

# **MONTCLAIR CENTER BID**

## **GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015**

**Montclair Center BID - Full Board Meeting**  
**Dec. 9, 2020 – 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.**  
**Zoom**

Board members in attendance: Jose Barreiro, Jeff Beck, Richard Cronk, David Cummings, Ashley Cyrus, Rebecca Doyle, Carley Graham Garcia, Lisa Ingersoll, Lisa Johnson, Jaji Packard, Alescia Peyton, Hipolito Pollantis, Lori Price Abrams, Sharda Ramharack, Sue Schultz, Matt Silverman, Robert Squires, Nat Testa

Absent: Jennifer Bobal, Brittany DeMaio, Kathryn Waggener McGuire

Staff: Jason Gleason, Jackie Apicella, Pauline Heaney, AnnMarie Sekeres

P.U.M.A. Staff: Brad Segal, JJ Folsom

Guests: Celestina Ando, Luther Flurry, Petia Morozov, Joann Olcott-Yeager, David Placek, Mayor Sean Spiller, Councilman Peter Yacobellis

### **I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME**

Lisa Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

She thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Councilman Peter Yacobellis introduced himself.

### **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **III. ADOPTION OF NOVEMBER MINUTES**

**Sue Schultz moved to approve the November minutes.**

**Matt Silverman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### **a. 2020 Year in Review**

Jason Gleason and Lisa Johnson gave a PowerPoint presentation on the year in review. Starting the year off we cancelled the wellness festival in March, changing strategies due to COVID to support our businesses throughout the pandemic. The BID pivoted its social media messaging, becoming a distribution source of key information from state and local government regarding protocols, grants, PPE, and executive orders, as well as many other resources.

Seven online zoom webinars entitled "Montclair Mondays" were presented to as many as 50 attendees per session. Take Out Tuesdays/Gift Me Wednesdays online

campaigns were launched. Stakeholder education was offered with the Montclair Public Library and Storefront Mastery. A Fresh Air Montclair initiative was created to fill vacant storefronts with artwork. There are now currently 25 installations throughout the district.

June saw the partial reopening of businesses. The Montclair Business Association, a partnership with other local business areas within Montclair, was established to support all Montclair businesses, and lobbied the Township for help and resources to aide all local businesses. BID social media had a record year, with 11K followers on Facebook, and hitting 10K followers on Instagram.

In July the BID implemented Pop Goes the Plaza, a partnership with the Township to shut down Church and South Park Streets to cars, creating an open-air market with increased outdoor dining/seating for restaurants and dining areas for take-out. DesignShed conceived designs of streetscape with illuminated benches, shades and interactive displays. Fresh Air Fitness was established in Crane Park to help the gyms and fitness studios who were last to reopen. The “Love Our Montclair” campaign, spearheaded by Councilman Peter Yacobellis, helped increase marketing presence with a hashtag campaign by the Township.

Throughout August Pop Goes the Plaza was ongoing, activating the street with a fashion show and Jazz House Kids performing live music featuring jazz legends. People came out of hibernation to enjoy summer evenings in a safe environment. The BID garnered lots of press and media attention, with Jason Gleason and the district being featured on News12 NJ, CBS and on radio.

September brought “Late Night Thursdays” encouraging businesses to stay open until 8:00 p.m. promoting early and safe/less crowded holiday shopping. Students from Jazz House Kids were able to play and jam in safety for four weekends at Crane Park.

November’s Shop Small campaign featured thirty individual business owner portraits used in banners up and down Bloomfield Avenue. It was also featured in social media and print advertising in the *Montclair Local* and *NJ Monthly*. This initiative was hugely popular with very positive feedback. The BID updated its website with a fresh, more intuitive and streamlined Instagram-like feel.

The BID garnered an MSNJ Recovery grant for \$100,000 specifically for COVID relief and recovery. Jason Gleason was named as a member of the Township’s COVID Recovery Task Force acting as liaison between all communities.

Sensitivity training for small businesses was secured as part of stakeholder education. This brought awareness to issues of diversity, and each business that completes the training will receive a certificate and window sticker to convey “all welcome here.” Lisa Johnson mentioned that even during the difficulties of 2020, amazingly 25 new businesses opened in our district, which showed the strong support to businesses offered by the community and BID.

Mayor Spiller thanked and congratulated the BID and business community on its quick action to engage and pivot during the pandemic. He stated that vaccinations are on the way, and while we cannot wait to connect again in person, we must do the right thing to get safely through this holiday season.

## **V. TREASURERS REPORT**

Jaji Packard stated the budget was in good financial standing, ending the year in a surplus. The only overspending this year was on marketing, due to the increased social media and PR campaigns. There will be NO increase in the 2021 assessment; the goal is to help our business owners during the pandemic.

## **VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **a. Board Election Results**

Nat Testa, chair of the nominations committee, reported the board election results. Only two categories were contested. For business owner the winning votes went to Lisa Johnson and Celestina Ando. Rebecca Doyle, Carly Graham-Garcia and Matt Silverman garnered the At-Large seats. A total of 49 ballots were submitted. A survey for nominations to the five executive board positions will be sent out later this month

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. 2021 Committees**

Jason Gleason thanked the current committees for their great work this year, saying the committee chairs did an exceptional job. Next year the committee purviews may change slightly (such as budget/finance/investments/growing capital, or parking/transportation). He encouraged non-board members to join a committee, reminding all board members as part of their commitment they must sit on at least one committee.

### **b. 2021 Officer Nominations**

As previously mentioned, nominations for board officers will be forthcoming, as well as virtual sign-ups for committees.

### **c. Survive & Thrive**

Matt Silverman said this initiative is a toolbox, a plan to create policies and programs to help ALL Montclair businesses post-COVID. The goal is to work with all business, town and government leaders for quarter one, 2021. Now is the time to be ready and prepare for warmer weather engagement. We must hit the ground running, seeking examples of recovery strategy from other towns. Jason Gleason asked the board to get a resolution together regarding this, encouraging the board to look at this document.

Jose Barriero wanted to acknowledge the businesses we lost this year, stating they are local friends and neighbors, including the Bow-Tie Cinema and Costanera restaurant, both having operated in the district for a very long time.

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

a. **MSNJ COVID Recovery Grant Update**

This grant is helping offset extra spending due to COVID. We have judiciously spent the grant down to the penny, showing good management of the money.

b. **P.U.M.A. Updates**

Working groups have met with JJ Folsom, Brad Segal and Andrea Buglione. They have set the groundwork for how the role out will proceed. Stakeholder interviews are coming up, and everyone is enthusiastic to participate. P.U.M.A. has set a pretty aggressive schedule with plans to be completed by April.

**IX. OPEN DISCUSSION – New Ideas, Comments, Questions**

Lisa Johnson thanked Sharda Ramharack, who is leaving the board after a very long tenure. Sharda was also congratulated on Smith Boring's upcoming 34-year anniversary.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Jose Barriero moved to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Ingersoll seconded.  
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING:**

**January 13 • 7:00 p.m.**

**Zoom**