



**Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2020 | 9:30-11:00 a.m. | Zoom Meeting**

The Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Commission met virtually in regular session. Those present are listed below. The meeting was held as an electronic regular Commission meeting because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commissioners, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.

Present: Craig Byers, Lijun Chadima, Stephanie Jelinek, Pam Lewis, Chad Pelley, James Piersall

Absent: Ana McClain, Bob Schaffer

Guests: Ben Dillon - Geometric, Abby Huff & Monica Vernon – Main Street, Kelsey Worcester – HBK Engineering/Beautification Committee member, Jennifer Pratt – City of Cedar Rapids

Economic Alliance Staff: Ellen Bardsley, Jessica Komisar, Doug Neumann, Phil Wasta

Welcome and Call to Order

Piersall welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Chadima asked if we could receive COVID-19 updates from Commissioners. Piersall said we could do so under “Other Business” if there is time and also reiterated that when the agenda is published, we must stay within the agenda items because that’s what the public is aware of. Pelley moved approval of the agenda with Byers seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chadima moved approval of the April minutes with Lewis seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

There hasn’t been a lot of activity on the financials on either the income or expense side. We are still in process of attempting to move the account from the City to our own account but that has been put on hold due to COVID-19 setbacks. Neumann said he has re-started conversations with Casey Drew and is hoping to get this accomplished in the next 60-90 days. Chadima moved approval of the financials with Byers seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Art Update

Piersall said the Public Art Committee has met twice and most recently, last week with Murals and More to discuss the process and locations. The two locations the committee decided to look into include the West facing side of Ideal Social Hall facing the Kickstand parking lot and the East facing side of the Graham Construction Building facing the river. Jelinek said they have listed the Ideal Social Hall property for sale so they would be unable to provide any financial match or agreement. Lewis expressed concern for a previous mural in Czech Village which has covered up once a new property owner purchased the building. Piersall said we would want to have a contractual guarantee with the building owner that they wouldn’t paint over it in the form of an easement that would go with the building. Once the mural is up, the new owner would be bound to the same conditions of the previous owner. Piersall asked Jelinek if we installed a mural on the side of Ideal Social Hall if she’d be willing to go into an agreement to allow the mural to stay? Jelinek said that could detract from interest of the building. Vernon said Main Street has been communicating with Sue Novak, owner of the Graham Construction Building, since earlier this year about a mural on the side of their property as well. Vernon said she has received permission from the Novaks as well and have funding for the paint and a design and suggested there could

be some dual coordination. Vernon said she was under the impression that the SSMID was going to focus its public art efforts on the City of Cedar Rapids Art Walk. Piersall said the SSMID hasn't shifted that focus but we didn't want to wait 2 years to do something. Byers said if we are wanting to move forward with the Novak property, we should meet with Main Street separately on how we can partner together. Lewis said if Main Street is already moving forward with their Novak property mural, can we look into another location to have multiple murals. Piersall said the Public Art committee will proceed to work with Main Street but to continue to move toward the goal of having a mural in place this year.

Piersall provided an update on the 16th Ave roundabout and the construction period is slated for mid-July through September.

Joint District Bike Loop Update

Neumann said we will send designs and pictures when they are ready but so far, the City has been very helpful on this project and wants to see it come to fruition yet this Summer. They have been assisting with mapping out the routes in conjunction with construction and flood control work. Neumann said the overall project cost is estimated at \$125k and includes 5 miles of bike trail, 3 large district maps and a number of smaller directional branded signs. Neumann acknowledged this may feel like a sticker shock, however when you add up the revenues of all three SSMIDs, the CVNB SSMID collects about 5% of the revenue so maybe it would be appropriate to suggest to the other SSMIDs that we could contribute about 5% of the project cost. That would be approximately \$6,250 which we could fund using the \$2,500 Projects budget line item and the remaining from reserves. Jelinek said this would be the best use of those funds and asked what the reoccurring costs would be for maintenance. Neumann said we would learn a lot more in year two of the project but knowing the route is likely to change each year means there will always be street paint as an annual cost to keep it going.

Pending a go-forward of this project and agreement from the other two SSMIDs, Chadima moved approval of committing \$6,250 for the district bike loop with the funds coming from the projects line item and reserves with Lewis seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

District Staffing

Neumann said some of the hours we intended to provide to the SSMID have been stretched due to the Economic Alliance's COVID-19 response. Neumann said Wasta, MedQuarter Executive Director, has weekly hours he could designate to the CVNB SSMID. This has already been cleared by the Medical SSMID and has no impact on the CVNB SSMID's budget. Komisar, Neumann, Bardsley and others will continue to contribute to CVNB efforts in addition to Wasta. Piersall said he doesn't see anything but positives to come from Wasta's added experience and knowledge.

Beautification Committee Update

Worcester said Blooms will be swapping out soil this week and will be planting annuals and perennials next week. Worcester presented images of the plants that we will have and said if we want to make adjustments to the plantings for 2021, we will need to have our order in by September of 2020.

Lewis said the Beautification Committee hasn't had an in-person meeting yet but working independently and communicating via e-mail and once the plants are in, they will look at the next project including the beautification request from Main Street (trash bins, benches, etc.). Vernon and Huff said as restaurants are doing curbside and carryout, they think there are some areas in the district they wish had more seating and trash bins. They are hoping the SSMID might consider budgeting for those items and adding them. Piersall said in October we will start discussing 2021 budget. Neumann reminded the group that the SSMID added more funds to the streetscape budget line item knowing we wanted more plantings and hardware for banners and felt that \$15k could also buy some benches and trash bins in a couple different locations and there may very well be some dollars available this year. Lewis and the committee will discuss and look into options and pricing.

Jelinek asked what the plan is for the benches and items behind the Cherry Building. Neumann said that was a short-term disposal site for items in the way of Downtown construction and will check back in on that.

Other Business

Pratt said the City has created simplified materials and resources for businesses who are interested in expanding outdoor service areas. Pratt also shared they are working with VeoRide for an update on the bike share program and should have an announcement in the next couple of weeks.

Chadima asked who is responsible for collecting data on businesses in the district. Vernon said Main Street has collected general and COVID-19 data and can share their reports.

Chadima asked if we can do more posting on the SSMID's Facebook page. Bardsley said the SSMID's communications plan had been to post 1-2 times per week but we've fallen short of that since the Covid outbreak because of all of the other communications demands. We'll work to get back on track with that.

Adjourn

Chadima moved to adjourn the meeting with Byers seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.