



Downtown Committee

Dec. 1, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Present: **Jaimee Bellissimo**, Manchester Transit Authority; **Linda Connell**, McLane, Graf, Raulerson & Middleton; **Stephanie Lewry**, Intown Manchester; **Jennifer Rounds**, Shaggin' Salon; **Brigitte Lunderville**, Granite Commercial Real Estate; **Jay Minkarah**, City of Manchester Economic Development Office; **Charles Panasis**, Brady Sullivan Properties; **Brad Alderfer**, Northwestern Mutual; **Judi Window**, Granite State Ambassadors; **Will Stewart**, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Linda Connell called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Downtown Publication

- Will Stewart reported that Chamber staff suggested combining the printing of a downtown publication with Advantage magazine as a removable insert with an overrun for independent distribution.
- Judi Window, whose Granite State Ambassadors man the Manchester Visitors Center, the Airport Welcome Desk and other tourist-oriented information center, suggested printing a brochure-sized publication that is “rackable” in visitor centers. She also advised including distribution costs, in addition to printing costs, in all pricing estimates. Will Stewart will have cost estimates available for the January meeting.
- It was further suggested that given the limited space available on a brochure, additional information should be catalogued on a website, the URL and a QR code for which would be printed on said brochure.

3. Intown Manchester Survey Results

- Stephanie Lewry reported that Intown Manchester recently undertook a survey of all downtown property owners and tenants. The survey, which had a 13 percent response rate, reflected the responses of very different areas of the Central Business Service District that have different issues and perspective. That said, highlights of the survey included concerns about panhandlers and the desire for additional festivals.

4. Downtown Sidewalk Improvements

- The issue of deteriorating sidewalks is often voiced by downtown Chamber members, but no one seems to have a solution to the issue given the multimillion dollar cost of replacing the sidewalks. Jay Minkarah noted the best way to accomplish such a project would be to float a bond, something the aldermen are

unlikely to want to take on, especially as they recently floated a bond to construct the municipal center on Valley Street.

- This challenge notwithstanding, it was noted that the Chamber, as the voice of the business community, is in a unique position to champion for new sidewalks given their negative impact on downtown, the city's economic engine which contains the core of the city's tax base.
- Before proceeding further, Will Stewart agreeing to contact Public Works Director Kevin Sheppard and Ward 3 Alderman Pat Long to learn more about the City's sidewalk policy/priority list and specific sidewalk cost estimates.

5. Old/New Business

- Stephanie Lewry noted that contrary to previous discussions, there are plenty of parking signs downtown, though only those parking signs on private property are designated by a "Big Blue P"; those on City property are, by ordinance, green. Jay Minkarah wondered if the existing parking signs are positioned well enough to guide visitors to downtown parking from Exit 5 and the Amoskeag Rotary. Will Stewart suggested mapping the location of said signs to determine if this is so.
- Jaimee Bellissimo informed the committee that the Green DASH rolling press conference originally scheduled for November has been postponed until January, sometime after the Primary.

6. Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Next Meeting: 2 p.m., Thursday, January 26, 2012