

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

Montclair Center BID - Full Board Meeting
April 14, 2021 - 7:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.
Zoom

Board members in attendance: Celestina Ando, Jose Barreiro, Jeff Beck, Richard Cronk, David Cummings, Ashley Cyrus, Lisa Johnson, Roger Mazzeo, Jill Montague, Jaji Packard, Alescia Peyton, David Placek, Hipolito Pollantis, Lori Price Abrams, Elizabeth Rich, Sue Schultz, Matt Silverman, Robert Squires
Absent: Jennifer Bobal, Nat Testa
Staff: Jason Gleason, Pauline Heaney
P.U.M.A. Staff: Brad Segal, JJ Folsom, Andrea Buglione

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Lisa Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. ADOPTION OF MARCH MINUTES

Matt Silverman moved to approve the March minutes.

Lori Price Abrams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Clean, Safe & Green Report

Jason Gleason reported that the ambassadors have picked up approximately 3.5 tons of garbage this month between emptying big belly, Victor Stanley trash receptacles and litter pick-up. The street sweeper is back on the street, and together with the power washer the team is performing deep cleaning. They have removed graffiti from fourteen locations, and will be repainting twenty Victor Stanley trash cans. Repairing banner rods, weeding and tree-bed rejuvenation is also underway. The Polaris vehicle is set to be delivered this week.

b. Fresh Air Updates

Jason Gleason spoke regarding the popularity of the Fresh Air Montclair initiative last year. Efforts to re-sign, catalogue and repopulate these exhibits is ongoing. \$45,000 has been earmarked for this, together with plans to run a sponsorship campaign for marketing and PR. There are fifteen new exhibits coming in the next few weeks, with the intention of having a ribbon cutting mid to late May. Some of the exhibits have lighting features for display at night.

V. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Lisa Johnson mentioned that with the spring, warmer weather and more people vaccinated, the district is starting to become alive again. Good news - the BID had a net effect of eleven new businesses in the first quarter.

VI. TREASURERS REPORT

Jose Barriero reported the budget was formerly approved by the Town Council. There will be a new, easier to read, more high-level snapshot of our budget which will be posted on Basecamp.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Parking Committee

Matt Silverman says currently the Parking Committee is primarily focused on the employee parking permit program. Determining how many employees will need permits will be more difficult. Then the problem will be to identify parking spaces. They will most likely be those largely unused in the daytime within the Crescent, Seymour and Bay Street parking decks. Evening and weekend employee parking needs will also be reviewed. Finally, there will be a need to introduce an ordinance defining these new permit rules and fees.

Discussion arose regarding the Bloomfield Avenue construction project, what the timeframe of this is, what it might entail, and how it will affect our businesses. Also, there are many reports of broken parking meters all over town, but especially in the Maple Lot. This issue was brought up at the recent Town Council meeting, where it was reported a vehicle can lawfully be ticketed if parked at a broken meter. Meanwhile, those meters in which coins are jammed or screens damaged can still be accessed by using the ParkMobile app (although this might be considered discriminatory).

b. Nominations Committee

Sue Schultz announced that Rebecca Doyle has resigned from her At-Large seat on the board. The Nominations Committee is looking to fill her unexpired term ending December 2021. Please contact Sue Schultz if you can recommend anyone to this position.

c. Brick & Mortar Working Group

Jaji Packard spoke regarding the Brick & Mortar business start-up competition. The expectation is to notify finalists on June 12. June 19 is slated as the day for finalists to meet judges live and answer their questions. If anyone would like to be on the panel of judges, please let Jaji Packard know.

d. Marketing Committee

Jose Barreiro mentioned the Marketing Committee should view the Red Root report on Basecamp. It shows how the social media engagement is extremely high, with the number of views doubling; the highest posts being for Good Bottle, Mesob and New Life Consignment.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

a. P.U.M.A. Initial Strategic Plan Introduction

Brad Segal complimented the working committee on doing a great job working through the initial draft plan. He then gave an overview of this draft, mentioning that for this plan more than fifty Zoom interviews were conducted, and almost 1,000 survey results were received. He is very optimistic for Montclair post-COVID. Montclair will likely see a good recovery while continuing to attract new businesses, although we must be mindful of displacement.

One recommendation is that the BID should adopt an urban district management model over the current main street approach. It better benefits the whole district, in a more tailored, market based (not historical) way. It is more property-owner based, with a larger professional staff and is more policy focused. This would align with the International Downtown Association.

The P.U.M.A. team then outlined the vision and mission statements, goals and key objectives.

- Goal 1 includes, amongst other objectives, establishing a baseline services agreement for the clean, safe and green team.
- Goal 2 requires marketing and communication promoting awareness of the purpose and uniqueness of the BID and the value it adds. The recommendation is for the BID to work on smaller events, and in collaboration with other organizations. Another objective is tailored marketing to reach all stakeholders, including residents as a key consumer segment, with targeted outreach.
- Goal 3 includes broadening support for existing and new businesses. To include a retail study looking at what might be needed and thrive within the district. It should include a retail mix, and encourage diverse and minority ownership.
- Goal 4 encourages creating enjoyable public spaces, focusing on the arts in events and programming, as well as public art and lighting. Supporting the Montclair SAFE Plan is key, working with the Township toward greater pedestrian and bike safety.
- Goal 5 involves working to be advocates for the district, including collaborating with the Township to solve long-term planning and policy issues, and foster partnerships with civic organizations.

Organizational implications to the BID include the addition of two positions: a full-time data analyst for property and inventory of businesses within the district, plus a business support manager who will establish relationships and liaise with the Township, gather event permits, assist with construction mitigation (communication with businesses regarding construction plans, dates, signage and access), etc.

P.U.M.A. has also observed that the BID's property tax rate assessment is low by industry standards. It recommends an increase in the budget assessment, and also looking into other ways of diversifying funding.

Brad Segal conducted two online polls to gauge the board's impressions of the draft goals, objectives and overall strategic plan. Most board members agreed it is going in the right direction, and expressed much enthusiasm.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. OPEN DISCUSSION – New Ideas, Comments, Questions
None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Alescya Peyton moved to adjourn the meeting. **Jose Barrerio** seconded.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

May 12 • 7:00 p.m.

Zoom