

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
MEETING
PARTNERSHIP OFFICE
23 Royce Circle**

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2014

3:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Chair: Tom Callahan, Fran Archambault, Phil Barry, Mark Hammond, Matt Hart, Dave Pepin, Paul Shapiro, Bill Simpson, and Frank Vasington

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, John Zaccaro (Partnership attorney) by phone

1. Call to Order

Tom Callahan called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2014

Paul Shapiro made a motion to approve the minutes of April 24, 2014. Phil Barry seconded the motion. Dave Pepin abstained. The motion was approved.

3. Update on Storrs Center

Ms. van Zelm updated the Committee on several Storrs Center projects. She referred to an invite from Price Chopper, previously e-mailed, which invited Committee members to the Grand Opening on June 6 at 8 am and the preview party on June 5 from 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Donations to the preview party will go to three local non-profits. Price Chopper and Leyland will match those donations.

Ms. van Zelm said the Phase 2 zoning permit application was being reviewed by the Town's Director of Planning and Development and her recommendation was expected by the end of May.

Ms. van Zelm said that Storrs Center Alliance had hired a new builder for Phase 2 – Centerplan – out of Middletown, CT.

Ms. van Zelm said 42 refundable deposits had been received for the condos and townhomes in Storrs Center. She said Storrs Center Alliance is continuing its marketing with ads in the Chronicle and the Hartford Courant over the next several weeks. Social media marketing will be in full force next week. Ms. van

Zelm said a bus trip from Mansfield is being planned to Warwick Grove to see the housing that Storrs Center Alliance built there which is similar to what will be built in Storrs Center. In July, Storrs Center Alliance will host a seminar for prospective buyers on personalizing your home and in August will host a meeting with the buyers on purchase agreements, homeowners association, etc.

Ms. van Zelm said that she has been informed that Hart Realty will close with Storrs Center Alliance on the Price Chopper site in mid-June. As was done with Phase 1A, an estoppel certificate will be required by the Partnership and Storrs Center Alliance. The Committee does not meet until after that closing so Ms. van Zelm asked that it be addressed today.

Mark Hammond made a motion to add the issue of estoppel certificates to the agenda. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. van Zelm called Partnership attorney John Zaccaro and Mr. Callahan asked that he review the intention of estoppel certificates. Mr. Zaccaro said that the estoppel certificates for Storrs Center identify the agreements between the Partnership and Storrs Center Alliance and whether obligations have been met by both parties. Mr. Callahan asked for confirmation that nothing has changed since the estoppel certificates were signed in March on Phase 1A. Mr. Zaccaro said the previous estoppel certificates for Phase 1A would still be applicable except for the change in parcel (to Price Chopper and MP-2 building (5,000 square foot building)). Mr. Simpson made a motion to recommend approval to the Partnership Board of Directors by the Board of Directors or the Partnership Executive Committee to allow Ms. van Zelm, as Executive Director, to sign an estoppel agreement with Storrs Center Alliance. Paul Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Review of Public Infrastructure Projects

Ms. van Zelm said the Town Square will open tomorrow. Electrical work will occur this summer and the Town will go out to bid for the light pylons around the green circle, the stage roof, and the shade structure later this month. She said the Partnership received a generous grant from the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation for the stage roof. The shade structure will be bid as an add alternate pending funding. She said fundraising continues.

Ms. van Zelm said the solution for the flawed HVAC system in the Transportation Center has been proposed by the architect and the builder and cost allocation is being discussed. Mr. Hart said a railing has been added to the 2nd floor of the garage overlooking the Transportation Center to ensure it is a safe area. Mr. Hart also said that a glass partition had been added on the 2nd floor looking into the first floor of the Transportation Center to address safety and security concerns.

Ms. van Zelm said the work on Storrs Road, Dog Lane, and Wilbur Cross Way is essentially complete with punch list items remaining. She said the trees and lights will start to be put in on Wilbur Cross Way this weekend.

Mr. Hart said there is an approximate \$1.7 million over-run on the Storrs Center public infrastructure projects. He said it will be funded over time with net revenue from taxes coming in from Storrs Center. This information has been shared and updated with the Town Council on an on-going basis, and most recently during the budget process. He said the garage deficit was approximately \$1.3 million due to the need to add caissons to support the garage. Through negotiation, the Town will have to pay approximately \$330,000 with the architect Desman and Storrs Center Alliance paying the balance (Storrs Center Alliance is essentially paying for the contribution to the 7th floor deck which they had desired).

The over-runs on Storrs Road, Dog Lane, and Wilbur Cross Way were largely due to higher utility costs, higher CDOT administration fees, and demo costs (reimbursable by the Town per the Town's Development Agreement with Storrs Center Alliance).

The costs should not negatively affect the Town's General Fund since the funding will come from the Storrs Center Reserve.

In response to a question from Mr. Barry, Mr. Hart said Storrs Center Alliance's agreement to run the parking garage for 7 years was extended to 20 years to provide more revenue to pay its share of the parking garage overrun.

5. Review of Partnership Long-Term Budget

The Committee continued its discussion of the Partnership's role going forward and its long-term budget. Ms. van Zelm arranged the suggested downtown management skills into categories for efficiency of review and organization.

Mr. Hammond left the meeting.

The Committee agreed that changes may need to be made in the organization's structure to reflect the buildout of Storrs Center. Who are the best members of the Board of Directors to achieve current goals?

Mr. Callahan suggested that the partners now include EdR, Storrs Center Alliance, and Hart Realty. The customers are the businesses in the downtown and the guests are the visitors.

The Committee discussed a main goal of the Partnership to promote the downtown as a destination and draw people into the businesses.

Mr. Callahan suggested packaging the downtown with the attributes in the area – UConn (Jorgensen, basketball/other sports, outdoor activities).

Phil Barry expressed concern about drawing people in the summer. Bill Simpson said the increase in UConn summer school attendance, UConn visitors, and events will all help draw people downtown.

Mr. Hart said that programming and coordination with other entities as noted by Mr. Callahan above are key.

Fran Archambault and Dave Pepin suggested that the downtown needs to attract businesses and an atmosphere that will in create a buzz/pizazz when you come into the downtown.

Mr. Callahan asked the Committee to review the matrix Ms. van Zelm created. Are the categories of skills appropriate? What other skills are needed? He asked Committee members to send changes to Ms. van Zelm.

Building off of Mr. Pepin and Mr. Archambault's comments, Mr. Hart suggested that they are talking about creating a culture and a customer experience. He suggested adding that to the matrix. Mr. Hart also noted that beautification is critical.

Mr. Callahan said key to creating the pizazz is understanding the Storrs market. It is imperative that the Partnership have good intelligence on how to move forward on retail.

6. Adjourn

Mr. Hart made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Archambault seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm