



DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

February 15, 2022

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:14 P.M., and the following were

Present: Ben Slocum, Chairperson
Gary Albert
Marnie Duse
Joe Keedy
Jennifer Shorter
Drew Smith
Mayor John Murphy

Absent: Robin Bennett, Vice Chairperson

Also in attendance were Downtown Director Becky Goodman and Executive Assistant Sarah Bek.

Approve Consent Agenda Items

Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the January 18, 2022 regular meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since January 18, 2022 that totaled \$42,356.15; and January expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director. Upon motion made by Albert and seconded by Keedy the consent agenda was approved. All in favor.

Review and Accept Final Streetscape Study

The Downtown Director reviewed that the final draft of the streetscape study was prepared by Beckett and Raeder and that the study will be used as a guideline for future streetscape improvements in downtown.

Tim Knutsen, Beckett and Raeder representative, gave an overview of the streetscape study and reviewed design and beautification actions, economic enhancement actions, and additional focus of streetscape assessment on accessibility, mobility and alternative transportation; reviewed outdoor dining and public spaces; reviewed pedestrian walking surfaces and to maintain existing paving patterns which serve as an accessibility enhancement and aesthetic benefit; maintain downtown furnishings; replace raised planters as they continue to weather; reviewed landscape materials and to maintain honey locust as downtown tree standard with a selection of alternative options; maintain wayfinding and historic signs; maintain existing downtown waste and recycling system; consider improvements such as additional enclosures for individual waste totes or grease recycling facilities in order to allow improved aesthetics; establish a recycling facility close to downtown; support the proposed Pennsylvania Park improvements included in the City's MDNR grant application; consider addition of QR codes to wayfinding signs; indicate the designated downtown bike route and downtown bicycle facilities in the downtown wayfinding system; promote satellite parking and shuttles to downtown at peak tourist season; install additional bike corrals and hoops; continue to focus on the option of a downtown parking structure to provide additional parking options; establish dimensional, aesthetic and material standards for outdoor dining platforms; prioritize Pennsylvania Park gazebo lighting as an initial decorative lighting enhancement; and that the Board study results examining construction and operational costs between electric and hydronic snowmelt systems.

Board members inquired if concrete could be stamped; commented that the City completed a tree study to try and eliminate diseased trees and that it might be best to have 2-5 tree alternatives; discussed City entrances and edges on Mitchell Street and screening for new proposed development at former Family Video property; inquired if snowmelt system would overtax the electrical grid; discussed use of downtown streets in regards to bicycle parking; discussed the need for new bike racks and inventory current locations and focus on central spine of Howard Street; that DMB or other committees have not been approached by Parks and Recreation Director or Commission and would like to see that happen.

Mr. Knutsen responded that stamped concrete is hard to get identical if have to be removed and replaced; that the hydronic snowmelt system would be under electric service for entire downtown; and that the electric provider might not be able to provide a line to all of downtown.

The Downtown Director reported that the railroad tracks and public art will be discussed, that discussions will begin at the end of summer concerning the updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan and that she has commented to the Parks and Recreation Director that the DMB wants to have a presence and be involved in the plan.

Amend 2022 Event Schedule

The Downtown Director reviewed that the Organizational Task Force discussed the 2022 Downtown Event Schedule and each event was discussed on its own merits; that there is no event planner currently on staff; that the DMB is operating in a pre-post COVID era; and that the DMB is contracting with a consultant who will help review future event schedule strategy.

Board members discussed the proposed event schedule and commented that the Strategic Plan RFP will help with determining events in the future. Upon motion made by Shorter and seconded by Smith to approve the amended 2022 event schedule as recommended by the Organizational Task Force and Events Committee. All in favor.

Approve Walker Parking Proposal for Darling Lot

The Downtown Director reviewed that the DMB included in the 2022 budget funds to contract for a feasibility study/plan on the placement of a parking platform on the Darling Lot; that staff communicated with Jake Jeppesen, Walker Parking, on proposed scope of work; ; that green space and sustainability components were included; that decks might be going out of style and could be utilized as something else; that there are new trends in parking including electric vehicles and drop offs; that there will be data analysis on how deck could be used; that it would be approximately 6-8 weeks until final plan is produced; and that staff is recommending the Board review proposal and if desired approve expense of \$21,000 which is \$6,000 over budgeted amount, and the extra expense would come from the proposed net revenue amount expected at the end of 2023.

Board members discussed current Darling Lot parking conditions and that the lot is typically not full; inquired how the lot will be marketed to get people to park there; inquired if it would be free parking; that Darling Lot is not in the most desirable spot for visitors; discussed the possibility of asking City Council to fund part of the study; heard comments that DMB manages parking and that Petoskey is a walkable community; that employees and residents park for 8 hours per day in parking spots; that the Board should identify stakeholders and what is important when evaluating a parking deck including employees, tourists, residents, etc.; inquired on cost of previous study; that parking fines and fees were increased to pay for a future parking deck; that there is no covered parking in downtown; that if a deck is built then more people may want to live in downtown and future developers will be in favor of building downtown due to available parking; and that there is a demand for parking.

The Downtown Director responded that a parking deck would be added to inventory; that it could satisfy downtown residential; that larger businesses with a lot of permits such as OHM could be encouraged to park in deck; and the previous study was estimated at \$9-11M to build a deck.

Mr. Smith moved that, seconded by Mr. Keedy to approve the proposal from Walker Parking for a parking platform feasibility study on the Darling Lot in the amount of \$21,000. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Reports by Downtown Committees

Events Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that Wonderful Winter Week begins this week with 39 sculptures, a winter ghost walk and 24 story boards for winter read around and marketing outlets have been heavily used to promote event.

Design Committee – The Downtown Director reported that the committee met yesterday and dining deck design aspects have been identified and will now combine ideas also from the Parking Committee and discuss with the Public Works Director and Public Safety Director; that there will be a draft resolution to be considered in March for allowing dining decks with City Council to finally approve with allowing only one space for businesses due to encroachment issues.

Parking Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that the committee needs two new Board member volunteers. Ms. Shorter volunteered to serve on the committee.

Report from City Staff

Mayor Murphy reviewed that City Council met in special session last night to discuss 24 applications for the City Manager position and that City Council will interview 6 candidates around the middle of March.

Miscellaneous Comments

The Downtown Director reported that downtown business is good for this time of year; that the Organizational Task Force will not meet until RFP's are submitted for Strategic Plan; that parking enforcement during evening hours have minimal expenses and will be discussed at the next meeting; that all downtown employee evaluations were completed by the end of January; that she met with the new CVB Director who is collaboratively spirited; and that she and Board member Smith attended a workshop concerning micro climate of tourism which was a study of 7 regions depicting challenges and opportunities with main focus on short-term rentals, housing and employee retention.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, this February 15, 2022, meeting adjourned at 9:09 P.M.