Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Meeting Minutes
December 19th, 2019 | 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. | Czech Museum and Library

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

Absent: Craig Byers

Guests: Abby Huff & Monica Vernon – Czech Village NewBo Main Street

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

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

Approval of Consent Agenda
Chadima moved approval of the agenda with Lewis seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chadima moved approval of the November minutes with Schaffer seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

2020 Action Plan Discussion & Approval
Commissioners reviewed details of the three action plan items for 2020 which include increased streetscape, public art and continued communications. Details include:

Streetscape
- Expanding current aesthetics utilizing the Beautification Committee, currently led by Lewis.
- Lead on 16th Ave SW streetscape plan, per the City of Cedar Rapids request
- New minor scale amenities such as benches, limited lighting and signage
- New major scale amenities such as bridge lighting, pocket park and dog park
- Creation of a potential master streetscape plan

Public Art
- Lead on 10th Ave SE art walk project, per the City of Cedar Rapids request (this is an update from November’s meeting, it is 10th Ave SE and not 11th Ave SE)
- Multi-district conversations surrounding public art
- Collaboration with Main Street or other organizations on public art to avoid duplicating efforts

Continued Communications
- Stakeholder communication with similar frequency, content and delivery vehicles as in 2019

Chadima brought up the topic of child care as it is an important need throughout the districts. Neumann said it isn’t one of our top three priorities but the SSMID could participate in multi-district collaboration projects other than public art – child care being one that’s a popular topic amongst Downtown and MedQuarter.

Lewis asked if we are locked into these three top priorities in 2020 and what the plan would be if something else comes up. Piersall said these three items might not be set in stone but the SSMID needs to have a direction and this action plan gives us just that. Neumann added the action plan outlines uses for the $46,500 operating budget but doesn’t project any use of the $50k in undesignated reserves. Funding for other opportunities beyond the action plan could potentially come from undesignated reserves, if the Commission approves.
McClain moved approval of the 2020 Action Plan as presented with Lewis seconding. The 2020 Action Plan was unanimously approved.

**2020 Budget Discussion & Approval**
The 2020 draft budget proposed the following:

- **Revenue** - $46,500
- **Expenses**
  - Streetscape Maintenance - $15k – expansion from $9k per action plan
  - Communications - $6k – same services as 2019
  - Czech Village Parking Lot Set-Aside - $1k
  - Public Art - $7k – art walk or multi-district project per action plan
  - ConnectCR Pledge - $2,500
- **Program/Admin** – $15k – admin support plus staff time leading public art & streetscape priorities; had not been previously paying for any of the professional services included here.
- **Reserve Funds**
  - Czech Village Parking Lots - $3k
  - Capital Improvement Fund - $5k
  - Undesignated Reserves - $35k – will be updated at year-end to reflect carryover, will total about $50k

Chadima asked if there was opportunity to invest the $50k in undesignated reserves into something that might make some interest revenue. Piersall said it’s not a large enough amount of money to make much of a difference. Lewis said the Czech Village Parking Lots line item which reflects $3k should be $2,400 after $600 was spent on attorney fees for an abstract examination. Other Commissioners said their understanding was that the SSMID would invest $1k per year on the lots for improvements and repairs and that the SSMID would pay half and the Czech Village Association would pay the other half. Jelinek suggested we table this discussion and research the facts and what was approved first.

Chadima moved approval of the 2020 proposed budget with Pelley seconding. The 2020 proposed budget was unanimously approved.

**Economic Alliance Service Contract**
Neumann walked Commissioners through the draft services agreement and highlighted that the rate of $1,230.22 per month is calculated based on anticipated monthly hours for each service area with a factor for benefits and overhead but there is no mark-up for profit. Neumann said he will continue to come to the SSMID meetings but the SSMID won’t be paying for his time. A new program position will take most of the follow up actions. The agreement language explains that the SSMID has a 60 day out which means either party may terminate the agreement upon 60 days prior written notice to the other party. The agreement also outlines the commencement date of January 1, 2020 and would automatically renew on 1 year terms after that but could make it a 1 year term and re-do or re-visit the agreement on an annual basis. McClain said if the SSMID were to get approached by a different organization that wants to be the fiscal agent, she would like them to have the opportunity for them to present to the SSMID and possibly having a firmer expiration. Piersall said the 60 day out safety clause gives us that flexibility. Jelinek suggested instead of putting McClain’s thought in the agreement that the Commissioners have an annual re-occurring agenda item to discuss the partnership with the Economic Alliance. McClain said she liked that idea. Holdcraft suggested Commissioners have that conversation in the summertime before we draft the next year’s budget. Commissioners agreed that June would be a good month to do it.

Piersall said he would like to add a provision that the agreement will automatically renew on the same terms.

With modifications listed above, Chadima moved approval of the Economic Alliance Service Contract with McClain seconding. The Economic Alliance Service Contract was unanimously approved.

Chadima moved approval for Piersall to sign the final version with Holdcraft seconding. The motion for Piersall to sign the final version of the Contract was unanimously approved.
New Project Updates

- Cargill received the 3rd and final vote from City Council and approved development plan on an 8-1 vote.
- Area Action Plan was approved by City Council. Neumann thanked Commissioners for their work and input on this plan and said it will be important to communicate the approved plan to stakeholders and explain the specific lanes the SSMID will be a part of in 2020.
- Received a kind letter from the Czech Village Association regarding the holiday décor and installation.
- Lewis said the Christmas tree by the gazebo on 16th Ave SW is the responsibility of the Association and the Parks Department has locked off the electricity box. Lewis said she has talked to several individuals within the Parks Department and is continuing to make calls to ensure the tree is lit by Christmas.
- Chadima asked about the benches from Downtown and said they could be used somewhere in our district such as in parking lots. Komisar said they are donating them to those who are interested and will ask Jesse Thoeming for a count of how many are available.
- Jelinek asked how much of 3rd Street to 8th Ave does Downtown District cover. Neumann said they cover all of 3rd Street to the 8th Ave intersection. Jelinek pointed out how dark it is from the section in front of the former Honeywell building to 8th Ave. Neumann said that is related to a street construction project.
- Pelley said his group will close on the Vondracek property and the land between the former Redball and Brewhemia on Monday. They will be meeting with a hotel group before they share imagery to the public.
- McClain asked what the status is on the Loftus Lumber project. Neumann said although there was a delay, everything continues to be on track and is going well.

District Guest Updates

Main Street will be adding 5 new board members starting in January and the Quonset Hut received the Challenge Grant of $75k to be turned into a glass blowing studio. Vernon said Village Meat Market business and building sold to the Sausage Foundary. Other initiatives of Main Street include increasing foot traffic in the district during 1st quarter of 2020. Events include a mac and cheese bake off and Mad Men type party at the Olympic within 10 days of their opening. Main Street continues to be involved in the Roundhouse and will be taking a new approach and packaging to the Hall-Perrine Foundation for funding.

Vernon said they are still researching opportunities for a district trolley circuit. Holdcraft asked what the rider count was for Deck the District. Huff said since the weather was nice, the bus, which the SSMID contributed $700 to, wasn’t highly utilized.

Adjourn

Chadima moved to adjourn the meeting with McClain seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 a.m.
Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID 2020 Action Plan
Approved on 12/19/19

**Streetscape**
- Expand current use of planters, banners and holiday décor, utilizing the planning and research of the Beautification Committee to extend to additional areas, enhance what’s already there and increase the maintenance and attention paid to what gets put in place. Emphasis on developing a unified or complementary look across the District and creating and executing on a plan to ensure timely, consistent and quality displays.
- Lead on 16th Ave. SW Streetscape plan, per City of CR request.
- Discuss the potential for new minor scale amenities such as benches, limited lighting and signage that might include parking and/or wayfinding signs.
- Discuss the potential for new major scale amenities such as bridge lighting, canopy street lighting, pocket park(s) and dog park.
- Discuss what a master streetscape plan might entail and see if the Commission may want to go that direction.

**Public Art**
- Lead on the 10th Ave. SE artwalk project as requested by the City of CR. The City defined the scope of these responsibilities as plan, create, buy, install and maintain. But initially, most of the budget impact will be professional service time devoted to planning the project, determining funding sources, building a supportive coalition, etc.
- Participate in Multi-District discussions about a district collaboration project that the Commission hopes could be steered toward a public art project. If public art is chosen as a district collaboration project, the Commission would be expected to contribute funding, larger dollars which would come from either project funds or undesignated reserves rather than from the operating line item.
- Communicate and coordinate w/ Main Street on public art initiatives that group is leading. Because both groups have identified this strategy as something to work on, take care to not duplicate or complicate efforts. Have clear duties and responsibilities outlined and communicated before proceeding.

**Communications**
- Stakeholder communications will continue with similar frequency, content and delivery vehicles as in 2019. There should be MORE wins and tangible benefits to communicate. Emphasis should be put on those things that SSMID directly impacts. Care should continue to go to NOT duplicating information already being distributed by other groups in this area.
- Help facilitate the Commission to speak as a unified voice, submit feedback and testimony to issues that impact the district, champion its priorities and progress.