

## **Minutes from 2/3/2011 Lark St. BID Meeting**

Attendance: Matthew Badalucco, Jeff Gritsavage, RA DePrima, Mark Brogna, Collin Rost, Chris Schloss, Richard Conti, Elissa Halloran, Matthew Montesano, Alex Monticello, Stephen O'Neill, Officer Kevin Reedy

Staff: Mary Spinelli, Sara-Becca Smith

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00

### Executive Committee Report:

Matthew Badalucco asked for a motion to approve the December meeting minutes the motion was made and seconded. The minutes were approved by vote of the board.

Badalucco reported that the following nominations had been made:

Chair/President: Matt Badalucco

Vice-Chair/VP: Jerry Aumand

Treasurer: Chris Schloss

Secretary: Mark Brogna

The motion to vote was made and seconded. The vote passed. Badalucco appointed Alex Monticello to the At Large position.

Badalucco recapped the Neighborhood Association meeting that was held recently with the presidents from the surrounding NA's attending. The discussion focused on public safety and events. There was a positive response to Winter WonderLARK but the same issues that are voiced every year with LarkFEST were mentioned again; public urination and displeasure with the open container permit. Badalucco suggested that we may be able to assist the neighbors by putting up snow fencing to block off private property as was done with one residence next to the Silent Disco. The security camera bulk buying project was discussed and the NA's were invited to participate. Badalucco mentioned that the gift card program, while shelved in 2010, would be revisited in 2011 and he urged the NA's to ask their constituents to support the local businesses on the street as many of them are suffering because of the economy and the loss of the staff from Planned Parenthood and Tess' Lark Tavern. Badalucco will be attending some of the upcoming NA meetings and encouraging the neighbors to support the District businesses.

### Executive Director Report:

Mary Spinelli reported that Winter WonderLARK total budget netted -\$200. She reported that two new events were scheduled for area merchants in partnership with the Legal Project. The first event, a business resource forum will take place on Tuesday, February 22 from 5:30-7pm in the Trinity Chapel. Panelists will include the Legal Project and the Community Loan Fund of the Capital District. The BID is planning on holding the

forums quarterly. The second event will allow business owners to meet one on one with area attorneys for a half hour for free. These meetings will take place in the BID office.

Spinelli also reported that an art contest with a recycling theme is in the works in partnership with the Aurora Foundation. Albany City School District students grades K-12 will be asked to participate in the contest. One student's artwork from each grade level will be chosen and posted on one of the 13 BigBelly units in the District. The BigBelly poster panels that are required to display the posters on each unit cost \$135 a piece. The BID recently received news that we will be receiving a \$500 City Arts Grant this year. The money will be put towards the contest costs. Spinelli has been communicating with DGS on the project and was told that the City might be able to assist with the cost of the panels. The Aurora Foundation will be soliciting sponsors for the project and is trying to secure savings bonds from Sefcu for the winners. The posters will be unveiled at Art on Lark.

Spinelli stated that an updated brochure has been made that will be printed in house. Brochures will go out to businesses and the Albany Convention and Visitors Bureau. The website was updated last month and includes the new logo and updated colors. A New Years letter was sent to the businesses this past month highlighting the BID's 2010 accomplishments and plans for 2011. The bird that has been used to advertise the BID's events was given a name, Petula Lark. The name was chosen after a name submission period and an online public poll.

The banner project is moving forward \$2,500 has been pledged and \$750 received. Spinelli is waiting on a quote for the installation of the banners. Jeff Gritsavage mentioned being concerned about the length of the banners and their placement. Gritsavage stated that if they are too long that people will grab them and that passing trucks may hit them as well. Spinelli stated that the poles and street had been surveyed by the company when she first started discussing the project with them and these concerns were taken into consideration.

The spanwire project is still being researched. It was determined that installing poles for the wire would be cost prohibitive as each pole would cost over \$10K to install. There is no plan to move forward yet.

A third day of cleaning for the street has been budgeted for and scheduled for 2011. It was suggested that we look into the cost of adding a fourth day in the summer months and that we see if the Central BID's cleaners would be willing to clean the west side of Lark Street up to Spring Street in order to clean up the garbage near the bus stop. After the recent snowstorms, a man has been hired per diem to shovel our walkway and sidewalk as well as the crosswalks throughout the District. The flower baskets will continue to be watered every other day this year as they were last year. The flowers still looked nice and it was a large savings scheduling this for every other day rather than daily.

### Business Retention & Recruitment:

Spinelli reported that there are plans to start a committee focused on business retention and recruitment. A letter inviting realtors, business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, the Community Loan Fund, and other interested parties is in the works. A chair to head the committee is needed. Badalucco mentioned that Mike Yevoli, City Development and Planning Commissioner, had offered his marketing person to the BID. Badalucco suggested using him to assist Lark Street businesses needing marketing help. A follow up meeting with Yevoli is to be scheduled.

### Special Events Committee:

The first Steering Committee meeting for Champagne on the Park was held. Julie Byron of the Gingerman and Curtis Canham, the BID's graphic designer attended. Curtis agreed to do the events design work in exchange for tickets to the event. The theme for the event was chosen at the meeting, "All that Glimmers." This theme came out of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary gift of crystal. 2011 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BID. Spinelli asked for suggestions for this year's honorees as they need to be chosen before the Honorary Committee letter can be sent. The Pride Center, formerly the CDGLCC, and In Our Own Voices were suggested and approved. Andrew Harvey, the Park South Neighborhood Association President was suggested and approved. RA DePrima and Stephen O'Neill abstained from the vote for Andrew Harvey.

### Finance Committee:

Chris Schloss reported that changes had been made to the Cash Flow statement to make it more readable and to include a column of totals for each grouping. Numerical changes to the statement include a \$4K back tax payment to the IRS in December. The Community Development Block Grant award for year 37 (June 2011-May 2012) is \$14K. This is a \$4K decrease from 2010. There is an appeals process and hearing which Spinelli will be attending.

### Quality of Life/Public Safety:

Matthew Montesano responded to what is viewed as a lack of police response to the public urination problems at events and the pending new procedure. Montesano explained that at the events if an officer were to issue a ticket to the offender the officer would be required to go to the station to file the report, removing them from the event and reducing the number of officers present at the event. A new procedure is waiting approval which would allow the officer to issue an appearance ticket and not be required to return to the station. This new procedure will require that the offender either pay a fine or go to court. Montesano suggested contacting the Hackett Middle School Principal to arrange a meeting as spring is on the way and Lark Street is a main walkway for the students.

Richard Conti reported that the Public Safety Committee meetings are now being held on the Thursday alternate to the board meetings. The last meeting and the upcoming meeting

are focusing on the direction and goals of the committee. Conti would like the committee to have a longer term focus and be more proactive. An informal meet and greet with the new beat officers has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 8 from 5pm to 6:30. Since the officers will have office space in the BID building it was planned that the open house take place at the BID with public safety/crime prevention information displayed. Badalucco suggested that it be held at one of the businesses on the street in order for the business to make some money from people attending the meet and greet.

#### Environmental Committee:

RA DePrima reported that he is working with Price Chopper to open a cash and credit only line that would keep customers from having to wait for other customers using WIC. He mentioned that the manager would be interested in attending another board meeting. DePrima is also working with the DA's office to organize community service volunteers to do street maintenance and gardening. Spinelli mentioned that we had contacted them for their assistance last year but did not have any luck in getting street maintenance volunteers. The BID did have a few community service volunteers for LarkFEST. Montesano suggested reconnecting as there is a push to give more community service sentences.