

**SPECIAL BOARD OF COMMISSONERS MEETING
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT**

**September 21, 2009
8:00 AM**

**OFFICE OF
THE DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
983 MAIN STREET SUITE 10
MANCHESTER, CT 06040**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Firestone, Chair
Hope Igdalsky
Don DuBaldo
Michael Esposito
Betsey Treiber

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
PRESENT: Mark Pellegrini, Dir., Planning & Neighborhood Services

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

ALSO PRESENT: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rev. Salvatore Mancini
John Tunila
Glenda Sinnamon

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT: Sue O'Connor, GMCC

Call to Order

Ms. Firestone called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM

Review of DMSSD Strategic Plan

The board of commissioners met to review the DMSSD Strategic Plan beginning with the Economic and Safety portion of the plan.

To begin the process, Ms. Parseliti reviewed a current "Snap Shot" of the Downtown that outlined business number, types, categories and niches as well as the number of residential properties Downtown with two or more tenants. Research will be conducted to obtain the number of units in the residential properties.

The commission moved on to Economic and Safety portion of the DMSSD Strategic Plan. They identified the following additions and priorities for each portion of the plan.

VALUE: ECONOMIC

- Ask the Town Attorney for a copy of the Ordinances relating to property blight. (Property Maintenance Code Public Nuisance Code)

- Invite the Town Attorney to attend a commission meeting to explain the Ordinances and how they work. (triggers, enforcement mechanisms, etc.)
- Contact CT Main Street Program to see if any of their programs have adopted innovative programs to combat blight.
- Work to create linkages between MCC and the Downtown:
 - Assess which currently vacant spaces could work as a gallery/performance space for MCC students. Approach landlord and ask him/her to consider donating space for 6 months.
 - Hold discussions with Downtown landlords and MCC to discuss their willingness to partner to promote encouraging students to consider Downtown housing options. Send list of available residential rentals to Student Activities office.
 - Visit Westfield, MA to investigate their initiative with Westfield College.
- Create a survey form targeted at Downtown restaurant customers that asks: “What kinds of businesses/activities they would like see Downtown that would enhance your visit?”
- Work with restaurants to place surveys on tables and encourage customers to complete.
- Continue to advocate for street front retail. Look at ways other communities have worked to foster Downtown retail. Continue to build on antiques niche.
- Contact CT Main Street Program to see if any grants/funds exist for elevator installation.
- Identify new organizations to communicate available properties to. (Medical Society, Retail trade Assoc. etc.)

Priorities for FY 09/10

1. Explore potential for attracting MCC students to Downtown housing with Downtown property owners and MCC.
2. Identify potential locations for an MCC gallery/arts center in the downtown, communicate options to MCC and work with MCC to make it happen
3. Work with restaurants to conduct a customer survey to identify how customers currently use the downtown and what uses they would like to see downtown that do not currently exist.

VALUE: SAFETY

- Invite Chief Montminey to a commission meeting.
- Plan a Coffee with the Cops for October. Arrange for meeting space in the Heritage Building.
- Advocate continuation of Downtown walking beat officer(s).
- Ask Sgt Wilson to do periodic walk-thru’s of office buildings as a part of beat walks.

- Ask Sgt. Wilson to do a 2nd round of outreach calls.
- Ask for info on the status of graffiti tagging that took place several months ago.
- Contact the General Manager to request a review of the Video Block Watch Program in Purnell Place.
- Improve pedestrian lighting on Main St.
 - Step 1 - Work with Town to assess ability of existing poles to accept pedestrian height lighting arm.
 - Step 2 - Ask the Town to allocate money for an engineering study in the next fiscal year.
 - Step 3 - Consider doing a demonstration project.

Priorities for FY 09/10

1. Work with Town to improve pedestrian lighting along Main Street.
2. Advocate continuation of Downtown walking beat officer(s).
3. Improve pedestrian lighting along Main Street.

The commission will set a new meeting date to review the remaining three sections of the Strategic Plan that focus on Physical, Social and Civic values.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana M. Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder