

# **Downtown Improvement Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

### **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

A special meeting of the Nashua Downtown Improvement Committee was called to order at 7:45 A.M. on November 18, 2016 in Nashua City Hall, Auditorium by Chairwoman Mary Lou Blaisdell.

Present: Richard Lannan, Sy Mahfuz, John Koutsos, Alderman Ben Clemons, Simon Sarris, Ron LeFleur.

City of Nashua staff present: Director Tim Cumming, James Vayo

Members of the public present: James Tobin, Paul Shea

### **2. Approval of October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION BY R. LANNAN TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 14<sup>th</sup> MEETING MINUTES SECONDED BY S. MAHFUZ AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **3. Update on the Holiday Lights**

Chair Blaisdell gives the committee a progress update on the installation of holiday lights for Main Street. She informs the committee that a new garland product and banner enhancers have been installed on the street poles. Asks if Great American Downtown has received a check from the City of Nashua. Director Cummings notes the City of Nashua contribution to Great American Downtown for the holiday light improvements is in the mail.

P. Shea of Great American Downtown notes there are some issues with the electrical outlets on some of the trees, as such, not all trees will have lights hung on them.

### **4. Proposal from Zagster for Bicycle Share**

J Vayo presents information on a proposal for a subscription based bicycle share program for Downtown Nashua. The bicycle share proposal consisted of approximately 30 bicycles which would be placed as 4 or 5 bike stations in the area of downtown. The cost for the program would be approximately \$54,000/year with a two year subscription.

Committee members felt the proposal was cost prohibitive and that such a program would not be a direct benefit to the merchants on Main Street. As such, it was decided they would not recommend using surplus parking revenue to assist in funding such a program.

## **5. Performing Arts Center Progress Update**

J Vayo presents information on the progression of the Phase II feasibility study for the Performing Arts Center. J. Vayo notes the architects (Bruner Cott) has begun site investigations and layout of an archetype program. Mr. Vayo and Scott Aquilina (Bruner Cott) will be out all day on this Friday investigating various sites for fit with the program. J. Vayo notes that a public meeting to review progress should take place sometime in January.

## **6. Wayfinding and Signage Update**

J Vayo presents progress from the design consultants on the wayfinding and sign package for Downtown Nashua (See attached documents labelled “Design Options Meeting” and “Downtown Improvement Committee – Work Progress”). The presentation included information on the existing and suggested color schemes, imagery that is characteristic of Downtown Nashua, early concepts for signage shapes or silhouettes, potential font types which would be ADA compliant for signage, and visual concepts for the design package. Furthermore, the presentation provided information to the committee about user preferences and concerns for downtown via the survey results collected over the last month.

S. Mahfuz expressed concern about any color palette for the signs. Does not want to see the wrong colors and distasteful colors on the wayfinding signs.

J. Vayo notes the signs will likely be black and white with some highlights of color as that is what will most closely reflect the character of the recent infrastructure improvements on Main Street.

Mahfuz also wishes to ensure the lettering on the signs is large enough to be legible, notes he is less concerned about sign background color and more concerned about larger font and legibility.

Alderman Clemons asks if Gateway Signs are being considered in the sign package, he is interested in seeing new gateway signs which direct people from the highway exits into downtown and surrounding civic destinations such as Holman Stadium.

P. Shea notes there is an opportunity in capturing primary East-West travel through the region.

J. Vayo informs the committee that the consultants (Greenman Pedersen Inc.) will be present at the December meeting to collect input from the committee members on the trajectory of the sign package concept and draft signage locations and that this will be an important project milestone in which committee input will be important to the direction of the project.

J. Vayo also notes he is working with the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development to identify creative ways in which DOT approved signage can be placed on the Highway to direct people to utilize Exit 6 to visit Downtown Nashua. He offers to keep the committee updated as the discussion progresses.

S Mahfuz asks if city staff are happy with the work of the signage consultant. J. Vayo notes that Greenman Pedersen is exceeding expectations and feels the City of Nashua is getting a high quality product for the given cost of the consulting services.

## 7. Other Business

Chair Blaisdell asks is there is a fee in place for the Overhead Banner on Main Street. P. Shea describes how the banners are approved and who they are targeted towards. Chair Blaisdell asks if it is possible to review the policy for the Overhead Banners as she would like to see a fee of \$200 to \$300 so that those funds can go back to the surplus revenue for the Downtown Improvement Committee.

S. Mahfuz asks if the most up to date parking revenue information could be sent out to the committee members so they can see what track they are on for revenue in CY2017. J. Vayo offers to send them the last update, notes information for the year will be available for the January meeting.

Chair Blaisdell shared concerns about peddlers and soliciting on Main Street as of late, notes the loss of Police Officers walking Main Street as a contributing factor. P. Shea suggests the consideration of the committee using surplus funding to hire a security officer. J. Vayo suggests that "Downtown Ambassadors" is something the Parking Department has been interested in doing and there may be a possibility to transition of parking enforcement position over to a Downtown concierge style position. J. Koutsos would like the City of Nashua to consider hiring staff to man the offices in the City Garages. J. Vayo asks if the committee would be interested in looking at putting out an RFP for small businesses to operate out of the City garages. Vayo give the example of a Car detailing facility, which would result in the garage being regularly occupied by a human with the benefit of paying a fee to the parking department for the privilege. J. Vayo offers to develop some precedents for review in by the committee in January.

## 8. Adjournment and Next Meeting

**MOTION TO ADJORN THE MEETING MADE BY S. MAHFUZ AT 9:02AM. SECONDED BY J. KOUSOS AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The next meeting will take place on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7:45 a.m. in City Hall Room 208