

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Thursday, December 4, 2014
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers**

4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Steve Bacon, Harry Birkenruth, Tom Callahan, Brid Grant, Matt Hart, Cheyenne Haslett, George Jones, Mike Kirk, Philip Lodewick, Paul McCarthy, Betsy Paterson, Shamim Patwa, Steve Rogers, and Bill Simpson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

Philip Lodewick called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of November 6, 2014

Mike Kirk made a motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2014. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Steve Bacon made a motion to move Agenda Item #4, "Update on Storrs Center", ahead of the Executive Director Report. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Update on Storrs Center – Howard Kaufman (Principal and Managing Member, LeylandAlliance)

Steve Bacon recused himself and left the room for a discussion of Main Street Homes.

Howard Kaufman said the final plan for Main Street Homes includes a combination of 38 town homes and condominiums. Initially, approximately 45 people put down non-binding deposits. Weichert Realtors in Mansfield were brought on as the brokers for the property. Leyland developed purchase agreements and met most of those people who put down deposits.

As of this time, ten people have signed contracts to purchase a home. Additional appointments have been set up. Mr. Kaufman said that people dropped out for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Kaufman said Leyland is now conducting a much broader marketing effort beyond its effort with the Founding Residents (those people who signed non-binding deposits). Ads are being placed in the Hartford Courant, The Chronicle, the Journal Inquirer, and the Daily Campus. They have also used and will continue to use internet marketing which has already resulted in a few leads and contracts for the property.

Mr. Kaufman said Leyland will also be purchasing ad space through the UConn Alumni Association e-communications with alumni.

Mr. Kaufman said a certain number of units will need to be pre-sold before they break ground. That number may depend on what price level and location of units have sold.

Mr. Kaufman said the private infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, extension of utilities) is approximately \$1.5 million.

Brid Grant asked how long it would take to build out the homes. Mr. Kaufman said he thought it would take approximately 15 months.

After the Main Street Homes discussion ended, Mr. Bacon re-entered the meeting.

Mr. Kaufman said the building on the corner of Charles Smith Way and Storrs Road is 75 percent leased with the Hair Cuttery and Wingstop as new tenants. The space closest to Storrs Road has not been leased yet; it is approximately 1,000 to 1,500 square feet. Mr. Kaufman said work should start on the Hair Cuttery space by the end of the month with a spring opening for the two committed tenants.

Customers will park in the lot currently used by Price Chopper. As a point of information, this lot is controlled by the owner, Hart Realty Advisers, not Price Chopper. He said if the lot becomes too crowded, employees will need to move to the parking garage.

With respect to Phase 2 construction, Mr. Kaufman said the VS-2 building (along Storrs Road) is the furthest along followed by VS-5 and VS8-9. The deadline for completion of the residential units is mid-July. There will be 204 apartments in Phase 2.

There is 34,000 square feet of commercial space in Phase 2. One lease has been signed and there are discussions about the other spaces.

Mr. Kaufman said he continues to talk to Leyland's commercial leasing agent Dan Zelson about clothing stores, and Mr. Zelson reiterated that clothing stores tend to want to be in malls or open in existing shopping centers where the cost is less.

With respect to the vacancies in 1 Royce Circle, Mr. Kaufman said they are still waiting for ThinkitDrinkit to complete their build out. The former one Tribe space has been leased and should open in about a month.

Ms. Grant left the meeting.

Mr. Kaufman said there continues to be interest in a hotel in the downtown from hotel developers.

Cheyenne Haslett encouraged Mr. Kaufman to seek the smaller retailers that would allow Mansfield to serve as a destination. She also suggested more breakfast/brunch places. Ms. Haslett thought a vintage/thrift clothing store would also work well.

Mr. Lodewick suggested a furniture consignment store.

Toni Moran suggested another higher end restaurant that allows for a quiet meal.

Ms. van Zelm said she would follow-up with Price Chopper to see how the announced name change to Market 32 affects the Mansfield store.

5. Executive Director Report

Ms. van Zelm asked Mike Kirk if he would give the Board an update on the UConn Master Plan. Mr. Kirk said that comments to the UConn Master Plan are open until January 26, 2015. The Plan will go to the Board of Trustees in January, and be submitted for final review by the Trustees in the spring.

Ms. van Zelm said the holiday reception for Board and committee members, and Partnership patrons is December 9 at 5:30 pm at the UConn Co-op at Storrs Center.

Ms. van Zelm said that Partnership Communications and Special Projects Manager Kathleen Paterson has worked with the Town and Matt Joyce with The Wilder Companies to put up lights on the trees and bushes in the Town Square. The lights will go on from 4 pm to 5 am.

Ms. van Zelm said she continues to work with the Town on ordinances for the Town Square and public spaces. She hopes to bring drafts of ordinances and policies to the next Board meeting.

Matt Hart left the meeting.

6. Four Corners Sewer and Water Advisory Committee Update

Toni Moran said the Town Council has asked for an update on the sewer and water projects at a future Town Council meeting. She said the Town has submitted a State Small Town Economic Assistance Program grant for \$500,000 to help alleviate some of the sewer costs.

7. Report from Committees

Advertising and Promotion

Ms. Moran said the 2nd annual Winter Welcome is planned for Dec. 13 from 1 pm to 5 pm in the downtown. Carolers and Santa will participate along with specials at several of the businesses.

Ms. Moran said the Committee heard a presentation from the UConn student ATION marketing group on their proposed design of a logo for Downtown Storrs. The Committee commented on the draft logo designs and made a recommendation on one logo for further tweaking. The goal is to bring the logo to the Board in January.

Square Fair

Ms. Moran said one Square Fair is being discussed vs. a series as was done last year.

Celebrate Mansfield Festival

Ms. Paterson said the Festival Subcommittee will meet in January.

Business Development and Retention

Steve Rogers said the Committee did not meet last month.

Executive Committee

Mr. Lodewick said the Committee along with Membership Development Chair George Jones and Town Manager Matt Hart met to continue the discussion of the Partnership's transition to its management role in downtown Storrs. The Committee talked about the overarching goal of completing Storrs Center. The Committee also reviewed several of the operation functions that the Partnership now undertakes including parking, events, marketing, assisting with managing the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center, etc.

Members of the Committee and Mr. Hart will look to meet with the principal property owners from Leyland, EdR, and Hart to discuss how to best coordinate the management of Storrs Center. What operational and financial role will they play in the Partnership?

Finance and Administration

Mr. Callahan said the Committee did not meet last month.

Membership Development

George Jones said the Committee finalized its membership renewal letters to go out in early January.

Planning and Design

Mr. Bacon said the Committee met with the construction manager for Educational Playcare to go over the preliminary Sustainability Guidelines checklist. The Committee will meet with them again in early 2015. Mr. Bacon said the Committee will meet with the Phase 2 architect Humphreys Architects at its December meeting.

8. Other

Mike Kirk announced that UConn has opted to exercise its right of first refusal to buy the Nathan Hall Inn. The Board of Trustees will consider approving a purchase and sale agreement at its December meeting. If the purchase is approved, UConn will continue to use the hotel as a hotel and residents for its students, for three years. At that time, it would expect to turn the hotel into a dormitory.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Callahan made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Paterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.