

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE**

**July 11, 2013**

**6:00 PM**

**Mansfield Town Hall  
Conference Room B**

**MINUTES**

Present: Steve Rogers (chair), Mona Friedland, Curt Hirsch, Paul McCarthy, Girish Punj, Rene Schein, Brian Wells

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes from April 11, 2013**

Brian Wells made a motion to approve the April 11, 2013 minutes. Paul McCarthy seconded the motion. Rene Schein abstained. The motion was approved with one abstention.

**4. Update on Tenanting and Ideas for future Tenants**

Mr. Rogers welcomed Mona Friedland to the Committee.

Ms. van Zelm said that oneTribe clothing, CVS, and Friendly Fire have signed leases to be part of Storrs Center.

Mr. Rogers said the goal is to try to populate Wilbur Cross Way with more emphasis on retail tenants. He said with all the internet business, it is difficult for retailers to want to be pioneers. Mr. Rogers said that master developer LeylandAlliance is evaluating whether housing would also be part of the mix on Wilbur Cross Way.

Girish Punj suggested inviting prospective tenants to the Grand Opening. It could be a soft sell to them to encourage them to locate in Storrs Center. The Committee agreed and suggested a handout/packet for potential businesses.

Mr. Punj suggested using the NAICS code to breakdown businesses by specialty. The Committee could review other college towns to see that type of retail they have in their towns and see if there might be a fit for Storrs Center. This tool allows one to see how the retail is doing in sales as well.

Mr. Rogers said he has suggested the idea of an indoor "mall" where specialty stores would have spaces.

## **5. Storrs Center Business Questions and Follow-Up from April Meeting; and Meeting with Storrs Center Businesses**

As follow-up from the April meeting, Mr. Rogers did speak with Bill Simpson at the UConn Co-op about the possibility of a variety of signage outside the new Co-op location in Storrs Center that would identify what is being sold inside. Mr. Simpson said they would not be allowed to put an Apple sign on the outside of the Co-op.

As follow-up from the April meeting, Ms. van Zelm said the parking behind 9 Dog Lane will now be 30 minute parking and not specifically designated for Daily Campus parking. The Daily Campus staff will receive a parking pass that will give them access to spaces in the nearby UConn lots.

Ms. van Zelm shared with the Committee an example of a questionnaire for businesses to ascertain their needs and how the respective municipality might help them. She said this example was shared with the Mansfield Economic Development Commission by the Director of Economic Development in Suffield as one tool to assist business owners in the community. The questionnaire would be a guide for business visitations by representatives of the Commission. She asked the Committee what they think about initiating business visitations with Storrs Center businesses.

Ms. Friedland asked what would be the appropriate time to set up meetings. Mr. Rogers thought an introductory letter from the Committee would be a good way to reach out to them by explaining what the Committee does including recruiting new businesses for Storrs Center. The Committee could serve as an ombudsman for the businesses. Ms. Schein also suggested asking them to come to Committee meetings.

Mr. Hirsch left the meeting.

Ms. van Zelm said that LeylandAlliance does host monthly tenant meetings. Mr. Rogers encouraged Committee members to attend those meetings. Ms. van Zelm will send the dates of those meetings to the Committee members.

## **6. Marketing of Storrs Center Businesses**

Ms. Friedland suggested participating in the Windham Chamber's radio show to announce new tenants.

Brian Wells suggested connecting with The Last Green Valley to market Storrs Center. He is on the Board and can make an introduction. He also suggested working with the Eastern Tourism District and the contacts there are Ed Dombrosky or Janice Putnam. He also suggested reaching out to motorcoachs that organize tours.

Paul McCarthy said the Department of Athletics has a link to Storrs Center on its website. He said he met with Ms. van Zelm to identify partnering opportunities. One thought is to connect with incoming sports teams from other colleges to let them know about Storrs Center. Mr. McCarthy said IMG has the marketing rights to UConn athletics and a representative did attend one of the Storrs Center tenant meetings. He said that Athletics has also suggested that TV coverage show Storrs Center as one of the places around the University during timeouts as they do with their TV coverage. This would be up to the television station. Mr. Rogers also suggested that the piece on UConn that occurs during a broadcast include Storrs Center. Mr. McCarthy said he would suggest this to UConn Communications.

Mr. Wells said the Basketball Hall of Fame series will be in Mansfield from November 29 to December 1 and would be a good opportunity to promote Storrs Center.

**7. Future Meeting Agendas**

The Committee will not meet in August.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.