Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2019 | 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. | Alliant Energy Classroom at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Present: Craig Byers, Lijun Chadima, Jessalyn Holdcraft, Stephanie Jelinek, Pam Lewis, Ana McClain, James Piersall

Absent: Chad Pelley, Bob Schaffer

Guests: Mike McGrath – Connect CR, Richard Sova & Development Team - NewBo Partners, Martin Gardner Architecture, Knutson Construction, Brost Architects, Abby Huff & Monica Vernon – Czech Village NewBo Main Street, Adam Lindenlaub & Team – City of Cedar Rapids, Brian Morelli – The Gazette, Beth Orth - Geonetric

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

Welcome and Call to Order
Byers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda
Holdcraft moved approval of the March minutes & February Financials with Lewis seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Neumann to create a preliminary 5-year financial/budget forecast in order for the commission to have a better idea on the direction they are moving.

Connect CR
McGrath provided an update on the $20M Connect CR Project which will include upgrades to the Cedar Lake area and the new Smokestack Bridge. Cedar Lake improvements include shorelines, water quality, boardwalk, ADA kayak launches, playground and more and the Smokestack Bridge will be 192 ft. high. The CVNB SSMID has been asked to contribute $50k to the Connect CR campaign which can be paid in annual installments for 5 years. There will be ongoing costs after construction of the projects that the City will be responsible for. McGrath added the timing of the projects works well with the Flood Protection System to ensure they are properly protected and integrated. The other two SSMIDs are not contributing directly to the project, however Downtown SSMID does have $40k budgeted for projects specifically tied to Connect CR such as signage, public art, sculptures, etc.

The commission agreed to table this discussion until naming/public recognition opportunities and economic impact projections are provided by McGrath.

Landover Development
Sova and his team presented the new residential/retail development that will be located at the former Loftus Lumber site on 3rd St. between 9th and 10th Ave. This is a 3-story development with a warehouse feel including 138 apartments ranging from studio to 2-bedroom. The project will include covered parking, an amenities courtyard with grilling stations and firepits, a 24-hour fitness center and a pet spa. There will be 17k sq. ft. of retail/office space along 3rd St. This development is currently in the preliminary architecture phase with the next phase being an environmental study. The demo of the current site is scheduled to begin in the next 30 days. Residential units will be market rate rental and Sova is hoping for construction to begin June of 2019 with occupancy beginning in the Summer of 2020. Sova said once 10th and 9th Ave. and 4th St. is improved, it will add additional parking spots to alleviate the concern of parking.
Sova added with the amenities provided, this development is considered a Class A housing project that has not yet been seen in Cedar Rapids. Sova believes there is a sufficient demand in our market and is not currently concerned about occupancy. Existing apartments range from $1.60-$1.70 per sq. ft. Sova said they will try to stay in that range, however it is difficult to do with this development because of expense of the parking garage.

Neumann outlined ways the SSMID could be involved in the development in the future, with streetscape elements, signage, etc. No decisions need to be made at this point.

**Small Business Survey**
Synchronist is a software program that Economic Development groups around the nation use to compile data from interstate commerce companies and compare on a local, state and federal level. The Economic Alliance completes more than 100 of these surveys every year to forecast what is occurring in the market so we can react appropriately. Synchronist has recently released a survey for non-interstate commerce companies, which could be beneficial information for our district. Huff said she already produces interviews very similar to this one with existing small businesses and is concerned this could become repetitive and duplicative. Neumann suggested they compare the two surveys.

**Core District Summit Debrief**
Representatives from all three SSMIDs came together this week to discuss initiatives, challenges and how the SSMIDs can work together to be more efficient. Members from the CVNB SSMID that were present include Byers, McClain & Jelinek. Updates from the other SSMIDs include a public safety effort for Greene Square and daytime events in the MedQuarter. This group will meet about twice a year, with the next meeting being in September in order to discuss 2020 planning.

**Main Street Leadership Update**
Huff introduced herself as the new Main Street Executive Director. She will be working in the district to build relationships with both business and property owners and her focus is to create a sense of community connecting NewBo and Czech Village. Huff is also working with NewBo Market vendors for when they are ready to “graduate” from the Market and provide them resources on how they can stay in the district. Vernon introduced herself as the Executive Director of Strategic Development. Vernon will be working outside of the district and will be focusing on the bigger picture of how we can make this district more powerful.

**Adjourn**
The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.