

Lark Street BID Board Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2008

Attendance: Jerry Aumand, Richard Berkley, Erin Brewer, Richard Conti, Rob Curry, Dino Kacani, Donald Keenan, Jim Linnan, Lucy Prudencio Jeffrey Gritsavage

Staff: Mary Spinelli, Michael Weidrich

Guest: Matt Montesano

The meeting commenced at 6:10. Jeff Gritsavage asked present members to review November Minutes while waiting for additional members to arrive and establish a quorum.

Opening Remarks

Jeff Gritsavage began by discussing the vacant board seat and the need to fill it. Gritsavage suggested RA DePrima to fill the empty board position.

Michael Weidrich stated that the BID was waiting for Key Bank to appoint or remove themselves from the available seat. Members ascertained through discussion that RA DePrima does not fall under the guidelines of a commercial tenant and could presently only fill an empty residential tenant seat. Gritsavage suggested that DePrima chair an Ad Hoc Environmental Committee for the district with himself as co-chair. Jerry Aumand stated that having DePrima chair a committee would be a good test to determine how well he can follow thru.

Gritsavage asked if all members present had reviewed the minutes. Jim Linnan made a motion to accept the minutes. Richard Berkley asked that the November minutes be amended to state "...setting the bar on fundraising too low". Jim Linnan moved to accept the minutes with the amendment.

Gritsavage seconded. All were in favor.

At 6:30 the meeting went into Executive Session.

At 6:50 the meeting came out of Executive Session.

Committee Reports

▪Public Safety

Erin Brewer relayed information to Board members on an incident involving two men in a physical altercation in front of EB Essentials that lasted approximately 1 hour. Albany PD was called twice without any response.

Matt Montesano said that he would look into the call and find out why there was no officer response. Montesano then reported on the string of robberies occurring in the South End. Gritsavage reported on the Nuisance Crime Forum and the possibility of a text alert system via cell phones based on codes. Erin Brewer expressed concern of additional problems in the afternoons involving teenagers because of the closing of Livingston.

Gritsavage stated that the BID would hold a monthly meeting on various issues. Michael Weidrich suggested that Board members could take turns facilitating the meetings based on their particular expertise or interest. Jerry Aumand asked what the end result or purpose of these meetings would be. Weidrich stated that they would serve as a forum for property and business owners to be involved in a forum that gives them an opportunity to work together and gather ideas.

Regressing back to the issue of safety and police presence, Jim Linnan suggested lobbying City Hall for a bike cop or a beat cop. Matt Montesano stated that there were currently two beat cops but that they would get pulled if other calls came in and they were needed to respond. Richard Berkley made a motion to reach out to the four Neighborhood Associations to write a joint petition for more officers. Jim Linnan seconded and all were in favor. Jerry Aumand added that the petition should be specific as to what time officers would be the most needed.

Gritsavage mentioned the meeting attended by himself and Richard Conti with the Park South NA discussing parking and the possibility of creating angled parking on Lark between Madison and Myrtle and also permit parking in the district.

▪ **Business Retention**

Michael Weidrich stated that a new business opened next to Bombers-Opus Igor which is a second-hand clothing and ebay sales store. There was also talk of El Mariachi opening a take-out space and discussion on the empty commercial space next to Lionheart. Theory, formerly The Larkin had construction work going on inside but needs SLA permits. Richard Berkley suggested that the BID reach out to Theory's owners to help them with their permit application(s).

▪ **Development and Expansion**

Jim Linnan stated that he had no news to report.

Gritsavage added that the BID was set to complete back payments to the ALDC in January and that there may be a shift in focus to obtaining the building.

Executive Director's Report

Michael Weidrich reported that Jay Barron from the Armory had approached him about co-organizing an Inauguration Party and was also looking for marketing assistance from the BID. Richard Berkley asked what would the Lark Street businesses be getting and stated that the BID should not use any taxpayer money for advertising this event with the Armory. Weidrich also reported that snow blowing would not be covered by the BID's liability insurance. Gritsavage stated that the small risk should not be a deterrent to snow blowing.

Other Business

Gritsavage then stated that the Visioning and Prioritizing should be put off until January 2009 and made a motion to adjourn. Donald Keenan seconded the motion and all were in favor.