

Downtown Improvement Committee

Meeting Minutes April 8th, 2016

1. Call to Order and Welcome

A regular meeting of the Nashua Downtown Improvement Committee was called to order at 7:37 a.m. on April 8th, 2016 in Nashua City Hall, Room 208 by Chairman Marylou Blaisdell.

Present: Marylou Blaisdell, John Koutsos, Ben Clemons, Sy Mahfuz, Ron LeFleur, Richard Lannan (by Phone), Mayor Donchess, Sarah Marchant, James Vayo, Paul Shea, Tracy Hatch, Kathy Hersh, & Jerry Beck.

2. February, 12TH 2016 Meeting Minutes

MOTION MADE BY MARYLOU BLAISDELL TO TABLE THE MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY, 12TH 2016. MOTION SECONDED BY R LEFLEUR, TABLED BY COMMITTEE.

3. Downtown Arts Program Update

MaryLou Blaisdell introduces Kathy Hersh and notes that City Arts Nashua is looking for additional funding for arts programs in downtown Nashua. Kathy Hersh provided a PowerPoint presentation on the progress of ArtVentures. To date, sculptures have been created and displayed on Main Street for the Holiday Stroll, Jerry Beck has engages children from local schools to take part in the creation of the sculptures. ArtVentures anticipates a April 30th Re-launch to bring the sculptures back to Main Street now that winter has passed. Mrs. Hersh presented information about the next ArtVentures project. The Totem Poems initiative. The poems will be created by the Nashua Middle School Students and place on two totems which will be located on Main Street. The specific locations for the totems will be determined at a later date. Mr. Mahfuz commented that he was interested in continuing to provide power for Main Street sculptures if there is a need. Tracy Hatch asked what challenges exist for this program moving forward and how can Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce participate to demonstrate the value to its members. The presentation included discussion about adding a mural to the side of Mr. Lannan's building (170-186 Main Street). Mayor Donchess commented that the mural seems like a great idea and would contribute to the sense of vibrancy for Main Street. There are ongoing discussions about cost between Lannan and Beck. Paul Shea noted that there are more affordable options for creating a mural at this location. Some tactics include only going one story high, limiting lighting, using wheat paste in lieu of a superstructure on the building wall. Mr. Mahfuz believes this project could easily involve fundraising with the business community in order to make ends meet.

4. 2014 Funding Update

Marylou announces that 2015 funding numbers are now known and asks Sarah Marchant to provide an update on the funding available. Mrs. Marchant explains that the funding is reduced by about \$30,000 from last year. The Funding shortfall was the result of two factors; a very difficult winter which kept consumers away from Main Street, and intensive summer construction of the sidewalks on Main Street which resulted in meters being taken off-line. Alderman Ben Clemons requested the committee receive a monthly parking revenue update regardless on meeting. Budget Committee recommended to the Board of Alderman (legislation) that the parking revenue be held in an expendable trust fund which will allow the committee to pool funds year-to-year.

Sy Mahfuz notes sidewalk clearing is a major concern for the businesses, the committee needs to find a way to ensure the sidewalks are cleared immediately after snow storms to ensure ease of access to businesses by retail consumers. Sarah Marchant notes that the city now has the ability to request snow removal as part of their annual private contracts via the transit department.

5. Temple Street Parking

Sarah Marchant explained that R.J. Finlay recently purchased a building on Main Street which also has a rear parking lot on Court Street. R.J. Finlay is making the parking at the rear of this Main Street building open to the public after 5pm.

6. Downtown Banners

James Vayo noted that the Main Street spring banners are ready to go up. There are 11 fewer banners than pole locations and the quoted price to purchase the remaining 11 banners is approximately \$1,500. James Vayo will move forward with purchase of banners from the appropriated funds.

7. Wayfinding & Sign Package Update

James Vayo describes the contents of the Wayfinding and Sign Package RFP as well as the 2003 Wayfinding package. The 2003 package completed by Barlo Signs was the baseline for the current RFP. The RFP package will be ready to go out to bid by late next week. Bid solicitation will be on-going for several weeks and will be reviewed by the committee in June. The RFP contains language to allow maximum flexibility in selecting a vendor to complete the work as outlined in the RFP. Marylou is concerned about ensuring parking is easily found by visitors to the city and wishes to see the parking elements of the RFP go up first. Mayor Donchess explains that James Vayo has laid out the RFP in a manner that allows the city to select the size of the scope of work as well as the ability to separate the design of wayfinding and fabrication of signs. Once a design is complete and cost is identified, there can be a discussion about how much additional funding will be needed to complete the Wayfinding and Signage project. Ben Clemons wishes for the Downtown Improvement Committee to be a part of deciding the design of the wayfinding and signage. Mayor Donchess notes

the Parking Loop is a good idea. James Vayo explains the idea of branding access to parking on the pair of on-way streets known as East/West Pearl Streets and Temple/Factory Streets. The Committee discussed the feasibility of implementing the concept of a Parking Loop for downtown. There is a general consensus that the parking loop concept is a good idea for branding municipal parking. Ben Clemons notes that West Pearl Street may be a good candidate for angled parking if travel is reversed. Koutsos would like to see the parking loop branding to include signage on Main Street to help guide drivers to municipal lots. Sy Mahfuz notes that it would be desired to pair

8. Arts Feasibility Study

May 3rd, the next PEDC meeting, 3rd floor auditorium, the arts feasibility study will be presented to the public.

9. Adjournment and Next Meeting

MOTION TO ADJORN THE MEETING MADE BY MaryLou Blaisdell AT 9:05 AM. SECONDED BY JOHN KOUTSOS AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Marylou notes that meetings from now on will be held 15 minutes later in order to allow city staff members (Marchant & Vayo) to be present for the beginning of future meetings.

The next meeting will take place on May 13th, 2016 at 7:45 a.m.