



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved DOWNTOWN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 16, 2015

5:30 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 108 (City-County Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 11 - Michael E. Verveer; Ledell Zellers; Davy Mayer; Gregory O. Frank; Mary C. Carbine; Ted Crabb; Thomas E. Hirsch; Matthew J. Covert; Sandra J. Torkildson; Austin E. McClendon and Adam J. Plotkin

APPROVAL OF March 22, 2015 MINUTES

A motion was made by McClendon, seconded by Crabb, to Approve the March 22, 2015 Minutes with the following change to the last sentence in Agenda Item 1 so that it reads:

“Torkildson will work with the BID and the Parks Division to notify affected property and business owners, if it hasn’t already been done.”

The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

Mary Carbine recused herself from Item 2c regarding the Programming Plan for Philosophers’ Grove as she is the director of the BID. Carbine added that she will be happy to answer any questions from the Committee, if they so desire on the BID’s role in the Programming Plan.

Greg Frank also recused himself from item 2c, as the President of the BID.

1. [36258](#) Report of Mall Maintenance and Special Events 2015

Lisa Laschinger, Mall Maintenance Supervisor, gave a report about spring activities including the removal of 19 dead trees and their replacement schedule. Verveer said that a constituent was concerned about the asphalt used to patch to the stump until a new tree was planted, itself had become a tripping hazard and would like streets to look into it.

Laschinger said that Parks staff has been working on the notices to the expanded mall area and that the new areas will be added September 1. It was determined by the commission that letters of notification should go out by no later than August 1, so that property and store owners know what is coming so they don’t contract out with snow removers etc. Verveer also suggested that there be a public information meeting, and that he could help reserve the

Fluno Center sometime before August 1. Carbine suggested that Ruth Rohlich of the City Office of Business Resources would be a good contact to get businesses contacts for those that are outside the BID boundary. Carbine said that she would help with BID businesses contacts if needed.

2a. [36539](#)

Philosophers Grove

Laschinger mentioned the increase in food giveaways in the Philosophers' Grove area. The clean up after such events has been a problem, as these are not permitted events and they often happen at the ends of shifts so that the crews cannot clean up after them as soon as they would like.

Carbine asked about the location and frequency of the events. Laschinger replied that the giveaways are generally in the Philosophers' Grove and occur on Fridays and Saturdays but not consistent. Verveer said that the Friday afternoon events by Holy Redeemer used to be permitted in Lisa Link Peace Park, and that perhaps staff can contact them an appeal to them to at least coordinate times with the Mall Crews.. Carbine said that she believes that is the "Pro Labore Dei" group. Carbine added that the "Friends of the State Street family" group has a schedule on line. (Staff looked it up online, and it appears that they have a 3pm Saturday Food event.)

Frank said that this is a delicate issue, and the purpose s good, but that it seems to attract more than people who are in need, but also people who take advantage of them. Crabb wondered of the Vending Oversight Commission should be looking into this issue. Verveer said that the Street Use staff team is a better group as money doesn't change hands. Verveer added that the DCC should invite these groups to the DCC to talk about these issues. Torkildson asked the city to approach them to at least talk about coordination of trash bins and clean up. Crabb added that staff could potentially offer up[trash containers and see what might help. Carbine said that cleanup issues last many hours longer than the events, as food containers and other debris remains in the area for hours.

Verveer said that two years ago he convened a group to look at this issue but that there wasn't a political will to do anything about it. Verveer said that there are ordinances on the books that could be enforced to prevent these gatherings, but he doubts there would be political will today to enforce them. The DCC asked staff to look into this issue for future discussions.

Rebecca Cnare, Planning Staff, gave an update that Traffic Engineering had replaced the lights in Philosophers' Grove from an 11 watt LED bulb to a 19 watt LED bulb to increase lighting levels in the area as requested by the DCC.

2b. [37817](#)

Approving plans and specifications for modifications to the Philosophers' Grove located on the 100 Block of West Mifflin Street. (4th AD)

Staff gave a brief overview of the public process on the resolution today, noting that both Board of Public Works (BPW) and the Madison Arts Commission (MAC) voted to approve the resolution. The MAC had a thorough discussion that included emotional input from the artist, who ultimately understood the need to comprise and said that she wouldn't object to the removal of the 11 stones. The MAC has forwarded a memo to the DCC and the Common Council with their concerns and input. Verveer added that BPW member and Alder Paul Skidmore voted against the proposal as he said that as a person with a background in private security personal he did not believe that proposal went far enough.

Frank said that through this process he has a new appreciation for how important art is to the community. McClendon said that he has appreciated the input from the new owners of Teddywedgers and that there testimony has been really helpful during this process.

Crabb noted that the sidewalk is very tight where the cul-de-sac is closest to the building

facades. He would like staff to continue to look at ideas that could alleviate this problem. Covert added that there might even be some temporary measures, like adding some pavement to help.

Staff Noted that the bike corral idea in front of the Silver Dollar is also still a work in progress, and that the police have indicated that there are ordinances in place that would allow police to make sure that other items are not being stored at the bike corral.

The Staff also mentioned that there was a discussion about the Top of State Street Bus Shelter during a staff meeting on potential physical changes to Philosophers' Grove. The police had mentioned that there has been some trouble with that station and that due to the tight sidewalk in that area mixed with the large number of people milling around, that it has become a pinch point that blocks the flow of pedestrian movement. Metro Transit looked at the usage of the stop, and was not opposed to exploring alternatives that would eliminate that stop and move it around the corner to the existing stop at North Carroll Street. The DCC indicated that they would like staff to look into this idea further and had a discussion on the process to use to move this idea forward without compromising the timeline for other physical changes to the area.

The chair recognized Rosemary Lee, who registered to speak during the Committee discussion. Rosemary said that she is disappointed that the Committee would even think about removing a stop and that all of the committee members must drive or they would never consider it. The shelter is a very important place for inclement weather as well as a place for people to sit down that need to rest on the sidewalk.

A motion was made by Crabb, seconded by Verveer, to Return to Lead with the Following Recommendation(s) to the BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS to add a clause: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that City staff should study the effects of potential relocation of the eastbound bus stop at the 100 block of State Street to the existing stop on North Carroll, along with the removal the bus shelter at the top of State Street. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

2c. [37858](#)

SUBSTITUTE Amending the 2015 Adopted Operating Budget of the Planning Division by appropriating ~~\$25,000~~; \$15,000 from the Contingent Reserve, \$5,000 from the Planning Division Placemaking Budget, and \$5,000 from the Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development Budget and to authorize the City of Madison to enter into a contract with the Madison Central Business Improvement District to fund the creation of an Activities Program at Philosophers' Grove located on the 100 Block of West Mifflin Street, and the performance stage on the 100 Block of North Carroll Street (4th AD).

Staff gave a brief overview of the substitute resolution and asked Mary Carbine to describe the potential role of the BID. Staff described that the ideas behind the funding was not only to provide some administration to actually hire someone to go out and seek programming, but it is also using at least half of the funding, if not more, to pay artists and performers honorariums and organizer stipends to encourage quality programming, instead of always asking groups to perform for free.

Hirsch asked what types of programming will be considered. Carbine answered that they will look for a wide range of events, including music performance, interactive and community activities, athletic and food focused events, pop up markets such as flea markets, children's events etc. Frank added that fundraising wise, he thinks the BID can raise even more than the required match of \$5,000. Carbine noted that she has been working with the Parks Foundation to set up a 501c3 to allow tax deductible donations. Crabb encouraged the BID to work with the Downtown Library Bubbler as well as other nearby cultural partners.

Hirsch asked about the timing and if events happen during the farmers markets. Carbine noted that the area is already used by vendors during the Saturday farmers market, and that they will focus programming on times when the most people will be around, such as the noon hour and after work, although other evening events could happen as well.

Frank & Barbine recused themselves since they are involved with BID.

A motion was made by Hirsch, seconded by Crabb, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the BOARD OF ESTIMATES,. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: 9 - Michael E. Verveer; Ledell Zellers; Davy Mayer; Thomas E. Hirsch; Matthew J. Covert; Sandra J. Torkildson; Austin E. McClendon; Adam J. Plotkin and Ted Crabb

Recused: 2 - Gregory O. Frank and Mary C. Carbine

3. [33826](#)

Committee Member & Staff Updates

Frank mentioned that he is very pleased to have been a part of the effort that has come together with this committee on the Philosopher' Grove area.

Carbine noted that their efforts have been noted in the International Downtown Association email newsletter, and asked staff to forward her email to the Committee.

Mayer said that the Bassett Neighborhood invited Verb Stenman of the Mallards to come and talk about the new Shake the Lake fireworks event for this year.

Hirsch noted the AIA Wisconsin annual meeting will be at the Monona Terrace Next Week.

Torkildson invited all DCC members to the 40th anniversary event of a Room of One's Own at 315 W Gorham on May 2 from 7-9pm. A \$10 donation will benefit the Literacy Network and there will be a lot of great desserts!

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Hirsch, seconded by Carbine, to Adjourn at 7:00 p.m. The motion passed by voice vote/other.