

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE OF SYRACUSE, INC.

November 13, 2012

**CenterState CEO Board Room,
572 South Salina Street**

3:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

- Members:** Messrs. Doucette, Fiorito, Koolakian, Shapiro and Tripoli.
- Staff:** Mss. Hnatko, Pivovarova, Reed, Romeo, and Treier; Messrs. Campanie and McFadden.
- Guest:** Brian Anderson – National Grid
Mary Kate Hartman – Landmark Theatre
Linda Dickerson Hartsock – Syracuse University
Larry Leatherman – MOST
Madison Quinn – Onondaga County
Dave Shah – UA Properties, LLC
Paul Stemkoski – Bivens & Associates Architects

I. Welcome and Minutes of September 18th

Mr. Fiorito welcomed guests and members present.

A quorum was not present to approve the minutes or financial report, so they will be held until the next meeting.

II. Administration

a. Annual Report

Ms. Treier reported that the Annual Report was complete, and everyone was given a copy. The Downtown Committee is happy with the design of the report and believes the information contained is easy to understand.

b. 2013 Meeting Schedule

A schedule of the Downtown Committee Board meetings for the upcoming year was distributed to each member.

III. Economic Development

a. Retail Recruitment Event Recap

Ms. Treier reported that the Retail Recruitment Event was held on October 18th at the Atrium Building. The event had 30 retailers in attendance. Staff will be following up with the list of 65 retailers who showed interest in Downtown Syracuse.

Ms. Treier also reported that the Downtown Committee's newest commercial, to promote Downtown as a business location, aired in Rochester, Binghamton, and the Syracuse markets in October. This commercial is part of the ongoing retail recruitment initiatives for downtown.

b. Be Downtown Syracuse Brochure

Ms. Treier reported that the Be Downtown Syracuse brochure is the newest piece to market downtown, and is a follow-up to Meet Downtown Syracuse which was released last year. It's a new comprehensive brochure about the Downtown market, designed to provide prospective retailers a wealth of information. It features statistics on everything from demographics to parking, events, consumer spending patterns, and also includes fun facts like the average number of parks and shops a visitor will pass by in a 5 minute walk.

Ms. Treier stated that since October 2011, 25 new businesses have opened in Downtown Syracuse, compared to (12) in 2010-2011, and (9) in 2009-2010. Downtown Syracuse is in the midst of a development boom. The development projects currently planned or underway in Downtown Syracuse total over \$265 million and include more than 400 new residential units that are under construction or in the planning stages.

c. Project Updates

1. Merchants Commons

Ms. Treier reported that multiple floors are roughed in allowing for residents to see the actual floor plan of the units. Daily tours of the projects are being offered. They are also executing leases at this time for an April - May 2013 occupancy for residential units.

2. Inns at Armory Square

Ms. Treier stated that this is a 78 room Residence Inn and a 102 room Courtyard by Marriott going up in Armory Square, across from Kitty Hoynes. This project is currently two weeks ahead of schedule. The façade brick work is scheduled to be completed by the end of November and they are installing windows on the Franklin Street side. Recently, RHS Holdings announced they hired Jim Wefers, who will be the General Manager of the Hotel, and is now part of the New Castle Hotel & Resorts operations team. The anticipated opening is Spring 2013, but the specific date will be announced after the New Year.

3. Hotel Syracuse

Ms. Treier reported that she met last month with the potential development team for the Hotel Syracuse complex. The firm looking into the Hotel is based out of Boston, but has a local connection. They have an impressive portfolio and the bandwidth to undertake the project. A hotel flag has been approached, has come to town, and is looking into the project. The development team is investigating financing options.

4. Pike Block

Ms. Treier stated that leases are being accepted but not being executed just yet. They are planning a May 2013 opening, and the first model unit is opening later this week.

IV. Marketing and Communications

a. Cake Boss Promotion

Ms. Romeo reported that the Downtown Committee is promoting the upcoming December 15th 'Homemade for the Holidays' show that the Cake Boss will perform at the Oncenter Civic Center with discounted tickets and a chance for people to win 4 tickets to the show. The Cake Boss, also known as Buddy Valastro, owns a popular bakery in Hoboken, NJ and has a show on TLC. The Downtown Committee has created an oversized holiday card to send well wishes to Buddy and the people of Hoboken who have been affected by Hurricane Sandy. Ms. Romeo stated that the card will rotate around to different downtown restaurants over the next few weeks. When people sign the card they can also enter themselves in a drawing to win 4 tickets to the show. The discounted tickets and the giveaway are being promoted through social media and on the Downtown Committee website.

b. Holiday Program

Ms. Romeo reported that the holiday decorations will be up throughout Downtown Syracuse by the Clinton Square tree lighting, Friday, November 23rd. The holiday themed TV ad will start the week of Thanksgiving and will run through January 1st.

c. Holiday Shopping

Ms. Romeo reported that new this year, the Downtown Committee is partnering with 40 Below, SyracuseFirst, Northside Up, and CenterState CEO on the Shop Syracuse Holiday Passport. The passport is a punch card that shoppers can get filled at participating businesses whenever they make a purchase there, from November 19th through January 2nd. Full cards can be entered in a weekly drawing for prizes. The program is intended to promote shopping at locally-owned businesses during the holidays. More than 50 Downtown Syracuse businesses are participating in the Shop Syracuse Holiday Passport. Ms. Romeo also stated that each week between Thanksgiving and Christmas the Downtown Committee will be posting themed itineraries to the website that will highlight various aspects of the overall holiday experience downtown, with suggestions of places to visit and gifts to buy. The Shop Syracuse Holiday Passport and the holiday itineraries will be promoted to the media, as well as on Twitter and Facebook.

d. Brand Implementation

Ms. Treier reminded that at the September Board meeting the new brand was selected for the Downtown Committee, and with the Board's urging they have started to put together the Brand Launch implementation plan. A major component of the new identity will be the website, which is getting a major overhaul. Through Preserve America the Downtown Committee received a grant for a website redesign and recently the contractor selection was approved. Ms. Treier stated that the Downtown Committee is working on brand applications for equipment, uniforms, letterhead, business cards, and brochures to unify their products. Ms. Treier anticipates a three-month work period for the website and once that is complete, they will be able to formally launch the new brand first quarter next year.

V. Save the Rain – Project Updates

Mr. Fiorito introduced the first guest speaker, Ms. Madison Quinn, Onondaga County Save the Rain Program, to highlight some of the current projects going on in Onondaga County.

Ms. Quinn started off by discussing Gray Infrastructure projects, which includes overall management of sewer systems. One example of this is the Clinton Storage Facility. This project is still under construction and should be completed in 2013. Another example is the CSO 022 & 045 Sewer Separation Project taking place on Genesee and Franklin Streets. This project is nearly

complete, with the paving and roads being done. The sewers have been separated, but the “Greening the Gray” portion is not complete.

Ms. Quinn also reported on some of the Green Projects in the county. The Onondaga County Civic Strip and the Oncenter roof and garage are just a few examples. The Oncenter green roof is now Green, capturing 1 million gallons of water per year, which is prevented from entering the sewer. There are many new rain gardens, and the Townsend median has been replanted.

Ms. Quinn also stated that the Robert R. Haggard Park, on the corner of West Genesee Street and Clinton Street should be completed by the end of the year.

Ms. Quinn reported that there are many upcoming projects for 2013. A few of these projects are 100 Clinton Street parking lot, I-690 Downspout Disconnect Project, Almond Street pavement removal, Armory Square Park, and Hanover Square. All of these projects will be updated through social media. Ms. Quinn stated that a more in depth description of all these projects is located on their website, www.savetherain.us.

Mr. Koolakian asked that how much of the rainwater overflow needs to be removed from the Downtown area. Ms. Quinn stated that by 2018, by court order, 95% of all overflow will be removed. By the end of the year, they will have about half of that done. There is a 100,000 gallon cap per year that will flow into Onondaga Creek. As they get closer to their goal, there should be fewer sewer overflows.

Mr. Doucette remarked on the improved appearance of the streets. Mr. Fiorito stated that these projects improve the appearance of the city, with regards to the sections that were deteriorating. He thanked Ms. Quinn for all her hard work.

VI. Connective Corridor Updates

Mr. Fiorito introduced Ms. Linda Dickerson Hartsock, Syracuse University. Ms. Dickerson stated that this week marked an important milestone for the Connective Corridor. Phase 1, University Avenue to East Genesee Street, is now complete. The Phase 2 and 3 review, which entails Downtown Syracuse, has been approved and work will start on the Civic Strip in 2013.

Ms. Hartsock stated she had just returned from Chicago where the first phase of the Connective Corridor project won the 2012 Transportation Project of the Year award. Onondaga County, The City of Syracuse, and Syracuse University were awarded by The Institution of Transportation Engineers New York Upstate Section of the US Green Building Council.

Ms. Hartsock reported that the benefits of this project are:

- Building Community Connections with Collaboration of Syracuse University, City of Syracuse, and Onondaga County.
- Engagement through students design and engineering in the community.
- Transformation of the urban landscape
- Urban spaces
- Streetscapes
- Bike and pedestrian paths, and a bike share program
- Green Infrastructure
- Free Public Transportation

- Smart Transportation Technologies
- Public Art: Interactive
- Public Art: Urban Video
- Public Art: Visual
- Public Art: Performance
- Gateway Enhancements
- Signage and Branding
- Wayfinding
- Urban lighting
- Technology Testbeds
- Façade improvements
- Historic Preservation and Interpretation

Ms. Hartsock reported that Phase 2 is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2014 or early 2015.

VII. Public Comments

Mr. Fiorito opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Dave Shah, UA Properties, reported that in 2-3 more months they will have additional residential units available for lease.

Mr. Tom Campanie reported that people are pleased with the new Centro Hub, and that business owners are saying that their business has changed. Businesses stated that there has been an increase in new customers, which he commented will continue once the Pike Block project is completed.

Ms. Mary Kate Hartmann reported that the Landmark had a good run with their production of Jersey Boys. Business boomed with visitors from Canada to Pennsylvania. The Landmark has a very packed schedule coming up, with performances by Tragically Hip, So U Think U Can Dance, and Wicked. Ms. Hartmann also mentioned that they will be showing the movie Elf, after the tree lighting ceremony.

Ms. Hartmann stated that on December 16th, from 1-6pm, they will be showing the movies “It’s a Wonderful Life” and “A Christmas Story”. Also, on December 20th there is going to be a Zombie Fashion Show, hosted by Syracuse Style.

Mr. McFadden reported that the Farmer’s Market was challenging this year. With the late frost and dry summer, numbers were down because vendors just didn’t have product. Mr. McFadden stated that the year went well.

VIII. Other Business and Adjourn

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, January 15th at 3:00 pm**
572 South Salina Street, Board Room