

**DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE OF SYRACUSE, INC.**

**July 9, 2013**

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

**3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendance**

**Members:** Chairman Breuer; Ms. Littlejohn; Messrs. Fiorito, Koolakian, Maxwell, Nutting, Shapiro and Tripoli.

**Staff:** Mss. Finch, Hnatko, Pivovarova, Reed, and Treier; Messrs. Campanie.

**Guests:** Sergeant Pat Phelps – Syracuse Police Department  
Doug Norkett – Syracuse Police Department  
Bob Dougherty – Syracuse Common Council  
Paul Stemkoski – Bivens + Associates Architects  
Nathan Brown – Holt Architects  
Brian Anderson – National Grid  
Tony Ortega – MOST  
Brian Balash – Pyramid Brokerage  
Russ Andrews – Property Owner

**I. Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 21, 2013**

Chairman Breuer welcomed guests and members present. He welcomed new Board member David Nutting, CEO and Chairman for VIP Structures.

Chairman Breuer asked for consideration of the minutes of May 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Koolakian moved and Mr. Fiorito seconded a motion to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion was unanimously carried.

**II. Financial Report as of May 31, 2013**

Ms. Treier shared the preliminary May 31<sup>st</sup> financial statement. Ms. Treier reported that the Special Assessment income is showing approximately \$25,000 more than budgeted. That is due to an additional draw from the reserve account to purchase a tractor for the maintenance department. The Franklin Street Parking Lot continues to perform above expectations. The

Downtown Living Tour Income is ahead of budget due to ticket sales as well as increased sponsorships for this past year's event.

Ms. Treier reported that under Expenses there are no major program expenses to highlight. Under Marketing, this statement does not yet reflect the spring advertising Commercial Campaign, which is why the Advertising line is showing at 34% of budgeted expense. Under Security, the Downtown Committee will end the year under budget in the salary line, but will make up for these expenses in other department's program lines. Ms. Treier reported that Economic Development will be closer to budget in the June 30<sup>th</sup> statement as expenses related to branding and printing have not yet been incurred in the May statement. The transportation lines are as expected, with the Herald Place lot running under budget.

Chairman Breuer asked for a motion to approve the preliminary May 31<sup>st</sup> financial statement, subject to audit. Mr. Fiorito moved and Mr. Maxwell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously carried.

### **III. Marketing and Communications**

#### **a. New Downtown Committee Website**

Ms. Pivovarova reported that the Downtown Committee has a new website which is part of its rebranding, and includes a new look and new features. The updates include a more streamlined site map to allow for easier navigation within the site. The home page is divided into two parts, consisting of the Lifestyle section and Business section. The Lifestyle section is consumer focused, and it contains information on visiting or living in downtown. The Business section contains information on doing business downtown, whether for a retail location or office space.

Ms Pivovarova reported that the home page contains a current listing of events as well as an events calendar, live twitter feed, and interactive map. The search options have been expanded and now events can be found using keywords, dates, and/or category. The website was also made mobile-friendly and provides an optimal viewing experience across a wide range of devices (computers, tablets and mobile phones).

The Lifestyle section contains information regarding shopping, dining and services within downtown. It also contains an interactive map that shows specific information or a service that someone may be looking for. The Living section contains a residential search for specific areas to live within downtown.

Ms. Finch presented the Business component of the website and reported that Why Downtown is the section of the website where people should start if they are thinking about locating a business downtown. It has several useful resources and links including the "Great Business Begins Downtown" commercial, "Think Downtown Syracuse" video, link to resources, and link to the real estate search. Ms. Finch noted that there is a special web address that will take users directly to this page, and it will be used in the Downtown Committee's marketing and recruitment materials. The webpage is [www.whydowntownsyracuse.com](http://www.whydowntownsyracuse.com).

Ms. Finch reported that the Real Estate page allows people to search for available office space, available retail space, and buildings that are for sale. It has several search criteria including the class of space, the cost of the space, the size of the space, and the neighborhood that the space is located within. A building search result shows images of the property, a map, a building profile, and contact information for the leasing agent.

**b. Arts & Crafts Festival and ArtsWeek**

Ms. Reed reported that the Syracuse Arts & Crafts Festival opens July 26<sup>th</sup>. The funding from NYS that had supported the event for several years is no longer available, but the festival was able to retain AmeriCU as the title sponsor. The show will feature 180 exhibitors. Ms. Reed noted that the Arts & Crafts Festival is one of the anchor events in the larger umbrella program called ArtsWeek. ArtsWeek is the combined result of 26 organizations programming arts activities, including the NE Jazz and Wine Festival and the Native American Festival called Stage of Nations. Ms. Reed reported that ArtsWeek was the recipient of a \$10,000 grant this year through CNY Arts. A portion of the funds will go toward promoting ArtsWeek, and a portion of the funds will be used for research to determine the impact that events like this have on the community. This survey information will be very useful in future event planning.

**IV. Economic Development**

**a. NY Main Street Grant Application**

Ms. Finch reported that the New York State Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) opened June 17<sup>th</sup> and applications are due August 12<sup>th</sup>. The Downtown Committee is completing an application for a New York Main Street Grant. This year the Downtown Committee will be applying for \$200,000 which is the maximum funding that can be requested. The target area includes: the 100 and 200 blocks of West Jefferson, the 100 and 200 blocks of East Jefferson, and the 400 block of South Warren Street. Ms. Finch stated that if the Downtown Committee is awarded this money they will send out an RFP in February to property owners. Those interested in utilizing the funds will be able to submit a proposal for façade improvements and commercial/residential build-outs. The Downtown Committee will then select projects to fund. The Downtown Committee is asking property owners to submit letters of support and financial commitment documentation stating that they will use these funds if they are available, which will strengthen the application. Ms. Finch noted that the goal of the New York Main Street program is to improve neighborhoods and increase economic vitality.

**b. The Urban Initiatives Grant Program**

Ms. Finch reported that the Downtown Committee is also submitting a CFA for the Urban Initiatives Program. This program aims to upgrade commercial and retail areas, as well as to improve cultural and community facilities in urban neighborhoods. Only one project may be funded with this grant. The Downtown Committee is applying on behalf of the Landmark Theatre to improve their marquee. The Downtown Committee will be requesting \$150,000 which is the largest amount that can be requested.

## V. **Surveillance Camera Proposal**

Ms. Treier report that at the May Board meeting, the Board heard a presentation from the Syracuse Police Department on a downtown surveillance camera program based off of the experiences with the NWS pilot program. The Board asked that the Downtown Committee do further investigation and come back at this meeting with a more fine-tuned proposal and a description of possible funding sources. Ms. Treier referred to the Violent Crimes Map located in the Board member's binders, which is a recent map provided by the Syracuse Police Department to show the extent of their surveillance camera network. Currently there are about 30 cameras in the City, all placed based on violent crimes analysis. The cameras were all funded through grants either secured by the Syracuse Police Department, or secured by the specific neighborhoods who wanted to see cameras installed, and then the funds were granted over to the Syracuse Police Department. Ms. Treier stated that the Downtown Committee's camera program would be similar in coverage size to the NWS, which has 11 cameras.

Ms. Treier reported that the reason the Downtown Committee started to look into surveillance cameras was to address quality of life concerns. Downtown is fortunate in that they don't have the level of violent crimes in the downtown neighborhood compared to other areas of the city, but they do want to be able to address things like drug crimes and vehicle larcenies. As the data has shown, cameras reduce disorder related crimes, and aids in prosecution of crimes because the crimes are either caught on camera or they can place people at the crime. 75% of an overt camera system's value is as a crime-deterrent.

Ms. Treier referred to the Drug Related Crimes Map in the Board member's binders. She noted that the offenses shown are for the time period between May 2012 and April 2013.

At the May Board meeting, Deputy Chief Cecile shared data for the Downtown neighborhood. Based on the data gathered and results shown in the NWS program, the cameras would help to reduce/deter crimes and aid in prosecution. The NWS program showed a 42% reduction in reported drug crimes, and an overall 25% reduction in crime in the neighborhood. Deputy Chief Cecile stated the cameras are not a substitute for police, rather a tool to perform an additional security.

Ms. Treier referred to the Camera Location Map in the Board member's binders that shared the 10 plotted camera locations. These are based on the locations of the reported drug offenses and other areas of general activity in downtown, such as Armory Square and Clinton Square. Ms. Treier reported that this is the initial proposal for 10 downtown camera locations and the locations can change.

Ms. Treier referred to the proposed budget for the 10 camera system. The upfront cost would be \$136,984. This includes a 10 camera system, licensing fee, and prep work for installation. Ms. Treier estimated that electricity costs would be covered by the City as done in all other neighborhoods. Ms. Treier suggested that the Downtown Committee maintain ownership of the camera system, and any costs would be added to the annual budget. Ms. Treier reported that potential sources for funding include approximately \$79,000 remaining from a previous grant and the remainder would be funded from Downtown Committee Reserves. Ms. Treier noted that other neighborhoods have used grants from Assemblyman Magnarelli, Onondaga County Sewer Mitigation funds, and Homeland Security Grants.

Ms. Treier noted that the Common Council may need to approve the mounting of the cameras onto the City poles, and that there will most likely be Public Safety Committee meetings. Also, the Downtown Committee should conduct community meetings and utilize the constituent survey as mechanism to collect opinions on potential camera installation.

Mr. Tripoli asked if the various areas with cameras had a noticeable decrease in criminal activity. Sgt. Pat Phelps stated that the NWS had a significant decrease, and the other areas represent new installations so it is too early to give an accurate analysis. Mr. Nutting asked if the Syracuse Police Department considered the criminal activity to actually decrease, or do they feel as though the activity simply relocated. Sgt. Phelps stated that there was no evidence that the activity relocated to an adjacent area. Mr. Nutting asked if the camera had a fixed line of view, and Sgt. Phelps stated that the cameras can be put on a rotation schedule. Mr. Tripoli stated that with the information that he has gathered, drug activity has a tendency to move from an area, not disappear entirely due to camera installation.

Chair Breuer reported that once there is a camera network in place in Downtown, the camera area could be expanded. Mr. Shapiro asked what purpose camera installations had for Walton Street, as there is always a fair amount of traffic during the day and a police presence at night. Sgt. Phelps stated that this is an area with high population and that there was also a technical reason. The cameras need to see each other to work on a two way wireless system, and placing them on Walton Street completes the transmission system for the other areas of downtown. Mr. Shapiro suggested cameras would be better served installed near the new apartments being built as they should be protected.

Mr. Nutting asked that once the system is set up will property owners be able to add a camera to their building, and tie into the system. Sgt. Phelps said yes, property owners should be able to buy and add cameras to connect to the existing system.

Mr. Shapiro asked what happens to the transmission if one camera goes out. Sgt. Phelps stated that it is a two-way system, and the system could go out if one camera fails. Mr. Koolakian asked about vandalism with regards to the cameras, if they are protected, and how high up they are mounted. Sgt. Phelps stated that the cameras are mounted 15 feet up, but they are not vandal proof. To date, there has been 1 small hole, maybe from a BB gun, found in one camera. The hole had no operational effect on the camera. Chair Breuer asked if the camera system recommended for downtown is the same system that is installed on the NWS. Sgt. Phelps stated that the camera system will most likely be a better system, as technology has improved within the two years since the other system was installed. The cameras will have the same hardware, but have an upgraded system and better camera resolution. Mr. Shapiro asked if the Downtown Committee Security will be able to view footage. Sgt. Phelps stated that this proposal does not include live feed access for the Downtown Committee, but with the proper permission it could be possible to view it at the Public Safety Building.

Chair Breuer stated that the issues surrounding the camera system need to be addressed, with expense and location being the most important. Chair Breuer asked if the cost of the 10 camera system is comparable to the existing system. Sgt. Phelps stated that yes it is, with price being based off the current system which was a result of a SPD RFP process. Chair Breuer stated that the Downtown Committee will need to confirm the repurposing of funds from the grant.

Mr. Koolakian asked how long the cameras would last. Sgt. Phelps stated that each camera has a 1 year warranty, and a 5 year lifespan.

Chairman Breuer asked for consideration of the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Downtown Committee of Syracuse approves the budgeted amount of \$136,984 for a 10 surveillance camera system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Downtown Committee will negotiate a service and maintenance agreement that allows the Downtown Committee to purchase hardware for installation and replacement by the contractor who will also provide a maintenance program for the surveillance camera system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Downtown Committee will work with the Syracuse Police Department and VPN to modify the initially proposed camera locations based on residential development and active lifestyle centers and present this to the Board at a future meeting.

Mr. Shapiro moved and Mr. Fiorito seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously carried.

**VI. Public Comments**

Chairman Breuer opened the floor for public comments. No comments were provided.

**VII. Other Business and Adjourn**

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm**  
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