

**THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION
JULY 21, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT were Commissioners Kyle Bozoian, Jim Dwyer, Ken Fowler, and Trip Straub; Kate Haher, Executive Director and Erica Lembo, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for the CID; and Jes Stevens (Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corporation).

MINUTES

Kyle Bozoian moved to approve the May 19, 2020 meeting minutes. Ken Fowler seconded. Minutes approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of 2019/2020 Financials

Trip Straub noted that, overall, the CID had a good year and ended with a surplus. Kate stated that all of the CID's planned projects for the fiscal year had fallen in line or under budget, noting significant savings in the Cocktail Party and Halloween expense line items.

Review of June 2020 Financials

Kate stated that sales tax revenue reported in June came in much lower than projected due to COVID-19, and said that she anticipates revenue over the next two to three months will continue to be lower (from businesses being shut down).

She also mentioned that the CID's Statement of Financial Position (as of June 30, 2020) shows more than 1.7 million dollars in reserves, and noted that the CID has approved approximately \$330,000 of that reserve for operating expenditures and special projects in the 20/21 fiscal year.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS

CWE Streatery

Kate stated that she has worked closely with businesses in the District to kick off the CID's expanded streetscape dining program. She noted that permits will be in place for four weeks at a time (with the option to renew), and stated that there will be three different restaurant "groupings" along Euclid Avenue (Pi Pizzeria and Up-Down STL; Ranoush, Mission Taco Joint, and Salt + Smoke; El Burro Loco, Drunken Fish, and Brennan's).

Kate stated that while the expanded dining program is scheduled to kick off this weekend, Mission Taco Joint and Salt + Smoke had to temporarily shut down on Sunday due to COVID-19 which may push the start back. She said she has reached out to both owners about their reopening plans and will know later today or tomorrow which restaurants will be participating this weekend.

Sidewalk Sale Update

Kate provided a brief recap on the CWE Sidewalk Sale, which took place on Saturday, July 18. She stated that it was an opportunity to help drive traffic into the neighborhood, and with merchandise moved to the sidewalk, visitors could shop for discounts while safely social distancing. She noted that while there wasn't a huge amount of foot traffic that day, there was still a decent number of shoppers throughout the neighborhood. Ken Fowler stated that Enchanting Embellishments had had its best sales day of the year. Kate mentioned that Provisions St. Louis had also seen a steady stream of customers throughout the event. However, she noted that Left Bank Books reported that they didn't have any uptick in sales that day. Kate mentioned that weather is typically tough on this event (i.e. extreme heat or rain), and that she will continue to evaluate the event moving forward.

Gift Card Promotions

Erica Lembo stated that the CID just completed a second round of its gift card incentive program and explained that gift cards will be distributed to participants who stop by the CID office (with their sales receipts) over the next four weeks.

Jim Dwyer asked if Erica could send an email to the Board, listing how many gift cards were given away this round, compared to the first round. Erica said she would email details to the Board once the data has been compiled.

CWE Summer Passport

Erica stated that the CID will soon launch a CWE Summer Passport to help drive traffic into the District and incentivize people to shop and dine throughout the neighborhood. She mentioned that the Passport will feature special promotions from participating businesses in the District and will be available to download on the CWEScene website. She explained that once a participant has received the requested number of stamps, they can turn in their passport (to the CID office) to receive a \$50 gift card. Erica said she will begin reaching out to businesses over the next few days to see who would like to participate.

Trivia Tuesday

Erica stated that the CID will also launch a “Trivia Tuesday” social media contest on its Facebook and Instagram pages. She explained that trivia questions would be posted each Tuesday (about the CWE neighborhood and/or specific businesses in the District) and that participants could submit their answers for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to a business of their choice.

Kate stated that the CID has been working with Novella on these marketing initiatives and that these programs are not only a good way to hopefully drive traffic into the District, but to help the CWE stay top-of-mind and fresh on social media feeds.

Halloween in the CWE

Kate mentioned that she is currently looking into how Halloween can be celebrated in the CWE this year. She stated that large events are still not permitted in the City and noted that it’s too early to tell what the environment (regarding COVID-19) will look like in October. She said that she’s started some discussions with event organizers about possibly having a virtual component this year.

Trip Straub proposed that the CID consider doing a virtual costume contest this year. He suggested that people could sign up in advance and that the CID could film contestants in their costumes. Then on Halloween, the CID could air the videos on its social media page and viewers could vote for their favorite costume. Jim suggested that photos from previous events could be integrated into the video, and noted a virtual costume contest could help the CWE continue its longstanding tradition of “hosting” Halloween, despite the current circumstances.

Kate stated that she will put together a virtual plan for this year’s event and will share it with the Board once it’s ready.

Window Walk

Kate noted that the CID also plans to continue its Window Walk festivities. She explained that Window Walk is an event that can be safely promoted, since large groups of people don’t congregate in one area (like Halloween). She stated that attendees can walk through the neighborhood to view each window, while still abiding by social distancing guidelines. She said that she plans to meet with the two lead designers next week to keep the design process moving forward.

PUBLIC REALM

Streetscape Pilot Program Update

Kate said that she had recently had a conversation with Alderwoman Heather Navarro and Jared Boyd from the Treasurer’s Office, regarding the CID’s proposal to lease 14 parking meters (for up to 18 months) at Maryland and Euclid. Kate reported that the Treasurer’s Office advised that they aren’t in a position to make any commitment on parking spaces for an 18-month period, due to uncertainty regarding revenue/budgets. She mentioned that the Treasurer’s Office has said that they will continue to support the CID’s expanded patio dining program, however, Kate noted that the two projects are completely separate. She stated that she and the Alderwoman have asked Jared Boyd to come back with a formal response from the Treasurer’s Office to what has been proposed (and to offer guidance on what could be adjusted to grant approval, i.e. a shorter term period or higher dollar amount). Therefore, Kate said the streetscape pilot program remains in a holding pattern until she receives an updated response from the Treasurer’s Office.

Retail Study Update

Kate stated that the CID's retail study is moving along, and that H3 Studio has already conducted 12 meetings (with 5 more on the schedule). Kate explained that next steps include a Steering Committee meeting and a resident group meeting. She stated that she is finalizing the Steering Committee and that the consultant had expressed a need for diversity in both groups.

Building Lighting Update

Kate provided an update on the building lighting project. She explained that the project had gone out to bid and that they had received 3 proposals. She shared a summary of the proposals and noted that RJP's proposal was the lowest and most in line with what Randy Burkett's office projected the cost to be. Kate reminded the Board that these designs were done by Randy Burkett a few years back and that the design concepts could be carried through to other properties in the CID with minor adjustments, and explained that the idea was to share the project cost with property owners

Kyle Bozoian asked if there are any renderings of the building lighting design plan. Kate stated that she would email the Board Randy Burkett's lighting design schematics that were developed for the four buildings at McPherson.

Ken asked if this project could move up on the CID's priority list, given the fact that the streetscape pilot program is still in a holding pattern. Jim agreed with Ken and said that the cost seems like a manageable number for the CID to consider. Kate said the next step would be to reach out to Pete Rothschild (who owns the four buildings at the McPherson intersection) to determine if he was interested in sharing the cost of the building lighting. The Board agreed that Kate should reach out to Pete to determine if he is interested in funding 50% of the project (with the CID funding the other 50%).

Kate noted that the Maryland intersection has four different property owners and that the CID may need to consider rolling out the project incrementally, depending on who's on board to participate.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kate stated that several businesses in the District have requested dedicated parking spaces for curbside pick-up and deliveries. She mentioned that she had recently put in a request through the City Street Department, indicating approximately 10 parking spots in the District that could be designated for curbside pick-up (for 10-15 minutes at a time). She explained that signage could be posted on the meters, stating that the spots are reserved for curbside pick-up and deliveries. She noted that she has not yet received a response from the City, but that she plans to follow up and keep the conversation moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

JAMES DWYER, SECRETARY