

**Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation/
Downtown Special Assessment District
Board Meeting Minutes
May 27, 2015**

Attending: Austin Fisher, Chris Spraragen, Rudy Grant, Joe O'Connor
Absent: Heather Peterson, Jack McDonald, Richard Antokol, Scott Johnson
Staff: Jim Salengo, Colleen Merays, Gail White

Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation

Approvals on the agenda were tabled since a quorum was not present.

- 1) **2015 Building Block Party Honorees** – Jim Salengo reviewed the nominees for the 2015 Building Block Party: Schenectady County Public Library (Arts/Culture), NY Folklore Society (Established Business), Centre Street Pub (New Business), YMCA Schenectady (Not-for-profit), and Schenectady Rotary (Susan B. Rosenthal Award for Volunteerism). Board members present were in agreement. ACTION: Colleen Merays will send an email to the full board informing them of the 2015 awardees.

- 2) **Executive Director's Report**
 - a) **Finance**

2014 Audit Update – Jason Marra from Cusack & Company will attend the June board meeting to present the audited financials. We will need to have a quorum for this meeting.
 - b) **Outdoor Program**
 - i. **Hometown Heroes Banner Program** – A total of 43 banners were sponsored; 33 are up now and the other 10 are in production. SEFCU sponsored 16 banners. The Gazette article was a big help in getting banner nominees. About 75 people attended the launch ceremony at Veterans Park, during which WWII veteran Charlie Merriam was honored. The DSIC received citations from Angelo Santabarbara and Jim Tedisco. A page on our website links to a map of banner locations and bios of many honorees. Jim reviewed project finances; after direct expenses and staff time, the program netted \$3,407.
 - ii. **2015 Flower Program** – Most of the flowers baskets are up. We ordered an additional 17 for Erie Blvd. but the city neglected to submit the purchase order for new flower arms for the light poles. We will find temporary locations for them; arms should be here in late June. Gazette reporter Kelly de la Rocha wrote a nice article about the flower program after attending a presentation that Colleen Merays gave to the Schenectady Business & Professional Women's Club. We have a new watering tank that is twice the size of our old one. Two seasonal workers are splitting the watering shifts this year. Gail White and Colleen will plant the street planters next week.
 - iii. **Updated Uniforms** – The outdoor team has new safety orange shirts with a large DSIC logo on the back for better visibility and recognition. Jim shared two recent notes send to the DSIC complimenting the outdoor team on their work.
 - iv. **Partnership with Wildwood School** – Wildwood Schools contacted us about a potential partnership with their students; we will try having them assist with weeding around lower State Street's new trees. Gail has contacted them to work out the details. Landscape architect Mary Moore Wallinger is also working with Metroplex and some City Mission residents on landscaping tasks around downtown.

c) Marketing /Communications

- i. New Website Update** – The website should be ready to go in late June or early July; we plan to announce it at the Annual Meeting on July 28. The interactive map on the site will now use Google Maps; the site will be much more functional and mobile friendly.
 - ii. Chalk It Up! Downtown Schenectady** – The event is scheduled for August 8, 12-4pm, with a rain date of August 9. We are seeking artists to create sidewalk chalk art drawings on Erie Blvd. Artwork will be judged for prizes. Colleen will meet with Matt Baumgartner to discuss using the Wolff’s Biergarten parking lot for entertainment, etc.
 - iii. 2015 Wing Walk** – Due to its growing popularity, this year’s Wing Walk will be moved to Saturday afternoon, October 3, from 12-5pm. This will provide two additional hours and the ability to co-promote Saturday night entertainment at businesses following the event. The event will be capped at 1,000 tickets.
- d) Taking Care of Business Update** – The Gazette did a nice article about Esmeralda Jewelry relocating to a new space on Jay Street. All seven affected businesses have received initial funding. Esmeralda Jewelry has now received their second and final check. Persian Bite is looking for a building to purchase in downtown.

3) New/Old Business

- a) NYS Not-For-Profit Revitalization Act** – Jim had asked Colleen to attend a seminar on a recent overhaul of New York State’s regulations for not-for-profit organizations. Jim recommended getting a quote from the presenting attorney, who specializes in not-for-profit work, to review our bylaws to make sure we are compliant. Austin Fisher and Chris Spraragen agreed to serve on a board governance sub-committee. **ACTION:** Jim will get a quote to present at the next board meeting.
- b) Downtown Survey** – In an effort to get this done, Jim proposed that he conduct surveys during the one-on-one downtown stakeholder meetings that the board asked him to focus on for 2015. He will use the same forms created by the board at the end of last year. Board members present were in agreement.
- c) Annual Meeting Date & Location** – The DSIC’s 2015 Annual Meeting Mingle will be held at Centre Street Pub on Tuesday, July 28 from 5-7pm. This is a change from the date of July 22 that was originally discussed. Like last year, there will be light fare and a cash bar.

Meeting closed at 9:27am