

**Downtown Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2024**

Present: Steve Rubin, Christine Jeffries, Peggy Frank, Bill Novack, Rick Hitchcock, Mike Hudson, Doug Krieger, Katie Wood. **Via Zoom:** Joe Costello, Kaylin Risvold, Tom Miers, Brien Nagle
Staff & Guest: Derek McDaniel, Mikal Mayes, Mike Panas, Shannon Kunicki.

The minutes for the December 4, 2023, meeting were reviewed and a motion was made by Peggy Frank, seconded by Katie Wood, unanimously approved.

Washington St. Bridge: Bill Novack provided an update on the bridge. He reported construction is a few months behind, but they are still trending towards a November 2024 finish date. The city has paid for winter protection on the concrete which will ensure that the project will be completed by the end of 2024. Steve asked if they were also preparing the ground for the park owned by NCC? Bill stated that the park is a separate contract, however they are responsible for cleaning up their construction mess. The state DCEO office awarded the city a grant that was extended through August 2026.

Washington Streetscape: Bill Novack reported that the bid has been awarded for the Washington Street streetscape. The project will start at the intersection of Chicago Ave & Washington north to Benton Ave. Water main removal and replacement will be included. This will also include connections to all businesses for future water connections such as sprinkler systems. It will also include complete pavement and sidewalk removal and replacement, adding in the new planters and other design improvements. A pre-construction meeting for merchants and owners will be held on January 23, 2024. The morning and afternoon sessions will be held at Tapville Social where city staff, engineers, and design team will provide an overview of the staging and what merchants can expect. Weather permitting, the contractor would like to start the week of January 29th. There are several deadlines to meet with incentives and penalties.

Wayfinding Signs: Bill Novack updated the committee on the wayfinding sign project for downtown. They have finalized the master plan, and a professional designer and fabricator will design and build the signs. The master plan will be on the city council agenda for January 16, 2024, for them to consider endorsing the plan and supporting the multi-year implementation plan. The biggest part of the implementation will be in 2024, with installation on Main Street and Washington Street.

Parking Deck: Christine Jeffries let everyone know that the top levels are open on all of the parking decks downtown. There are additional police officers that have been added to the downtown beat, which will help to control any suspicious activity downtown. Six new officers will be sworn in on Wednesday.

By-Laws: A copy of the By-Laws were sent out to committee members to review. Steve asked for input. Brien Nagle suggested some minor changes before approving the final version.

- **REDACT Objective E in Section 3:** *Support sufficient, appropriately located, and attractively designed parking through stewardship of the continuous improvement model for Downtown parking and other parking studies,*

- **Section 4 Office:** The principal office of DAC should be the office of *Naperville Development Partnership*.
- **Section 2 Composition:** Changed the number of directors.
- **Section 14 Informal Action by Directors:** Change to 'signed by 75% of the board of directors' from 100%.

A motion was made by Christine Jeffries, to approve the revised by laws as presented, seconded by Derek Daniel, unanimously approved.

Downtown Naperville Alliance: Katie Wood gave an update from the DNA. They had sales in gift cards in December of over \$300,000, which goes right back to the downtown merchants. No new information regarding the new Director.

Century Walk: Doug Krieger gave an update on what the best path forward is for existing art as well as new art. The biggest challenge is the maintenance of the pieces, \$50,000 has been allotted for maintenance, however, with the age and amount of maintenance that amount of money does not go very far. They are comfortable taking care of the art on public property but have no long-term plan for the pieces on private property. Peggy brought up the letter of recommendation on maintenance, Doug said to wait on the letter until after the discussion with the city and Brand.

NCC Parking Deck: Mike Hudson reported the deck is on track to open with temp occupancy on January 31. There is still some sitework and landscaping to be done in March. When completed it will have 542 parking spots with some motorcycle parking as well.

Walkabouts: The Chief has offered his SEPTEC team to conduct a walkabout to point out some potential problem areas. They would offer suggestions on where to add additional lighting and other safety measures.

Sidewalk Solicitors: Solicitors have seemed to go away but may return when the weather warms up. They are asking for money and credit cards which is considered soliciting. Officer Colton was going to look into an ordinance that is already on the books and what we can do moving forward.

Workshop: Steve talked about the need for a workshop with the goal of receiving an in-depth understanding of the market factors that impact downtown. The pressures – good or bad, and what we might expect in the coming years. Steve says he only hears great things about downtown and wants to keep up that momentum. The idea was to bring in a facilitator to help us discuss why we are successful and how to keep us successful. However, after talking to potential facilitators the \$3000 budget would not get us very far. Christine suggested that we bring in some retail brokers to have a panel discussion about what they hear and see downtown. Brokers that represent tenants and owners in the downtown and in other cities. Katie suggested a quantitative survey that is specific, what motivated you to come downtown, experience downtown, etc. They could be handed out in stores and restaurants. Tom suggested using the NCC marketing students to conduct a survey as part of their education. Mike said he would reach out to the business department. The workshop could still be something down the line that could launch the discussion for an updated 2030 plan down the road. Rick suggested that if funding is needed, DAC should make the request for the new budget season coming up in July, sooner than later.

Meeting adjourned at 5:07pm