



City of Madison

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

Thursday, July 21, 2016

5:30 PM

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Michael E. Verveer; Davy Mayer; Gregory O. Frank; Adam J. Plotkin;
Thomas E. Hirsch; Matthew J. Covert and Sandra J. Torkildson

Excused: 2 - Ledell Zellers and Ted Crabb

APPROVAL OF June 23, 2016 MINUTES

A motion was made by Frank, seconded by Plotkin, to Approve the Minutes of June 23, 2016. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Mohs, 510 Wisconsin Ave, spoke to the Committee about the new sign pole structures around the square. He said that they are gigantic and are out of scale. He said that he never saw information about them included in any plans, and that all they do is replicate what is painted on the street. The square is a slow moving traffic street that has no need for highway sized signs meant to be read at fast speeds. He hopes that no signs go up until this issue is discussed.

Tom Neujhar, ULI, also spoke against the signs. He said that design details are important on the square and that they introduce an unnecessary structure that is out of scale with the street and the type of traffic. He asked that the four structures be removed and not be included next construction phase.

Alder Verveer asked staff to out this topic on the next DCC agenda for further discussion and/or a staff update.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None.

1. [41722](#) Report of Mall Maintenance and Special Events 2016

Mark Kiesow and Chad Hughes, Parks Division, gave a brief update on Mall Maintenance Activities. Hughes will be taking over for Lisa Laschinger. They have been reinstalling bike racks, trash cans etc after the Square construction finished. The contractor cut a few irrigation lines that have caused some grass to burn up. This has also been an issue down on the 500 block at the hub, and Parks is trying to work out the issue with contractors to get the lines running. Alder Verveer asked about the fountains. Kiesow didn't know when they will be running again, and added that the splash pad at Lisa Link Park is working. The said that events have been going well and it has been a very busy event season as is typical this time of year. The sidewalk cleaning continues to go well, and staff has been working hard at keep the top of State Street clean for programming events. Verveer asked Kiesow for a count

on how many additional planters, bike racks and benches are needed and could be requested in next year's TID 32 budget, as Laschinger had mentioned that there were not any planter tubs in storage at Goodman Building. Kiesow said that he would set up a meeting with Cnare and Hughes to take a look at the expansion area and see what was needed.

Verveer asked about the behavior issues at the top of State Street. Kiesow said that it has been frustrating to get his crews to clean the area when there are so many people, and they try to coordinate with the police to move people when maintenance needs to occur.

2. Police Report on Downtown Safety Issues

Captain Carl Gloede spoke about general issues regarding downtown safety. He said that in general, things are better at the top of State Street than in years past. Philosophers' Grove is mostly empty but about 20-30 people have migrated to the other side of the street at 30 on the Square. There is boisterous loud behavior and it changes pattern throughout the day. In the morning it is mostly homeless people sleeping, then a bit later when the shelter opens up a few more people come to the area. It is about 11 am when more people seem to arrive from elsewhere that the behavior, drinking and other issues really increase. The police have stepped up activities and have extra officers there from noon-8pm.

Captain Gloede mentioned that there has been some discussion and people upset on social media about the police ticking for people sitting on the planters; the issue is that they obstruct the mainline sidewalk. The officers do everything they can to try to get compliance from people, and it is only after many refusals that they end up giving a ticket. He said that the police realize that we cannot arrest our way out of the behavior issues here, and that they try to educate and get compliance first, always. He also said that lost and abandoned property is also becoming an issue for the Police and Mall Maintenance staff, as several homeless hoarders have been creating larger issues.

Mayer asked about luggage chained to bike racks. Gloede says that the police know who is doing that - and they are trying to work with him on compliance.

Hirsch asked about how we can differentiate between homeless from the people who come down at 11am to deal drugs, drink and cause behavior issues. Gloede said that the people there in the morning are the homeless, versus people who are opportunistic and come down at 11am. They seem to want to be at this highly visible high traffic area.

Rebecca Cnare, Planning Division, said that staff is working on a three pronged approach to the area. One is having the police step up observation and enforcement of actual criminal behavior, drugs and drinking. Second, Community Services is looking at ways to try to reach out to the homeless population, as well as do outreach/assessment of others that are occupying the space to see what their issues are and look for ways to try and connect with them and get them help/services. Third, Planning and Economic Development staff is looking into allowing food carts to have extended hours at 30 on the Square to bring more positive activity to the area.

Hirsch was appreciative that staff understands that there are issues with different populations, he would like to be kept in the loop on activities and findings from the Community Services staff on outreach and assessment.

Torkildson said that Austin McClendon told her once that there really isn't a good space for middle aged African American men to socialize and comfortably congregate, especially if they love in different parts of the city.

Frank says that he has been an advocate for food carts in the area, but he asks that staff try to avoid direct competition with local businesses, i.e. no pizza, popcorn or pasties.

Verveer said that the number of complaints has been increasing, and the crowd that gathers at bar time maybe preying on the inebriated. What kind of police staffing is available for night patrols at the top of State Street? Gloede said that he will look to see if some of the officers down at Frances Street on Friday and Saturday nights can look into the top of State, noting that they are often busy with hundreds of people socializing outside down in the Frances Plaza area. Captain Gloede said that he will come back to the DCC to provide update on the situation.

3. [43549](#)

SUBSTITUTE Creating Section 23.60, renumbering current Section 23.60 to Section 23.70, and amending Section 1.08(3)(a) of the Madison General Ordinances to prohibit lying down or sleeping in the public sidewalks and rights of way and specified other public places, during specified hours in the Central Business District, and establish a bail deposit schedule for violations thereof.

A motion was made by Hirsch, seconded by Frank to adopt for purposes of discussion.

Hirsch asked Gloede about warnings vs. citations. Gloede said that the police know most of the people who are sleeping outside, and that they always try to educate and get compliance without giving tickets, this ordinance would give their warnings a bit more heft.

Plotkin asked about police training for crisis intervention. Gloede said that the younger officers have had more crisis intervention training, as that has been emphasized more recently.

Covert asked if the new County day shelter will help. Gloede said that he thinks it will help, as the site is close to downtown, and storage - which is a big issue will also be a part of the day shelter discussion.

Assistant City Attorney Marcy Paulson was available to answer questions. She explained that the ordinance is focused on the sidewalk and the right-of-way, not benches. Plotkin asked about a loitering ordinance. Paulson said that the city doesn't have a loitering ordinance.

Torkildson said that she received a letter from the YWCA saying that the passage of this ordinance could jeopardize HUD funding for the City. Verveer noted a few discrepancies in the ordinance, including the word "sitting" in 2(a) and (3) that is contradictory. Paulson said that she would take a look at the error and make sure that sitting was not a ticket-able offence, and a 2nd substitute may need to be issued. Verveer also asked of the City Attorney's office could look at other ordinances to see if the ticket amount could be lowered, as he recalled another ordinance that perhaps had a single dollar as the forfeiture amount.

Hirsch said that he talked with Alder Skidmore about the issues downtown, and that he is supporting the measure at this time with a mixed-heart, and he hopes that it can give the police a tool to help with this very hard core group of people that seem to be causing the most issues.

Verveer asked that staff forward the YWCA letter. Cnare said that she would if Verveer or Torkildson could send it to her. Mayer, Hirsch and others all expressed concern with voting on this item until they could learn more about the HID funding issue.

Mayer said that while he didn't support the bench ordinance, but he is more comfortable with this version that is more specific about obstructing the sidewalk.

Frank said that he has mixed feelings, and that we need to have a frank discussion about homelessness issues vs. and behavior issues in the downtown. He wants homeless advocates and others to know that they understand that there are indeed homeless issues, but also behavioral issues in the downtown that are separate.

Plotkin asked about how the attorney's office feels about ordinances and giving tickets to people that they know will not likely be able to pay them. Paulson said that they used to eventually arrest people if there were too many outstanding tickets, but now the city has been working on a "homeless court" that helps people get services, and if they comply - the tickets can be dismissed. Their goal is to stop the behavior, not prosecute people.

Mayer asked if there could be a ticket with no penalty. Paulson said that there would be no reason for people to comply if there wasn't a forfeiture attached to an ordinance violation.

Verveer proposed some ideas for a 2nd substitute that he would like the city attorney to look into.

1. Remove all references to sitting in 2(a)
2. In 2(d) the times should be adjusted to actually match what is needed - they should talk to the Mall Maintenance crew about their start time for the morning, perhaps adding another 2(h), and in 2(d) the end time should align with bar time.

A motion was made by Verveer, seconded by Frank, to Re-refer to the DOWNTOWN COORDINATING COMMITTEE'S next meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. [43665](#)

Downtown Retail and Market Analysis

Cnare gave a brief update on her work with Tangible Consulting, and noted that over 1000 survey forms were submitted to the consult as of two weeks ago.

There was some discussion about the referral of the sleeping ordinance and how it could conflict with the Retail and Market analysis meeting next month. There was general discussion and agreement that Cnare should try to move the start time to 5pm on August 18 to allow for the issue to be revisited.

5. [33826](#)

Committee Member & Staff Updates

Cnare noted the passing of former DCC member Austin McClendon, and said that she has a lovely exchange with Lauren Mikol, Austin's long time partner about how he loved participating on the DCC.

Mayer asked about the success of Maxwell Street Days, and wondered if the GSSBA ever thought about having a second one each year. Torkildson said that she has heard very positive things from retailers, but that it is a lot of work to put on even one large event like this every year.

6. Nominate Downtown Coordinating Committee member to serve on the Mayor's Design Awards Review Committee

Covert nominated Hirsh, who accepted the nomination. Tom asked that staff allow for blind nominations so the selection team can look at projects without knowing who nominated or who designed them.

A motion was made by Plotkin, seconded by Frank, to approve Tom Hirsch to serve on the Mayor's Design Award Review selection team. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Verveer, seconded by Covert, in honor of former member Austin McClendon, to Adjourn at 8:00 p.m.. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Upcoming Meeting: August 18, 2016 in Room MMB 260