

**DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE OF SYRACUSE, INC.**

**September 22, 2015**

**CenterState CEO Conference Room  
115 West Fayette Street**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance**

**Members:** Messrs. Howard, Fiorito, Fisher, Koolakian, Maxwell, Nutting, Simpson, Tripoli,  
Ms. Littlejohn

**Staff:** Mss. Holbrook, Maggiore, Reed, Schroeder, Sherlock and Treier; Mssrs. Campanie,  
McFadden

**I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes of July 21, 2015**

Mr. Fiorito welcomed members and staff present. He stated that the approval of the July 21, 2015 minutes will be postponed until the next meeting of the Board in November.

**II. Recognize Staff Members**

Ms. Treier introduced and welcomed Ms. Schroeder as the new Economic Development Program Manager for the Downtown Committee.

Ms. Treier also announced that Ms. Holbrook's role has expanded to include additional focus on community engagement activities and building partnerships with downtown retailers to help them promote their business in the Downtown Syracuse neighborhood.

Ms. Treier noted that the Farmers' Market has been getting extra coverage this season, including a new weekly newsletter and stories in the Post Standard which have been well received by the public.

### **III. Financial Report as of August 31, 2015**

Mr. Fiorito noted that the Financial Report review and approval will be postponed until the next meeting of the Board in November.

### **IV. Upcoming Events**

#### **A. Downtown Coffee Break – September 24**

Ms. Treier announced that the Downtown Committee has partnered with Tim Horton's Coffee and Bake Shop to host an Employee Appreciation coffee break in Perseverance Park on Thursday, September 24 from 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Tim Horton's will provide free coffee, cider and snacks to all downtown employees. The crowd will also enjoy their break listening to live entertainment and an opportunity to enter a free raffle for a gift basket from Tim Horton's. The event has been promoted through media and article coverage. Ms. Treier noted that we hope it will become a popular event that the Downtown Committee can continue.

#### **B. !melk Visit**

Ms. Treier announced that !melk, who has been contracted to redevelop the flowscape and Perseverance Park areas, is in town through Saturday to conduct community outreach sessions to gather information to start the design work for downtown's next great space. Mr. Maxwell commented that this first phase could take up to a year, and the proposal from !melk will dictate the timeline for the project.

#### **C. Progress Breakfast – October 22**

Ms. Treier announced that the Downtown Committee will be hosting "Good Morning Downtown Syracuse Progress Breakfast" on Thursday, October 22 at SKY Armory, 8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m. This will take the annual meeting a level deeper by focusing on three forward-thinking projects happening downtown. The presenters include Ed Riley of the Hotel Syracuse Restoration Project; Bob Doucette who will be sharing the new construction project of City Center and the Red House; and Marilyn Higgins focusing on restoring

connections through public art along the Connective Corridor. Ticket information is available on the Downtown Committee website: [downtownsyracuse.com/about-us/progress-breakfast](http://downtownsyracuse.com/about-us/progress-breakfast)

## V. **Strategic Planning**

Ms. Treier shared the groundwork undertaken to date in the strategic planning efforts of the Downtown Committee. The staff of the Downtown Committee strategically reviewed each one of its programs in the fall of 2014, which was facilitated by Ms. Heidi Holtz. The main question was, “How do we strengthen our existing programs to intentionally and strategically capitalize on what we do best and then couple that with opportunity areas?” The staff developed and agreed to a set of criteria to use as a lens to review all the programs that are undertaken. The criteria examined the strengths and opportunities of all of the Downtown Committee’s programs and if it was accomplishing the intended goals. The programs were then prioritized and reviewed on whether they should be continued, expanded, modified, or de-accessioned. Staff also looked to see if some of the lower scoring programs had the potential to accomplish goals if there was more time to focus on them. Ms. Treier distributed a chart with an overview of the Downtown Committee’s programs that reflect the work of this exercise and the current programs the staff identified as valuable to its constituents’ base. It also reflects the inter-connection of the programs areas. An overview of the specific program areas was presented as follows:

Ms. Schroeder explained the Economic Development Program which has a primary focus on directing development and quality of life initiatives to promote a favorable environment to conduct business. Mr. Fiorito asked if there was anything Ms. Schroeder would do differently with the Economic Development Program. Ms. Schroeder noted that there is opportunity to better coordinate with the City on specific processes to streamline the effort and help guide developers/businesses through that process.

Ms. Holbrook and Ms. Maggiore reviewed Marketing and Communications and highlighted the coordination, support and business services provided in each of its programs. Mr. Koolakian commented that it would be important to have the Armory Square Association and Hanover Square Association get together to help promote business and activity in each of their areas. He

looks forward to rejuvenating the Hanover Square group and hopes to have an event around Thanksgiving to encourage its residents to support the businesses in their neighborhood.

Mr. McFadden presented to the board an overview of the Environmental Maintenance programs the Downtown Committee provides. Mr. Koolakian asked if the benches in Hanover Square could get an armrest in the middle which could deter people from sleeping on them. Mr. Koolakian also commended Dave Kneer who does a nice job of cleaning up the Hanover Square area each morning. Mr. Koolakian noted his concern about emergency vehicles that are unable to get through the Hanover Square area due to the snowbanks and the snow that gets plowed up on the curbs. Ms. Treier added that the Downtown Committee will send out a reminder to landlords that the parking lot at City Lot #3 is available for free to residential tenants, and encourage that as an option to keep Genesee Street clear of cars to allow for snow plowing that street in winter.

Mr. Campanie reviewed the Downtown Committee's Security program. He also commented on how the new installation of the security cameras have been an asset and has greatly deterred negative activity. Mr. Campanie noted that evening patrol schedules have changed and now include additional foot patrols. Mr. Koolakian asked what to do if a retailer needs an officer on Saturday. Mr. Campanie responded that they should still call the Security Information Center number. Mr. Campanie noted he communicated with the Syracuse Police Captain that a beat car presence is still needed on Saturdays and that any other beat assigned to downtown be aware of, and answer, the 423-HELP number.

Ms. Treier asked the board if they had questions on any of the programs that the staff presented, and there were none. Ms. Treier noted the goal is to take a forward-thinking approach to the strategic planning discussion. The planning exercise is intended to capture the board's ideas on 1) how the Downtown Committee can best meet the needs of its stakeholders, and 2) how they envision Downtown in five years.

The Board engaged in strategic planning exercises. After the exercise, Mr. Fiorito commented that it was a good conversation and there was a lot to digest. Ms. Treier commented that the

Downtown Committee would like to create a dashboard with metrics to better gauge Downtown's health and impacts of progress.

Ms. Treier thanked the Board for all of the ideas that were generated at this meeting. She noted that this was the first phase in the Board process and staff will take this information and strategic guidance to create a series of recommendations for the Board. Ms. Treier noted that the Downtown Committee will need the Board's help and advice in prioritizing the path forward. This will also affect next year's annual budget which is due to the Mayor by February 1, 2016.

#### **VI. Other Business and Adjourn**

Mr. Fiorito asked the board if they had any comments and there were none. With no further business before the Board, Mr. Fiorito motioned to adjourn and Mr. Tripoli seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Next Board meeting:

**November 17, 2015, 3:00 p.m.**  
**CenterState CEO, 115 West Fayette Street**