

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – MAY 20, 2022**

Present:

Brian Andrews /Commissioner/Liaison
Joe Colangelo/Business owner
Dennis Concha/Business owner
Paul Gallo/Resident
Paul LaCorte/Property owner
Kristen Mider/(Chairwoman) Resident
Steve Oliveira/Property owner
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner

Caren Demyen/Director
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Laura Kreiser/Reporter for The Westfield Leader

Absent:

Tammie Crispino/Business owner
Anthony Durante/Resident
Kendall O'Brien/Resident

Ms. Demyen 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 April 2022 minutes by Ms. Mider. Mr. LaCorte seconded. Minutes were approved.

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS – Commissioner Brian Andrews

- Township approved the North Avenue redevelopment plan. This plan won't touch the Fire House, parking lot, or gazebo. Township and DMC Redevelopment Committee will get to work on the next steps.
- The Township Committee will be working closely with Iron Ore on the Chestnut and High project. The Township Committee is making sure that any impact funds received from this project will be used for traffic and flooding impact.
- Mr. LaCorte asked where the \$700k in impact fees from the Riverfront development ended up. CFO is looking into where that money was spent.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider thanked the members for their attendance at recent subcommittee meetings.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

- Ms. Demyen mentioned the passing of Marissa Maranhao, the owner of Yumpanadas.
- Office Updates
 - Bag ban went into effect on 5/4.
 - Business and property owner meeting was held on April 12 with about 30 business and property owners in attendance. Mr. Concha said he felt meeting in-person is helpful. The next meeting will be held in July.
- Business Updates
 - There are new owners at Hot Yoga Revolution and Hickory & Hill.
 - Max & Luna moved to a new location.
 - The Artist Framer will be reopening in its new location in early June.
 - Property owner updates were provided.
- The relationship with UCEDC is going well. The DMC office continues to work with them on one-on-one and training sessions.
- There will be a movie filming in a residential area next month and the focus is on making sure there is minimal impact on residents and businesses.

- Social media update included review of growth, recent Earth Day posts, and business spotlights.
- Currently trying to decide if Downtown Wi-Fi is worth the investment.
- Recently held ribbon cuttings for Vine & Oak Tavern and LABO Refillery.
- Department requests for Capital Budget Projects close the end of June. Departments can then send requests to Clerk's Office for Township Committee approval to go out for bids. Downtown Cranford's requests are the streetscape study, parking study, and holiday wreaths.
- The sign ordinance will be voted on at the next Township Committee meeting. Ms. Demyen thanked the subcommittee members, as well as Mayor Prunty, Commissioner Andrews, and Graham Petto from Topology.
- Redevelopment Updates
 - Mr. LaCorte said that the rehab zone on North Avenue has been designated by a 3-2 Township Committee vote on May 10. Nothing has been decided in regards to building height and design.
 - Redevelopment Committee met with owners on the other side of North Avenue (Riverside Inn through Bar Americana) on May 19 to update them on rehab zone across the street. Property owners will meet amongst themselves and then get back to the committee regarding their preferences for the area. According to the owners of Swan Cleaners property, the site is now clean. They plan to have a rendering of what they propose for that property in a few weeks. The purpose of the meeting was to assure property owners that they can go to the Township Committee or Redevelopment Committee with any questions or concerns.
- Parklets
 - The planters for the parklets were installed by MWT and the flowers will be going in today.
 - The parklet placement was reviewed by CPD and Engineering.
 - Ms. Demyen said that at some point, the future plans for the parklets need to be reviewed. Currently, they cause a number of difficulties for business owners and the Downtown Cranford office. Ms. Mider said that she loves the parklets but they take up a lot of Ms. Demyen's time and energy. She hopes that the streetscape study will help address changes that can be made to public spaces and outdoor dining. Ms. Demyen said the Downtown Cranford office, as well as other Township Departments and NJDOT, has been fielding a number of calls and emails.
- Netting is being installed under Centennial Avenue bridge to help keep that area free of nesting birds.
- Maintenance
 - Chalk sign installed at Eastman Plaza, asking people not to chalk where people sit.
 - 4 picnic tables were put out at the gazebo.
 - Fountain at Post Office Plaza will be turned on soon.
 - New sod and mulch has been installed at Eastman Plaza.
 - New piano will be painted and then placed at the gazebo.
- Reviewed the gift card program.
- Ms. Demyen did a run-down of recent events, including Peeps-Tacular, Sweet Escape, Arts Day, Sip & Shop, and Spring Hop. Ms. Sayegh said Arts Day was a great event and the Cranford Film Festival had a terrific turnout. Upcoming events include Taste of Cranford, Pride celebration (in collaboration with Cranford Unity Project), Summer Sounds, Storytime, and more.
- There will be a focus on promoting upcoming films and events at the Cranford Theater.
- Ms. Demyen reviewed a number of events that Downtown Cranford would like to hold during Scarecrow Stroll.

Motion to adjourn at 9:45 am by Mr. LaCorte. Seconded by Mr. Andrews, all in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator