering also bringing in a guest speaker to get some new people going to the events. Meeting with property owners and commercial owners to find out what is available but to also educate them to come to the DMC and to work together to fill these spaces. As the conversation wrapped up regarding business development, Mr. O'Donovan wanted to take a moment to express his concerns about Ms. Nunziato stepping down from the Board and feels that it's a wake-up call. Mr. O'Donovan feels that business owners are the firing line – people come to them to express their frustrations. He feels that Ms. Nunziato will be very much missed on this Board. Mr. Durante mentioned that if there are frustrations to make sure that members voice their concerns in the meetings.
- Finance – Mr. Colangelo said there were no updates. There will be a permanent budget in place in April.
- Maintenance – Mr. Bailer said that there are 15 light posts out. A lot of the lights that have been out are now on. Mr. O'Donovan said that we have had dimmers for over a year that haven't been installed. He feels it's not fair to wait for DPW to do them when it's not their job. Ms. Mider said that the lights that are in aren't uniform and the lumens need to be consistent. Mr. LaCorte's suggestion is that the township should hire an electrical engineer to check all the wiring and fix it – he feels that there is a lot of savings to be made. Mr. Bailer mentioned there is a plan for the installation of trees, tree stump grinding, as well as the two bike racks - all on the DPW list. Mr. LaCorte suggested putting cones on all the uneven concrete areas in the plaza where concrete is since it's a tripping hazard.

RESERVE

- Logo – Mr. Durante opened up the discussion explaining that Darcy was hired to work for the DMC. He reminded everyone that if there is frustration or feedback about the process, this is the time to share it. At the last meeting, the feedback was sent back to Darcy and she sent over a few revised concepts. Darcy's logos were reviewed as well as logos from other towns for idea inspiration. Mr. Durante felt that the logo Ms. Demyen did had a plug and play feel – where any town could be associated with it. Overall the group seemed to like logos from Summit, Metuchen and Westfield. Commissioner Maisonneuve mentioned that this is the opportunity to create an iconic image that without seeing the name, people will understand and make an association with Cranford. Mr. Durante said that he would bring all of this feedback to Darcy so she is aware of the direction the Board wants to go regarding the logo.
- Domain – Mr. O'Donovan reached out to Bill Tipton regarding the domain name of www.downtowncranford.com. GoDaddy quoted that the domain is worth \$1500 but after speaking with Mr. O'Donovan, he is willing to sell it to the DMC for \$500. Mr. Durante made a motion to use \$500 of the reserve money to purchase the domain. All members were in favor. No one opposed. Motion passed.
- Distrx – A promotional flyer was sent out and a meeting is set up for 3/26 at 6pm at the Garlic Rose. Founder of Distrx is going to Skype in to answer questions. Mr. Bailer said the office will also walk to businesses in town to hand out flyers to promote more people to attend the meeting.
- MotionLoft – meeting is set to speak with the township committee regarding MotionLoft and the benefits it could bring to many departments including police, planning, etc...
- Regarding the solar power benches, Mr. Bailer spoke with DPW and it is not included in the Clean Communities grant. Utility box art, graphic artist, tile art project, parking meter bags are also on the reserve budget list. Mr. Bailer also discussed the installation of potentially 20 tree surrounds which are \$200 a tree pit. Sixty trees in the SID still do not have them. Mr. Durante suggested seeing the plants that the DPW has for installing more trees and then coming back to the tree surrounds. Ms. Mider wants to make sure that the Board is looking at the entire SID – she feels that the section

between Walgreens and NJ Wineseller looks disgusting and no one has paid attention to that section.

- Façade grant – in the past there was a façade grant from the DMC that allocated about \$8k per year. Mr. Bailer is looking into this more and feels it is worth including in the budget.
- Pole banners –Mr. Bailer feels that we need more brackets for the poles which are about \$120 per pole. Ms. Mider mentioned that since the Board is looking to get the poles, we should wait until they are done and then look into getting more brackets.
- Post Office Plaza RFP – Mr. Cryan said that it has not gone out yet and will look into adding information about the trees. Mr. Bailer showed different options for the Post Office plaza redesign. It was concluded to discuss this at the next meeting since it would require further discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Motion to adjourn at 10am by Mr. Durante. Mr. Colangelo seconded. All were in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Caren Demyen, Administrative Assistant