

# **Armory Arts District Study Group Meeting    MINUTES**

**April 4th, 2012**

**In attendance: Yvonne Seggerman; Mark House; Don Keel; Silvia Acosta; Linda Dewing; David Wax; Gretchen Dow Simpson; Jim Tiernan; Chris Ladds; Judith Miller; Mike Cassidy; Jessica Ann Weinstein; Brian Platt; Phyllis Nathanson; Mike Davolio**

**Meeting commenced at 11:43am**

## **1. Welcome and Introductions      Yvonne Seggerman**

- **Richard Kazarian was called out of town at the last minute and cannot attend today**

- **This group's next meeting (June 6th, 2012) will be the annual meeting**

- **Review and approve minutes of the February 1st meeting**

**&#61664; Motion passed unanimously**

- **Welcome Jim Tiernan, The Classic Building**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – the “plan of attack” was to put a roof over Classic Display (the operating company); Michael Davolio pointed out the assets of this building, and we decided to fill the building with artists. We will begin with fire safety; re-do floors; 500-5,000 sq ft spaces available; card-entry system; video security. The current direction of the plan does not include live/work space.**

**&#61664; Linda Dewing – parking?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – more than sufficient parking available for the units in the building**

**&#61664; Silvia Acosta – what is the address of the space?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – 80 and 84 Fountain Street. We plan to sandblast and bring back the natural brick; clean and simple design**

**&#61664; Linda Dewing – is it a historic building?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – no**

**&#61664; Yvonne Seggerman – if tax credits come back, will they be available to you?**

**&#61664; Mark House – you would just need to register as a historic building**

**&#61664; Mike Cassidy – adding a few more buildings is do-able in our district**

**&#61664; Judy Miller – some artists want “sloppy spaces” with water access, etc. Will this type of space be available in the building?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – once we understand the artists needs, we can try to provide the right amenities; currently the building can accommodate many options**

**&#61664; Judy Miller – How many floors?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – 3 active floors; 4th floor: single tenant with multiple artists; we are meeting with blasting companies, planning to bring back natural wood**

**&#61664; Silvia Acosta – rental space only? Any space available for artist purchase?**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – rent only; not looking into condo space at this time**

**&#61664; Gretchen Dow Simpson – a similar building in Portland, ME: floors are divided into many cubicles with a common space, kitchen,**

etc. \$250/month to rent a cubicle, with the freedom to use it whenever you want, and the security to leave your computer locked up in your cubicle.

• Yvonne – The new building could be an incubator space: somewhere for artists to work until their business gets off the ground.

• Jim Tiernan – that is cost-effective; for our company, Classic Display, we want to create acrylic displays; we need a creative approach; we want to fashion a campaign to be part of the art work, not just create an office space.

• Yvonne – we will put you on the listservs of art communities in the city

- GrowSmart RI Power of Place Summit May 11 – all encouraged to attend

• An all-day Friday event; opportunity to get with our peers in urban renewal

• [www.growsmart.org](http://www.growsmart.org)

• \$75 to attend; let Yvonne know if you are interested and maybe we can possibly go as a group

## 2. Bike path – direction through center of city Mark House

- Mark House attending a meeting last month at the Visitors' Center; looked at the Armory Arts District through Front Street

• A breakout group had been looking at how bikes can traverse through City Hall

• The AADSG original idea, running through Mr. Yip's property was not acceptable.

• The "choice" plan now:

• Come across Exchange St bridge and continue below Tolman teachers' deck; this keeps 95% of path on the river. Stay on river until Central Falls.

• Funding: yes for design work, but currently not available for construction

• Our main wish – behind city hall, keep it along the river 100%

• Linda Dewing – how can our group help instigate motion in this project?

• Phyllis Nathanson – our group should be very vocal; Pawtucket has a history of being at the bottom of the barrel; we are the entrance to RI; the bike path is expensive, but it is also economically essential for revitalization, we must actively participate and this will jumpstart retail in our area – the bike path is a key part.

• Mark House – Where are we now with the city?

• Mike Davolio – the city is willing to go forward when we agree on a route

• Mark House – we have agreed on a route.

• Yvonne Seggerman – Whose decision is it to make?

• Mike Davolio – ultimately, the Mayor's decision, DOT will follow his suggestion

• Phyllis Nathanson – did we settle the issue with the police, concerning the area behind city hall?

• Yvonne Seggerman – children go slowly on the path

• putting the path in front of exiting fire trucks is not a great idea; but anyway whatever the decision, we need one, so the bike path can be completed

- Mark and Yvonne agreed to write letters to the mayor.

### **3. Pawtucket / Central Falls River Corridor      Mark House**

- Mark House reporting on behalf of Thomas Mann from the Pawtucket Foundation

- Re-development initiative along waterfront; money was brought in on challenge grant

- A portion of the grant was privately held

- Money for the first two phases; research by foundation; make decision ASAP

- Phase 1 is market analysis, hopefully done by the fall

- Hope to keep as much around here as possible

- Instead of individual uses along area, ask what will reap the best revenue for the city

- Idea for this plan – everyone buy in; some solutions will not meet everyone's needs, but will meet needs of greater goal

- This plan will make it easier to invest

- Yvonne Seggerman – please describe each location so folks can know where exactly

- Mark House – Town Landing; State Pier; National Grid; properties along Roosevelt Ave including Apex; city—owned properties including Slater Mill; up to horseshoe in Central Falls; northern reaches of our district: Kollett; Front Street

**&#61664; It gets difficult through Middle Street due to 3-family houses**

- Mark House – this is why we want an “outside-in” view; too close to home can cloud our vision/goals; it helps to have an outsider recognize the assets of our district**
- Mike Davolio – we have elected to keep two separate contracts, one that the City Planning Department administers and one that the Pawtucket Foundation administers with an eye that we are not duplicating the work in any way.**

#### **4. Governance Yvonne Seggerman**

- Core values for the mission statement**

**&#61664; Thanks to those of you who sent in core value ideas before this meeting**

**Core values:**

- Arts, design and education centered (trying to get to critical mass)**
- Focus on external neighborhood aesthetics**
- To be “A Destination”**
- Essential component of a vibrant community**
- Community vitality**
- Accessibility**
- Regional impact**
- Focus on excellence**
- Advocacy for political action that will positively affect living and working in the district.**
- Create greater public value for all by working together in**

**collaboration in an arts-centric neighborhood.**

- **Collaboration between arts district and City**

**(please continue to email Yvonne as you think of more to add to this list:)**

**We will fashion core values into a mission statement; remember that we are not stating the district's mission, rather the mission of this study group**

- **Membership:**

**What constitutes a member?**

**&#61664; Membership should be those who are committed and interested and have a reason to connect with this area, either by residence, business, or city commitment.**

**&#61664; Anyone who attends 4 out of 6 meetings in a calendar year and shows interest/concern for our group's topics and issues is invited to be a member**

**&#61664; Yvonne Seggerman – we are working by studying other neighborhood groups' bylaws as a model**

**&#61664; Phyllis Nathanson – an individual showing interest and showing up gets a vote**

**&#61664; Yvonne Seggerman – one vote per person, not per organization/institution (ex: Riverfront Lofts; Gamm Theatre; etc...)**

**&#61664; Don Keel – advocacy is important to our group’s function; as far as membership, are we looking for a large membership like a museum or a smaller membership? What is our membership vision? What is the mechanism for nominating/inviting members? Do we have criteria in mind, based on our mission? Can just anyone become a member if they fulfill the attendance requirements?**

**&#61664; Yvonne Seggerman – this is a good question to send back to the governance sub-committee; ex: is it enough to be just a neighbor? A business owner? Etc.**

**&#61664; Judy Miller – our group has done a great job educating the rest of the state about our area; education should be part of our mission; ex: The Foundry Show draws 10,000 people to Pawtucket every year; they would not ordinarily come to Pawtucket but the Foundry Show has educated them, and they return.**

**&#61664; Jim Tiernan – happy to volunteer to help - can use tracking info on those attendees of the Foundry Show to help further our exposure and education; use that tracking info to identify our demographic**

- Zoning Task Force**

**&#61664; Committee did not meet between the last AADSG meeting and now; will talk about staying aware of new zoning in area; no issues have come up since then**

**&#61664; Mike Davolio – new issue: cannot put recording studio or health club in riverfront area; and yet variance is not the way to go**

**&#61664; Long conversation about the uses and restrictions of the**

**current RD3**

**&#61664; We agreed to look at the RD3 at the next meeting so we might suggest alterations.**

## **5. Other Business**

- Yvonne Seggerman – City Councilor Dave Moran would like these meetings to be moved to Wednesday evenings so he can attend**  
**&#61664; This does not work for most of our group; we will keep our meetings at the current time (bi-monthly first Wednesdays 11:30am)**
- Mike Davolio – city is moving forward with street improvements (Exchange Street)**  
**&#61664; Need a public meeting; would like this group to be involved in decisions**
- Silvia Acosta – RISD is working on a community garden outside of the Chinese Christian Museum; looking to the development of a floating field station and lower pavilion**

**Meeting adjourned at 12:52pm**  
**Jessica Ann Weinstein**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by**

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

**AADSG meets every other month on the first Wednesday at 11:30am**

**Meetings remaining in 2012:**

**June 6th, 2012 at 11:30am**

**August 1st, 2012 at 11:30am**

**October 3rd, 2012 at 11:30am**

**December 5th, 2012 at 11:30am**