

Board Meeting of the Trustees

Fort Lee Improvement District Corporation

DBA: Business District Alliance (BD) of Fort Lee

July 9, 2014

Meeting called to Order at 6:01pm

Present: Romina Starace, Michael Beyer, Councilman Joseph Cervieri, Mayor Mark Sokolich, Janice Friedman, Denis Glennon, Kathy Lee, James Liu, Councilman Harvey Sohmer, Robert Durando, Frank Patti, Anthony Clores

Absent: Gloria Gallo, Brian Ribarro, Robert Clark, Ashley Yook, Victor Cividini

Also Present: Tom Meyers, Nelson Page (both from the Fort Lee Film Commission)

Adoption of Minutes: June 4, 2014

MOTION: M. Beyer, Second by J. Liu—APPROVED

Treasurer's Report:

There's little to no financial activity to report yet.

S. Koperweis explains the 2 payments to Millennium Strategies represent 2 different contracts; one is a monthly fee per annual contract and the other for phase 2 of the Improvement Study.

President's Report

Stakeholder and membership reach out is continuing.

Executive Director's Report

Sign ordinance: The sub-committee met and it was recommended that Stuart meet with Michael Jovishoff the planning board planner to review options. **S. Koperweis plans to set up a meeting with him next week.** As changes need to be made to the sign ordinance it would be best to review the entire document in full context.

Marketing & Analysis Study

D. Glennon does not feel any of the 3 agencies S. Koperweis sent him are adequate. He has some other thoughts on the market analysis and would like to review along with information being obtained by S. Koperweis by his company. **D. Glennon suggested that a presentation be made at the next board meeting in August.**

Capital Improvements—Rt. 46 Signage, Rt. 1

S. Koperweis informed the board that the state doesn't allow signs to be put up on Rt. 1. So we can only use directional signs on local roads. They were not aware that the approach road on Rt. 46 actually turns into Rt. 1.

A. Clores says someone asked him if or how capital improvements may impact or benefit Palisades and Lemonie Avenues. Several board members stated that these businesses, south of Main Street, are being impacted indirectly via the improvement to the general shopping area.

Assessments

As this was the first assessment bills sent out by the borough a letter was placed in the assessment mailing to the property owners explaining who we are, what we do and how to contact us.

M. Beyer asks what kind of assessment the new development projects will pay?

Mayor Sokolich said that you can't give an arbitrary assessment number to the new development because it's based on full development. As of now their assessment is based upon the current values; and once a C/O is completed the full new value will be assessed.

Main Street Project

Mayor Sokolich gave an update. He noted that bonding should be approved this week for the project and that by spring to summer of 2015 we should see all of the aesthetic improvements on Main Street completed.

R. Starace is concerned if this project doesn't get done in 12 months people will get anxious and question why they don't see tangible benefits yet from their SID assessments.

Mayor Sokolich points out that most SID initiatives are marketing and branding, not shovel in the ground projects. The idea is to have the SID take the credit for "managing" the Main Street improvements (i.e. wider sidewalks, new vegetation); while additionally the borough will pick up the full cost for the new parking deck and offices.

Walking Tour of Area Businesses

S. Koperweis presented a picture of an artist rendering that shows where the new development projects are located. This will be given to business owners who have questions about the new development. They may also hang these up in their store or restaurant to show their customers. So far, the walking tour has been productive. More are planned. **A. Yook** and D. Taylor accompanied S. Koperweis on two recent walking tours.

Fort Lee Regional Chamber of Commerce Lunch Meeting

Staff met with Chamber officials. Our information packet should be going out in the Chamber Newsletter. We plan to do cross promotions and assist each other whenever possible.

Redevelopment 5

Mayor Sokolich gave an update. We're working with Port Authority of NY/NJ to create an open area for folks waiting for the bus or car pool area. The bank on the corner of the property is coming down within a few weeks. Retail tenants include Starbucks, Paris Baguette, and another coffee shop. Though the property is owned by the Borough, Tucker Development asked for easements. One section in the development area will have fashion retailers. Capital One Bank will be moving in to the section; however, the current property owner says they'll spend money on façade improvements. Another tenant is expected to be a high end Mexican Restaurant.

The Mayor proclaimed that the Borough could become a go to place for theatre and the arts because of new and renovated venues; with the goal for Fort Lee to have the best film festival.

He concluded that of course there are the ongoing concerns of the growing pains because of all of the construction.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: 6:45pm F. Patti, Second by M. Beyer

Next meeting is scheduled for 8/13/14