

**MINUTES FROM THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT'S
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

2PM NOVEMBER 8, 2005

40 FOUNTAIN ST.

Present were Bob Gagliardi, Richard Lappin, Michael Corso, Joe DiBattista , Maria Ruggieri, John Macliver, Dan Baudouin and Frank LaTorre

1. Trash receptacles and other litter issues

The Director of Public Space, Frank LaTorre, said the new trash receptacles ordered by the DID from The Steelyard will be arriving in a few weeks. He reported on a meeting at City Hall with Carol Grant, John Nickelson, Francisco Ramirez, Dan Baudouin and himself regarding trash receptacles. The City said there is precedent in the District for private businesses to purchase receptacles and empty them so they are allowing us to place new receptacles as needed, locations being approved by John Nickelson. John Nickelson said at that meeting that Public Works will be providing a dumpster to which the DID can take the trash it collects from the new receptacles. The City will haul the trash away from that dumpster.

It was discussed that the way the locations for the placement of the new receptacles was determined was by objectively looking at where the greatest need is. A map will be sent out to all the property owners of the District showing the new locations. There will be an accompanying letter asking if they care to 1) purchase a receptacle for \$700/each if one of the new receptacles is not being placed in

front of their property or 2) if a new receptacle is being placed in front of their property, would they like to contribute \$700 to help the DID by paying for that receptacle. These communications will be sent out with the next DID newsletter.

Frank presented City Ordinance Section 12-57 Littering to the committee that states, in part, "The owner or person in control of any property which is held out for the public as a place for assemblage for the transaction of business for recreation or as public way, shall provide a conspicuously identifiable receptacle for the disposal of litter." The City said they will not be enforcing that law but encouraging property owners and businesses to abide by it. There are also ordinances regarding dumpsters that Frank will be discussing one-on-one with property owners and haulers, as negligence in this area contributes to litter and public health problems. Frank will also bring up to the Downtown Merchants Association the existence of City Ordinance 12-57 to work on voluntary cooperation with this law, especially in the litter "hot spots" created by certain businesses in the District.

2. Snow Removal Plan for Winter of 2005-06

Letters will be sent out to all property owners and business owners asking for their cooperation to keep the sidewalks clear of snow this winter. Copies of City Ordinance Section 23-13 will be sent out along with the letter. That ordinance states that any property owner not clearing a path in front of their property can be fined up to \$300/infracton. Frank is working with the City and the Police

Department to see if Colonel Esserman will co-sign the letter with him. Frank will be meeting one-on-one with surface parking lot owners to let them know that they cannot plow snow onto sidewalks and public alleys. Different solutions must be found because forcing people to walk on the streets because of piles of uncleared snow on sidewalks is not acceptable.

It was unanimously agreed on that the sidewalks not being cleared on the four overpasses that go from the District across Rt. 95 is a serious problem. If we want to truly open the District up to the West Side, four seasons per year, this must be addressed. It is a major public safety problem as well, forcing people to walk on slippery streets to cross the overpasses. It was decided the DID will not do the plowing of these sidewalks. The DID through its Director of Public Space and with certain Board members will make it known to City Councilors and to the Mayor this is an issue that must be looked at this year to get some City resources to address the problem.

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John Nickelson said at a meeting at City Hall he will be getting back to Frank LaTorre as to what alleys the City will and will not plow this year and what criteria are used to make such decisions. John also said he will be having someone from his department speak with the haulers to let them know they must not place dumpsters, after

emptying them, in locations that block public passage of vehicles. It is another facet of keeping alleys open that must be addressed.

3. City Matching Grant for New Trees

There is a City match program for the purchase of trees. A tree costs \$300 of which the City will match \$150/tree for every \$150/tree donated by private owners or community organizations. Alix Ogden, Director of the Parks Department, suggested that the DID hold off until the spring of 2006 the ordering of new trees for planting that fall. The reason to wait is that the City Forester, Doug Still, is conducting a comprehensive Downtown Tree Survey, which will take some time to complete. In the spring, we will have a much better idea of how many trees we will need and what variety he would suggest as part of his comprehensive plan.

4. Community Bulletin Boards

The Committee encouraged Frank to further research the idea of having community bulletin boards in the District. They would be a place for organizations from churches to nightclubs to post information about events in the District. They would be roofed structures that would also include a quality map of the District. Before any money is allocated from the DID for preliminary engineering work to develop specs and a budget per kiosk, more research will be done to see how other cities designed, paid for, use and maintain community bulleting boards. The idea of using the back of RIPTA bus shelters as a possible short tem answer was proposed.

5. Special Projects List

It was decided that a list of special projects will be developed to begin to assess where the DID wishes to place resources for the remainder of this fiscal year and in planning the budget for the next fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2006. While the prioritization of special projects will be examined so will the allocation of resources to Block-by-Block. How is the present allocation of resources to the Clean Team vs. Safety Team working out. Does there need to be a shift in the deployment of staff? All these issues are important to begin working on for decisions on most productively utilizing the monetary and “people” resources of the DID.

6. Other Business

Dan Baudouin gave a summary of the first Sidewalk Repair meeting that occurred at the DID offices on October 26. Present were a representative of RIDOT, the City’s Directors of Planning and Public Works, Dan and Frank. Dan explained what happened at the meeting. The various sources of money were discussed and the need to coordinate efforts such that the most money that is available will be secured and spent wisely in the District. The positive interaction and exchange of information between the the State, the City and the DID to accomplish this goal was advanced by this meeting. There will be further meetings to continue this coordination of work.

The question of standardizing the material used for sidewalk construction for the District was discussed. The City is heading

toward all concrete in any new construction. Could there be an alternative suggested to the City? It was decided to invite Will Gates, landscape architect, to attend the next Operations Committee on 2 PM Tuesday December 6 for a short walking tour to get his perspective of alternatives to concrete he has seen work elsewhere that are durable, cost effective and aesthetically pleasing.