



**Cedar Rapid Downtown SSMID Commission Minutes**  
**July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance**

**Present:** Casey Drew, Emily Ellingson, Darryl High, Dawn Jaffray, Linda Mattes, Matthew Miller, Randy Rings, Craig Stephan, Joe Terfler, Fred Timko

**Absent:** Dave Drown, Chris Lindell, Andrew Morf, David Sorg

**Guests:** Jennifer Pratt & Rob Davis – City of Cedar Rapids

**Staff:** Jenn Draper, Ashley Huber, 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**

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

**Flood Control System**

Davis provided an update on the Flood Control System, highlights/key takeaways included:

- Will cost approximately \$750M, funds have been secured from the Army Corps of Engineers, Iowa Flood Mitigation Board and other city, state and federal grants.
- Important to the City that the system will be incorporated into everyday aesthetics that won't appear to the public as flood protection
- System includes raising two bridges, levees, permanent and removable walls, roadway and railroad closure gates, storm water detention and pump stations, and recreational amenities
- Completed segments of the system: NewBo Levee, Sinclair Detention Basin, Sinclair Pump Station, Lot 44 Pump Station, McGrath Amphitheatre, Northwest Memorial
- East side projects starting in 2019-2020: 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave Flood Gate, Lot 44 Pump Station (adding 2 additional pumps) & Levee, 16<sup>th</sup> Ave Flood Gate and Sinclair Pump Station (adding 2 additional pumps)
- Raising the Tree of Five Seasons 10' to integrate it into the system
- Roller Flood Gates installed on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, 12<sup>th</sup> Ave and 16<sup>th</sup> Ave – rolls across the road to keep water in river, gate is stored behind the flood wall, deployed for a 20-22' elevation and takes 45 mins to close
- Removable Flood Gates installed on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave East in 2020 – permanent columns on sidewalk, stackable panel gate, deployed for a 22' elevation
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Plaza will have a public gathering space feel, enhance the trail along the river and will maintain the view of the river. This will be located between the former Smulekoff's building and the Hach building and will include permanent and removable wall segments. This project will be done in two phases – one for the Army Corps to build the wall and the other for the amenity enhancements done by the City. There are obstacles to face including reconfiguring parking that will be eliminated and garbage pick-up as businesses currently have their dumpsters located in this area. The SSMID feels like now is a good time to take the next steps in discussing a

potential pedestrian bridge from this plaza area to the amphitheater which has been an initiative in the JLG plan. The SSMID has organized a sub-committee for this potential project which consists of Miller, Rings, Stephan and Timko.

- There will be fewer parking spots available in Lot 44 during and after construction.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge will remain open during flooding but will be elevated 15 ft. There are currently 7 piers on this bridge, the goal is to have maximum 2 piers. The Riverfront area near the bridge will include a flood wall, pump station, public gathering spaces, streetscaping and lighting and a trail to complement the Amphitheatre. Construction for this segment will begin in 2023 as utilities will need to be relocated from 2017-2021.
- Czech Village Levee – construction phases between 2018-2020 and stretches from the Solid Waste Agency to 16<sup>th</sup> Ave SW.
- Shaver Rd NE & Trail at McLoud Run improvements include elevating Shaver Rd 8 ft over the flood wall. There will also be trail and stream improvements.
- There is a Fall open house scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>

### **Rebranding Update**

The Rebranding sub-committee has narrowed down the selected firm from the 6 that submitted a proposal. All firms that submitted had an estimated cost approximately double what the SSMID had budgeted for which was \$25k. Rings motioned for approval of moving forward with de Novo Marketing and to increase the budget from \$25k to their cost of \$46,500 with High seconding. The motion was unanimously in favor. The next step in this process is for de Novo to come in front of the entire commission to get a better sense of what we would like to define as “downtown” and what needs to be branded. According to their proposal, it will take about 30 weeks from start to finish.

### **EDC Support Discussion**

The EDC has asked the SSMID to consider a contribution of \$25k per year for 3 years. The SSMID has contributed this amount to the EDC in the past but it has been several years since SSMID has contributed anything. These funds would go to paying EDC staff to coach businesses on logistics such as business plans, financials, etc. The commission agreed that there would need to be a caveat that any funding from the SSMID go to business locating downtown and the SSMID would need a report-out bi-annually or quarterly to see which businesses have benefited from the funds and how they are being spent. Timko said he is less concerned about the amount of funds we contribute but with how the funds are being spent and how it affects downtown. Several commissioners suggested that rather than contribute to EDC's operating budget that the EDC come to the SSMID when a downtown business needs funding for a project or program. Maybe SSMID could direct-fund those kinds of requests instead of a general contribution to EDC. Mattes will talk with Curt Nelson with the EDC if they can put a downtown specific program together and what that would look like. The commission did not approve a contribution at this time.

### **Downtown Grocer Recommendation**

At this time the SSMID's decision to make a financial contribution to the Paramount Lot grocer project is on hold until further evaluation. There hasn't been a confirmed grocer for the space and the SSMID wants to wait until that happens. The commission agreed that it would need to be a stand-alone grocer, not a grocer and restaurant combined so it doesn't conflict with existing downtown restaurants.

### **Other Business**

Stephan – cans will be coming in the next couple of weeks. This will put Iowa Brewing Company in new areas such as Kernels games, concerts, golf courses and the amphitheater. In December they started a partnership with Iowa Beverage Systems which spans the area of Des Moines to the Mississippi and they recently signed with United Beverage which covers Waterloo and the northern half of the state. This new opportunity will expand Iowa Brewing Company's presence.

Jaffray – new building is fully occupied and business is going well

Miller – busy time for construction and contractors

Terfler – GreatAmerica is at almost 600 employees and that number will continue to grow as they build out the space in their building that used to be occupied by ImOn.

Ellingson – Lynch Dallas looking at ways to reconfigure their building to provide more office space as they continue to hire more attorneys.

Mattes – stripping the top 2 floors of the Alliant building to rent out. Mattes is also working on being able to have the building exterior up-lit all the time.

Timko – Kingston Village has seen a total of \$93M in development and that will continue to grow

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.