



Cedar Rapid Downtown SSMID Commission Minutes
September 26, 2018 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance

Present: Casey Drew, Dave Drown, Dawn Jaffray, Chris Lindell, Linda Mattes, Matt Miller, Andrew Morf, Randy Rings, Craig Stephan, Joe Terfler, Fred Timko

Absent: Emily Ellingson, Darryl High, David Sorg

Staff: Ellen Bardsley, Jenn Draper, Jessica Komisar, Doug Neumann, Jesse Thoeming

Welcome, Introductions & Call to Order

Mattes welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda

Timko moved approval of the consent agenda with Terfler seconding. The consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

Mattes announced that binders were created for all commission members which includes the MOA with the city, roles and responsibilities of members and other important commission information. Neumann provided a presentation on the history of the Downtown SSMID which included information about the original SSMID focuses and concerns and how we have transitioned to where we are at now. Since this commission has a lot of discretion on how we want to spend our money and how we want to make our decisions, we get to decide what the approval rights are within our structure. The commission currently does not have any bylaws, Timko stated we should have some sort of written policies but doesn't necessarily have to be bylaws. Mattes stated her and Thoeming will draft up a document to be reviewed by the executive committee and then that will be reviewed for approval from the rest of the board at the next meeting. Mattes urged commission members to review the binders and to become familiar with the items in them. There will be a few more documents to be included such as Chapter 386 from the State code.

Mattes asked if the Economic Alliance is audited annually and if the SSMID account is included in that audit in which Neumann confirmed. Drew added that the City does not audit the SSMID account.

Go CR Discussion

Neumann noted that this is a big topic of conversation and that from the Economic Alliance perspective, we immediately raised our hand and offered short-term assistance. There are several functions of Go CR that align with our mission that we would like to see continue but the question of who will ultimately be responsible for these functions both short-term and long-term is still up for discussion. Neumann stated he is proud of the way Market After Dark turned out and that it was what the community needed at the time.

Downtown SSMID Vision

Mattes wants to know from the commission what tasks we want to drive and work on. The first example she gave was the re-branding of downtown. Mattes didn't believe that anybody is interested in that, however Rings stated he struggles with throwing out ideas from what the JLG study says needs to be fixed. Rings added that during the study, JLG didn't like the look of the logo and they didn't like the word "downtown" and that the tagline works and could go with anything. Rings likes the idea of picking items out of each quadrant (from the JLG study diagram) to have a good mix and

get some victories. Rings asked Drew if the wayfinding project is still moving forward, Drew confirmed that it is. Jaffray gave the idea of asking downtown businesses for new logo ideas which would be more economical, and she believes these businesses might enjoy the aspect of helping with this effort. Mattes told the commission to give Thoeming names of people within downtown businesses that you think would be interested in participating in this effort within the next week and then give that group of people 6-8 weeks to see what they come up with which would be by our next meeting in November.

Thoeming updated the commission on the Connect CR fundraising efforts which is currently at \$1.75M. As soon as that gets to 3 million dollars, there will be a public solicitation effort. Rings stated that this money would only be used in the two spots: the bridge and Cedar Lake and that updating the trail, which connects these two spots and runs through our district, would be a great touch on the whole thing. Mattes proposed an annual meeting with all three SSMID's to discuss the continuity of this effort throughout each commission's district. Adding lighting, art and more to the trail would make it more visually appealing.

Mattes stated that we will be providing a budget to the City by the end of the year and we would need to lay out dollars for these projects we want to accomplish.

Budget

Thoeming stated that between necessary expenditures on activities such as holiday lights, the fall tree planting/removing cycle, sidewalk repairs, etc. our operations will spend another \$112K before the end of the calendar year. The budget document that was included in this month's agenda packets will be a standing document for meetings moving forward. Lindell suggested we include a balance of what is in the checking account and what we currently have in other commitments.

WOW Projects

Mattes suggested that instead of the previous idea of a sign on the back of the Roosevelt, we do some sort of light art. Jaffray added we could do a light projection onto the building. Thoeming added we do not want to do anything until the back of the building is cleaned up. Mattes stated that an LED light art display or projection are two good options. Overall there was positive feedback from the commission, but no approval was needed at this time.

Mattes mentioned there are things that we need to start considering as we look at bigger cities. One of those things are "selfie spots" or areas where people want to stop, take a picture, and share it on social media. Thoeming had given information to the commission about the LOVE sculpture which is a 6' x 6' x 2.5' stainless steel sculpture that can be purchased from China for \$5,600 (not including lighting). It was decided that this sculpture would be a good step in the right direction. Rings motioned approval for the sculpture with Timko seconding and all in favor. This sculpture still needs to be approved by the Cedar Rapids Visual Arts Commission.

2nd Downtown Video

After presenting the 2nd video to the commission, Bardsley shared that this video was posted to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Vimeo on Sunday, September 16th. There were two Facebook ads (one for inside Cedar Rapids and one for outside of the Cedar Rapids area) and one Instagram ad created (Cedar Rapids metro area) for this video. Overall, the feedback has been good and the next two videos that will be launched will cover working downtown/large employers and small business.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.