



Downtown Committee

Sept. 29, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Present: **Jaimee Bellissimo**, Manchester Transit Authority; **Scott Shubert**, Anagnost Companies; **Jennifer Rounds**, Shaggin' Salon; **Jay Minkarah**, City of Manchester Economic Development Office; **Don St. Germain**, St. Mary's Bank, **Stephanie Lewry**, Intown Manchester; **Cindy Lafond**, YMCA; **Will Stewart**, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

Will Stewart called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Will Stewart introduced himself as the committee's new staff liaison and passed along the regrets of Linda Connell, committee chair, who was prevented from attending the meeting due to work.

2. Discussion of Downtown Committee Goals

As part of his new duties, Will Stewart compiled a one-page draft document regarding the committee's mission, goals, strategies, tactics and timeline. Committee members were invited to suggest additions, deletions and other edits to better reflect their vision for the committee's focus going forward. Suggestions included:

- Increasing downtown market-rate residential properties.
- Increasing downtown commercial occupancy rates with a focus on business and financial services.
- Converting downtown Class B office space to residential.
- Advocate for better parking signage (specifically big, blue "P" signs) downtown.
- Advocate for public-private partnership to totally reconstruct downtown sidewalks.
- Study downtown bicycle infrastructure.
- Create, print and distribute a quarterly booklet showing the locations of downtown events, parking, apartments, restaurants, etc., to better inform residents and visitors alike of what's available downtown.

3. Green DASH Update

- The makeover of the downtown circulator has resulted in a 28% ridership increase.
- Ads are currently being sold to finance a printed map showing the bus's route and major stops. The map will be distributed across the Central Business District.

4. Policy Roundtable Results

- Downtown-related issues discussed at the Chamber's two Policy Roundtable events in September, 2011, included tourism, a lack of retail options downtown, a reluctance to implement the International Existing Building Code, loud motorcycle

noise, poorly-maintained brick sidewalks, poor funding of the MTA and a lack of city/downtown marketing.

5. Old/New Business

- There was no old or new business addressed.

6. Adjourn

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

**Next Meeting: 2 p.m., Thursday, October 27, 2011
Fourth Thursday of the month**