



Downtown Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2022

Present: Greg DeGeeter, Peggy Frank, Doug Krieger, Tom Miers, Brien Nagle, Bill Novack, Christine Jeffries. **Via-Zoom:** Steve Rubin, Allison Laff, Benny White. **Guest & Staff:** Reba Osborne, Shannon Kunicki, Mike Panas.

The minutes of the April 4, 2022, DAC meeting were reviewed, and a motion was made to approve the minutes by Doug Krieger, seconded by Christine Jeffries, unanimously approved.

Historic Landmarking Ad Hoc Committee update: This committee includes representatives from the NDP, NACC and DAC. The committee is looking at certain issues pertaining to landmarking without owner's consent. City staff is putting together a report to go to city council with recommendations on how to better address the issue and the economic injury that occurs to the property owner. The next step is to meet with City Council members before the June 21, 2022, Council meeting in which staff will be submitting their recommendation for how to better handle the landmarking process.

Downtown Streetscape: Bill Novack updated the committee on the downtown streetscape project. The contractors are still on track to finish up Jefferson by the end of July. They are still on track to finish everything by Labor Day. The Washington street scape will take place with the bridge project. Tom Miers suggested a ribbon cutting ceremony for the completed streetscape on Main & Jefferson.

Washington Street Bridge: An update was given by Bill Novack on the Washington street bridge project. There has been significant progress in the land acquisition process which could wrap up in the next month. There is a ton of utility work that goes along with this project that could start this fall depending on the weather and contractor. In 2023 the goal is to have the East side of the bridge complete, and the west side completed in 2024. One lane in each direction will be open on the bridge.

Washington Street scape: This will look very similar to what has been done at Central Park place. Bill will be going door to door to talk to the property owners to talk about joining the SSA.

Outdoor Dining in Downtown: There was four applications submitted out of the five available spaces allowed for the downtown outdoor dining area. City staff is looking at design guidelines for the outdoor seating, in which the restaurant would have to supply their own furniture, and fencing. Liquor commission will review them and potentially raise the cap. It will be a case-by-case basis.

Updating the 2030 plan: This discussion was tabled to the next meeting.

Wayfinding Signage for Downtown: In the absence of Rick Hitchcock, Christine updated the committee on the proposed downtown wayfinding signage for downtown. There are two different wayfinding signage, electric which is the kiosk outside like you would see at a mall. The DNA is applying for money through the America rescue act fund to place 4-6 signs in the downtown. The static wayfinding signage that are pedestrian friendly to help find your way around downtown. The recommendation from Rick would be to hire a consultant for the design and logistics of the wayfinding signs. The estimated cost for the design consultant would be about \$60,000. The DNA is willing to front the money for the fee with a

guarantee that the city would reimburse two thirds of the cost in the city budget for next year. This way they can go ahead and start the process. They would like to move ahead if they can have some assurance that they will be reimbursed. Doug Krieger said that speaking to finance that they would be able to give the DNA that assurance. The next step would be for to select a consultant.

Riverwalk 2031 Master Plan: Bill Novack presented an overview of the Riverwalk Master Plan and what they are looking to complete in the next couple of years. 2031 will be the 50th anniversary of the Riverwalk, and there are over a dozen projects, small and large, that were recommended to enhance the riverwalk. The *Eagle Street Gateway* will be the first project to take place, this will give barrier free access from the lower part to the upper part of the riverwalk. The design and permitting will take place this year and the construction will take place in 2023. A grant was applied for 50%, \$900,000, of the project from Congressman Bill Foster's office and the project was one of the fifteen projects to move forward in the approval process. Other projects would include the *Grand Pavilion*, where they would like to set up a nicer venue, add a band shell and replace the parking lot surface with permeable pavers. Improvements to *Prairie Garden*, where the ice-skating rinks are set up, would include a nice little boardwalk with prairie plants. *Ecological Bank Restoration* would be upgraded to include more prairie planting to create shoreline stabilization along the Riverwalk. The *Paddleboat Quarry Overlook* will be updated and refreshed. The park next to the Burger King which is owned by North Central College, will be beautified and a gateway into North Central College will be installed. There are a few private projects that are also included in the plans, including an extension south to Martin Avenue, across from the Edward Hospital.

A Motion to adjourn was made by Tom Miers, seconded by Brien Nagle, unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned 5:09pm