

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION  
BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES – MAY 21, 2021**

**Present:**

Brian Andrews/Deputy Mayor  
Joe Colangelo/Resident  
Dennis Concha/Business owner  
Tom Connolly/Business owner  
Tammie Crispino/Business owner  
Paul LaCorte/Property owner  
Ashley Legg/Resident  
Kristen Mider/Chairwoman  
Steve Oliveira/Property owner  
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner  
Caren Demyen/ Director  
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

**Absent:**

Anthony Durante/Resident  
Kathleen Prunty/Mayor

Ms. Demyen called the meeting to order at 8:32am. Announcement made that the meeting was posted as required by law.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Motion to approve April 2021 minutes by Mrs. Mider, seconded by Mr. Connolly. All were in favor.

**CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS** – Kristen Mider

- Mrs. Mider said that the cost of lumber affected the parklet design. There has been some grumbling from business owners regarding the redesign, but we needed to pivot. Planters will be painted and placed on top. Ms. Demyen has been painting the planters in an effort to get them completed as quickly as possible. Ms. Demyen will be painting on Sunday, if volunteers are available to help. The office worked hard to make sure it was done properly this year, in regards to businesses having their insurance and the aesthetics of the parklets.
- Trash pickup is on the radar of the DMC Board and Ms. Demyen. Options are being considered, including adding a pickup.
- Maintenance downtown is a bit of a struggle as Rui is out due to a work injury. The DMC is working closely with the DPW to make sure they understand what needs to be done.

**TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS** – Deputy Mayor Andrews

- Provided an update on the closure of Eastman Street. The Township Committee is planning to pass an ordinance to create a pedestrian area for the summer. Commissioner of Transportation denied closing the street, so the town is going to pass an ordinance. Many of the commissioners believe the street closure contributes to the vibrancy of the downtown and that it falls in line with their understanding of the law.
- The Memorial Day parade will be happening, but on a smaller scale.
- Fireworks will also be happening for Independence Day, taking place on July 2. July 2 date is needed due to public safety concerns.
- Three expressions of interest were received for North Avenue redevelopment. The North Avenue Redevelopment Committee held its first meeting last week and will give their feedback to the Township Committee.
- The Township budget was approved and Mr. Andrews believes that it is responsible and addresses the town's needs.
- Mrs. Mider informed the board that Anthony Durante is a member of the North Avenue Redevelopment Committee, representing that DMC Board.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** - Caren Demyen

## Monthly Project Report

- Ms. Demyen said that the office is working on creating inventory lists and also making an effort to walk through the town and meet with business owners.
- Maintenance is being taken care of by the DPW and there is communication between DPW and the DMC office in regards to what needs to be done.
- Business and Property Owner Meeting took place earlier this month and was well attended.
- The Downtown Cranford website continues to update job listings from downtown businesses, though a number are struggling to find staff.
- Upcoming pop-ups will be taking place at Augusta Mae, Ciao Bello, and other businesses.
- Social Media – the office is making an effort to focus on stores that aren't usually mentioned. An upcoming series will be called "A Day in the Life," and spotlight Marino's Seafood.
- Virtual Restaurant Guide will have a few small changes, including the addition of an index. People are using it, which is great to see.
- Events recap:
  - Cran-Tucky Derby took place in early May. The event brought in a number of people from outside Cranford, though it wasn't as busy as past events, due to competition from other things also happening that day.
  - Sip & Shop was successful.
  - Summer Sounds will be starting in June and run through August. Joe Regan will also be playing the Downtown Cranford piano Saturdays in June from 5-7pm.
  - Fire Me Up! is painting two pianos for downtown which will be placed at Eastman Plaza and by the gazebo. Outdoor tables have also been added at the gazebo and Eastman Plaza.
  - June 1<sup>st</sup> is the start of "Take Pride in Downtown Cranford."
    - We will be working with the Cranford Library and Cranford Unity Project on a Story Walk.
    - There will be a plant installation with the Green Thumb Garden Club.
    - Window clings will be given to businesses.
    - The office is working with businesses on donating a percentage of purchases during June to True Colors United.
- New businesses that will be opening in the coming months include Red Crab, a Syrian restaurant, two dentist offices, and Phoenix Modular.
- Ms. Sayegh said that she will be renovating the movie theater in Upper Montclair. Cranford Theater is still closed and she's unsure when it will re-open.
- Ribbon cuttings were held recently, and more are coming up as well.
- The gift card program continues to be a work in progress but the plan is to have it up and running by the fall.
- Working with Stefanie at The Artist Framer on new light pole banners.
- The fountain renovation is nearly complete and there will be a ribbon cutting when it's done.
- There are sponsorships available for fall/winter planters and benches.
- Parklet tops are in the process of being painted. We're grateful to MWT for their help.
- Continuing to work on mapping of the light poles and inventory of the garbage cans. Garbage pickup is a work in progress.

## **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- Marketing/Business Development: Ms. Legg said there are a number of events coming up including Taste of Cranford, Golden Ticket, Lego Night, and more. Wellness Week will be this summer and focus will be given to salons as well.
- Maintenance: Mr. Connolly brought up the need for a bike rack near the parking garage/Cranford Hotel.

- Ms. Demyen added that she's making a Capital Budget list. The electric has to be redone in a number of public spaces and if anyone has thoughts or suggestions about other requests, they can reach out.

***Motion to adjourn at 9:32 am by Mrs. Mider. Mr. LaCorte seconded. All were in favor.***

Respectively submitted,  
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator