

**Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes**

**August 12, 2015**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

**Tallgrass Business Resources**

**Present:** John Albert, Tim Charles, Richard Cooley, Gordon Epping, Michelle Jensen, Mary Meisterling, Kathy McCauley, Karen Smith, Julie Sterling, Julianne Thomas

**Absent:** Mike Sundall, Ted Townsend

**Guests:** Jon Bogert, Mike Easley, Kris Gulick, Matt Myers, Richard Pankey, Gary Petersen, Sgt. Mike Wallerstedt

**Economic Alliance Staff:** Phil Wasta, Sarika Bhakta, Doug Neumann

**Welcome & Call to Order**

Charles called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Charles thanked Townsend for his hard work as past Chair and will ensure to acknowledge this again when Townsend is present.

**Consent Agenda**

Wasta shared with the Commission that the City's fiscal year wrapped up at the end of June, thus next month the SSMID will have more accurate financial numbers to review. Albert noted at last meeting inaccurate information about Standards Committee membership composition was stated which was documented into the minutes and sent out to the Commission. Updates have since been made to the minutes, but this needs to be reflected by some kind of parenthetical notation, etc. Meisterling moved approval of the Consent Agenda, Epping seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

**Presentation on 10<sup>th</sup> St Truck Traffic Study**

The City hired Anderson-Bogert to commission study on truck traffic on 10<sup>th</sup> Street SE from 1<sup>st</sup> Ave to 8<sup>th</sup> Ave SE to determine the amount of heavy vehicles (using this corridor and viable options for diverting any of this traffic to alternate routes in and/or outside the MedQuarter. Bogert prefaced how truck routes do not change often as it is not easy to accomplish due to significant opposition that surfaces when discussions as to where this might go occur. Truck routes are adopted by City Council via ordinance.

Jon Bogert shared the study's methodology, results and conclusions with Commission in which both mechanical and manual counts were utilized. The peak periods for heavy vehicular traffic were 7am-9am and 11am-1pm, not much after 4pm. About 15% of the total heavy vehicle traffic is grain trucks, but only 40% of the through truck traffic were grain trucks. Total traffic was about 5,580 and about 479 were trucks which represent about 9% of the total traffic in the 24-hour period observed. Bogert analyzed that based on their estimation of 40% of the total traffic is through traffic that could be relocated to alternate route if 10<sup>th</sup> Street was no longer the truck route. Bogert indicated that they have been informed that 7<sup>th</sup> St SE and 8<sup>th</sup> St SE will be converted to two-ways from 4<sup>th</sup> Ave to 8<sup>th</sup> Ave SE. If the conversions occur to two-way operations then reasonable to assume the split for traffic would be about 50%-50% as Bogert estimated up to 200 heavy vehicle trucks could be moved from 10<sup>th</sup> St SE to 7<sup>th</sup> St SE/8<sup>th</sup> St SE.

City staff provided information about how current ordinance reflects trucks have to stay on truck route and take shortest distance to and from their origination/destination. Several key physical attributes, intersection geometry and radius, existing stop signs, flow of traffic, etc. all would need to be assessed and potentially improved for 7<sup>th</sup> St SE/8<sup>th</sup> St SE to accommodate truck traffic which could take time, money and resources.

It is difficult to enforce heavy vehicular traffic on 10<sup>th</sup> Street should routes be altered as some are meant to take 10<sup>th</sup> St due to their delivery location that might be on the corridor, thus just takes time.

The Commission acknowledged that it would not be realistic to eliminate this type of activity altogether on 10<sup>th</sup> St and that this might be a larger picture for Cedar Rapids to address and assess how they are coming into the City. Due to the traffic flow and continued growth in district, the Commission felt this topic will need to be reassessed down the road.

There were four options that were discussed:

1. Maintain status quo, but continue to revisit heavy vehicular/truck traffic assessment
2. Designate 7<sup>th</sup> St SE/8<sup>th</sup> St SE as truck routes
3. Redistribute truck traffic by designating 7<sup>th</sup> St SE/8<sup>th</sup> St SE as alternate routes to 10<sup>th</sup> St SE
4. Eliminate truck traffic within district altogether and reroute outside

Epping moved to support Anderson-Bogert's conclusions from the Truck Traffic Study commissioned by the City which is reflected as option #3 above, Smith seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

### **Committee Updates, Next Steps and Timeline**

#### **Branding/Marketing**

Thomas indicated the MedQuarter brochure/map will be finalized soon and as soon as it is published it will be outdated due to ongoing progress in the district, but a good marketing and recruitment tool that is necessary to have. Videos are progressing well; some shots will have a big red "Q" held up in the background that will change showcasing dining, healthcare, etc. Banners still problematic with the hardware, but Wasta will provide update later under Operations. Especially For You Race will co-brand MedQuarter on the street banners indicating "Starting in the MedQuarter", logo will be on the race bibs and seeking to put together a MedQuarter team to participant in the race the day of.

#### **Operations**

Wasta reported on behalf of Meisterling indicating a high failure rate of the banner brackets causing banners to be damaged, about 32% whereas the Downtown SSMID experiences only 3%-5%. He is working with the City's purchasing department to send a communication to SignPro to explore the best recourse. Signage/Wayfinding is on a pause for the time being and not pursuing RFP for design services until the Convention & Visitors Bureau completes their rebranding. In the meantime, the task force is working with Iowa DOT for signage on I380. Wasta also mentioned that he has received estimates from the City on the street sign toppers, thus in process of reviewing this information as well.

#### **Standards**

Charles informed Commission that Albert has agreed to chair the Standards Committee and asked who would be willing to serve on the committee. Cooley, Pankey and Smith agreed to serve on the committee.

Wasta reported three applicants inquired about Façade Improvement Program grants and in the process of following up with them.

### **Update on City's Historic Preservation Guidelines**

The City hired Winter & Company to develop a Historic Preservation Plan that will guide community preservation efforts by identifying strategies to preserve architectural, archaeological, cultural, and historic resources. This was a project under a MOA between the City, FEMA, State Historical Society, etc. due to FEMA funding received post-floods and the demolition of historic properties in Cedar Rapids.

Cooley indicated there were numerous focus groups, meetings and public events to seek community input on people's issues and goals which were then tabulated into a matrix. The plan

illustrates the advantages and what can be done with historic preservation in conjunction with economic development. For example, building re-use where it is the exterior that needs to remain. One can also add onto a building, thus don't want to emulate the same as the building but blend and complement the existing building. Cooley indicated that according to national standards as to what guidelines should look like for mid-large cities, we are doing very well such as communications between the City and Historic Preservation Commission via annual reports, etc. The report also includes ideas for funding sources of historic properties. In the MedQuarter there are three historic properties, the Ausadie, Avril House and the Douglas Mansion. Cooley also mentioned that Turner Alley could be a local historic district, thus a district within a district.

### **Lakota Timeline/Five-Year Action Strategy**

Albert provided update on Lakota's one-year review of the MedQuarter Master Development Plan. The plan is strong and moving in the right direction. For marketing initiatives, Lakota recommends developing metrics. Lakota indicated erroneously that an Open Space Master Plan will be completed this year headed by the Operations Committee; currently there is no initiative underway to have a master plan on this matter thus this will be communicated back to Lakota for revisions. Development site marketing and promotion was also mentioned for Marketing where strategies need to be developed to attract economic development targeting retail, hotel, etc.

Albert brought up an initiative for consideration to the Commission. University Circle Innovation District annually hosts a panel to discuss innovation and collaboration by bringing experts from around the country to learn about ways to be more innovative. Albert inquired if this was an initiative the Commission would like to see incorporated into their 5-year action strategy plan, but host this on a regional level. Charles indicated it is critical to lock-in the MDP, but even more essential that it stays organic and there be opportunity to revisit it on an annual basis as priorities shift. Albert motioned to incorporate hosting a metro-wide innovation and collaboration panel in year 3, Thomas seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Wasta reported on the recent presentation he did in front of the Cedar Rapids Healthcare Alliance that was well received and that he is trying to get in front of as many people as possible to increase awareness of MedQuarter. The gateway signage is progressing as the last easement agreement has been signed by the property owner and now working on the RFQ process for the fabrication of the signs.

Development opportunities are going well as continue to meet with developers; one company looking at relocating into the district and another company currently in the district exploring expansion opportunities. Script for the second video is a virtual tour of the district, thus there might be some footage of Wasta canvassing the district on his bike and conducting outreach with stakeholders. Found resolution for property owner at 625 First Ave SE and their adjacent overgrown bushes and moving forward property owner responsible for maintaining it.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business stated.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.