

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

Montclair Center BID - Full Board Meeting
November 10, 2021 - 7:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.
BID Office, 26 Lackawanna Plaza or Zoom

Board members in attendance: Jose Barreiro, Celestina Ando, Ashley Cyrus, Lisa Johnson, Roger Mazzeo, Jill Montague, Jaji Packard, Alescia Peyton, David Placek, Hipolito Pollantis, Lori Price Abrams, Sue Schultz, Matt Silverman, Robert Squires, Nat Testa

Absent: Richard Cronk, David Cummings, Jeff Beck, Elizabeth Rich, Caterina Russo

Staff: Jason Gleason, Pauline Heaney

Guests: Emer Featherstone, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Ernst Goldman, Jr., Matt Horrigan, Lucas Kovalcik, Kiahna Malloy, Kristen Zachares

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Lisa Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF OCTOBER MINUTES

Matt Silverman moved to approve the October minutes.

Sue Schultz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nat Testa commented on the removal of the pedestrian flashing lights on Bloomfield and Midland Avenues. He asked when the signal in this very dangerous intersection would be installed.

Jose Barreiro commended the BID ambassadors for swiftly cleaning up and making safe the area of Park Street and Bloomfield Avenue after a traffic accident.

Matt Silverman commented that he is pleased to see the Wellmont Theater doing so well, but asked if the tour buses can park anywhere else other than on Bloomfield Avenue. Jason Gleason replied that there are spaces in the Fullerton lot, but they are not really deep or wide enough to house all the buses that arrive. The Wellmont is looking into a solution for this.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Introduction to New Board Member Candidates

Jason Gleason introduced the new board member candidates, who each spoke briefly about their business. Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa is a commercial and residential property developer and Montclair resident. Matt Horrigan is a property developer who has been in Montclair for 16 years. Ernst Goldman, Jr., an Immaculate Conception High School graduate, is owner of 4Evergrafix. He is very grateful for all the help the BID provided throughout the pandemic and wants to join the board to

give back. Lucas Kovalcik is founder and owner of The Gravity Vault. He would like to join the board to help local businesses and the community. Kristen Zachares, owner of The Eclectic Chic Boutique, has been in business in Montclair for 10 years. She curates gift items from local area artists. She loves Montclair and would love to participate on the BID board. Emer Featherstone is an accountant and property owner, who has been on Church Street for 20 years. Kiahna Malloy, owner of Kreme & Krumb artisan ice-cream, opened a pop-up in Montclair this year and will be opening a permanent storefront soon in the Vestry. Jason Gleason was grateful to all the candidates for stepping forward and thanked the Nominations Committee for procuring such a strong selection of nominees.

b. BID 20th Anniversary Discussion

Lisa Johnson asked for ideas on celebrating the BID's 20th anniversary in 2022. It was suggested to use this anniversary to show how far we've come as an organization, and to springboard awareness of our organization within the district. It would be an opportunity to showcase the value our organization provides, and all the things it is responsible for. It could be a celebration of bringing people back together after COVID, along with celebrating the growth of the downtown in the last 20 years.

Discussion took place regarding the scope of this celebration. It could be a small event for just the board and staff, or a broader fundraising event, such as for the arts program. "Downtown Saturday Night," a party for all of Montclair, was one suggestion.

This could also be an opportunity to drive revenue to our businesses. Each business could customize the use of "20" (i.e. 20% off, \$20 off, \$200 off) to fit their individual model. Other suggestions included a tie-in event on the new arts plaza, a scavenger hunt, a 20% off booklet, and digital loyalty rewards.

There could be a committee for anniversary activities, and the Marketing Committee should get together between now and December to plan for a January kick-off. Activities will certainly include the design of a 20th anniversary logo and slogan. Social media content calendar throwback posts, fun facts and stats will also be used. Press releases and media posts would highlight the physical developments and demographic changes that have taken place in the last 20 years. A monthly feature or milestone could be included in the *Montclair Local*. It would also be a chance to honor Ambassador Supervisor Dylan Blackwell, who has worked for the BID for its 20-year history. All events can take place throughout the course of the year and should be as budget neutral as possible.

c. New Board Member Onboarding Discussion

Lisa Johnson asked if the board was doing enough to orient and welcome new members. Could anything be improved in the orientation process? David Placek suggested a "buddy system" for new board members; a mentorship-like collaboration with an existing board member.

Jason Gleason asked if the board found the project management software, Basecamp, useful. Other than curtailing long threads, most members agreed it was a great resource for all board communication and document sharing.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Clean, Safe and Green Report

Clean: The ambassadors cleaned three quarters of a ton of overflow garbage and sidewalk debris. They have also been cleaning up an enormous quantity of leaves. Safe: The Bloomfield Avenue sidewalk construction project has been doing a better job of utilizing barricades and site cleaning. They are still on track to finish by May 2022. The new traffic signals slated for Midland Avenue and Seymour Plaza are needed desperately. The BID has completed an inventory of light outages in the district, now about 30%. PSEG has been notified of all the outages, with several follow-up blasts. Green: 700 tulip bulbs have been planted within the district. A total of 3,000 should be planted once they have arrived from the supplier.

b. New Business/Vacancy Report

There were 49 new business openings in Montclair Center this year. The district lost 18, which makes the vacancy rate 11.3%, down from 18%. Most of the vacancies are very large. There are very few 2,500 sq. ft. and under listings, which is what most new businesses are looking for. Today there was a ribbon cutting for Summit Health, a 30,000 sq. ft. multi-use medical space. It is physician owned (not corporate) and the fourth hub to be opened in New Jersey – a very big win for Montclair. Summit Health is also eager to contribute to the community and to participate in arts offerings.

c. 2022 Holiday/Activity Report

Beyond Main has recorded 26 promotional videos for businesses on its site. These will be aired on News 12 NJ. In conjunction with Red Root Marketing, the BID is launching a 'Thank You For Loving Local' campaign, including gift card giveaways to promote tagging and posting to social media. It was very successful last year, with a lot of interaction on Instagram. The *NJ Monthly* will include a newsletter regarding holiday shopping, along with press releases and a full-page ad to be featured in the *Montclair Local*. A large banner designed with the campaign graphics will span across Bloomfield Avenue. Press releases and Small Business Saturday activities have been scheduled. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be in the district November 27, together with performances on Church Street from Jazz House Kids and Vanguard Theater. Free one-day parking passes will be given out for proof of purchase from businesses within the district, and Montclair Public Library volunteers will also be on hand at the BID tent that day. The Township has agreed to free two-hour parking at meters starting November 27, and through the holidays.

VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

None.

VII. TREASURERS REPORT

a. 2022 Budget Vote

Jose Barreiro thanked the Budget Committee for their work, especially Celestina Ando for presenting the budget at the last meeting. The Board has had a month to

bring up any questions or concerns regarding the budget. Some members mentioned how they like the new format, making it easier to read. There was no further discussion.

**David Placek moved to pass the budget as presented.
Jaji Packard seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

a. **Parking Ordinance Change – Follow-up Meeting**

Matt Silverman stated conversations have been ongoing with the town planner, attorney, and council about how we might limit the new parking ordinance to just larger developments, recommending exempting properties under 5,000 sq. ft. David Placek believes there is ample parking in decks in the district; there needs to be data to support that position. Therefore, he has hired a private parking consultant to do an in-depth study and will happily share data results with the Township and board once completed. Also, there is a parking perception problem which might be addressed by using additional signage. Discussion turned to the large number of broken meters within the district.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

X. OPEN DISCUSSION – New Ideas, Comments, Questions

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

**Nat Testa moved to adjourn the meeting. Jaji Packard seconded.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

NEXT MEETING:

Dec. 8 • 7:00 p.m.