



## DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

June 21, 2022

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 21, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

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

Absent: Robin Bennett, Vice Chairperson

Also in attendance were Downtown Director Becky Goodman, City Manager Shane Horn and Executive Assistant Sarah Bek.

Chair Slocum welcomed new Board member Megan DeWindt.

### **Approve Consent Agenda Items**

Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the May 17, 2022 special joint and regular meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since May 17, 2022 that totaled \$84,233.06; and May expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director. Shorter moved that and seconded by Albert to approve the consent agenda. All in favor.

### **Strategic Plan Mission and Vision Workshop**

The Downtown Director reviewed that the consultants conducted surveys and stakeholder interviews, as well as studied several documents and data and will be on-site June 21-23 to continue analysis.

The consultants conducted a mission and vision workshop with Board members looking at core values, hurdles, broad purpose and the Board's specific mission. The consultants gathered information from Board participation and will further their insight in to the downtown community to help them develop a five-year strategic plan that is tailed to Petoskey.

### **Discuss Darling Lot Parking Deck and Provide Direction to Walker Parking Consultants**

The Downtown Director reviewed that the DMB and City Council had met jointly on May 17 to hear a presentation from Walker Parking Consultants regarding their progress on a parking deck design for the Darling Parking Lot. At that meeting, Walker had reported on the work done on the project so far and asked that, before they completed their report, they be given direction in three different areas that included: whether a diagonal or perpendicular parking pattern was preferred; if a roof option should be included in the final design and if so, should it contain "green" features and, should the architectural design be basic, traditional, or high end.

The Downtown Director further reported that City Council had discussed the study and the request for recommendations at their June 6 regular meeting and that there had been comments from Council regarding dissatisfaction with the process and a need to develop the Darling Lot as a mixed-use project that would include housing. In response, staff had explained that this study is part of a research project to determine the most feasible and desirable plan for the Darling Lot; that the site is still listed as a Redevelopment Ready Site on the MEDC website and other types of projects could happen there; and that the Walker study was included in the DMB budget as part of a process that would assist in planning efforts. Council had then moved to recommend that a perpendicular parking pattern, an option for a roof (not necessarily green), and a traditional architecture design should be included in the final plan.

Staff concluded that she is now requesting that the DMB discuss and review these same questions and make their recommendations that would be forwarded to Walker Parking Consultants in order for them to complete the study.

DMB comments included affirmation that a solar component would be costly and symbolic; confirmation that the study was needed as a part of a plan for how to move ahead with development of the lot; and that covered parking is desirable for future Downtown success.

It was moved by Smith and seconded by Keedy that the DMB instruct Walker Parking to proceed with the study including the same recommendations made by City Council which included a perpendicular parking pattern, an option for a roof (not necessarily green), and a traditional architecture design. All in favor.

### **Reports by Downtown Committees**

Marketing Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that the committee decided to coordinate and print a Downtown Petoskey wall calendar which could be sold as a fundraiser; that the website redevelopment project was on schedule; and that no errors had been reported in the shopping map to the current date.

Events Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that there were favorable comments on the Summer Celebration and Back to the Bricks Car Show; that preparation for Sidewalk Sales including shorter hours; and the beginning of the prep work for Summer Send Off was occurring. The Downtown Director shared with the Board that she was relying on the committee for support, but that, without an assistant, she was making decisions in the essence of time.

Parking Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that a QR code had been placed on the actual ticket to encourage direct payments through the website and that it was working; that only one of the two applicants she had hired had actually shown up; that she had hired another ambassador who would be starting in the coming days; and that she had been contacted by a Wisconsin developer who was interested in presenting a mixed-use project for the Darling Lot.

Design Committee – The Downtown Director reviewed that the committee had not met but she had met with Tim Knutsen about the status of plans for the Mitchell Street entryway and the gazebo lighting projects; that she had met with the City Planner about moving ahead with allowing rooftop dining in the CBD; and had also discussed with the City Planner allowing first floor residential in the backs of buildings in the commercial district. Board members were supportive of the rooftop dining concept and had expressed support of combined first floor use of residential and commercial in the past.

In the area of Economic Development, the Downtown Director stated that the Rugport Sign had still not been taken down; that Spice Merchants and Apre`s by Threads had opened on Howard Street; and that there were two new stores ready to sign leases on Park Avenue.

The Organization Task Force had not been required or asked to meet, but that staff had organized paperwork and expectations with consultant, reviewed surveys that are going out this week, scheduled meetings with many of the stakeholders, and set up a schedule for the consultant visit in June.

The Downtown Director further reported:

- The downtown office had supplied parking tokens to Julienne Tomatoes who were giving them as a courtesy to customers who were upset because they had paid the meter only to find that the restaurant was not open and that offers of other assistance had been made to them, but there did not seem more that could be done to help them in their sewer line clean-up effort. Staff will definitely promote the reopening of the restaurant as much as possible.
- Regarding the dining deck resolution that had been contested by Gypsy Vodka, staff clarified that, as board members, all should know that the dining decks are controversial among the public because they take up parking spaces; some think they don't look nice; others question why if restaurants can have them everyone should be able to have one; they add congestion to the streets; and that the restrictions put on for full service dining that included table side service were meant to be inclusive of restaurants that would help keep visitors in downtown after they had a meal. They were not meant to exclude anyone.
- Trolley – Still no serious trolley driver candidates. Staff believes that the problem is not the wages, but that it is the training required and the seasonality of the work.
- The downtown office is still very busy. Record numbers of tickets are being written, staff is trying especially hard to target excessive parkers, especially when there are complaints. Administrative work is taking more time than usual; answering complaints, tracking late payments, and even just recording paid tickets are all taking up limited staff time.
- Staff is receiving more and more anecdotal comments regarding courtesy tickets. People tell us they never put money in the meter until they get their courtesy ticket, knowing that they will be able to park several times for free before they are caught and given a warning. One person said that he has been getting new plates every year because he relied on the courtesy ticket warning and this was cheaper than paying tickets.
- Thanks to Jennifer Shorter who made a last-minute appearance on 9&10 News to talk about summer in Downtown Petoskey when staff was not available.

### **Hear City Staff Report**

Mayor Murphy reported that the preceding evening's City Council meeting had adjourned very late in the evening, but that Council had heard a presentation by Beckett and Raeder concerning the Little Traverse Wheelway Westside Connector schematic design; approved allowing accessory dwelling units on a limited basis; had agreed on recommendations to Walker Parking Consultants for the completion of their study on the Darling Lot; and had discussions on the Director of Finance and Clerk-Treasurer positions.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, this June 21, 2022, meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.