

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 16, 2022**

Present:

Brian Andrews /Commissioner/Liaison
Dennis Concha/Business owner
Joe Colangelo/Business owner
Tammie Crispino/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

Absent:

Caren Demyen/Director
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

William Thilly/22 Bloomingdale Ave.
Laura Kreiser/Reporter for The Westfield Leader

Ms. Demyen called the meeting to order at 8:35am. Announcement made that the meeting was posted as required by law.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve July 2022 minutes by Ms. Mider. Mr. Durante seconded. Minutes were approved.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider said that downtown was busy over the summer and thanked Ms. Demyen for her efforts.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

- Office Updates
 - Working with Topology on café permit applications.
 - UCEDC: 1 on 1 sessions coming up and an upcoming collaboration with Cranford Chamber of Commerce and UCEDC on Oct. 12.
 - Worked with OEM on Hurricane Preparedness Kit which was distributed to business and property owners and is also posted on website.
 - Social media update
- Business Updates
 - Simply is now closed. Siam Inn is going through a transition of owners and A&B Promotions may be moving out of the downtown.
 - New Businesses
 - 8 Thai has opened and upcoming openings include Craft, Waxcetera, and Mystic Lobster.
- Grants
 - Grant awarded by Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs will be used for utility box wraps. Call has been put out for artists.
- Maintenance
 - 3 new benches will be delivered to Post Office Plaza later this month
 - Little Library is in process of being painted
 - Plaques have been ordered for Victorian poles
- Redevelopment

- Mr. LaCorte said there were 2 bids for a visual model of North Avenue. The bids are now in the hands of the Township Committee. Mr. LaCorte met with Commissioners Black and O'Connor, as well as Candidate Stulpin to inform them of the progress. The redevelopment committee is planning to meet with property owners on the Swan Cleaners side. The redevelopment committee is waiting for a list of rights for property owners and tenants that will be provided by the Township Attorney. Commissioner Andrews thanked Mr. LaCorte for pushing the process along. The Township Committee wants to make sure that property owners know what's going on so they can make informed decisions.
- Holiday Lights
 - Steve Manginelli is donating his time to install the holiday lights. The cost of the lights will be split with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Parklets will be dismantled on November 1. Discussion needs to be held on the future of the parklets.
- Gift card update was provided. Over \$58k has been sold in Downtown Cranford gift cards. There was discussion that new employees need to be trained on how to redeem the gift cards.
- August Events Recap: Goonies Family Fun Night, Story Time at the Gazebo, Summer Sounds, Sidewalk Sale, and Restaurant Week
- September Events Recap: 908 Day, Paint Out, Wellness Week
- Upcoming October Events
 - Pink Out has sold out
 - Ghost Walk Tour has sold over 300 tickets so far
 - Additional events include Howl-o-Ween, Apple Pie Contest, Candy Stroll, Ghostbusters Day, etc.
- Capital Budget Projects
 - Parking Study, Streetscape Study, and Holiday Decorations

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS – Commissioner Brian Andrews

- Commissioner Andrews presented a 2019 study that was done on Post Office Plaza. He said he hears from multiple people that they want better use of public space. The 2019 study shows options on how that area can be transformed, including making Eastman Plaza into a pedestrian plaza. He would like feedback from the DMC Board on the different ideas. A strong case would have to be made to the NJ DOT as to why the project would benefit Cranford.
- Mr. Durante said that the study was done with a grant and showed a number of different concepts. He believes it should be a part of a bigger study. Ms. Demyen recommended reaching out to property owners in the Eastman Street area if the project moves forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- William Thilly asked about making the lot behind The Garlic Rose an open space. Ms. Demyen said it has been thought about, but a number of trucks go through that area. Mr. Thilly asked about which buildings the DMC would choose to redevelop. Ms. Mider said that the DMC takes its cues from the Township Committee which designates the redevelopment area. In reference to Mr. Thilly's question about development by South and Chestnut, Mr. Durante replied that those areas are private developments. Mr. LaCorte said that the focus of the Redevelopment Committee is on the designated area of the MDTV side of North Avenue.

Ms. Mider motioned to go into a closed session. Mr. Colangelo seconded.

CLOSED SESSION

OPEN SESSION

Motion to adjourn at 10 am by Ms. Mider. Seconded by Mr. LaCorte, all in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator