Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2019 | 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. | Alliant Energy Classroom at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Present: Craig Byers, Jessalyn Holdcraft, Stephanie Jelinek, Pam Lewis, Ana McClain, Chad Pelley, James Piersall, Bob Schaffer

Absent: Lijun Chadima

Guests: Richard Sova & Development Team, Abby Huff & Monica Vernon – Czech Village NewBo Main Street, Nate Kampman – City of Cedar Rapids, Beth Orth – Geonetric, Brian Morelli – The Gazette, Dale Todd

Economic Alliance Staff: Ashley Huber, Jessica Komisar, Melissa McCarville, Doug Neumann

Welcome and Call to Order
Byers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda
Holdcraft moved approval of the April minutes & April Financials with Piersall seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Street Construction & Flood Control System Updates
Components to the Flood Control System that are complete in the district include the Sinclair levee and pump station. The Czech Village levee has been under construction for a couple of years but it is now starting to come together nicely and construction will extend into 2020. There will be a gap in the levee at Bowling St. where a pump station and gate well need to be added because that is one of the lowest spots in town it will need the extra protection. There will be an open house regarding the system on Thursday, June 27th from 4:30-6:30 at the Economic Alliance with presentations and another open house in September.

Kampman provided a 5-year report on Paving for Progress. This program is strategic as the City is looking at the street network as a whole, not just picking pieces individual. In the past 5 years, 44 linear miles of roadway has been improved and 134 projects have been completed totaling in $80M worth of investment. 66% of the completed projects have been residential and 33% have been arterial. Instead of incurring debt, the City is paying as they go through other revenue sources to match for grant dollars.

Kampman provided a document that lists recent, ongoing and upcoming projects for the District. Holdcraft asked if designated bike lanes will be created during 12th Ave restriping. Kampman confirmed bike lanes will be added during that project. The flood control system will also incorporate archways over bridges but if the SSMID is looking into other gateways, Pratt said it would be nice to have a similar look and feel.

Landover Development
Since Sova’s presentation the Commission in April, there have been revisions to the plans/design. The renderings shown are still preliminary, but changes include:
- Reduced retail space (17k sq. ft. to 8k sq. ft.) and increased indoor parking (186 spaces)
- Added some more apartment units on the 2nd floor where there was previously retail
- 146 total units – mix of studio, 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom
• Exterior façade updated to incorporate historical elements. Industrial yet contemporary elements with brick detailing which is common in the district.

Holdcraft asked if exterior/perimeter parking was updated. Martin said that has remained the same and includes 27 spaces. Sova added eventually they would like to see 9th Ave. re-built to provide additional parking. Holdcraft asked if any of the units will be income restricted. Sova said there will not be. Sova said they are currently working with the City on the TIF plan but the plan is to break ground this Summer. Byers motioned for Commission resolution of support of the project with Piersall seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Clarification of District Roles
Neumann wanted to provide clarification to questions that Chadima had e-mailed to the Commission last month:

1) Who is maintaining the CVNB SSMID page within the Mainstreet website?
   a. This is an old page that’s not currently live. All current CVNB SSMID minutes are hosted on the Economic Alliance website.

2) Why isn’t CVNB Main Street not listed under Community and Business Development on the City’s website?
   a. The City has updated their website and while that page isn’t technically live anymore, if someone does a generic search they can still find it. Pratt stated that page shouldn’t exist anymore, and they will get that updated.

3) What is the relationship between Downtown SSMID and Downtown District and Medical District and Medical SSMID?
   a. Downtown District is the brand of the Downtown SSMID and the MedQ/Medical District is the brand of the Medical SSMID. They are the same, singular organization.

4) What is the relationship between CVNB SSMID and CVNB Mainstreet?
   a. The SSMID is separate from Mainstreet, New Bohemia District, Czech Merchants Association, Southside Development, Friends of Czech Village, Oak Hill-Jackson Neighborhood Association, etc. From a governance standpoint, the CVNB District evolved very differently than the other two districts (Downtown & MedQ).

ConnectCR Contribution Decision
During April’s meeting, Mike McGrath presented about ConnectCR, which left the Commission with two questions: will there be an economic impact study and is there a donation level at which the District’s name would be displayed? While ConnectCR will not spend thousands of dollars to hire a consultant to complete a study, the impact on the District will be immeasurable and will attract many. Todd added they did do an economic survey for the Cedar Lake component only but implications from this project will be large once it begins. The ConnectCR steering committee is $2.4M away from the $20M goal. McClain said there is a fear amongst Czech Village merchants that the bridge will re-direct people in a different route and not come into Czech Village. Pratt added wayfinding will be a large component of this project. There will be several branches off the trail, not just one singular path which will help direct people in other directions. Todd noted that people will come if there’s a reason for them to come. Destinations will be more successful because of this project.

McGrath’s initial ask to the Commission in April was $50k over 5 years. With such limited current budget, the Commission felt that was too high and discussed $25k over 5 years. The Commission doesn’t need to give the same amount every year and could stagger the payments. Neumann pointed out to the Commission that when looking at our budget, we are bringing in $31k per year which is up from $20k in just one year. With other projects in the district such as Sova’s and the opportunity to increase the tax levy rate, that number will continue to grow. Holdcraft questioned if we should negotiate or add a caveat to re-evaluate midway through. Pelley motioned to approve a $25k donation over the next 5 years (Years 1 & 2: $2,500, Year 3: $5,000, Years 4 & 5: $7,500) with McClain seconding. The motioned was unanimously approved and the first payment of $2,500 will be made this year and taken out of this year’s budget.

New Project Updates
Jelinek has been working with HBK Engineering to have festival/string lights installed along 3rd Street between 11th Ave and 12th Ave and questioned if this could be a SSMID project or not. This project consists of installing poles every 4 feet for the lights to be hung from in addition to new streetlights. Jelinek said it would cost around $60k for implementation and installation. That is not including ongoing maintenance and utility cost. Jelinek will send the Commission the
contract from HBK and see if they would potentially make an in-person presentation to the SSMID. If the SSMID decides to take on this project, there would need to be an RFP released. The lights would be owned and maintained by whichever group takes on this project. Neumann added Downtown SSMID is considering a lighting project on 3rd Street as well and will follow-up with making the connection between the two SSMIDs.

Guest District Updates
Vernon provided a list of update items Mainstreet would like the SSMID to take into consideration including wayfinding, bike racks, garbage cans, flowers, parking lot repairs, banner replacements, blade signage, the Roundhouse, gateway to NewBo and mural clean-up. Mainstreet has also met with the Czech Village Association regarding PA System speakers to alert people in the area of storms, events, etc. similar to how NewBo City Market has their outdoor speakers.

Pratt said the City needs to update the Wayfinding project and budget.

Election of Chair/Vice Chair
There was general consensus that it’d be a good time to rotate in new leadership, as Byers has been chairing the commission since its beginning. Byers said he’s more than ready to step down as chair and just serve as a continuing member of the Commission. Piersall said he would step up to be chair but didn’t necessarily want to do it, if others were interested. But others on the commission felt the structure of a vice chair moving to chair was very important to the continuity of the Commission, and with that, Piersall agreed that he would become chair, if elected. At least three commission members have said they would consider a nomination to be vice chair, though Lewis said she would only do it if no one else were interested. Chadima had expressed interest earlier via email, and Holdcraft said she would consider it, too. The Commission decided not to take action at this meeting, but it’s likely to be voted on at the next meeting.

Adjourn
The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.