

# **THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

**MARCH 21, 2017**

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. at the Chase Park Plaza.

**PRESENT** were Commissioners Jim Dwyer, Derek Gamlin, Chris Lanter, Pete Rothschild and Trip Straub; Kate Maher, Executive Director of the CWE North Community Improvement District, Elisa Essner, Marketing & Communications Coordinator for the CID, and Margot Montague, Marketing Intern for the CID; and Joey Aker and Josh Ivey of Up Down STL.

Derek Gamlin moved to approve the Jan. 17, 2017, minutes; the minutes were approved.

### **UP DOWN STL**

Pete Rothschild introduced Joey Aker and Josh Ivey of Up Down STL, a new arcade bar being developed in the old Herbie's space at Euclid and McPherson.

Josh provided an overview of the business model and outlined the opposition the business was currently facing to its application for a liquor license from the neighborhood. He said that a small group of homeowners within the voting radius for the license had banded together and engaged in a campaign of what he felt was misinformation about the bar and its clientele.

He said that one of the biggest complaints from residents was that Up Down is "just a bar," and not an appropriate replacement for the Balaban's property, which is very sentimental for many longtime residents.

He said that while some residents had expressed concerns that Up Down was not a good fit for the neighborhood, he and his partners had chosen a space in the CWE based on what neighborhoods had worked for them in other markets. He said that there is a growing market for entertainment-based nightlife (their other locations do \$3-5 million annually), and so Up Down had potential to be a very strong contributor to the CID's efforts to enhance the neighborhood.

Residents have also expressed concerns about parking and food offerings, which Josh said could be readily addressed.

Josh invited board members to attend a Q&A session that had been set up for residents (6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 22 at Mary Ann's Tea Room). He said that he and his team had been going door-to-door and speaking by phone to numerous residents, but hoped that this forum would give them an opportunity to address some of the residents' concerns, and to use statistics from the Up Down's other

successful locations (in Des Moines, Kansas City and Minneapolis) to demonstrate its commitment to bringing a positive, young professional crowd to the area.

Pete Rothschild, the building's owner, said he had not expected this level of opposition to Up Down STL, and asked whether the CID would consider endorsing the business' request for a liquor license. He said he would not be involved in a project like this if he didn't feel it would bring much-needed youth and vitality, and added that as owner of properties on all four corners at that intersection, he has a very vested interest in bringing successful projects to that end of the CWE.

Pete recused himself and the board discussed the merits of making recommendations for/against specific businesses coming into the district. The board agreed that while it could take an overall pro-business stance, it should not make statements about specific businesses to avoid possible perceived conflicts of interest. Instead, the board agreed its role should be to support the businesses already within its boundaries and manage the funds it receives from sales at those businesses. The board agreed, however, that commissioners are free to act as individuals regarding proposed new businesses. Derek said he would be happy to offer any advice as a fellow bar owner in the area.

Pete said he disagreed with, but would accept, the board's decision, and that he appreciated their taking time to consider his request.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**Review of February 2017 Financials.** Trip Straub noted that February had been a very strong month for the CID, with \$104,000 in revenue collected (versus the projected \$71,000). This, combined with lower-than-expected expenditures and higher-than-expected sponsorships for Halloween and Window Walk, had put the CID ahead on its YTD budget projections.

Kate noted that the transfer of funds from the CID's ICS account to a new account at Eagle Bank had been completed, and that new account was now reflected in the financial report.

**Review of Preliminary 2017/18 Budget Priorities.** Kate Maher provide a brief overview of the proposed budget for FY 2017/18. She said that a "high-level" summary must be submitted to the city by the end of April, and the final budget must be submitted by the end of June.

Trip recommended that, because of various uncertainties involving some of the CID's larger contributors (ie. The Chase), the projected revenues from sales and use tax collection should be decreased to \$800,000. The board agreed and advised Kate to adjust the budget accordingly and circulate it to the board for review prior to submitting to the city.

## **MARKETING & EVENTS**

**CWE Event Updates.** Kate provided a brief update on the CID's upcoming events. She said the planning process was going smoothly for the second annual CWE Cocktail Party (June 10) and that she was still

working on sponsorships. She said that Major Brands would not be returning as the event's platinum sponsor (\$6,000) this year because they do not have enough accounts in the neighborhood to justify the investment. However, she said she had been working with Derek and his team at Gamlin Restaurant Group on some other liquor sponsor leads, and that several other sponsors (including WashU and Citizen Park) were already confirmed.

## **PUBLIC REALM**

**Facade Lighting Project Update.** Kate reported that Randy Burkett and his team had surveyed the neighborhood, and would be surveying the electrical infrastructure of several neighborhood buildings this week. She said she hoped to have a better sense of his team's timeline by the end of the month.

Kate stated that she had submitted a grant application to St. Louis Development Corp., and that she had received confirmation that the CID was selected to receive funding for this project. She explained that once the design phase was complete she would submit project details and cost information to St. Louis Development Corp for review and that the CID could be awarded up to \$20,000.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

J. DWYER, SECRETARY