

**THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION
AUGUST 18, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT were Commissioners Kyle Bozoian, Jim Dwyer, Paul Filla, Ken Fowler, and Trip Straub; Rebecca Simcox, Manager at Kendra Scott; 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 July 21, 2020 meeting minutes. Ken Fowler seconded. Minutes approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of July 2020 Financials

Kate Haher stated that July sales tax revenue was slightly below budget, however, she noted that payments from a few businesses including Straub's and Drunken Fish were not received this month. She advised that if those payments were received, revenue would have been tracking slightly above budget. She also noted that it was a quiet month for expenses, with just a few expenses related to Marketing (for the Friday Night Music Series and the CWE Streatery).

CID Board Positions

Kate introduced Rebecca Simcox, Manager at Kendra Scott, to the Board and advised that Rebecca will be joining the Board once she is formally appointed by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen (which Kate noted would most likely be in October due to a summer recess).

Kate also stated that Ken Fowler had expressed interest in filling the CID's vacant Treasurer position. Trip Straub moved to approve the appointment of Ken as the CID's Treasurer. Jim Dwyer seconded. Motion approved.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS

CWE Streatery Update

Kate provided a brief update on the Central West End Streatery, stating that it has been a success from all angles. She explained that the street has been busy, participating restaurants have followed all City guidelines, and that several restaurants, including Salt + Smoke, Mission Taco, Brennan's and Pi, have reported a 20-25% increase in sales during Streatery weekends. She also noted that after the first weekend, the Streatery expanded its footprint along Euclid Avenue (up to Washington Boulevard) to include Evangeline's and Cocina Latina.

Kate mentioned that the Streatery has drawn a lot of positive press and recited a list of media mentions, which included stories by KSDK, Fox2Now, St. Louis Magazine, Feast, and Sauce. She also stated that community feedback has been favorable and that the CID has received positive emails and comments through social media. She mentioned that she has not received any negative feedback from a safety standpoint, and noted that business have done a great job at spacing their tables six feet apart, managing lines, and making sure guests are all wearing masks.

Kate stated that some of the restaurants have expressed interest in starting the Streatery earlier on Saturdays (the CID's current permit allows for the Streatery to begin at 11 a.m.), as well as extending to Sundays. She said that she would check with retailers to make sure they are on board with expanding. Kate also noted that the City may extend the street permit (from September 30) into October.

Halloween 2020 Virtual Plan

Kate stated that she and Erica recently participated in a Zoom call with CWE Halloween event organizers (Dennis Gorg and Frances Thompson) and TSV Sound & Vision, to discuss a virtual costume contest this year. She explained that individuals could sign up in advance and come to a dedicated location in the CWE to be filmed in their costume. Then, TSV Sound & Vision would create a video that the CID could air on its social media channels the week before Halloween. She stated that the video could be aired several times and that people could vote for their favorite costumes via text. She also noted that restaurants in the District could host “watch parties” inside their establishments to help drum up excitement and attract people into the neighborhood. She stated that the winners would then be announced on the CID’s social media pages on Halloween..

She also mentioned that the video could include short vignettes about the Central West End, or ads for businesses in the District. She explained that this could be a great way to promote the neighborhood and that the video could potentially reach a very large audience (through social media).

Kate stated that it would cost the CID approximately \$25,000 to produce the virtual costume contest (based on the proposal from TSV Sound & Vision). She asked if the Board was in favor of moving forward with the project. The Board agreed that the CID should continue moving forward to produce a virtual costume contest.

Window Walk Update

Kate provided a brief update on Window Walk, noting that the CID continues to plan festivities for the event. 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.

Kate mentioned that she and Erica recently met (via Zoom) with St. Louis Magazine and one of the lead designers from last year to start moving the window design process forward. She noted that the two lead designers are excited to participate and to start reassembling their teams.

Kate reminded Commissioners that the CID had removed its event budget for FY 2020 due to COVID-19. However, she said she thinks it’s important for the CID to continue the traditional Window Walk festivities because it helps drive traffic and energy into the neighborhood during the holiday season. She stated that it would cost approximately \$50,000 to produce Window Walk this year. The Board agreed that the CID should continue its Window Walk festivities.

Gift Card Update

Erica Lembo provided a brief update of the CID’s gift card incentive program. She reported that the CID had given away 42 gift cards in the first round and 29 in the second. Erica also described a few other gift card initiatives that the CID will soon be launching, including a Trivia Tuesday social media contest, a Streatery photo contest, and a tic-tac-toe board (which will be shared on social media on September 1). She explained that these marketing initiatives are not only a good way to hopefully drive traffic into the District, but also to help the CWE stay top-of-mind and fresh on social media feeds.

Annual Report

Erica reminded the Board that she had sent an email last night containing a draft of the CID’s FY 2019-2020 Annual Report. She stated that this report highlights the CID’s successes and accomplishments during the previous fiscal year, and also highlights goals for the upcoming year. She asked the Board to review the document and submit feedback within the next two weeks.

PUBLIC REALM

Streetscape Pilot Program Update

Kate reminded the Board that the Treasurer’s Office had recently advised that they aren’t able to make any commitment on the CID’s proposal to lease 14 parking meters (for up to 18 months) at Maryland and Euclid

for the streetscape pilot program, due to uncertainty regarding revenue/budgets. However, she stated that Alderwoman Heather Navarro had recently had a conversation with Jamie Wilson (Director of the City of St. Louis Street Department) and learned that the Street Department can deem certain areas a “no parking zone.” Kate stated that the Street Department has requested a letter from the design team, outlining the importance of the streetscape project, as well as letters of support from property owners. Kate said she is in the process of acquiring these letters and will continue to keep moving the project forward.

Retail Study Update

Kate reported that the CID’s retail study is moving ahead, and noted that the consultants have had positive one-on-one conversations with multiple business owners in the District. She mentioned that the next step is an Advisory Committee meeting, which is scheduled for September 1.

Maryland Plaza Fountain

Kate mentioned that Koplars Properties had received two bids to repair the Maryland Plaza Fountain and that the CID had approved the lower bid (\$42,000) in July. However, she stated that the contractor has increased the price, after realizing that the repairs are more extensive than originally understood. Kate said that the new cost to repair the fountain comes in just under \$73,000.

She explained that the CID had just recently learned that it is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the fountain pursuant to provisions in the Maryland Plaza South Redevelopment Agreement. Paul Filla asked the date of this agreement. Kate said that the CID was created in 2010 and that the agreement was put in place well before that. She noted that the Koplars have historically provided general routine maintenance of the fountain. Kyle Bozoian asked if the CID could receive routine maintenance records from the Koplars, to ensure that the CID knows what needs to be done to maintain the fountain. Jim Dwyer agreed and suggested that the CID should formalize an understanding with Koplars Properties regarding who is responsible for what going forward. Kate said that she would reach out to the Koplars and request a record of their maintenance repairs.

Building Lighting Update

Kate stated that she had emailed Pete Rothschild after the last Board meeting to determine if he was interested in funding 50% of the building lighting project at McPherson (with the CID funding the other 50%). She reported that he is unable to fund a portion of the project at this time, but that he would keep the CID apprised if his situation changes.

Kate mentioned that the CID could still pursue the project with other property owners. Kyle Bozoian stated that Mac Properties has the project on its radar and would keep Kate updated.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

JAMES DWYER, SECRETARY