

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**MINUTES – NOVEMBER 18, 2022**

**Present:**

Brian Andrews /Commissioner/Liaison  
Joe Colangelo/Business owner  
Anthony Durante/Resident  
Paul Gallo/Resident  
Paul LaCorte/Property owner  
Kristen Mider/(Chairwoman) Resident  
Kendall O'Brien/Resident  
Steve Oliveira/Property Owner  
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner

Caren Demyen/Director  
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Ryan Cooper/Township Attorney  
Kathleen Miller Prunty/Mayor  
Laura Kreiser/Reporter for The Westfield  
Leader

**Absent:**

Dennis Concha/Business owner  
Tammie Crispino/Business owner

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 October 2022 minutes by Ms. Mider. Mr. Colangelo seconded. Mr. Andrews abstained. Minutes were approved.

**MAYOR REMARKS** – Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Township will be seeking volunteers for boards and committees and she asked Board members to encourage people to volunteer. Ms. Prunty thanked the Board for its work on redevelopment.

**TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS** – Commissioner Brian Andrews

- Mr. Andrews feels that the town needs to work on the nuts and bolts of keeping the town running effectively. He pointed to the number of Downtown Cranford lights that continue to be out. He would like the Township Committee to focus on Cranford running better in 2023.
- Mr. Andrews said that Cranford received an award at the League of Municipalities, which he presented to Ms. Demyen.

**CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS** – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider thanked the Downtown office for its hard work on October events.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** - Caren Demyen

- Streetscape Study – James Ribando from Arterial joined via Zoom
  - Mr. Durante said the Streetscape Study is the first step in helping to define the future look and feel of Downtown streets and sidewalks. The study will provide general direction, not specifics. The hope is that the project is wrapped up by next year.
  - The sub-committee met with Arterial a few weeks ago and walked around downtown with them.
  - Mr. Ribando said that Arterial has worked on a number of streets around the area and is interested in real solutions for towns. The first part of a project is coming to town, seeing what

the issues are, and then addressing those issues. The aim is to have conceptual plans and renderings at the end of the project.

- Ms. Demyen said that the next step is creating a steering committee of 5-7 people. She's excited about the grant opportunities that could come from the study and also thanked Mr. Durante and Mr. LaCorte for walking around with her and the team from Arterial.
  - Mr. Ribando said that Arterial makes sure to incorporate each town's unique narrative into designs.
  - Mr. Oliveira asked about artwork in regards to the study. Mr. Durante said that there is the opportunity to create and define public space that would be conducive to art in the study.
  - Ms. Sayegh asked if Mr. Ribando had any takeaways from his walk around downtown. He replied that a central, flex space seems to be lacking. He also said that the sidewalk pavers may need to be replaced eventually, as has been done in other towns.
  - Mr. Durante said that Arterial will set up stakeholder meetings. The DMC Board will define stakeholders and the steering committee. There was a discussion about who should be a part of the steering committee. Ideas included a member from the DMC Board, a Cranford Police officer, business or property owners, and Township Committee member. Mayor Prunty brought up the idea that a Downtown resident should be a part of the steering committee. Mr. LaCorte said he feels the Township Administrator should be a part of it as well. Ms. O'Brien mentioned having a senior resident be a part of it and the Mayor said that point of view would also be captured during the stakeholder meetings.
  - The discussion turned to stakeholders and who should be included. The list included DMC Board, Emergency Services (Police, Fire, EMT), residents, Pedestrian Safety group, and business and property owners. Mr. Durante asked if DOT and County should be a part of it as well. The Board suggested reaching out to Arterial for their feedback and suggestions on stakeholder groups.
- Office Updates
    - Ms. Demyen congratulated a number of businesses and business owners for recent achievements.
    - Social media update – nice growth in October.
  - Business Updates
    - Recent ribbon cuttings included Starbucks and Maktoob by Lola. Craft Protein Bar and 8 Thai ribbon cuttings will be coming up in the next few weeks.
  - Redevelopment
    - Mr. LaCorte said that 49 South (former gas station) will be a medial building. They worked with the business owner to adjust the rendering so both the Township and the business owner were happy with the final results. The property at that gateway to town will be enhanced. In Mr. LaCorte's opinion, there is a need to codify design standards in Cranford.
    - Connolly & Hickey is working on the design for North Ave and Mr. LaCorte believes progress will be made on North Avenue in 2023.
    - Mr. Cooper said that the Township is pursuing ways to get in touch with Santander about the drive-thru property currently for sale on Springfield Avenue.
  - Maintenance
    - Mr. LaCorte said there is an issue with Maintenance, referring to the number of lights out as one example.
    - Ms. Demyen said that Engineering will be doing a map of the lights and also researching where to buy the lights. She feels that progress is being made.
    - Commissioner Andrews said that a tracking system will be put in to keep track of which lights are fixed and when. A professional came out earlier this year and fixed the lights, but many of those are out again.
    - Mayor Prunty said that there has never been an issue of this magnitude with the lights, where so many are out at one time. There has to be an underlying problem that must be addressed.
    - Mr. LaCorte said the repair of the lights needs to be coordinated and taken care of.
  - Holiday banners will be going up and the Jaycees will be decorating Eastman Plaza.

- Delivery of the new holiday wreaths is delayed.
- Little Free Library was installed
- Parklets were removed and will need to be discussed in the future.
- An update on the Downtown Cranford gift cards was provided.
- Events Update
  - Scarecrow Stroll went very well.
  - Ghostbusters Day was very popular and there was a lot of activity downtown.
  - Upcoming events include Small Business Saturday and holiday events.
- Capital Budget Projects
  - The Parking study went out for its 2<sup>nd</sup> RFP.
  - Ms. Demyen would like to set up a meeting with the Finance Committee for budget prep.
  - Almost \$78K has been collected this year in sponsorships and donations.

***Motion to adjourn at 9:56 am by Mr. Lacorte. Seconded by Mr. Colangelo, all in favor.***

Respectively submitted,  
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator