

South Orange Village Center Alliance

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Bob Zuckerman, *Executive Director*

Melissa Hodge, *Events and Operations*

Board of Directors

Steven Pedigo

Mark Murphy

Mark Hartwyk

Deborah Engel

Courtney Bryan

Cat Fisher

Danny Harrison

Jonathan Javins

Michael Maza

Leslie Pogany

Sunny Uberoi

Matt Wonski

Freddy Arsenault

Fahim Abedrabbo

Steven Schnall

Adam Loehner

Open Minutes

November 20, 2019

A regular meeting of the South Orange Village Center Alliance was held at Village Hall offices at 76 South Orange Avenue on October 17, 2018 and called to order by Chairman Pedigo at 8:35 a.m. The meeting was certified by Director Engel as being duly advertised.

Meeting Notice Statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the press in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A 10:4-6. In addition, notice of this meeting was posted in Village Hall and on the Village's website, and has been filed by the Office of the Village Clerk. Official action may be taken.

A roll call of those in attendance was taken.

Present: Steven Pedigo, Mark Murphy, Mark Hartwyk, Deborah Engel, Courtney Bryan¹, Cat Fisher, Jonathan Javins, Michael Maza, Leslie Pogany, Sunny Uberoi, Steven Schnall, Adam Loehner

Also Present: Bob Zuckerman (ED) and Melissa Hodge (EOA)

Absent: Danny Harrison, Matt Wonski, Freddy Aresnault, Fahim Abedrabbo

Public: Alyssa Aronson (resident)

Next Meeting Date: December 19, 2018

Adoption of the Open Minutes for October 17, 2018:

A motion was made by Director Hartwyk and seconded by Trustee Schnall to approve the Open Minutes for October 17, 2018, all were in favor. Directors Pogany and Uberoi abstained.

Board Report Summary + Review of 2018 End of Year Budget Forecast

Exec Director Zuckerman reported on the following new items since the board report was distributed:

1- Shop SOMA Local is a new Facebook group created by business owner Kimaya Salaskar of Kamaya Kama in response to SOMA Lounge not allowing businesses to post on their page. This page is an outlet for businesses to connect with the community and promote their products and services.

2 - Connected with the Green Team at South Orange Middle School to discuss keeping Downtown South Orange Clean and educating the students.

3 - Meeting with Brokers re: old Wine Emporium business

4 - Movement on liquor license bill. A3494. Passed Assembly Committee (but not yet Assembly or Senate). Similar to past bil discussed but limit the type of restaurants that could get a service license for beer/wine to areas that are SIDs, BIDs, etc. Bob is checking in with our representatives.

5 - Main Street NJ program may be coming back with more money and resources than before, and brings about new grant opportunities.

Board Committee Reports

Business Retention: Valley Street retail district - committee will discuss branding and how we can support them in Jan/Feb. Businesses to visit include Bayleaf, Ampy, Sonny's and Elitist Coffee. Will assemble the new Business Council with hopes for a meeting in Jan.

Beautification: 2018 items - painting and lights are in; deciding on color to paint the lamp posts. Holiday lights and garland along Sloan Street; hope to do it earlier next year. 7 businesses are participating. Hope to concentrate efforts in 2019: activate the circle in front of the Fire station - seasonal items (mums, pumpkins, etc) as well as the gateway corridor next to Grid Iron Waffle. Also looking at areas for murals and connecting with artists who make murals. Director Hartwyk reported that by the end of the year, they will decide on the 4-5 things to complete in 2019. Director Pogony asked about the money that is in the bank for lights. The money is still being held in the bank.

Marketing and Communications: Reviewing budgets and reimagining how to spend our dollars (canva vs graphic designer, etc.) Focusing on our social media. Determining best way to reach our businesses and coming up with strategies to do so.

Fundraising: Long term fundraising plan for the organization (3 year range vs 1 year). Surveying at the beginning of the year thinking about grants. Revisioning how we do individual contributions (event late Q1 or early Q2). Annual appeal letter language (more later). Director Pogany mentioned how the rescue squad did a great job and Director Fisher chimed in with the Founder's Park fundraiser as well. Chairman Pedigo talked about rethinking our budget so we are not so reliant on assessments and village contributions.

2019 Action Plan & Budget Presentation

ED Bob Zuckerman presented the action plan and budget for 2019 that will be presented to the Board of Trustees in December. Director Hartwyck motioned to approve the budget - pending changing the income line to pull less money from reserves and make it a balanced budget. Director Murphy seconded. All in Favor. No one Opposed. The proposed 2019 budget was approved.

Master Plan: SOVCA Involvement

ED Zuckerman walked through his outline for the Master Plan. The process led by Topology. Two types of participating groups: neighborhood groups, and boards, commissions and advisory groups. We are looped in with Seton Village, Valley Street Corridor, SO Chamber of Commerce. We report to Josh Mann on steering committee. We will hold sessions of 10-12 people max. Sessions with property owners and second floor tenants, retailers and restaurants will come in Jan. Sessions running now through April. Ambassadors were (session leaders) given a workbook with questions to ask and organize, and act as objective facilitators. Questions focus on the issues that SOVCA focuses on as well - development, housing, transportation, parking, central business district.

ED Zuckerman will draft a press release to include dates and how we are participating.

Review of 2019 Cleaning Plan

ED Zuckerman walked through the cleaning plan and calendar. Board members mentioned they see the cleaning team and think it's been positive for our district.

Annual Appeal

Two letters were drafted - one for past donors and one for potential new donors with the hope to get the letters out by early next week. Chair Pedigo suggested we use just one letter. Part of plan is a special village vibe out next Tuesday for Giving Tuesdays. Another digital round at the end of December. Chair Pedigo asked board members to send 2-3 names to add to their outreach lists. Google form forthcoming.

IDA Presentation: Lessons Learned

ED Zuckerman attended the International Downtown Association conference. The conference is mostly for cities (large cities to smaller cities). Not many suburban towns our size. Attended sessions on parking and where it's going in the future (experts say there will be a reduced need for parking with self driving cars, uber, lyft, etc.). Cities are designating certain places for drop

offs via uber and lyft. New decks are built with flexibility to convert if parking decks aren't needed in the future. He also attended a collective learning session and discussed organizations that come together (like BIDs) - quarterly. Zuckerman said he'd like to start bringing together the EDs from Essex County to share best practices and learn from each other. Zuckerman said he also attended a session on retail recruiting and explored the exhibit hall where he learned about self watering planters and digital kiosks. There are two types of kiosks: one where you buy the machine for 30-35K per machine, the company helps with set up, and then the district controls the content. The second model gives the kiosks for free and then the company shares advertising revenue with the district. For this approach, at least 15 kiosks need to be placed in an area. Trustee Schnall will take the lead on kiosks.

Public Comment

Trustee Schnall motioned to open public comment and Director Hartwyk seconded.

Resident Alyssa Aronson asked about the following:

Jane Kurtin and facade improvements: Zuckerman reported that we asked and have gotten resistance. We will position the storefront improvement grant programs.

On a Jitney question, Hartwyk suggested bringing it to the parking authority meeting.

Where is Seton Hall's involvement in the proposed action plan: Zuckerman reported that the involvement fair will continue and we may host another South Orange Day at the basketball games, but the athletics department is currently in transition. Zuckerman also said they are looking into a bike share program to better connect seton hall with the downtown.

Restaurant Hunters - asked about that show - Director Engel mentioned they were here yesterday and will be running a segment on South Orange in 2019.

Motion to close public comment made by Director Hartwyk and seconded by Trustee Schnall.

Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Schnall and seconded by Director Hartwyk; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.