

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

Montclair Center BID - Full Board Meeting
April 20, 2022 7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
In Person at BID Office or via Zoom

Board members in attendance: Celestina Ando, Jeff Beck, Ashley Cyrus, Emer Featherstone, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Kiahna Malloy, Roger Mazzeo, Jaji Packard, Lori Price Abrams, Robert Squires, Nat Testa, Kristen Zachares

Absent: David Cummings, Matt Horrigan, Jill Montague, David Placek, Hipolito Pollantis, Elizabeth Rich

Staff: Jason Gleason, Pauline Heaney

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Jaji Packard called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF FEBRUARY MINUTES

Jaji Packard moved to approve the February minutes, with discussed formatting change going forward. Jeff Beck seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Melissa Walker, Executive Director of Jazz House Kids

Jaji Packard, Celestina Ando and Jason Gleason met previously with Melissa Walker, who is grateful for our contribution and support of the jazz events last year. She asked how we can support the festival this year. She also asked if we can commit to supporting the festival for the next three years.

Discussion took place about what support the BID can provide this year. We would like to know what the Township is going to provide in terms of sanitation, policing and parking enforcement. The thought is to provide less financial and more in-kind support. Last year the BID gave \$20K in sponsorship, with in-kind support of \$74,300, which included staff, professional support, communication, marketing, ambassadors, stage rental, and banners. However, this was provided through a grant we received, we are not able to sponsor at the same level this year. It was agreed to table this until the board May meeting when we will have answers to these questions.

Jason Gleason also mentioned that the Rev. Craig Dunn, from Montclair Neighborhood Development Corporation (MNDC) has invited board members and BID stakeholders to a diversity training seminar on April 30. Please let Jason know if you would like to attend.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Main Street Grant

The BID has formally been awarded the \$75K grant and will begin implementing the goals; a new banner system and accompanying website, water retaining fiberglass liners for hanging baskets, and programming at Wellmont Arts Plaza. A few more things have to be worked out, but we are probably looking at late summer, early fall for events at the Wellmont.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

1. 2022 First Quarter

Celestina Ando presented the first quarter bridge document. The BID is doing great, with \$3000 received in additional income from banners, also additional payroll savings. She remarked that utilities were a little higher than usual, but overall, we are up by about \$7,000 in the first quarter.

For quarter two we will have a modified budget. The Main Street grant will be reflected in the forecast, along with depreciation, and unplanned expense (retaining attorney of record Robert Goldsmith). She mentioned it would be ideal to plan ahead for capital purposes. Currently the threshold is \$2k. We should look to identify any larger purchases for this year.

VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Main Street Convention in Richmond, VA – May 18 Board Meeting Date Conflict
Jaji Packard asked to move the date of the next board meeting to May 25, since she and Jason Gleason will be away at the Main Street Convention. All agreed.

2. Meet and Greet

Jaji Packard thanked the staff saying the Meet and Greet was a big success. The next event is scheduled for August 13, in conjunction with the Jazz House Block Party. More details will be available shortly.

3. Conflict of Interest Policy: Statement, Discussion, and Vote

Jaji Packard reminded the board how important the Conflict of Interest Policy is and to please return signed copies as soon as possible.

Recently a potential conflict occurred when David Placek offered Jason Gleason compensation for serving in a facilitatory capacity. Attorney Rob Goldsmith was brought in to review, concluding that no conflict occurred, stating that the work took place outside the parameters of Jason Gleason's executive director position and work hours. Goldsmith recommended that David Placek recuse himself on voting on any future issues of that nature.

Jaji Packard moved to approve the compensation for Jason Gleason. Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa seconded. David Placek, Lori Price Abrams, and Emer Featherstone abstained. Motion passed.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Thank you and Goodbye to Alescia Peyton
Jaji Packard reported that Compleat Window Fashions and Decor had closed and Alescia Peyton has resigned from the board. Jaji thanked her for her service.

2. Recruitment Committee

- a. Two nominees for two business seats

Jaji Packard spoke of the open business owner seats, and presented two candidates for consideration. Montclair resident David Harrison, from Spiro Harrison. Ernst Goldman, creative director and owner of 4Evergrafix. Board discussion took place.

Jeff Beck moved to approve the nomination of David Harrison as presented. Nat Testa seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Nat Testa moved to approve the nomination of Ernst Goldman as presented. Emer Featherstone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. One open seat for a resident of the BID
Currently, we do not have any nominations for the resident seat.

3. Public Space Enhancement and Activation Committee

- a. Native species proposal for our planters.

On April 26, this committee will meet with members of the Montclair Garden Club, Northeast Earth Coalition (NEEC) president, Jose German, and the May in Montclair group, to discuss the native species ordinance. Other board members are welcome to attend. Jaji explained a native species ordinance was announced at the last council meeting. The aim is to create a policy for sustainability. However, the wording of the ordinance has been amended to include a carve out for the BID for planting daffodils and tulips within the district. The BID and the Montclair Garden Club have a long and happy partnership with the planters in Montclair Center, and have a lot vested in continuing the program. The BID will bring and discuss ideas that originate from the meeting to the expert horticulturist from Van Vleck.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Essex County Construction

Jason Gleason and Jaji Packard met earlier with Brian Scantlebury to discuss construction projects. He said the Glenridge parking deck is now slated to open sometime in August; supply chain issues being one cause of the delay. Parking signage is also in the works. If you see any tripping or other hazards on Bloomfield Avenue, please snap a photo and report it to Jason who will compile a list and forward all complaints to Brian. Lastly, Brian is working on opening a small business office, which will be a one-stop shop for businesses.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Studio Montclair Proposal

Susanna Baker, director of Studio Montclair is looking to use the Leach Building to house a Soho style gallery, with exhibit and event space and art incubator for emerging artists for approximately one to three years. She has asked if the BID could support and partner this venture with a \$10K marquee sponsorship. In return the BID could use the space for such things as Meet and Greets, and our own art programing.

Jason Gleason mentioned Carlos Pomares, VP Essex County Commissioner, is also the executive director of the Cuban Artist Fund and might also support this venture. Jason said Studio Montclair has been a great partner to the BID. They have programmed a dead block, and with many other galleries closing in the district introducing a new arts space might be a good investment. If the board decided to go ahead with this proposal, funding could come out of the strategic initiatives budget or the remaining \$10k funds left over from the FreshAir program could be used.

Discussion took place regarding whether it is worth the investment for something that might only last for one year. However, there are also significant rewards and recognition for the BID.

Another art option with the remaining FreshAir funds is for the BID to provide a stipend for emerging artists to produce smaller murals around the district. More information on this later in this meeting.

2. Possibility of becoming a Destination Marketing Organization in 2023
Jaji Packard spoke regarding two grant opportunities from the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism. One is a smaller, cooperative marketing grant up to \$25K. The second is a sizable three-year grant, potentially up to \$300,000 per year, and would require us to be a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). Jason explained that we would be eligible to become a DMO due to his serving on the boards of NJ DMOs and NJ Travel Industry Association (NJTIA). Applying for this grant would require a huge amount of writing, and the submission of a declaration of intent by May 18. A private 25% match is also required for this grant. Jaji mentioned a tourism marketing expert would be very useful in helping put these grants together if anyone has any contacts in this area. She discussed the specific criteria for what can and cannot be funded with either grant, but generally includes marketing, advertising and PR efforts.

Jaji Packard moved to give the BID staff permission to apply for the grants as presented. Jeff Beck second. Motion passed unanimously.

3. 2022 Mural Project
Jaji Packard spoke regarding the mural project. She said we are obligated to do the mural on the building at 6 Gates Avenue, which will be funded by owner David Genova. The BID could also fund two additional murals, (perhaps for \$6K, and \$3K, with \$1k for royalties). She spoke of the success of the previous mural project, and how it attracts a large local and tourist following.

36 spaces around the district have been identified as potentially appropriate placements for a mural, (needs to be a previously painted area). Discussion took place regarding the cost, procedure, and timing of the previous mural program.

**Jaji Packard moved to authorize Jason Gleason to negotiate with Studio Montclair regarding the \$10k in support of their project.
One no vote, one abstention. Motion passed.**

**Jaji Packard moved to authorize the 2022 Mural Project for \$10K
Ashley Cyrus seconds. One abstention. Motion passed.**

X. OPEN DISCUSSION – New Ideas, Comments, Questions

XI. ADJOURNMENT

**David Garcia-Pedrosa moved to adjourn the meeting. Kristen Zachares seconded.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.**

NEXT MEETING:

May 25, 2022 • 7:00 p.m.