



Cedar Rapid Downtown SSMID Commission Minutes
September 22, 2021 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Hybrid – Conference Room A and Zoom

Present: Joe Ahmann, Dave Drown, Jon Dusek, Emily Ellingson, Darryl High, Jeff Janssen, James Klein, Jake Ryan, David Sorg, Craig Stephan, Joe Terfler, Fred Timko

Absent: Dawn Jaffray, Linda Mattes

Staff: Jessica Komisar, Julie Kraft, Jesse Thoeming, Phil Wasta, Caleb Woods

Welcome, Introductions & Call to Order

High welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Approval of July Minutes

Sorg moved approval of the July minutes with Ahmann seconding. The July minutes were unanimously approved.

American Rescue Plan Act

Ellingson and Thoeming presented details on the County’s process for obtaining funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. Linn County will receive \$44M and the City of Cedar Rapids will receive \$28M. Guidelines for Linn County funds include:

- responding to COVID-19 impacts including providing assistance to households, small businesses/non-profits, ot to aid impacted industries such as tourism, travel and hospitality
- providing premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work during COVID
- strengthening support for vital public services by replacing lost public sector revenue
- making necessary investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure

For Linn County funds, there is a survey for residents to complete to help identify and prioritize community needs. More information on how to apply for City and County funds will be released this Fall. Ellingson said when the application for projects open, we want to be ready to submit Downtown projects that wouldn’t be starting from square one and that have been vetted and know the scale and cost.

Dusek said the parking system wasn’t able to receive any funding assistance during COVID and took a large hit financially and suggested that the SSMID and parking board connect on if this will be a joint proposal or if each entity will submit individually. Thoeming said in the JLG plan it discussed engaging the river and how that would be a great impact to local tourism.

Commissioners formed a committee to discuss this effort, committee members include Dusek, Ahmann, Klein and Ellingson.

1st and 1st West Project Updates

Ahmann provided an update with renderings of the 1st and 1st West development project which at this time includes Big Grove Brewery, a locally owned Pickle Palace (similar to Smash Park in Des Moines), a hotel and a parking ramp. Ahmann said the term sheet has been approved and they are working on developer agreements. Ahmann said optimistically they would like to start breaking ground yet this year, but there are a lot of moving targets and is a multi-phased project.

Alleyway Update

Timko said the alleyway project committee will have more to share at the next meeting, they have engaged an architect to help with the patio plaza layout between US Bank and their parking lot and working with a lighting specialist. Thoeming said he can send finalized numbers once they are received via e-mail so there's time to review before the November meeting.

Fall Project Update

Market After Dark – event will be held Downtown this Saturday from 6:30-11:00 p.m. There will be no main stage entertainment but 3 smaller stages spread throughout the venue.

Projector/WOW Project – installation should finish Saturday morning with the goal of showcasing it to Commissioners in November. Thoeming is working with a local videographer for standard videos to use at the kick-off. Nesper will be installing window coverings. High asked if there's a risk of it being a distraction to drivers. Thoeming said the original plan was for the projector to be on 3rd Street but was moved to 3rd Ave because of the distraction but will check-in with the City.

ConnectCR Celebration Mural – will be completed on the side of the 2nd Ave parking garage in October by the Switzerland mural duo.

Holiday Lights – installation will start next week, trail will be lit from 1st Ave to 5th Ave. Our team will be doing the heavy lifting on install to assist with costs.

Other Murals – Thoeming said there will be a new tenant in the former Gazette building mid-to late summer but Thoeming is working with an artist for a temporary mural which would include pictures from MedQuarter employees as a tribute to healthcare workers. Thoeming presented a rendering for two other murals in Kingston Village to be installed on the two sides of Fix Salon. Both renderings have been approved by the VAC. Thoeming said the two Fix Salon murals would cost between \$60-70k and the property owners (also owners of Fix) would be comfortable contributing between \$25-30k. Thoeming said he doesn't believe all three murals would exceed \$80k. Thoeming will finalize numbers for all three murals and will send the breakdown of costs via e-mail.

Other Business

Commissioners provided various business updates.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.