

**Draft Minutes from the  
East Downtown Council Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, April 3, 2014**

**First Covenant Church, 2nd Floor Lounge, 810 South 7th Street**

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Present: Jeff Anderson, Tim Briggs, John Campobasso, Dan Collison, Tom Hayes, Varun Kharbanda, Brian Maupin, Paul Mellblom, Lynn Regnier, James Scott, Carletta Sweet, Tim Tucker, Bert Winkel  
Guests: Patrick Corkle, SRF Consulting Group  
Jenifer Hager, City of Minneapolis  
Aaron Vacek, SRF Consulting  
Staff: Christie Rock Hantge  
Absent: Jackie Barrett, Carl Runck

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**I. Call to Order and Introductions**

President Dan Collison called the meeting to order at 11:33 a.m. and asked members and guests to introduce themselves.

**II. Consideration of Agenda**

Approved as submitted (CS/TB).

**III. Consideration of Consent Agenda**

Approved as submitted which included the Minutes from March 6, 2014; Treasurer's Report for March 2014; and the Staff Report for the period 03-01-14 to 03-31-14 (CS/TB).

**IV. Guests Presentations**

- ***I-94W Westbound Exit Ramp to 7th Street Project Update.*** Jenifer Hager, Project Manager, advised that MnDOT's West Area Engineer, Ron Rauchle, was unavailable then she gave an overview of the proposed realignment of the current exit ramp off of I-94 westbound onto 5th Street to a new 7th Street exit ramp.

This is a concept the City has been working on for a number of years and is a piece of its *Access Minneapolis* Ten Year Transportation Action Plan (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/transplan/>) adopted by the City Council on June 29, 2007. This project is implementing that initiative.

In 2013 the City applied for MnDOT's Transportation Economic Development (TED) grant (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/funding/ted.html>) and was awarded \$6.8 million to implement this project in the 2015 construction season. The City is contributing another \$3 million to this project bringing the total project budget to approximately \$10 million.

They started engaging with the community back in January 2014 and are working on reaching a conceptual design layout in the next couple months for approval by both MnDOT and the City Council. Once a final design is approved they will put the project out for bidding in early 2015 in order to meet the 2015 construction season deadline.

Patrick Corkle, Traffic Engineer, using display boards explained the two concepts under consideration (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-121854>). In Option A, they would bring a 2-lane bridge from I-94 westbound onto 7th Street merging with the existing 2-lane Hiawatha ramp, then change 7th Street from a 2-lane roadway into a 3-lane, one-way roadway. Parking would be removed on both sides of the street with the potential for parking on the far west end. Push buttons for pedestrians and a pulsing signal at the 7th Street and 13th Avenue intersection would be added. City staff is leaning heavily toward positioning the signal at this location as it would be a good transition from the freeway infrastructure to a local street.

In Option B, again they would bring a 2-lane bridge from I-94 westbound onto 7th Street, however, now merging with a lane reduced Hiawatha ramp, then again change 7th Street from a 2-lane roadway into a 3-lane, one-way roadway. Parking would also be removed on both sides of the street with the potential for parking on the far west end. The push buttons for pedestrians and traffic signals would be positioned further westbound to allow access to/from Bethlehem Baptist Church's campus as well as enabling a more free flow of traffic. They are working through the technical documentation review with MnDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine which option would result in the least amount of

backups to the project partners' system. Hager advised that City staff is leaning heavily toward Option A.

Aaron Vacek, Consultant Project Manager, then discussed peak hours and daily traffic volume. The existing 5th Street exit ramp has about 800 cars during the 7:45 to 8:45 a.m. peak period with a daily volume of 5,000. It is assumed this traffic will move to the new 7th Street exit ramp resulting in about 1,400 cars during the 7:45 to 8:45 a.m. peak period with a daily volume of 8,500.

Thereafter, Corkle, Hager and Vacek responded to questions from board members. As part of the grant application, 5th Street will be repurposed under a separate project. The bridge would remain in place and facilitate a local connection (whether motorized or non-motorized to be determined) to the Cedar Riverside neighborhood to allow access to jobs and destinations in downtown.

- ***The Future of the East Downtown.*** In Beth Elliott's absence, Dan guided the board through the presentation she gave before the Minneapolis Downtown Council's 2025 Plan Development Committee entitled *The Future of the East Downtown* dated March 12, 2014 [**Christie insert link to Beth's document here**].

Of the ten initiatives within the 2025 Plan (<http://www.downtownmpls.com/page/show/423275-2025-plan>), six are in play in East Downtown: (1) doubling downtown's residential population; (2) create a consistently compelling downtown experience; (3) establish a downtown sports district that includes a new Vikings stadium; (4) lead the nation in transportation options; (5) create and sustain a green infrastructure and showcase the riverfront; and (6) forge connections to the University of Minnesota.

In order to realize the vision and implement these initiatives in East Downtown, the following goals were established:

- Connect with the surrounding neighborhoods
- That are characterized by mid-to high-density development that combines residential, office, hospitality, and retail
- With ground floor commercial uses along Washington and Chicago Avenues and 5th Street
- Plus transit-oriented development and denser, more high-rise development than has traditionally been seen in Minneapolis
- With structured parking either below or embedded within mixed-use development
- Redeveloped with a pedestrian friendly streetscape.

Beth's document also covered the barriers to realizing the vision (e.g., the dominance of surface parking lots within the area and the issues related to their ownership), separating fact from fiction as revealed in the Minneapolis East Downtown Parking Lot Study prepared for the City by HR&A Advisors, Inc. (<http://www.corridorsofopportunity.org/activities/parking-lot-study>), and a snapshot of what the future has in store including the Ryan development, 2-block park, Vikings stadium, air-rights development above ramp, HCMC expansion).

Dan has been in conversations with Elliott and others to determine what we can do as a district to incentivize development, that it is done well and right, that the best ideas lead, and to make it less profitable for landowners to hold on to their vacant parking lots.

## V. Action Items

- ***Executive Director Task Force Motion.*** Paul Mellblom advised that this task force, comprised of Daniel Gumnit, Lynn Regnier, Carletta Sweet and himself, had met over the past couple months and developed a Recommendations document which he presented at the March 2014 board meeting. At that time no action was taken and additional feedback was requested from the board. As a result of the detailed feedback received from Bert Winkel, the task force reconvened (sans Gumnit) and developed a more comprehensive Motion submitted for board approval. Paul then explained the two paths of the motion, i.e.: Path 1 is about what to do if the McKnight grant is approved; and Path 2 is about what to do if the McKnight grant is *not* approved. Regardless of which path is chosen, the EDC is committed to the long-term goals of: hiring a permanent, part-time ED; creating clarity of expectations and responsibilities for staff and board roles; continuing the cultivation of relationships with the Minneapolis Downtown Council; and endeavoring to move the organization to a level of operations where within 3 years or less a part-time ED will be hired by EDC.

Under Path 2, based on Paul's conversations with Dan regarding the perception by the business community, the title of Membership Director does not carry the gravitas of Executive Director and, as a consequence, proposed amending the Motion to replace Membership Director with Executive Director.

Dan clarified that the nature of the grant is a unique confluence of circumstances: (1) he was already developing a relation with Betsy Buckley during the interim and when Cramer arrived she quickly passed Dan over to him; and (2) Cramer, who was really engaged and imaginative, began inviting Dan to events. It was Cramer's idea to collaborate in this fashion. Officially, it is the MDC that has applied for the \$50,000 grant and the money would go to them and pay for an Executive Director position for 1 year. The contract for this position would be between the MDC and the EDC.

What success would look like within the terms of the contract is two key organizations connected to unfolding development in East Downtown Minneapolis tangibly influencing an array of stakeholders such that the next decade of city building in this district is more integrated, efficient, sustainable, regional, livable, and equitable through the discernment of best practices for:

- Organizational and Structural Alignment (Boards, Staff and Budgets)
- Program and Community Engagement Alignment (Planning and Strategy)
- Business, Residential, and Civic Alignment (Survey Input and Feedback)

Lynn then requested a brief closed session sans Dan and Christen. Thereafter, in open session the Motion as amended was approved (PM/BW).

- **Revised Board Renewal Commitment Form.** Dan distributed the revised board renewal commitment form and requested board members present to sign and submit.

## VI. Updates

- **MAP Board Leadership Development Update.** Dan advised that the Strategy Committee is focused on board leadership development and as a consequence created the 11" x 17" board profile worksheet as a working guide. Some of the edits will include keeping the Neighborhood Affiliation but only include EPNI and DMNA as they are the only two official neighborhood organizations, then add a Geographic Affiliation with Downtown East, Elliot Park, and Mill District. Under Demographic Qualities, Bert will explore the federal nomenclature for race and ethnicity to replace non-Caucasian. Many issues were also raised about the classification of non-Baby Boomer. Dan will tweak it further. James clarified that these are self-defining categories.

In the interest of being more intentional in the recruitment process and to become more inclusive in the decision-making process, the Board of Directors application and Nominating Process was developed for use by the board all year long. Thereafter, the process for nominating board directors was adopted (CS/BW).

- **DMNA Update.** Carletta highlighted that the DMNA will have its monthly board meeting that evening and will also hear about the I-94W westbound exit ramp to 7th Street project.

Responding to Dan's inquiry about what the board expects to takeaway from its strategic planning session that follows, Carletta advised that since there are still funds available in the NRP strategies they will need to prioritize how the funds are to be used and how to engage the community in implementing the strategies. Christie, who assembled the materials for the session, commented that it seems to be more about organizational processes and structure.

Carletta then announced that the annual meeting of the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership would be held on Tuesday, April 29th. The organization continues to develop and refine its Riverfront Vitality Report by working with the U of MN and other entities to obtain better data, e.g., who is using the river, how are they accessing it, what types of development exists along the riverfront, how to attract more businesses to the riverfront.

- **EPNI Update.** Piggybacking on strategic planning, that of the DMNA and EDC, and with EPNI's recent grant from McKnight for its sustainability and future role, Lynn commented that there are these three organizations all looking at themselves under microscopes and looking for collaborations that involves

community engagement. Hopefully, all will come out on parallel paths working together.

Dan advised that he sees it integrating in a lot of ways, not the least of which is the value proposition to the MDC is that we can get people together. And as a complement to Lynn and to this multi-level engagement process, Mike Ryan said in a public meeting that their Downtown East project has not had a smoother development and community engagement process than any other project they've had of that proportion. They attribute that to EDC partnering with EPNI and the DMNA for these forums. Pulling these organizations together is the new model and becoming attractive because it brings together the full spectrum of the market from huge corporations to residents.

- **MDC Update.** Dan advised that he is attending their board meetings as a non-ex officio on a trial basis (reference the MDC agenda and board minutes included in the board package). Of particular note, at the March 27th board meeting he learned that the Greater MSP is about to release a website about the EDC district. In a fast turnaround that afternoon, Dan crafted and presented comments about how the EDC reacts to conversations about branding.

John added that one of the discussions was about what to call the area and was focused on "stadium." He emphasized the need to reassert East Downtown into the conversation as they are branding it. The Greater MSP has millions of dollars to do marketing for the Twin Cities metro area and their focus is on recruiting companies to the area and making sure real estate developers are aware of the opportunities. It is an interesting and dynamic website that shows all the resources within and surrounding the EDC district.

## VII. Committee Reports

- **Business Forum Development Committee.** Dan advised that they are working to create a sponsorship level to raise income and sketching in the remainder of the season.
  - *April 17th Annual Meeting Business Forum.* Topic: "Introduction of new HCMC CEO Dr. Jon Pryor, plus an update on the Downtown Medical Office Building, and 5-Year Strategic Plan" to be held at the Normandy Inn.
  - *May 15th Business Forum.* Topic: "The Minnesota Vikings: The New Game-day Experience." Thanks to Jeff and Varun for hosting it at the 1010 Building. The Business Forum Development Committee meeting will be held just prior to the Business Forum.
  - *June 19th Business Forum.* Christie is working with the three City Council Members plus on a crime and safety update at TBD.
  - *Fall Business Forums.* Considering transit and technology for September, Valspar and Kraus Anderson for October, what's going on in a macro sense for November, then parks and greening in December.
- **Membership Committee.** No changes.
- **Strategy Committee.** Need to talk about board term limits and what committees and task forces are required and how the calendarization of the meetings so that they can fit into members' availability.

## VIII. Old / New / Other Business

Dan commented on how the overall structure of the agenda was changed that will engage our strategy in a more meaningful way, e.g., inserting a consent agenda followed by presentations then gathering all action items.

He also reminded the board about the McKnight grant application site visit on Tuesday, April 8th with Sarah Hernandez, Steve Cramer of MDC, Paul, Carletta and himself. It was important to vote on the EDC position in advance of that visit because it was part of the grant application to have one. The five objectives to be achieved are: (1) leveraging transit improvements for future residential, office and retail growth; (2) connecting city residents to resulting job opportunities; (3) enhancing green space and public realm improvements; (4) strengthening ties to the University of Minnesota; and (5) developing EDC board capacity, diversity and collaborative edges.

**IX. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m. (BW/VK).