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CITY OF READING **MAIN STREET BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MEETING MINUTES **MAY 22, 2012**

DRAFT

Call to Order

Chuck Broad (Chairman) called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM at the Outside In Café.

Present

Chuck Broad (Promotion), Brian Fichthorn (Economic), Bill Woolworth (Economic), Donna Reed (Reading City Council Liaison), Sam Loth (Coordinator) and Yohalna Jimenez (CD Administration).

Absent

Johanny Cepeda (Promotion), Tony Calvaresi (Economic), Rene Placido (Design), Ellen Horan (Economic), Michael Leifer (Design), Zane Collings (Economic), Lee Olsen (Design), Lenin Agudo (CD Director), Sean Moretti and Marcelino Colon.

Committee-of-the-Whole

- Minutes of the April 24, 2012 meeting approved as submitted.

4/30/12 Meeting with Lenin Agudo

- Board recommendation to produce bi-lingual City documents to be taken under review by CD office.
 - Board recommendation to draft position statement on Master Plan Design for City Council tabled for further review and action.
 - Approved research and development of sidewalk café guidelines for the Main Street District.
 - Penn Corridor Update meeting has been scheduled for 6/7/12, 3:00 PM at BCCF.
 - Agree to invite a representative from the Reading Parking Authority to Main Street meetings.
 - A meeting with the PA Downtown Center is scheduled for May 22, 2012 at 11:00 AM with the CD office, the Mayor and the DID Director.
- Sam Loth reported that the CD office wishes to clarify the Goals & Objectives of the Main Street Board for FY-2012. Mr. Agudo is interested in having the PA DCED designate the Reading Main Street Program as a state-recognized program. Both Chuck Broad and Sam Loth would like to see a joint Board training session of Main Street/DID conducted by the PDC to clarify G&O and identify long term strategic goals.

Board of Directors Membership & Attendance

- The Board of Directors was originally set at nine members. Donna Reed presented Chuck Broad with a list of six officially approved Board members; the three remaining candidates have not been officially approved by the City Council. In order to be officially approved the outstanding candidates must be interviewed according to City guidelines and provided the individuals meet the qualifications, are presented to City Council for official appointments to the Board.
- Approved: Michael Leifer, Zane Collings, Ellen Horan, Rene Placido, Charles Broad and Brian Fichthorn.
Not Approved: William Woolworth, Johanny Cepeda and Anthony Calvaresi.
- Additional developments include the voluntary deferment as a Board member by Mr. Calvaresi and the ongoing process to approve his replacement with Mr. Sean Moretti (Destination Realty).
- Also, a letter of resignation received on May 21st from Mr. Leifer citing his agreement to serve on the Fire Civil Service Board; an individual may serve on only one Board according to the City Charter. No replacement for Mr. Leifer has been identified. The resignation was not officially accepted because of lack of a quorum.

Main Street Program Sub-Committees

Design Sub-Committee

MSP Design Sub-committee Master Plan

- Lee Olsen reported via e-mail that a summary of comments for the three public meetings on the design plan will be presented to City Council at their workshop meeting on Monday, July 16, 2012.
- As previously noted, the CD office will make a decision on whether to present a position paper to City Council from the Main Street Board on the design plan.
- Donna Reed said that the City and the Parking Authority have begun discussions on the various issues raised by the public regarding the parking authority practices during the public meeting process.
- **Main Street Board Members on the Design Sub-Committee are Rene Placido and Mike Leifer.**

Economic Development Sub-Committee

City of Reading Sidewalk Café Ordinance

- The Board of Directors agreed that new ordinances for economic development within Reading's downtown need to be enacted. To begin the Board assigned the task of researching, reviewing and recommending a new sidewalk café ordinance to the Main Street Economic Development Sub-Committee, Brian Fichthorn, Chair. Mr. Fichthorn will obtain a copy of the current ordinance from the City Code office and begin research.

Fantastico Program for Penn Square

- This program identifies small business operators who are willing to receive business training and then operate businesses from sidewalk carts provided by the DID.
- Currently the City has fee schedules that apply to many activities that are undertaken in the central core. There is a disparity with these fees as some apply to business owners already operating from storefronts while others apply to temporary business activities. While the Fantastico Program is inviting the Board feels it is important not to penalize current permanent business owners with fees that are in excess of those fees paid by temporary business activities.

General Ordinance Overhaul

- The Board once again discussed their belief that there is a need to review and rewrite many of the ordinances that exist to regulate commerce and economic development in the City's central core. The Board especially believes there is a need to establish a mixed use philosophy that includes retail activities in 1st floor spaces and uses of upper floors for residences, business, professional and commercial uses. The City should also consider upper floor spaces and access for parking of vehicles.

DID/MSP HUB (Penn Corridor Update) Meeting

- The PCI (Penn Corridor Initiative) has scheduled a "Penn Corridor Update" round robin meeting with a broad number of organizations to update each other on projects and initiatives underway and being planned or considered. The purpose is to inform each other and to alert each other to overlapping efforts. Scarce resources at each organization might be offered cooperatively to save everyone time, money and effort.

MS Toolbox

City Micro-Loan Program (\$3,000 & Up)
City One-Stop Weekly Development Meeting at City Hall
City CDBG Façade Improvement Grant Program
City Economic Resource Profile Guide
City Citizens Service Center, 1st Floor City Hall

- **Members of the Economic Sub-Committee are Brian Fichthorn, Donna Reed, Ellen Horan, Bill Woolworth and Zane Collings.**

Promotion & Marketing Sub-Committee

Penn Street Environment Issues

- The Board feels that one of its charges is to take up the issues of homelessness, vagrancy and loitering along the Penn Street corridor in downtown Reading.
- Mr. Loth and others will review the procedures and policies of other communities of similar size such as Lancaster City, Bethlehem and others. This information will be shared at future meetings.
- The question was raised whether the City can apply for and accept private foundation funding for various projects. This issue will be discussed further.
- The subject of consistency and design in the 900 and 1000 Blocks of Penn Street was discussed. Mr. Loth said that this is a basic part of the Main Street Program; bringing expertise on merchandising and visual presentations to merchants. This will be discussed during PDC training.
- **Members of the Promotion Sub-Committee are Johanny Cepeda, Donna Reed and Chuck Broad.**

Old & New Business

- The Board agreed to invite Larry Lee or his representative from the Reading Parking Authority to future meetings.
- The Board encourages support for the efforts of Sheila Miller, Director for the Penn Street Farmers' Market running each Friday from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM starting June 1st. Contact: smiller@countyofberks.com Telephone 610.898.5482 or Fax 610.378.7961. Office at the Agricultural Center, 1238 County Welfare Road, Suite 110, Leesport, PA 19533. An interest of the Board is to consider moving the weekly farmers' market to the southwest corner of 5th & Penn Streets in order to provide better access for both vendors and the public.
- Alternate meetings on the 4th Tuesday of every month will occur as follows:
 - Tuesday JUN 26 at 4:30 PM – Peanut Bar
 - Tuesday JUL 24 at 8:00 AM – Outside In Café
 - Tuesday AUG28 at 4:30 PM – Peanut Bar
 - Tuesday SEP25 at 8:00 AM – Outside In Café
 - Tuesday OCT23 at 4:30 PM – Peanut Bar
 - Tuesday NOV27 at 8:00 AM – Outside In Café
 - No December 2012 Meeting

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM.

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday, June 26, 2012 @ 4:30 PM
Peanut Bar, 322 Penn Street
Reading, PA 19601