



Cedar Rapid Downtown SSMID Commission Minutes
May 26, 2021 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Hybrid – Multipurpose Room and Zoom

Present: Joe Ahmann, Dave Drown, Jon Dusek, Emily Ellingson, Darryl High, Dawn Jaffray, James Klein, Linda Mattes, Matt Miller, Andrew Morf, Craig Stephan, Joe Terfler, Fred Timko

Absent: David Sorg

Guests: Matt Myers – City of Cedar Rapids, Chief Wayne Jarmen & Lt. Tony Robinson – Cedar Rapids Police Department

Staff: Piper Cooper, Ellie Evans, Melissa McCarville, Jesse Thoeming, Phil Wasta

Welcome, Introductions & Call to Order

High welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Approval of January Minutes

Klein moved approval of the March minutes with Ellingson seconding. The March minutes were unanimously approved.

Pedestrian Signage

Thoeming said the City of Cedar Rapids has vehicular signage in their 2022 budget, and the SSMID had budgeted \$150k for 2021 not knowing what it would entail. Now knowing the City will be picking up the vehicular signage, Thoeming presented pedestrian signage and kiosks to the SSMID with 18 of them identified. Myers said the MedQuarter has vehicular signage and Czech Village NewBo will have signage for the next fiscal year after July 1. Myers said the pedestrian signs will likely be more expensive than the vehicular signs but they are modular pieces that include artwork of historical downtown, a map to show people where they are at and then main surrounding destinations showing how many minutes it will take to walk there from the sign. These destinations won't be calling out specific businesses and will be highlight more of the big attractions (Amphitheater, Power House, etc.) Myers said in 2016 vehicular signage were \$18k each but Myers believes the cost will be higher than that now for the pedestrian signage/kiosks.

Thoeming will work with Myers on finalizing current costs.

Gateway Discussion

High said he has met with the Iowa DOT and there is a gameplan to clean up the 7th Street gateway including mowing, weeding, removing dead trees and bushes and looking to accomplish that before the first Farmers Market. High said those tasks will continue until we get more information from Confluence. Thoeming said this will cost a little over \$33k and will be a 2.5 month long process and the City will split the cost with the SSMID 50/50 so the SSMID would need to contribute \$17k. Thoeming said we will breakdown the individual 7 gateways with scope, schedule and budget. Mattes asked if we have a perspective on the cost per site. Terfler agreed and suggested we guide Confluence on their design based on our budget. High said in the meantime we will begin seeing action taking place on the 7th Street gateway clean-up.

Project Updates

Branding Roll-Out

Thoeming said we are on track for the roll out which will include brand boxes for businesses, 200 banners and more.

Armstrong Projector

The projector and enclosure has arrived. Thoeming said he will be filing a permit with the City to drill underground as the power connection will run through the basement of the Armstrong building. Thoeming said we have a contract with ImOn to allow us to broadcast sporting events on the projector. Thoeming presented material from an artist that can do light images that respond to motion, temperature and precipitation in order to have some images projected as a default when there's not an event. Thoeming will get more information for the Commission.

Public Art

Thoeming said there are three public art installations in the pipeline – side of the Adcraft building showcasing community spirit, the new Securian Advisors building in the old Rapids Reproduction and the 2nd Ave parking ramp with the team from Switzerland. Thoeming said the Switzerland team for the third mural will be in town October 9-24.

Downtown Policing

Jarmen said from a city-wide aspect, public safety is in good shape and he still views Cedar Rapids as a safe city. After last year's events, Jarmen said Cedar Rapids performed admirably throughout the challenges we were faced with. The police department continues to partner with community outreach organizations to have a better connection with area youth.

Robinson said reported crime in Downtown is down about 8% compared to last year. Robinson said with more people returning to work, that will improve safety especially during the day as there is safety in numbers. Robinson said the overflow shelter will be closing at the end of the month so we might see a large influx of homeless population Downtown and to reach out to the department if you have issues. Jarmen said they have trained more bike officers so to expect seeing more bicycle patrolling.

High said the VeoRide scooters remain a high concern for Downtown patrons and businesses and asked if there are any policies that can be implemented. Robinson met with the city community development team and the general manager with VeoRide last fall, VeoRide will be putting stickers on each device about the laws. Robinson said speeds can be reduced in certain areas which is something we could look into more. Most accidents occur at night after 10 p.m.

Robinson talked about Greene Square and how the ambassador program has been helpful, although there is a fine line because it is still a public space.

Robinson said they have been working on plans for adding more cameras to Downtown but it depends on funding but is a work in progress. The city has a camera registration program so if a business already has a camera inside or outside, they can register it allowing the department access to recordings.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.