



DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

May 27, 2014

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Community Room, Petoskey, Michigan, on Tuesday, May 27, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

Present: Lawrence Rochon, Chairperson
Liz Ahrens
David Carlson
William J. Fraser, Mayor
Jason Keiswetter
Jessilynn Norcross
James M. Reid, Jr., Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Shorter
S. Reginald Smith

Absent: None

Also in attendance were the Downtown Director Becky Goodman, Downtown Promotions Coordinator Kate Manthei and City Manager Dan Ralley.

Approve Consent Agenda Items Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the April 22, 2014 regular session meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since April 22, 2014; and acceptance of the April expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director.

Board members discussed that there was a typo in the first sentence on page 2 of the minutes under Meeting Conduct Policy and that the word “the” needed to be removed. Upon motions made and supported, the April 22, 2014 regular session meeting minutes were approved with correction, acknowledgement of bills since April 22 that totaled \$28,958.75 and expense and income reports for April were approved. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Approve Entryway Signage Funding The Downtown Director then reported that the Design Committee met to again consider the question of signage for the entry to downtown. The Design Committee spent a considerable amount of time reassessing their original recommendation which was to wait on signage project until plans were made to incorporate signage into the gateway project.

After reviewing possible sites for new and existing signage the committee recommended that the existing sign located at Mitchell Street and the highway be repositioned to an angled position from its current position which is parallel to the highway. They also recommended that the sign be repainted with a brighter gold color and include the words, “shopping, dining, and lodging.” The committee also considered making these revisions to the sign that is located at the northern entrance to town, but did not feel that the additional wording would be necessary there as the sign already has high visibility. Refreshing the gold paint on the sign to a brighter hue would be desirable.

Sign and Design prepared an estimate that included repainting, re-lettering two sides of the sign, acquiring permits and moving the sign for \$2,500. The committee recommended that the DMB agree to spend up to \$3,000 to have this sign work done on the Mitchell Street Sign and to have the paint refreshed on the northern entry sign.

Mr. Reid motioned that, supported by Mr. Carlson, to approve up to \$3,000 for sign work on the Mitchell Street sign and refresh the paint on the northern entry sign.

There were public comments and heard an inquiry on where the Lake Street sign was after it was removed awhile back; that there should be a sign on Lake Street and it should be further discussed; inquiry on time frame of gateway project and if it was tied to the Petoskey Pointe site; and that the Mitchell Street sign should include a banner below the sign saying "next two right turns".

Board members discussed and recommended that the Design Committee further investigate cost, style, and other miscellaneous items for a Lake Street sign; discussed location options for Lake Street sign; and indicated that signs need to be simple so they are easier for visitors driving by to read.

Mr. Reid amended his original motion, supported by Ms. Norcross, to approve up to \$3,000 for sign work on the Mitchell Street sign and refresh paint on the northern entry sign and to include "next two right turns" wording below the Mitchell Street sign. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Hear Committee Reports

The Downtown Promotions Coordinator reported on behalf of the Events Committee and reviewed sidewalk sales additional signage, empty spaces on Mitchell Street and parking options; that a Moveable Feast event would occur in October with a Hemingway theme with a Friday night farmer's market, Saturday morning 5k run and local food and farm festival during Fall Petoskey Restaurant Week. The Promotions Coordinator also reported on behalf of Petoskey Rocks! Committee and that they received a \$1,500 sponsorship from the Petoskey Area Visitor's Bureau; that they are seeking participants and carriage sponsorships; and that details on specific events were still being made.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Marketing Committee and that 35,000 shopping maps were printed and distributed before Memorial Day; that a bag stuffer was being designed; and signs in parking lots will follow.

In Economic Enhancement, the Downtown Director reported that about 40 people attended Bob Negen's Whizz Bang training and heard favorable comments on the presentation; that about 40 people attended Wake Up Downtown and heard presentations from Chamber, CVB and Crooked Tree Arts Center on their summer programs and overviews on downtown marketing, trolley, parking and events; and that there is a free HLTW training on June 3.

In parking, the Downtown Director reported that two new staff people were hired to work a total of 30 extra hours per week for the summer and fill in for vacation and other needs throughout the entire year. The Director also reviewed some of the projects brought up at the April Parking Workshop which included:

- Partnerships with Emmet County – City staff will continue to work on more visually appealing and apparent signage for free parking during non-business hours in County lots.
- Shuttle Parking - Surveys were sent out and 53 responses were received; 78% of employers said that they would encourage employees to use shuttle; however almost all of the comments received were negative and the Parking Committee is not recommending this avenue.

- Renting Remote Parking Lot Spaces for July and August – Some contacts have been made.
- Begin Work on the Rail Corridor – Committee is considering bringing forward a proposal to conduct a preliminary study that would determine costs for building a trolley barn, its design, location, and operating costs with the hope that the study could be done in house.
- Create Bike Corrals – locations for bike corrals were discussed including the non-parking spaces near the bump outs and at the head of the Elks Lot across from City Park Grill.
- Develop the Darling Parking Lot – City staff and Downtown Director met with a finance person who has experience in Economic Development tools regarding moving ahead with a plan to create parking and mixed use development on the Darling Lot; that an RFQ will need to be sent out to prospective developers; the Committee met with Bob Gibbs and Mr. Gibbs will provide a quote and follow up with Beckett and Raeder.
- Win a Free Parking Permit Contest – Contest initiated with the first drawing on May 31.
- Tiered Parking Permits – A draft program has been prepared by staff, but no committee review yet.

The Downtown Director also reviewed other actions yet to be followed up on including eliminating all of the free parking areas, partnering with Petoskey Plastics to develop underground parking in the Saville Lot, partnering with CTAC for parking, and developing a way to incentivize employees to park remotely in July and August.

There were public comments and a suggestion to have a survey sent out indicating what two times would be most desired for a shuttle; that there should be a public meeting to discuss possible shuttle logistics; that early parkers should park elsewhere and not the free parking spots including bank employees, Petoskey Plastics employees and other businesses; inquiries if more bike racks can be purchased and placed around town; and the status of the old tennis courts for use of additional parking.

The Downtown Director reviewed that the old tennis courts were public park land and would need to go before the citizens to vote on approval of the use of this property.

Board members discussed parking issues and indicated that early parkers such as bank employees and Petoskey Plastic employees should park elsewhere and suggested the Downtown Director talk directly to these businesses to determine if they would be willing to use some kind of shuttle parking service.

Mr. Smith inquired on gated lots and that they should be a priority and indicated that Wake Up Downtown was not a good representation from downtown business owners wondering why those who seem to need the information the most were not present.

The Downtown Director commented that gated lots is a major expense and would not happen this summer, but could happen before next year. The Downtown Director will also consult with banks, Petoskey Plastics and other miscellaneous businesses regarding early parkers.

Ms. Ahrens reported on public art and that research was being done on policies and standards; that two meetings were scheduled for 10:00 A.M., Wednesday, June 25 at the Carnegie Building and 5:30 P.M., Tuesday, September 23 for opportunities for public input.

There was a public comment that both concepts of public art and bike corrals could be implemented.

The Downtown Director also reported that the office was still seeking a trolley driver; handled a FOIA request from Petoskey News Review; applied and received a \$1,500 grant for Petoskey Rocks! from the CVB; attended National Main Street Conference in Detroit and reviewed sessions attended; attended and helped plan the MDA reception which was held in the Guardian Building; and that the next MDA meeting will be in Port Huron and the state conference in Holland.

Board members inquired if it was beneficial for the Promotions Coordinator to attend these conferences as well; and the Downtown Director reviewed that it would be valuable and that next year there will be more money budgeted for both staff members to attend these meetings.

Hear City Staff Report

The City Manager gave an update on the US-31/Mitchell Street work and that new signals were up, the detour is expected to be in place thru June and work near the hospital is anticipated to be completed after July 4; that the Arlington Avenue/Greenway Corridor project is proceeding and that new rail road ties were being placed this weekend and underground work would be done prior to Labor Day. The City Manager also reported that Council would be discussing a potential Hemingway statue that Bob Dau, a Bayview resident, would commission and pay for statue; and reviewed that MDOT would be working on a project from the bridge to MacDonald Drive making it a four-lane highway in 2018.

Board members inquired on the large dirt pile on Arlington; if black erosion control was only by highway; and that there was a wrecked black car just out of town past Lewis Street that had been stranded there for days and is a poor eyesight.

Miscellaneous Public Comments

Chairperson Rochon asked for public comments and heard an inquiry where new business owners in town could find the HyettPalma study; and heard a written statement regarding the Petoskey News Review FOIA request article concerning board members meeting in "secret" and public input on the downtown public art plan.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M.