

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 21, 2018**

Present:

Anthony Durante/chairman
Chris Ashrafi/resident
Joe Colangelo/resident
Tom Connolly/business owner
Paul LaCorte/property owner
Jean Maisonneuve/Township Commissioner
Kristen Mider/resident
Steve Needle/property owner
Barry O'Donovan/business owner
Margaret Sacco/property owner
Terence Wall/Township Administrator
Gabe Bailer/Director
Michelle Stavrou/social media coordinator
Ellen O'Donnell/admin. asst.

Absent:

Clara Nunziato/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 July 20, 2018 minutes by Mr. Durante, seconded by Mr. Colangelo, Mr. Connolly abstained; remaining members voted in favor.***

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS - Commissioner Maisonneuve

- Spoke about Township Committee's ongoing discussions regarding affordable housing options, including how it impacts the downtown.

CHAIRMAN REMARKS – Anthony Durante

- Will be reviewing/presenting reserve budget later in meeting; congratulated Kilkenny House owner, Mr. O'Donovan, on 10 year anniversary.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Gabe Bailer

- Announced resignation of administrative assistant

New Business Openings

- Annealed Studio, Look Twice, Café Teasia
 - scheduling ribbon cutting ceremonies with these businesses, Mayor Hannen and Commissioner Maisonneuve.
- Prospective new business looking at former Fish Stand location in Riverfront.

Restaurant Week Feedback

- Survey Monkey results included:
 - restaurants reporting increase in sales
 - restaurants in favor of repeating Restaurant Week, additional dates.
 - Diners agree to attend future Restaurant Week
 - half of responders dined at 2 or more restaurants
 - numerous out of town diners
- Preliminary plan for next Restaurant Week in February, 2019.

Events

- **Music at the Square** Sunday, September 23 @ P.O. Plaza
- includes 2 bands, "The Lovehandles" and "Alden Street Band"; schedule of performers to be posted on Downtown Cranford social media.
- **Scarecrow Stroll**
- Received \$900 in sponsor donations; sponsor logos will appear on the ballot and tote bags.
- Night Stroll is Friday, October 19; plan is to include trick or treating:
 - DMC office to create promotional material for businesses to help promote trick or treating, as suggested by Ms. Sacco.
- **Holiday Shop** – December 14 (new event)
 - Event will be DMC office sponsored; logistics TBD
- **Play group performance**
 - Eastman Plaza October 18

Downtown Art Council

- discussing plans for a Downtown art stroll

Grants

- Awarded \$10k grant from NJTPA, conceptualization only, for Eastman & Miln streets; work on plans starting in December, coordinating with Township engineer; confirmed it is not a traffic study, design exercise only.
- Request submitted to county to conduct traffic study at 4 intersections at South Ave.: at High St., Walnut Ave., Centennial Ave. and South Union; no timeline reported.

Zoning code

- Discussion included need for flexibility with downtown zoning code and the obstacles for prospective businesses when the code is too specific as well as how it affects property owners; agreement that it is inconsistent and not a new issue,
 - **Next step:** arrange meeting to discuss need for changes to zoning code with Ron Johnson, representatives from Zoning Board and DMC Board members Mr. Durante, Mr. Ashrafi, Mr. Colangelo, Mr. Needle.

Day in life of Director

- Described communication efforts and fostering relationships with business owners, township staff, surrounding SID directors, state offices, vendors.
- Maintenance – daily tracking of maintenance issues and troubleshooting.
- Businesses – assist new businesses, facilitate permit application process.
- Marketing – exploring new marketing efforts, e.g. video, creating new website
- Events – manage the execution of events
- Economic Development – member of the Development Review Committee (DRC); in the process of creating an analysis report for the office park; determined 15%-20% of time on projects outside of the SID.
- Board members discussed concerns over time shared with efforts outside of the SID, scope of role, prioritizing downtown issues.

SUB-COMMITTEES

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

- Coordinating with Marketing/Communications; plan to meet before next board meeting.

Finance – C. Ashrafi, P. Lacorte

- Monthly reports distributed.

Maintenance – T. Connolly, P. LaCorte

Victorian Light Outages

- Discussion continued regarding concern of ongoing outages, the installation of the new light heads, public safety
- Mr. Bailer maintains a list of outages and reports on status
- Commissioner Maisonneuve requested a current punch list of maintenance issues t

- Mr. Wall committed to providing an action plan for the light outages by the end of the day.

Trash Receptacles

- Additional trash can purchased and placed at Eastman Plaza; Mr. Bailer reported the office is ordering 25 new, larger trash can liners.
- Ms. Mider recommends a contingency plan for holidays with no trash pickup; Mr. LaCorte suggests contacting owners of Track 5, Urban Burger for their assistance with excessive trash at Eastman Plaza.

Tablespoon sidewalk (North Union Ave.)

- DMC maintenance is scheduled to put pavers in the space.

Eastman Plaza Repair

Township Committee has identified funds to fix bluestone to at Eastman Plaza; anticipate plaza will be closed for a week to repair, working with contractor; getting quote to fix lights

Old City building

- Property owner scheduled to appear In court September 25 to address violations, summons issued by Township Property Maintenance Manager; Mr. Bailer to attend.

Marketing & Communications – C. Nunziato, M. Sacco

- Mr., Bailer reported that the Holiday Guide has been changed to be a year round guide, to include mailing and digital book.
- Mr. O'Donovan suggested getting a quote from another vendor going forward.
- DMC office working on new website.

NEW BUSINESS

Reserve Budget (handout)

- Mr. Durante & Mr. Bailer presented the list of items generated at the previous board meeting in more detail and with cost associated.
- Additional handouts included information for benches with chargeable ports and data collection **
- Data collection - board discussed benefits, costs and need for shared expense with Township
 - Next steps: Mr. Durante will distribute the list, requesting further feedback

Ms. Sacco left at 9:55am

Mr. Needle left at 10:05am

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rita LaBrutto 104 Arlington Road - remarked about zoning being an important issue, not a level playing field; encourages eliminating the idea of imminent domain with regard to township affordance housing discussions and downtown redevelopment; expressed that the maintenance issues are an administration & township issue to resolve, not the Downtown Director; pleased with the mums in P.O. Plaza; prefers if there were no games at that location, since it as a veterans plaza deserves a level of respect; Mr., Durante confirmed that strategic plan was revised based on survey and public feedback, including open ended comments.

Barbara Krause 20 Pittsfield Street - Pleased with mums & hanging baskets in the downtown; offered history of the flagpole at Post Office Plaza; as a representative of the flagpole committee, she doesn't agree with the placement of toys at the plaza.

Frank Krause 20 Pittsfield Street - discussed safety concerns with traffic and surrounding parking at P.O. Plaza with more activity there; not happy with the current use of the P.O. Plaza, feels that it is a historic site that shouldn't be used as a playground; when discussing zoning at 106 Eastman property the Board notified Dr. Krause that it is not in the SID.

❖ **Motion to adjourn at 10:15am by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. Colangelo, all in favor.**

Respectively submitted,

Ellen O'Donnell, Administrative Assistant