

CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 19, 2021

Present:

Joe Colangelo/Resident
Dennis Concha/Business owner
Tammie Crispino/Business owner
Jamie Cryan/Township Administrator
Anthony Durante/Resident
Paul LaCorte/Property owner
Ashley Legg/Resident
Kristen Mider/Chair
Steve Oliveira/Property owner
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner
Brian Andrews/Deputy Mayor
Kathleen Prunty/Mayor
Caren Demyen/Director
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Absent:

Tom Connolly/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 January 2021 minutes by Mr. LaCorte, seconded by Mr. Colangelo. All were in favor.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider thanked everyone for attending. She mentioned there was a great response to the Souperhero Stroll and the Takeover Makeover.

MAYOR REMARKS –Mayor Kathleen Prunty

- Mayor Prunty wanted to let the Board know that the Township Committee authorized advertising requests for expression of interest for the North Avenue redevelopment area. This is an extra step that is not required in a redevelopment process. This is putting out a request from developers, architects, planners to submit concept plans. Ms. Mider asked if the businesses in that area have been made aware and Mayor Prunty confirmed that they have all been contacted.

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS – Deputy Mayor Andrews

- Deputy Mayor Andrews is going to be putting forward a resolution to support a study along North Avenue for pedestrian and bike safety from Centennial and Lincoln. He also made the Board aware that the Township Committee is planning to renew the Cranford Theater Drive-In theater for Spring/Summer 2021.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

Monthly Project Report

- Ms. Demyen updated the Board on the office structure – she thanked everyone for their support as she stepped into the full-time director role as of January 27th. Ms. Stavrou plans to go full-time as of July 1. The maintenance position may move to the DPW pending Township Committee approval.
- Social media continues to grow on Facebook and Instagram. A chart is being updated on which businesses are posted and when. We tried Facebook Live classes with King Strength on Mondays in February – there were about 15-25 people participating each time. Ms. Stavrou also did one-on-one social media support with businesses who contacted her for extra help. We also have

increased our features – in February we featured Martin Jewelers and Track 5. In March we hope to feature Cranford Dental Arts and Chapman Brothers.

- In January we had 377 clicks on our website. Tabs have been updated on a regular basis. Discussion on adding a tab on a job posting for our Downtown businesses.
- Ms. Demyen congratulated the Cranford Theater for winning the Downtown New Jersey Placemaking Award.
- Souperhero Stroll was a great success – the event was sold out and Project Graduation raised \$4400. We received a lot of positive feedback from the businesses and community.
- We are celebrating Black History Month with a storywalk in conjunction with the Cranford Library and Cranford Unity Project.
- Cranford Yarnstormers raised \$1750 for Cranford Family Care by selling crocheted hearts. These were installed at the Gazebo and will be removed in 2 weeks.
- We are continuing to work with our businesses on at-home kits. We worked with Breadsmith on a Bake at Home Kit for \$5. The owner found that people bought multiple items and sales were up and she was pleased with how it went.
- Vinny's Pizza + Pasta was pleased with how the Valentine's Day Pizza Kit – he sold more kits than the holidays.
- Galentine's Day Shopping weekend was successful. We sold 75 bags and each bag had 25 specials/coupons for Downtown businesses.
- My Furry Valentine at Woof Gang Bakery went very well – 42 pets and their owners stopped by for a photo. Owner was happy with the event and said it was their most successful so far. Owner said retail sales are up and she is booked for grooming through March.
- Ms. Demyen thanked Ms. Crispino-Ramos from Fire Me Up for her help with the hearts for the Valentine's Day Scavenger Hunt.
- The Takeover Makeover went very well – the business owner was very pleased with the reveal. We were featured in the Westfield Leader, News 12 and TV35. We found the community was very supportive and we received a lot of positive feedback. We have had two contractors and one downtown business offer their support in the next Takeover Makeover if we decide to continue the program.
- Fire and Ice is this upcoming weekend – we have over a dozen restaurants participating in the wing contest and an ice carver in Lot 1.
- Virtual Restaurant Week is 2/21-2/25. We have partnered with Cranford Dental Arts – they are donating \$5 for every meal that is purchased during this time frame.
- On March 23, the Garden State Film Festival will be at the Cranford Theater.
- Working on the Run DMC event with Think D'sign Print.
- Sofi's is now Sofi's by Christine, Hynes Law Group is on Miln Street, a dentist office will be coming to the hardware store location, Aruta Fine Arts & Appraisals to Giggles.
- We had a ribbon cutting for Papa Ganache and Fettle Market.
- New garbage cans were delivered for Eastman Clock plaza. The older cans will be painted back to black and put in locations throughout the downtown.
- A resident reached out to us about putting in a Little Library in the Downtown. We worked with Tom Connolly on the design on a design of Droeschers Mill. More to come.
- Looking to start a bench sponsorship program to replace the benches. Mr. Durante said it was a no brainer to start this program. Ms. Demyen said she will email the Board for their feedback.
- Ms. Demyen mentioned there was some concerns over the dumpster in Lot 7. The Board discussed their concerns and made a motion to terminate the lease with the current hauler.
- Ms. Demyen is working on a spring parklet/street closure update.

BOARD COMMITTEES:

- Reestablished Board Committees.
- Application Review – Mr. Durante discussed the dental office coming to the hardware store and concerns about parking.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Deputy Mayor Andrews said that they are taking the light situation seriously and he is still doing research. Ms. Mider asked if Engineering would be taking this project over. Deputy Mayor Andrews said that it's still not confirmed.
- Ms. Demyen brought up the gift card program and will email the Board more information so it can be reviewed at the March meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 10:00am by Ms. Mider. Mr. Durante seconded. All were in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Caren Demyen, Director