

# **MONTCLAIR CENTER BID**

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

Montclair Center BID - Board Meeting  
April 19, 2023 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.  
In Person at BID Office 26 Lackawanna Plaza or via Zoom

Board members in attendance: Celestina Ando, Emer Featherstone, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Ernst Goldman, Natalie Haddad, Matt Horrigan, Ray Ketchem, Jacob Nieman, Jaji Packard, Elizabeth Rich, Kristen Zachares

Absent: David Cummings, Rachel Grochowski, Jill Montague, David Placek, Lori Price Abrams, Matt Silverman, Robert Squires,

Staff: Jason Gleason, Pauline Heaney, Judy Ross

Guest: Daniel Kim

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

Jaji Packard called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

### **II. ADOPTION OF FEBRUARY & MARCH MINUTES**

Jaji Packard moved to approve the February minutes.

Emer Featherstone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Jaji Packard moved to approve the March minutes.

Ernst Goldman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Daniel Kim of DiRasa House of Diversified Arts, an art gallery and event venue, will be opening in two weeks. He wants to help the BID and local community.

### **IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT (Jaji Packard)**

None

### **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Jason Gleason)**

#### **A. Office Update**

Jason announced that Pauline Heaney will be leaving her position to work at NJIT. She said she had learned a great deal and thoroughly enjoyed her time with the organization. Aysa Gordon will be assuming the position of administrative assistant and community liaison May 1. Jason announced he also has two solid candidates for the programming manager/assistant director position.

B. New and Noteworthy in Montclair Center

The only closing this month was Italees Jamaican restaurant. Meanwhile the BID had six openings Maddox, Musuko, Mud Clay Studio, Grace Loves Lace, Luigino's, and Lazlo Plants. DiRasa House of Diversified Arts and Genevieve's Exclusive Vintage Collection both on Lackawanna Plaza, will be opening in the next two weeks. It's been a fabulous quarter with 15 openings and 4 closings overall.

Placer.ai data reveals foot traffic is 200,000+ more visitors in this quarter over last. We are doing better than many BIDs, which is reflected in these numbers. Our downtown is being viewed very well. Visit frequency is an uptick, dwell time is also an uptick.

The CDS report is like last month. Ambassadors collected 170 bags of manually swept garbage, and 185 bags from garbage cans. However, they also collected 321 bags of curbside (illegally dumped) garbage, which should not be part of the regular pick up. Perhaps an enforcement blitz needs to happen or at least better communication on how residents should handle personal garbage. There was zero medical waste this month, but CDS reported lots of graffiti. The BID is getting lots of praise from the community because the district is looking really clean. Finally, as a result of Mayor Spiller communicating with PSEG, lighting outages were down by 5%.

Pride and Jazz event planning is in full swing. Vendor registration is underway, as are Unified Command meetings. The Pride event footprint is slightly larger this year, including Jazz House Kids performing on Church Street.

Montclair Film is planning a movie night July 16 showing Top Gun. Montclair Black Coalition has an event for Juneteenth, while AAPI is planning a Diwali event at MAM. Studio Montclair will be supporting the Leach Gallery, with a cross-collaboration with Dundee University on how to work together post-COVID, and MFEE is hosting a Toast to the Teachers through June 30.

A jury meeting took place with Jeff Beck, owner of East Side Mags; Tanya Poteat, member of the Montclair Art Museum's African American Cultural Committee; Sharon Burton Turner, lifetime arts advocate and former chair of Montclair Art Museum African American Cultural Committee; Charlie Spademan, sculptor, and Ria Asmaeil, 4 Flavors Art. They agreed unanimously on a mural for 6 Gates Avenue, deeming it appropriate for the district. This bodes well for the 36 other possible locations for murals in the district.

Earth day celebrations are this weekend at Crane Park, with the Northeast Earth Coalition (NEEC) and other sponsors. Electric vehicles will be on display, as well as an organized clean-up and bike ride events.

Fifty-two new parking signs have been installed, which is something the BID has been advocating for. The Midtown Deck was full for the first time since its opening. Many thanks to the Parking Committee and others who helped forward this initiative on this wayfinding success.

Main Street NJ has reinitiated its contract with National Main Street enabling us to get some direct services from them, including architectural services, historical tax credit advice for property owners and developers, access to full tutorials and assistance with getting buildings on the national register, as well as staff and board training. Also, NJ Main Street will soon be opening grant applications to BIDs. Amounts up to \$20,000 can be applied for and awarded before June 30. After June 30 there's a possibility of applying for another \$70K grant which will straddle the next fiscal year.

**VI. TREASURER'S REPORT** (*Matt Horrigan*)

Matt Horrigan presented the budget. The BID is in good shape at a net of \$8,000 in savings for this quarter. \$23,000 in savings is due to payroll, which was offset by \$15,000 for travel and computer software. Celestina Ando asked about the funds that should be coming in from subscribers to the DMO. She is concerned because the prior budget was approved on receiving \$50,000 from DMO memberships in the first six-month time frame. Jason reported it has been slow to get going. The foundational aspects, including the website and social media, are not there yet. There are no tangible services yet to offer.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS** (*Jaji Packard*)

A. Vote on Budget specifics for our Event Partnerships

Jaji asked for board members to disclose if they have a conflict or duality of interest for each event partnership resolution.

**Pride Festival**

Celestina Ando and Kristen Zachares disclosed that they will be vendors at the Pride event.

Whereas The Montclair Center BID includes event programming as an essential part of its mission,

Now, therefore, the Board of Directors of the Montclair Center BID hereby resolve: That the Executive Director be authorized, but not required, to partner with Out Montclair for the purpose of hosting the Montclair Pride festival on June 10, 2023, plus any affiliated or promotional sub-events, and is further authorized to spend up to \$20,000 in direct partnership expenses from Montclair Center Corporation funds. This resolution does not affect the Executive Director's ability to direct BID services in a way that may increase or decrease in-kind contributions to this or other events.

**Matt Horrigan moved to adopt the resolution as read. Emer Featherstone seconded. Resolution carried unanimously.**

**Jazz Festival**

Kristen Zachares, Natalie Haddad and Emer Featherstone mentioned possible conflicts.

Whereas The Montclair Center BID includes event programming as an essential part of its mission,

Now, therefore, the Board of Directors of the Montclair Center BID hereby resolve: That the Executive Director be authorized, but not required, to partner with Montclair Jazz Festival and/or Jazz House Kids for the purpose of hosting the 2023 Downtown Jamboree, Montclair Jazz Festival on September 9, 2023, plus any affiliated or promotional sub-events, and is further authorized to spend up to \$20,000 in direct partnership expenses from Montclair Center Corporation funds. This resolution does not affect the Executive Director's ability to direct BID services in a way that may increase or decrease in-kind contributions to this or other events.

**Matt Horrigan moved to adopt the resolution as read. Emer Featherstone seconded. Resolution carried unanimously.**

**Montclair Film Festival**

Emer Featherstone may have a conflict.

Whereas The Montclair Center BID includes event programming as an essential part of its mission,

Now, therefore, the Board of Directors of the Montclair Center BID hereby resolve: That the Executive Director be authorized, but not required, to partner with Montclair Film for the purpose of hosting the 2023 Montclair Film Festival on October 20, 2023 through October 29, 2023, plus any affiliated or promotional sub-events, and is further authorized to spend up to \$15,000 in direct partnership expenses from Montclair Center Corporation funds.

This resolution does not affect the Executive Director's ability to direct BID services in a way that may increase or decrease in-kind contributions to this or other events.

**Liz Rich moved to adopt the resolution as read. Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa seconded. Resolution carried unanimously.**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Resolution authorizing renewal of the MCBID lease for 26 Lackawanna Plaza for an additional three-year term. *(Jaji)*

**Lease Renewal Resolution for 26 Lackawanna Plaza**

Whereas, Montclair Center Corporation has a lease agreement with property owners Tamara and Guy Kinley leasing premises at 26 Lackawanna Plaza for a three year term ending November 30, 2023,

Whereas, the lease agreement includes the option to renew for one successive three year term,

Whereas, Montclair Center Corporation wishes to avail itself of the option to renew at the rate and under the terms and conditions specified in the lease agreement,

Therefore, the Directors of Montclair Center Corporation authorize the Executive Director to inform Tamara and Guy Kinley, the property owners of the premises at 26 Lackawanna Plaza, that Montclair Center Corporation hereby renews the lease agreement for the premises under the terms and conditions specified therein for a successive term of three years ending November 30, 2026.

In discussion Jason mentioned the terms are the same as previous years with a 3% annual increase.

**Natalie Haddad moved to adopt the resolution as read. Jacob Nieman seconded. Resolution carried unanimously.**

- B. Election of Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Montclair Center Corp. *(Jaji)*

Jaji reported that Ashley Cyrus has resigned from the board. Ernst Goldman and Matt Silverman have both been nominated to fill the VP position. Daniel Garcia Pedrosa facilitated a blind vote of those members present and announced that Ernst won the nomination.

- C. In the event that the Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer office seat is now vacant, election to fill the aforementioned seat.

**Jaji Packard moved to elect Kristen Zachares for the assistant secretary/treasurer position. Matt Horrigan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

- D. Master Plan Revision initiative. *(Jason, Discussion)*

Jason mentioned the master plan is being reexamined. Jacob Nieman explained the process from the planning board's point of view. It will be a long process with outreach to groups and communities impacted by the plan. Any individual or group that is impacted is welcome to participate in meetings - groups and subgroups will then report back to the planning board. Primary areas looked at for the reexamination include transportation and parking, neighborhood character, economic development, flexible suburban living, infrastructure and utilities. Also, certain geographic areas will be looked at, including Montclair Center. Janice Talley drafted reexamination report can be viewed on the Township website under planning. There is lots to digest, so Jason highlighted several areas, and discussed why we need to be involved in this:

- Land use amendments
- Open space – establish a parklet program
- Environmental commission will examine noise ordinances – there are currently none in Montclair.
- Parking /parking studies – shared parking services/ car dependent suburb.

Discussion took place with Jacob regarding the existing plan and how it relates to the reexamination. He explained that the planning board consists of nine members, and they are looking to hear from others in the community who will be impacted by this reexamination.

Jason suggested we need to be a voice for the district and have a working group review this document and put together a white paper as we did for Lackawanna Plaza. He further suggested putting out a PR and communications plan to our constituents to come have a seat at the table. There is a need for transparency and conversation. A working group can be set up through Basecamp.

- E. Favorite Takeaways from Main Street USA Conference in Boston  
Jaji, Ernst, Kristen, and Jason reported they thought the conference was terrific, the networking was especially beneficial. Sessions on engaging the board, bringing out best qualities and skillsets of the board were also well received. Having facetime with other eds, grant conversations, and conflict resolution sessions were also extremely helpful. Our BID is seen as the thought leader or 'gold' standard among our peers. We are the only BID using Placer and now the state is considering funding this software for other BIDs in New Jersey.

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

Celestina asked about a DMO update. The DMO director reported CivicBrand is conducting interviews for the branding exercise. Website and content are about eight weeks out. She is working on opportunities to promote our festivals and increase membership.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.**

Next full board meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 17, 2023, 7 p.m.**