

**Draft Minutes from the
East Downtown Council Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, October 3, 2013
First Covenant Church, 2nd Floor Lounge, 810 South 7th Street**

Present: John Campobasso, Dan Collison, Tom Hayes, Varun Kharbanda, Lynn Regnier, Brian Maupin, Jan Olsen, James Scott, Carletta Sweet, Tim Tucker, Bert Winkel
Staff: Christie Rock-Hantge
Absent: Jeff Anderson, Jackie Barrett, Carl Runck, Paul Mellblom

I. Call to Order

President Dan Collison called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. and announced that the National Association of Minority Contractors would be having a press conference and program at 3:30 p.m. that day to publicize the grand opening of its Resource Center in First Covenant Church. Dan then explained how he got to know the director of the regional chapter that covers the Upper Midwest (NAMC-UM) who had been thinking about ways to connect to the 16 contiguous block development project next to First Covenant. Through subsequent conversations, the idea for a contractors' resource center located in the church germinated to enable contractors and company owners to effectively be in the pipeline of all the bidding that will be going on in the next 3 years. As a consequence, NAMC-UM will become a member of the EDC.

II. Consideration of Agenda

Dan requested that the agenda be revised by adding 2014 Façade Improvement Matching Grant RFP decision under the President's Report, and to strike the Stadium Implementation Committee update due to Paul Mellblom's schedule that prevented him from attending the meeting. The revised agenda was approved as amended (CS/BW).

III. Consent Agenda

Approved as submitted (CS/BW).

IV. President's Report

- **Set date for December Business Forum.** Discussion was held to determine whether to maintain the historical pattern (using the first Thursday for the business forum) or to maintain the pattern of the other months (board meeting on first Thursday and business forum on third Thursday) because there is a lot of activity going on and people are still doing things (e.g., groundbreaking on the stadium in November, the Ryan project on our doorstep). Thereafter, the board agreed to maintain the first and third Thursday schedule for this December.
- **Downtown East versus East Downtown district branding discussion continued.** Dan explained that they took this discussion to the Strategy Committee meeting and having heard how EPNI feels, having met with Kjersti Monson, CPED's Director of Long Range Planning and Beth Elliott, CPED's Principal Planner, as well as how he refers to the district when at meetings, it was decided that there's not much to fight for or against at this time and suggested the board refer to the area as East Downtown.

Dan then went off the President's Report to allow the presentation on the 800 Washington Avenue RFP (see below).

- **2014 Façade Improvement Matching Grant decision.** Dan explained that the EDC has been doing these grants for many years and there's an RFP deadline of October 31st if we decide to pursue it for another year. There are three service areas: Intervene (red), Support (yellow), and Monitor (green), and the only area within the EDC district to Intervene is Chicago Avenue from 8th Street to Franklin Avenue. Lynn advised that there are some Aeon and NCU housing properties along that corridor but she doesn't know if the property has to be facing Chicago Avenue. Also, there are also some Somali-owned businesses between 16th and 17th Avenues but would need someone who could communicate with them to encourage their participation. Dan explained that the program is very administrative heavy and the EDC had hired someone to manage it. This last round he volunteered and pushed us over the last hump and got barely enough to give the EDC payback into the budget. Based on these and other considerations, the board agreed to not pursue the grant this year.

Dan then deferred discussion on the annual cycle for budgeting to discuss business forum development.

V. **800 Washington Avenue South RFP**

Ann Calvert, Minneapolis CPED Principal Project Coordinator, introduced herself and Daniel Villarreal, a new staff member who will be working on the project with her. Calvert explained that the site in question (reference the 6-page document Dan emailed on October 4th) is what remains of the E Liner Parcel on Washington Avenue South between Chicago and 9th Avenues. The City's first RFP occurred back when the Guthrie was in the works and they picked [now-defunct] Rottlund Homes who was going to do condos but ran into the market crash. Then when the second RFP was issued, the City accepted a combined proposal from the American Academy of Neurology for its new headquarters and Artspace for affordable housing. Eventually, Artspace relinquished their rights because it was too tough to acquire the funding they needed. Now with new development occurring in the areas and calls coming in about the site, the City is gearing back up for another RFP.

Calvert explained that the proposed development must comply with:

- *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*
- C3A (Community Activity Center District), DH (Downtown Height Overlay District), and DP (Downtown Parking Overlay District) zoning
- *The Historic Mills District Plan and Update*

Potential uses include:

- Commercial (e.g., retail, office, hospitality)
- Residential
- Arts and culture

Calvert also explained site considerations (e.g., a 10 foot setback required along Chicago Avenue, a 15 foot service alley easement next to parking ramp), the tentative timeline for the RFP process that will be posted at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/rfp/index.htm>, then responded to questions from the board.

VI. **Business Forum Development**

Dan explained that it is a lot of work to create high value business forums, but it is the EDC's bread and butter and so he has invested most of time in that regard.

- **September 19th Business Forum recap.** Upon reflection, Dan advised that when we did Izzy's some of the people who attended commented that it was better than they thought it would be because of the story of who Jeff Sommers is and what his business is. Thus, going forward Dan will pay close attention to ensure we have the hottest information on those who will present (because it is interesting how Sommers does entrepreneurialism from wages to a sustainable facility) and to capture that in our invitation.
- **October 17th Business Forum.** Confirmed at the Aloft Hotel. Featured speakers are Mayor RT Rybak, CPED Director Jeremy Hanson Willis, CPED's Director of Long Range Planning Kjersti Monson, and CPED's Principal Planner Beth Elliott. Topic will be "Property Development in Downtown East".
- **November 21st Business Forum.** Confirmed at the Normandy Inn. Topic would be one of the social fabric issues of the 2025 Plan Development Committee with Mikkel Beckmen, the new head of City and County efforts to end homelessness.
- **December 19th Business Forum.** Location TBD. Featured speakers would be Mike Ryan and Rick Collins from Ryan Companies. Topic would be "Envisioning Downtown Minneapolis in 2025".
- **Future Business Forums.** Suggestions included having, if they are available, the three newly elected council members representing the EDC district for January 16th. For March/April having Jon Pryor, the new CEO of HCMC. Dan reminded the board that the next Business Forum Planning Committee will be on Thursday, October 17th at 10:30 a.m. in advance of the Business Forum.

VII. **Marketing Committee Report**

Tom Hayes advised the board that Daniel Gumnit, CEO of People Serving People, has joined the MC and he has been very helpful so far. Tom explained that in June the MC had considered two scopes: the broader scope that would involve supporting the marketing of this district to attract businesses to the area; and the narrower scope that would involve increasing the visibility and perceived value of the EDC as an essential and effective business association by supporting communications to member businesses, prospective members, and key constituencies. Since June, in part due to the strategic planning process, the 5-year strategic framework generated some important goals and tactics that

were assigned to the MC that suggested going back to the broader scope. However, the work the MC has done today has affirmed that its scope should be the narrower of the two because that's all the capacity it has to do. Immediate next steps include identifying some communications planning assistance from either a local firm within the district or from a company that has a communications department. The scope of that assistance will be written and reviewed in the next month and by the next board meeting have it well defined so that by January/February they are creating the marketing plan for the EDC.

Dan reiterated that there will not be a lot of grant money coming our way and we'll have to generate income through membership and events. It's a changing paradigm, grants for staff and façade are going away because we're now in a favored district getting hundreds of millions of dollars of development and the EDC is trying to figure out its role in the mist of all this. Dan advised that Gumnit had commented that what the EDC probably sells best is influence then challenged us to come up with our value proposition.

Tom advised that Gumnit also said it's the insider information that could lead to influence and the connections to each other. That led to the discussion about if we were to look at a broader scope of work, we would need many more resources and whether our cost structure is appropriate for what we want to do.

Dan acknowledged a point of vulnerability – that it takes time to go to all the various meetings to bring that level of value and connection. Dan sees himself as a civic leader in a nonprofit capacity and this level of engagement integrates into his work, and he's willing to do so for the next few years. Part of the model of the Downtown Council is that they raised their membership and value so that they have a paid leader with supporting staff that create and generate the cyclical program. The EDC is somewhere between the MDC and the Lake Street Council that tries to create retail value. Because of the diversity of businesses within the EDC, if we're moving to influence, there's going to have to be a shift and a need to discuss staff development.

VIII. Membership Report

Dan advised that there are two new members: Hope Community Church and Covenant Electric as an affiliate. Christie added that there are 41 renewed members and 13 new members for a total of 54 that brought in \$13,940 in membership dues. Within the past couple days, Christie advised that North Central University, Bethlehem Baptist Church, BDC Management Company, Open Book, and MacPhail Center for Music had all renewed. At the September 17th business forum she received checks from Mahoney, Dougherty and Mahoney, and Kathleen Anderson.

In response to Varun's inquiry, Dan explained the "exchange" membership with the Minnesota High Tech Association and encouraged him to attend their events. Dan will follow up with MHTA to become more familiar with their activities.

Lastly, Christie announced the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Lunch & Learn: Health Care Reform Strategies for Small Business on October 11th at 11:30 a.m. John advised Varun that he could attend as a nonmember.

IX. Other Business

- Dan advised that he went to a 2025 Plan subcommittee on "Forging Connections to the University of Minnesota". It was a half-day charrette at the Cunningham Group and distributed renderings of a half billion dollars worth of development over 35W.
- Dan advised that some of the businesses in the Warehouse District no longer want to pay the assessments for the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District and passed around a map depicting levels of approval and disapproval of landowners. Since there is a growing concern about this resistance, given that the DID is approaching its 5-year budget renewal period, Dan has been asked by Betsy Buckley, interim CEO, to sit on their committee for a month to engage the EDC district who are for the program and realize that it is helpful for the stability and vitality of street life in all of downtown. Dan asked the board (a) what they know about the DID model and whether it needs reform, and (b) if it is a solid program, is the board comfortable with him participating in the committee and making calls to landowners within the EDC district. After a brief discussion, the board approved of Dan participating on the committee and Christie will draft a similar letter of support for its 2014 Operating Plan and Budget to that the DMNA submitted (TH/CS).

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. (CS/BW).

