

Board Meeting of the Trustees
Fort Lee Improvement District Corporation
DBA: Business District Alliance (BDA) of Fort Lee
5/13/15

Call to Order: 6:04 pm

Present: Michael Beyer, Victor Cividini, Anthony Clores, Robert Durando, Janice Friedman, Gloria Gallo, Denis Glennon, James Liu, Frank Patti, Councilman Harvey Sohmer, Mayor Mark Sokolich, Romina Starace, Ashley Yook

Absent: Councilman Joseph Cervieri, Kathy Lee, Brian Ribarro, Robert Clark

Also Present: Michael Maresca-Fort Lee Director of Public Works

Adoption of 4.8.15 Minutes

MOTION: A. Clores, Second by M. Beyer — APPROVED

Treasurer's Report

M. Beyer reviewed March and April's financials. He mentioned the \$150,000 that was put into a 3 year CD with a 1.5% interest rate and no penalties. He also summarized that on average, the BDA is cutting roughly a dozen checks of about \$12K-\$13K total per month. There was no income for the month of April. He also mentioned that he was pleased with the symposium expenses.

President's Report

Trees - **R. Starace** confirmed that the tree selection for the street scape is the 'Musashino' Zelkova.

Garbage - **R. Starace** advised that with the new streetscape, the garbage ordinance needs to be enforced. **M. Maresca** said the retailers that don't have dumpsters, were given large grey containers. **M. Maresca** will call the Department of Health to enforce.

Committee Reports

Marketing/Events Committee

Symposium – **S. Koperweis** mentioned that he had received positive feedback from a Realtor regarding the symposium. The Realtor is now putting together her own marketing materials and crediting the BDA. **D. Glennon** felt it was a shame that more retailers did not attend, but felt that we need to keep moving forward; with taking the temperature of the retailers and have more symposiums highlighting periodic updates. We need to engage the retailers and keep drawing them in.

S. Koperweis advised that he and **H. Levine** are currently canvassing the stores to continue explaining the mission of the BDA. **F. Patti** suggested that for future symposiums the food should be simpler which would keep expenses lower. It was pointed out that the first symposium was all donated versus the second symposium which had a reduced rate but was paid for; and there was a miscommunication on the quantity. The other expense difference of the second symposium was the cost of the caterer and some offsets by The Modern.

Marketing - **R. Starace** questioned the next step for marketing. **D. Glennon** said that the strategy is complete and now the next step is the execution. Upon finalization of the logo, the website will be launched shortly after. **Mayor M. Sokolich** mentioned that the branding is very important and wants to do a borough wide branding. **S. Koperweis** will make sure that the BDA and the borough branding is consistent.

Visual Capital Improvement

Streetscape – **A. Clores** advised that he went over the plans with **M. Maresca** and Boswell Engineering and recessed lighting for the trees will not work for many reasons.

Holiday Decorations – **A. Clores** mentioned that Holiday Decorations also does the decorations for Englewood and Closter. The average lease for a 3 foot display is \$125 per decoration. Three different decoration options were passed around for review. The consensus was to do a mixture of P390 (wreath with snowflake) and PMDS-SF (star with blue light in middle). The decorations will be mounted with clamps onto a bracket which is strapped to the pole. The decorations will be on the center of the pole.

S. Koperweis will get quotes on these two decorations. **M. Maresca** suggested selling the current decorations as part of the negotiation.

Beautification/Clean – **S. Koperweis** suggested the hiring of 3 ambassadors for 20 hours per week with a cost of \$800 per week. **M. Maresca** suggested that they scrape the gum and clean the oil spills while they are sweeping in order to avoid having to do power washing which would be an additional expense. **F. Patti** suggested to have a review after 90 days.

MOTION: BDA to hire 3 ambassadors for cleaning and code enforcement for 20 hours/week for a cost of \$800/week with a review after 90 days: F. Patti, Second by J. Liu – APPROVED

Environmental – Planters and garbage cans are currently only in the streetscape. **M. Maresca** said he will look to see if he can find additional garbage cans than can be placed on West Main Street. He also said the sidewalks on west Main St are too narrow to support planters. Will review with **S. Koperweis**.

S. Koperweis advised that the borough Beautification committee is looking for support from the BDA on the enhancement of triangle at Lemoine and Main St. and Borough Hall. **M. Maresca** said the town is already taking care of Borough Hall. **S. Koperweis** will get a quote from the Beautification committee on the enhancements they would like for the triangle.

Parking

R. Starace advised that she had received many complaints on the parking situation. There was a lot of discussion and **G. Gallo** advised the many reasons for the parking difficulties; such as the current construction and the limited parking with Parker Plaza and the commuters to Columbia Hospital. The Parking Authority is trying many different options such as changing the hours on the parking meters as well as enforcing the meter feeding violations. **Mayor M. Sokolich** mentioned the complications of government interfering with public parking and commended **G. Gallo** on doing the fine job she is doing in dealing with the current challenges.

New Business

Logo

S. Koperweis passed around the various logo suggestions as created by *Direct Development*. The overall consensus was style # 4.01 (Fort Lee in blue with arc above and bar below). *Direct Development* will create the variations which will include replacing the arc with a skyline as well as color variations on the arc or skyline and bar. Upon receipt of new variations, **S. Koperweis** will email and board will vote via email.

Downtown New Jersey

S. Koperweis passed around the upcoming DNJ conference flyer. **Mayor M. Sokolich** is a panelist. **S. Koperweis** said that it is worthwhile to participate and a good idea for improvement districts to become a member. **S. Koperweis** also disclosed that he is a member and also the chairman of the conference. **H. Levine** will send an rsvp to the board members.

MOTION: BDA to join Downtown NJ at a cost of \$295 as well as send BDA members to conference at \$85 per attendee: A. Yook, Second by M. Beyer – APPROVED

Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce

F. Patti suggested it would be wise for the BDA to join the Ft Lee Chamber or Commerce.

MOTION: BDA to join the Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce at a cost of \$200: F. Patti, Second by J. Liu – APPROVED

Millennium Strategies Contract

MOTION: BDA to renew contract with Millennium Strategies: A. Yook, Second by F. Patti – APPROVED

PBS Documentary

V. Cividini advised that his company (The Modern) has been talking to PBS on doing a 26 min segment on Fort Lee. In the past PBS produced a show about Jersey City highlighting its revitalization efforts. It costs a fee but the primary sponsor will receive a 3-4 minute portion of the program. It would be a great way to generate interest in the borough. **D. Glennon** suggests getting script approval if possible.

MOTION to adjourn at 8:07 pm: M. Beyer, Second by J. Liu – APPROVED

*Next BDA Meeting is scheduled for 6/10/15