

**Draft Minutes from the
East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 2, 2019
Guthrie Theater, 818 South 2nd Street, Livingston Conference Room, 8th floor
Downtown East Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

Present: Marita Albinson, Carina Aleckson, Marc Berg, Jacquie Berglund, Elizabeth Campbell, John Campobasso, Chris Fleck, Vanessa Haight, Cyndy Harrison, Phil Huebner, Tom Jollie, Julia Lauwagie, Paul Mason, Deborah Moses, Theresa Pesch, Beth Shogren, Carletta Sweet

Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge

Guest: Kim Bartmann, Bartmann Group

Absent: Daniel Gumnit, Varun Kharbanda, Richard Kiemen, Kelly Stenzel

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Remarks from Artistic Director

After Marita Albinson, Senior Communications Manager at the Guthrie Theater, welcomed the Board and explained several housekeeping items, everyone introduced themselves. Executive Director Dan Collison advised when he joined the ETBP 9 years ago, we weren't yet engaged with the GT, and James Scott, their former General Manager, starting pulling us in and since then the GT has been graceful in welcoming us here and setting a generous table.

Then Artistic Director Joseph Haj also welcomed the Board and advised this past December the Minneapolis Downtown Council held a meeting at the GT where he shared their connection to downtown which he'll share with the Board today. For context, from its founding in 1963 until May 2006, the GT was located on the grounds of the Walker Art Center (<https://walkerart.org/minnesotabydesign/objects/guthrie-theater>). When it became clear they needed to expand their facilities in order to fulfill their mission, the original plan was to move next to the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden (<https://walkerart.org/visit/garden>), but for a variety of reasons that didn't happen and they ended up here at the riverfront and he's certain this is where they were meant to be.

Sir Tyrone Guthrie, Founder and first Artistic Director, stated on his inaugural visit when considering the Twin Cities as a place to begin the theater, "It was the river itself that most charmed and amazed us. Eventually the Twin Cities will realize that their river can be and ought to be a wonderful and live giving amenity." So roughly 50 years after this observation, the GT made its move to the river. If you knew this neighborhood when they broke ground in September 2003, you'll remember how different it looked compared to what it is today, i.e., lots of surface parking lots are a striking contrast to what we see in this neighborhood now. Twenty years ago the GT couldn't imagine being in this part of downtown and now they can't imagine being anyplace else.

At the GT's annual meeting held on December 3, 2018, he shared that 395,236 patrons joined them in their past season and in fact, since the GT opened in the summer of 2006, they've averaged 397,000 patrons per season, which counts only for ticketed admissions (https://www.guthrietheater.org/globalassets/8-footer/b-for-press/press-releases/1757_1718annual-meeting_final_120318.pdf).

The GT was built as a resource to the community, which is why it's open daily and lobbies are accessible to all with no ticket required or admission fee. The majority of their public spaces are 4 to 9 stories above ground to ensure people can see the Mississippi River, downtown, the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. Annually, tens of thousands of local, national and international visitors stop by to enjoy the views of the river, study the Jean Nouvel designed architecture of the building, and take every imaginable type of photographs, the most unexpected and positive side effects of having a truly unique public building.

At their core, they're here to produce world class theater, so Haj then described what's currently happening on their stages:

- This Sunday, May 5th the classic production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* on the McGuire Proscenium Stage will close (<https://www.guthrietheater.org/shows-and-tickets/2018-2019-season/cyrano-de-bergerac/>);

- An amazing production of Metamorphoses on the Wurtele Thrust Stage in and around a pool of water is running through May 19th (<https://www.guthrietheater.org/shows-and-tickets/2018-2019-season/metamorphoses/>); and
- The big summer musical production of Guys and Dolls on the Wurtele Thrust Stage will run from June 22nd to August 25th (<https://www.guthrietheater.org/shows-and-tickets/2018-2019-season/guys-and-dolls/>).

For the past several years they've produced a big summer musical which brings more visitors than any other show in their season and they see the highest number of visitors from outside the metropolitan area and highest number of new attendees.

- They will end the season with the world premier of Floyd's on the McGuire Proscenium Stage by Lynn Nottage, the only woman to have won the Pulitzer Prize twice (<https://www.guthrietheater.org/shows-and-tickets/2018-2019-season/floyds/>).

Lastly, Haj thanked the ETBP for allowing him the opportunity to welcome them to the GT and share his remarks.

II. Call to Order

After the Board dined, Carletta Sweet called the meeting to order at 11:50 a.m., thanked the Guthrie Theater for hosting and providing the lunch and, because other members had joined the meeting, asked everyone to reintroduce themselves.

III. Consideration of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted (MB/CA).

IV. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included the minutes from the April 4, 2019 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for April which included the F2019 Budget vs. Actual as of April 30, 2019, and Wells Fargo bank statement for the period April 1-30, 2019; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and 2020 Partners' report for March 31-April 27, 2019; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 4/1/2019 to 4/30/2019 (CA/BS).

V. Presentations

- A. Proposed Restaurant at 205 Park Avenue.** Restaurateur Kim Bartmann (<http://bartmanngroup.com/kim-bartmann-mpls>) advised she makes a practice of going to the neighborhoods before she signs a lease or starts a project, which she did in this case as she was a part of the City's Request for Proposal process (<http://www.tdtmpls.com/news/2016/6/13/development-proposals-emerge-for-205-park-avenue>) and the community forum held by the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association here at the GT on May 16, 2016 (<https://www.thedmna.org/205-park-ave-s-development-priorities-q-a-with-council-member-frey-on-516-545-pm/>).

Her plans are to bookend Sherman Associates' mixed-use Vicinity project at 205 Park Avenue (<https://www.sherman-associates.com/properties/the-vicinity/case-study/>), i.e.: a coffee shop and bakery using heritage grains which she has converted to at all of her restaurants (<http://mspmag.com/eat-and-drink/foodie/bartmann-empire-heritage-grain/>) called Flower Power at the corner of Park Avenue and 2nd Street; and a restaurant with a brew pub component where guest brewmasters are invited to work with heritage grains at Park and Washington Avenues. Because the U.S. Bank kiosk didn't work out, the restaurant has absorbed that square footage along Washington Avenue. Having run 8 neighborhood restaurants in Minneapolis, the Red Stag Supperclub (<http://www.redstagsupperclub.com/>) being the closest to this location, she never thought she would have one in downtown, but now that this area has turned into a real neighborhood and has begun to bloom, she was willing to negotiate with George Sherman on this project and find out from the neighborhood what was lacking.

Once Frana Companies has completed construction in September-October of this year, Bartmann will be given access to her spaces and she estimates it will take 90 days to complete them. When designing a space, she usually takes from the existing physical space crossed with the character and history of the neighborhood to deliver a concept that fits. Since she's gone down the heritage grain road awhile ago, a movement that's building across the country and in Canada, and this newly built location is across the street from the Mill City Museum, she'll capture the historic essence of the neighborhood by bringing local arts back into the restaurant space in partnership with SooVAC (<https://www.soovac.org/>). Dan noted East Town's arts and entertainment was featured at the ETBP's annual meeting on April 18th and that he'll forward to Bartmann the FAQ sheet so that she can consider some of the more local options.

In about a month, Bartmann will be launching her first equity crowdfunding campaign (<https://www.moneycrashers.com/equity-crowdfunding-sites-investors-entrepreneurs/>) to help fund part of the buildout for the restaurant; she hopes the ETBP will help in amplifying it out into the world. Part of her axe to grind is proving doing business in a sustainable way is scalable, hence she can't ask for money as a for profit business. She's told her staff the definition of sustainability is to be able to repeat an action and align it with their business strategy. Because being able to repeat the action of opening their doors every day comes first, it makes more sense to conduct an equity crowdfunding campaign. The only successful ones in Minnesota have been breweries, so they'll need to do some educating of the public.

- B. Social Media Audit and Best Practices & Tactics.** Chris Fleck, Membership, Marketing and Communication Committee Chair, advised they've been discussing how to gain lift in two areas: the brand presence of East Town, which was rebranded [from the Downtown East-Elliot Park District] in 2016 with the pro bono assistance of Tom Jollie and his Padilla team; and awareness of the ETBP organization itself. As a consequence, he, Dan and Tom met with Leah Wong, VP of External Relations at the Minneapolis Downtown Council, to discuss how to optimize the synergy between the two organizations and understand how the MDC communicates, a presentation of which was given at the March 7th Board meeting.

Concurrently, in order to figure out where the ETBP's messaging for the community overlaps and complements the MDC and where it does its own thing, Tom engaged some of his Padilla team to conduct a social media audit with an audience outside of the East Town district, the results of which he presented to the MMC Committee at its last meeting on April 18th, and will now present to the entire Board (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/East-Town-Business-Partnership-Audit-Best-Practices-and-Tactics-v2.pdf>).

A lot of the ETBP's social media content is coming from within and is being pushed out, which is a great place to start, but in order to make it better, they evaluated each of the current social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn – and provided strategic social media recommendations based on current best practices.

To ensure messaging is strategic and consistent through these media channels, three pillars of content (i.e., relevant topics for our target audiences) were recommended: news; East Town identity; and events. And the following recommendations were made for each media channel:

1. Facebook
 - Connect the community
 - Create unique narratives
 - Make content distinguishable
 - Utilize Facebook live

2. Twitter
 - Create a hashtag
 - Utilize Twitter live

- Vary news sources

3. LinkedIn

- Leverage business audiences
- Repurpose existing content

Over the last year, all of the social media channels are choosing their algorithms in favor of people who spend to be with them; hence, to reach key audiences, a paid program is critical across Facebook and Twitter to promote original and key event content. Padilla is finding with their clients spending a little goes a long way in driving even organic traffic because those are the people who want to know and be involved.

After taking feedback from the MMC Committee, Tom advised they will be taking another look at the recommendations to sharpen them up. Long term the big question is how we implement some of the recommendations with the limited resources we have.

Dan added, from a resource side, he's full time across all of his partnerships with the ETBP's side being 10 hours a week. The ETBP's annual budget that is set every December is meager, i.e., approximately \$60,000 with virtually no overhead, which largely funds his and Christie's staff time, special projects, and Carletta's professional minutes. But this whole world of what it costs to do social media is a grappling space. For example, in the case with NūLoop Partners, there is a company on its Steering Committee which has a staff member who will give a few hours a week to populate its social media feeds. This is a leverage-able relationship because the company donating this staff time is a commercial real estate broker working to help the North Loop commercial real estate industry remains robust. This same leverage-able relationship could be established with our ETBP membership, especially larger companies with communications departments.

Tom stated there are little avenues in which to engage the business community, e.g., there are lots of organizations with job postings and the ETBP could leverage that as an interest area. When they first did the brand, the messaging was more about building a sense of community where it wasn't fully formed and not become Stadium Village 2, and as we move along to add more depth it's time to look at the next iteration.

After additional discussion, Christie advised the key to increasing the number of people seeing our posts is for everyone to share our page on their Facebook page and encourage their employee base to follow us versus shoving more content out.

- C. **Five Year Strategic Framework Review.** Dan explained this strategic framework was the result of the half day retreat held on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 facilitated by Trudy Ohnsorg of Cincinnatus, and was built upon the 2013-2017 Strategic Framework (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ETBP-StrategicPlan-2018-2022-Approved.pdf>). The he gave an brief overview of the ETBP's mission, geographic boundaries, planning process, four areas of strategic focus – *Connection and Collaboration, Advocacy and Resourcing, Leadership and Voice, Sound and Sustaining Organization Structure* – and the goals under each of those areas. They look for the biggest levers across institutions, organizations and staff to help accomplish these goals.

Our challenge is to clearly differentiate ourselves from similar organizations, and when he became shared staff with the MDC 4 years ago, the strategic decision was made to partner rather than compete with the MDC and the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce in order to gain scale in the rapidly changing environment.

VI. Action Items

- A. **Approve Officers of Board and At-Large Members of the Executive Committee.** Dan advised when the Board Development Committee became aware of the imminent departure of Paul Mellblom because his firm was moving to the CBD, internal discussions were held about the

appointment of the next slate of officers who would serve a 1-year term, i.e., President, Vice President and Treasurer. After extending the positions to the entire Board, the following slate is being submitted: John Campobasso as President, Carletta Sweet as Vice President, and Carina Aleckson as Treasurer. After again offering the positions to the entire Board, the slate of officers were approved as submitted (BS/MB).

Pursuant to Article VII, Section 7.12 of the Bylaws which states the Executive Committee is comprised of all elected officers of the Board and “one or two At-Large Board members”, Daniel Gumnit and Vanessa Haight were nominated as the At-Large members who would serve a 1-year term. Thereafter, the two At-Large nominees were approved as submitted (BS/EC).

- B. ETBP Committees and Sign Up.** Dan reviewed the purpose and scope of the four internal committees – Executive, Board Development, Business Forum and Event, Membership, Marketing and Communication – and the one external ad hoc committee, East Town-North Loop Development Work Group (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019-2020-ETBP-Committee-Structure-and-Goals.pdf>), then passed around a sign-up sheet; each Board member is expected to participate on at least one committee.
- C. New Board Member Terms.** After welcoming the five new Board members, Marc Berg explained Julia Lauwagie was filling the last year of Tim Tucker’s term ending in 2020, and Deborah Moses was filling the last 2 years of Paul Mellblom’s term ending in 2021, after which each would be eligible to serve two consecutive 3 year terms. Also, Jacquie Berglund, Richard Kiemen, and Theresa Pesch were all newly elected to a 3-year ending in 2022 and were eligible to serve another consecutive 3-year term.

Board members who will “term off” in 2020 include himself, Chris Fleck, and Varun Kharbanda. Elizabeth Campbell’s first 3-year term will also end in 2020, but she’ll be eligible for another consecutive 3-year term.

- D. Approve Amended Bylaws.** As a follow on to last month’s discussion wherein a vote to approve the updated Bylaws was postponed in order to comply with the provisions under “Article IX: Amendments,” Marc reiterated what transpired that lead up to the current version of the Bylaws (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ETBPBylaws.05.02.19.CLEAN-with-Carlettas-edits.pdf>). Thereafter, the updated Bylaws as of May 2, 2019 were approved as presented (MB/PM).
- E. Approve \$150 Membership Category for Restaurants.** MMC Committee Chair Chris Fleck advised they have been dialoguing for 6-9 months about the value propositions the ETBP offers as an economic development organization to the restaurant industry. To be short and frank, we really don’t provide a lot of value to them as they’re busy during the business forum time period, so the MMC decided to throw in an attractive level of membership for the restaurant industry only, and require that it still have a separate membership even if it was attached to a hotel that had a membership,. The dollar amount proffered is \$150 which would allow them to hang their shingle on the website and engage with them in the future for creative Happy Hour and other events; it’s an olive branch of good faith to continue to build upon that. Thereafter, the \$150 membership category for restaurants was approved as presented (CF/CS).
- F. Submit Executed Annual Conflict of Interest Document.** President John Campobasso reminded everyone to email their executed Conflict of Interest document back to Christie.

VII. Updates

- A. Executive Director Monthly Overview.** Due to time constrains, Dan postponed his report to the next Board meeting.

B. Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association. Because the Land Use Committee won't meet until May 7th, Carletta Sweet forewent an update this month.

C. Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc. Vanessa Haight highlighted the following activities:

1. As a follow up to her presentation in March 2019 on EPNI's past, present and future wherein Neighborhoods 2020 was discussed, she announced an important public hearing on the revised framework will be held this coming Monday, May 6th, 1:30 p.m. in Room 317 at City Hall (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/news/WCMSP-218620>). She encouraged those interested in the future of neighborhoods to attend.
2. Because the CVS Pharmacy at 949 Portland Avenue will be closing at the end of this month, it is a huge problem for many residents as it's the only place for them to get paper products, send money and purchase medicine. Then she solicited ideas on how to get that service back to the neighborhood.
3. Their 2019 Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, May 13th, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at North Central University's Anderson Auditorium (https://www.elliotpark.org/2019_annual_meeting/).
4. The City of Skate and EPNI continue to move forward with the state-of-the-art Elliot Park Skatepark project at 901 South 8th Street (<http://www.cityofskate.org/elliott-minneapolis-skatepark>). The website will be pushed out this Monday, May 6th for comments and feedback, and expect the project will be fast tracked in order to be completed by August 1st for X Games Minneapolis 2019 (<https://www.frontgatetickets.com/festivals/x-games-minneapolis/>).

D. Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District. Due to time constrains, Dan postponed his report to the next Board meeting.

VIII. Committee Reports

Due to time constrains, postponed his report to the next Board meeting.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. (MA/MB).