

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 19, 2021**

Present:

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

Absent:

Kendall O'Brien/Resident – 26 Burchfield Ave.

Ms. Demyen called the meeting to order at 8:30am. Announcement was made that the meeting was posted as required by law.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve October 2021 minutes by Ms. Mider. Minutes were approved. Mr. Durante abstained.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider said that fall was very busy downtown and brought in a lot of foot traffic.
- She complimented Ms. Demyen on improvements with the dumpster and trash pickup, as well as communication with Downtown business and property owners.
- Looking ahead to 2022, she asked Board members to think about their goals for next year. One of her goals is to support Cranford Theater.
- There will be vacancies on the Board, as Mr. Connolly will be leaving the Board.

MAYOR REMARKS – Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty

- There was a meeting last night on the redevelopment on South and Chestnut. They received input from residents and Ms. Prunty feels strongly about providing the public with information. She values input from the DMC Board.

CRANFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT – Captain Ed Davenport

- Captain Davenport introduced the new Cranford Police Department app. It came about as the CPD was looking to improve communication with residents.
- Residents can report traffic concerns including broken parking meters, lights out, etc.
- Parking permits can now be renewed and purchased on the app, and going forward the permit process will all be done on the app via license plates. Cars will no longer need to have parking permit stickers.
- The app is costing CPD around \$2,800/year, with most of the work being done in-house.
- Launched just 3 weeks ago, the app already has 600 users.
- App offers residents a convenient way to provide immediate feedback. Captain Davenport asked help from the Board members in spreading the word about the app and for any feedback they have.
- MPay2Park is working on connecting their pay stations to the app.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT – Frank Genova

- Mr. Genova spoke about the E.F. Britten building and how the property owner put up plywood on the building.
- Property maintenance issued a violation and hasn't heard back. Matt Lubin from Cranford Fire also issued a violation.
- Asbestos inspector from the Department of Labor inspected the property last week.
- The building owner has two weeks to comply, and if not will receive a summons to appear in court.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

Monthly Project Report

- Ms. Demyen provided office updates, which included a meeting with the BID Director of Millburn and UCEDC sessions with business owners.
- Ms. Demyen thanked Deputy Mayor Andrews for reaching out to the community regarding last night's South Avenue redevelopment meeting. She also said the owner of those properties, Brandon Boffard, appreciated the DMC feedback from the October meeting. Mr. Andrews encouraged the DMC Board members to continue to provide feedback.
- In regards to North Avenue redevelopment, there are 2 meeting dates planned, one virtual and one in-person. Ms. Demyen thanked Mayor Prunty and Deputy Mayor Andrews for reaching out to the public in regards to redevelopment information.
- The Renna Media ad has received mixed feedback from business owners but Ms. Demyen feels that it was worth trying as it reached a different audience.
- Ms. Demyen is working with Cranford Police and the Township on updating filming permits and requirements. The Downtown Cranford office will receive \$5,000 from the "Bros" filming, which will cover the cost of new garbage can tops.
- In May 2022, the Plastic bag and Styrofoam bans go into effect statewide.
- NJ Business Magazine will be featuring Cranford as its first "Main Street NJ."
- The Downtown Cranford office will be updating the online holiday gift guide in December, and plans to update the Restaurant Guide in January.
- Ms. Demyen had a conversation with Graham from Topology regarding the sign ordinance. They hope to have something for the DMC Board to review at the December meeting. Mr. Durante said it's great that this has professional support.
- Ms. Demyen said that the office received great feedback from this year's Scarecrow Stroll. Some business owners said October was their busiest month ever.
- The Downtown Cranford office will be working with Cranford Theater with upcoming events and collaborations. Ms. Sayegh said that events are doing well, and that it's becoming more about the experience, not just the movies. She also said that the events are bringing people in from across NJ, not just from the surrounding towns.
- Small Business Saturday is coming up and is one of the biggest annual events downtown. Business owners have been extremely generous with their donations for raffle baskets. There are other additional winter events planned for the month of December, including caroling, horse and carriage rides, and more.
- Ms. Demyen provided an update on new businesses, as well as current vacancies.
- In regards to the Downtown Cranford Gift Card, Ms. Demyen said they're waiting for the actual cards to arrive. The marketing materials are ready to go once the program launches. The program should be live on December 1. 106 businesses have signed up.
- Ms. Demyen asked for feedback on the archway that will be going up in one of the alleyways (between Breadsmith and Sofi's). The Board gave positive feedback and asked about doing another archway in the future as well.
- Ms. Demyen presented a few items on her wishlist for 2022 and asked the Board members to reach out with any ideas they have as well.

Motion to adjourn at 10:06 am by Ms. Mider. Mr. Colangelo seconded. All were in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator