

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Thursday, February 5, 2015  
Mansfield Town Hall  
Town Council Chambers**

**4:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

Present: Steve Bacon, Harry Birkenruth, Tom Callahan, George Jones, Matt Hart, Riley Hasson, Philip Lodewick (by phone), Paul McCarthy, Toni Moran, Betsy Paterson, Shamim Patwa, Steve Rogers, Paul Shapiro, and Bill Simpson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson, Sarah Delia

**1. Call to Order**

Vice President Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

**2. Opportunity for Public to Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2015**

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes of January 8, 2015. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**4. Executive Director Report**

Cynthia van Zelm referred to Kathleen Paterson, Communications and Special Projects Manager for the Partnership, to report on Winter Fun Week. Ms. K. Paterson said the culminating event of Winter Fun Week will be the Storrs Center Stroll from 1 to 5 pm on Saturday, February 7 hosted by the UConn Alumni Association. Check in will be in the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center with ice carving by UConn Dining Services on the Town Square and many performances, including Puppet Arts, the UConn Band and several a Capella groups. Many of the Storrs Center businesses will be offering specials for the event.

Ms. van Zelm said the firm XTX Associates from Glastonbury, CT has been chosen to install the stage roof and the light pylons on the Town Square. There will be a change in the shape

of the stage roof; it will be straight rather than curved, to meet the budget. The pre-construction meeting was held last week with an anticipated April start date for installation. A crane will be needed for this installation. The sculpture and trellises will be completed in March. A donor event is tentatively planned for May 1, with a private event followed by a public event on the Town Square.

Ms. van Zelm reported that the Partnership is continuing to work this semester with ATION, the student marketing group from UConn. This semester, they will be working on a video marketing the downtown area.

As follow-up to the January Board meeting, Ms. van Zelm showed the Downtown Storrs logo to Board member Mike Kirk, representing UConn. He had no concerns with the logo and said he would show it to President Herbst.

There will be a meeting February 11 to discuss the potential role of the current property owners – Storrs Center Alliance, EdR, and Hart Realty Advisors – in the governance of the Partnership.

Ms. van Zelm reported that Phase 2 is proceeding. Mechanicals are being installed in the VS-2 building that borders Storrs Road and Royce Circle. The winter weather has caused some delays. According to the Oaks on the Square, 70 percent of all the apartments (current and under construction) are leased.

As follow-up to the January Board meeting, Steve Bacon had reached out to Jeffrey Resetco with EdR about following up on radon testing in the Phase 1 buildings. Mr. Bacon read an email from Mr. Resetco reporting that BL Companies had conducted radon testing in the 1 and 9 Dog Lane, and 1 Royce Circle buildings. Radon levels were not detected above the EPA guidelines. BL did not recommend further action at the site at this time. EdR may elect to perform future testing on Phase 2 to ensure the radon levels are low there as well.

There followed a discussion of whether the Partnership would recommend any further action for the Phase 2 buildings. During the discussion, it was determined that radon testing is not required (per the Executive Director at the Eastern Highlands Health District). It is often sought by a buyer in a residential home during the sale process.

Mr. Bacon reminded the Board that this issue came up because it is included in the Storrs Center Sustainability Guidelines checklist as an item that needs to be reviewed during the builder/architect's review of the Guidelines. Phase 2 includes some first floor apartments so that is why the issue is being called out.

Tom Callahan said that the owner has a responsibility in regard to radon mitigation; the Partnership may want to encourage testing on a regular basis.

Mr. Bacon said he will contact Mr. Resetco and let him know that the action they took in Phase 1 was prudent, and that the Partnership would prefer that the same radon testing be done for the Phase 2 buildings. Mr. Bacon will also ask when testing will be done in the 8 Royce Circle building.

Ms. van Zelm mentioned that the Partnership is still looking for volunteers for the Storrs Center Stroll on Saturday.

Ms. van Zelm reported that Storrs Center Alliance is working diligently to market the Main Street Homes. The financing for their construction was approved.

Tom Callahan left the meeting.

## **5. Review of DRAFT Ordinances and Town Square Policies**

Toni Moran, Chair of the Advertising and Promotion Committee, reviewed the proposed streets and sidewalks (revised from what is now in place), dog waste and Town Square ordinances; as well as policies for the use of the Town Square, policies for street performers, and Town Square use application form, and street performers permit form, and insurance requirements. The draft ordinances and policies had been reviewed by the Advertising and Promotion Committee.

Ms. Moran said some of the key issues around the streets and sidewalks are the prohibition of skateboards on the Town Square and in the parking garage, and the prohibition of motorized scooters on the Town Square.

With respect to the draft dog waste ordinance, it would set a fine for someone who does not pick up after their dog. The provisions do not apply to guide dogs.

Ms. Moran said the proposed Town Square ordinance prohibits smoking on the Town Square.

She said there was a question on whether the policies should be referred to the Town Council with the ordinances. Typically, policies are developed and implemented administratively.

Ms. Moran then reviewed the Town Square policies. She said the goal is for the Square to be actively used and open to everyone. She noted that UConn is permitted to use the Square for up to 24 events a year. UConn will be in touch with the Partnership staff as to who the point person is at UConn to schedule these events.

Ms. Moran said the Advertising and Promotion Committee deferred the final decision of whether fundraising should be allowed to the Board. There needs to be a balance between overwhelming visitors to the Square with fundraising requests and not discouraging worthy groups from fundraising. The Committee proposed that fundraising either be banned or that it be allowed only for non-profit organizations.

Ms. van Zelm said the Town's insurance carrier CIRMA was reviewing the insurance requirements.

Ms. Moran said that street performers would be required to obtain a permit.

The Board discussed who should review and implement the Town Square policies. Mr. Bacon noted that if policies were to be changed, it would be a more lengthy process if it was done at the Town Council level. Matt Hart recommended that the Partnership have the discretion to set and revise policies for the Town Square. Ms. Moran asked that the policies be separated from the procedures.

Paul Shapiro raised the issue of whether First Amendment rights were protected under the draft Town Square ordinance. Ms. Moran said she did not think there was anything in the draft ordinance to prohibit free speech on the Square. The Board discussed this issue at length and recommended that language be added to the draft ordinance as a preamble to protect First Amendment rights, and to acknowledge that the Square is a venue for a public forum.

Ms. Moran also suggested that definition of event should be defined -- in terms of public use, restrooms, the use of the stage, food, parking and trash, etc.

With respect to the fines associated with failure to clean sidewalks, Steve Rogers thought the fine was too high especially for residents. This will be reviewed further.

Mr. Rogers also expressed concern about requiring a street performer to obtain a permit for a performance. Will this stifle spontaneity? He also thought the fee for a permit was too high. This will be reviewed as well.

Ms. Moran said there are costs to the Partnership and the Town for administering events and providing administrative support for events.

Ms. Moran made a motion to table further discussion on the Town Square ordinances and policies until the next Board meeting. Shamim Patwa seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. Moran asked Board members to send Ms. van Zelm any ideas on how to address fundraising on the Town Square.

Harry Birkenruth, Matt Hart, and Kathleen Paterson left the meeting.

## **6. Four Corners Sewer and Water Study Advisory Committee Update**

Mr. Shapiro reported that the CT Office of Policy and Management will determine if the Four Corners Sewer project requires an Environmental Impact Evaluation.

## **7. Report from Committees**

### Advertising and Promotion

There was no further report than the Town Square and ordinance and policy review.

### Business Development and Retention

The Committee has not met since the last Board meeting.

### Finance and Administration

The Committee wanted more detail on the financials for the various grants and capital projects in Storrs Center. Ms. van Zelm is working with the Town's Finance Department.

Town staff continues to work on the required CDOT paperwork to close out the Storrs Road and Dog Lane projects.

The Committee will bring a draft budget to the Board after more discussion with the property owners about their involvement in the Partnership.

### Membership Development

George Jones stated that the membership renewal letters for 2015 have been sent. Memberships are coming in.

### Nominating Committee

Ms. van Zelm said the Nominating Committee will likely meet on March 5.

### Planning and Design

Mr. Bacon said there was no further report.

## **8. Executive Director Annual Evaluation**

Ms. van Zelm passed out the Executive Director evaluation form. Members were asked to fill out the evaluation and return to Mr. Lodewick by March 2. Ms. van Zelm's evaluation will be at the March 5 Board meeting.

## **9. Adjourn**

Ms. Paterson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.

*Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm and Sarah Delia.*