

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2014

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Tallgrass Business Resources

Present: John Albert, Tim Charles, Richard Cooley, Michelle Jensen, Kathy McCauley, Mary Meisterling, Julie Sterling, Mike Sundall, Julianne Thomas, Ted Townsend, Phil Wasta and Marcie Watson

Steering Committee/Guests: Mike Easley, Gordon Epping, Richard Pankey, Seth Gunnerson, Jen Winter, Rob Davis and Sean Maxwell

Economic Alliance Staff: Sarika Bhakta, Doug Neumann and Wendy O'Brien

Welcome & Call to Order

Townsend called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Consent Agenda

Wasta moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Albert seconded, and the Commission unanimously approved.

Committee Updates, Next Steps and Timeline

Branding/Marketing

Thomas shared that the new banners are driving some traffic to the website. She noted cost estimates received for the various collateral pieces from de Novo as well as timeline: brochure (\$5,279.84 - Jan 2015), loyalty discount cards (\$1,772.72 - Jan 2015), table skirt (\$525 - end Dec 2014), pop-up banner (\$529 - end Dec 2014), introductory and virtual videos (\$6,700 - June 2015). The brochure will be sized to fit into a standard ½ page slot, typical of doctor office brochure racks and will unfold with a map of the district. The virtual tour video and introductory video is slated for production this spring. Murals were discussed with the St. Luke's location being the pilot, informing decisions about other murals to come. Additional mural sites are in consideration – let Thomas know if you have location ideas.

Operations

Meisterling indicated the Committee is working with the City for an RFP for the gateway monument signs and expect to have verbiage by the end of the year. Alliant has confirmed there is power source at each site location for the prospective gateway monument signs. She shared that banner maintenance is currently in a 90 day maintenance warranty period with Sign Pro, but once that expires Alliant Energy will handle maintenance requests and pick up as an in-kind donation to the SSMID. Meisterling also indicated that some of these projects have crossover with the Marketing & Branding Committee, thus will ensure to periodically include them in the Operations meetings and keep them informed.

Standards

Wasta introduced Seth Gunnerson from the City Planning department as a guest to share the draft of the Overlay District Ordinance. Wasta mentioned that the Standards Committee met and had a planning session to incorporate suggestions from The Lakota Group, the City has incorporated those changes that the Committee has reviewed and the final draft was handed out at the Commission meeting. He would like the Commission to review and offer any revisions within the next 30 days and bring to the January meeting for action. He noted that the next step, following approval from the SSMID is review of any zone changes with City zoning, public outreach to seek input, then City Council as early as February.

Gunnerson gave an overview of the Overlay District Ordinance draft noting the different sections: building massing/orientation/site design, building design, site furnishings and landscaping, signage, greenway design standards. One item the Standards Committee updated based on Commission feedback is modification of the set back on 4th Ave from 30 foot to a revised 20 foot. The MedQuarter Standards and Guidelines will be applied to new construction, additions to existing buildings and/or significant exterior rehabilitation of buildings. These standards will not apply to single-family and two-family dwellings, nor to minor repairs. The Standards and Guidelines also address design recommendations that people are encouraged to incorporate, but which are not required for approval.

Wasta drew attention to two words used within the document. "Shall" is used as an edict—required of design. "Should" is used to note what we desire—and is negotiable.

Gunnerson indicated that if someone is doing a retrofit or façade update, their suggestion is that they would like it to match. Cooley requested to ensure the Standards and Guidelines addresses historical and building adaptations as that is critical and Gunnerson indicated he will incorporate language to this effect.

Townsend noted his concern that receptions or open houses, though required, are not always productive or well attended. And, he offered the suggestion that a plan be developed to reach out directly to constituents. Wasta indicated that they will work with Branding & Marketing for the public relations aspect and Gunnerson requested to let them know how the City can help as well.

Thomas mentioned they will be conducting outreach to district partners to compile more information for the brochure. Charles mentioned that there's still a need to convey "Why the MedQuarter district" to constituents and this outreach would be a good opportunity to layer in that message as well.

Charles suggested two "gut checks": Does the commission feel completely versed in what is probably the most important decision they are going to make? Secondly, if the Commission doesn't feel confident that they have been able to get to the owners, don't rush it. Do we feel the public is with us? He cautions not to sacrifice quality for expediency. Wasta indicated that the timeline is completely up to the Commission, but developments are/will be occurring thus important to continue to proceed in an expeditious manner to ensure whatever is developed aligns with the MedQuarter vision.

Homework for Commissioners: review the draft Overlay District Ordinance, email Seth Gunnerson with any questions (and cc: Wasta and Bhakta to keep them in the loop.)

4th Avenue Update

Townsend began by introducing Rob Davis, Public Works Engineering Manager with City of Cedar Rapids and Jen Winter, Project Manager with HR Green. He stated that today's discussion is needed to decide if we do, or don't, want to ask the City to do anything different on 4th Street than what is currently planned.

Charles shared that any decision that delays the project (whether 6 months or a year) is problematic for him.

Townsend noted that with 4th Street being a 'Signature Street' for the MedQuarter, the Master Development Plan calls for it to be a 'greenway'. He noted that the Standards Committee has updated planned setback requirements in the overlay district from 30' to 20' due to owners' feedback. With that in mind, we need to decide if we want to narrow the street to two lane with no parking or make other modifications?

Lighting was also brought up as a decision that is a priority – but noted that it doesn't necessarily need to be decided today. Winters clarified that the current plan is a ground mounted pole with underground electrical, and would need lighting decision at the January meeting if decision is to switch out lights.

Winter recapped what is in the current City proposal:

- curb to curb – street pavement repair/overlay (nothing with sidewalks)
- bring curbs up to ADA compliance
- Alliant will replace existing tall lights (remove wood poles/lights and replace with the standard concrete poles/lights), conduit work underground will occur, but no lower pedestrian decorative lights
- conversion to 2-way (parking will remain status quo)
- intersection of 10th & 4th Ave will be now be poured with concrete vs. asphalt so stamped crosswalks are viable and sustainable for the long-term, thus this intersection will look like the rest of 10th Street (this was NOT in the city's original proposal but was changed after receiving feedback from 4th Ave stakeholders as the City was able to incorporate this into it)

Meisterling clarified that electrical underground is what feeds the lighting; it's not the standard transmission lines. They will still be overhead.

Davis clarified that the asphalt overlay's life expectancy is 10-15 years, so it doesn't preclude the road being narrowed in the more-distant future.

Winter clarified that there will need to be a minimum of three lanes at 10th street to ensure a turn lane.

Charles voiced his concern over his experience with the City regarding 10th Street at 7th and 8th Avenues not being completed. Anytime there is a delay, things drift. He voiced that the SSMID's focus, (incumbent to property owners) should be at how we are treating from the curb back.

Wasta voiced concern over any changes that would affect losing Paving for Progress funding.

There are still some TIF funds for design concept of 10th street.

Albert asked question to Gunnerson about parking and its importance to retail. Gunnerson replied that parking is viewed as part of a 'complete street' giving a buffer to pedestrians on the sidewalk. Davis noted that could be done with trees as well.

Pankey felt that bump outs could provide a bit more greenway, while acknowledging they are not snow plow friendly. He asked if bump outs could be added on the fly? Davis noted it would not be an issue to get an addendum to add in before the request for bid.

Winter noted the street is very flat, which can cause pooling issues. Drainage locations will need to be considered when developing a plan, utilizing the high spots so water can drain either way. She noted that mid-block crossing doesn't need to be a consideration since there are short blocks and crossing will be encouraged at the intersections. It was asked how big a deal it would be to do retrofit bump outs in 5 years. Pocket locations could be considered.

Winter was asked what cost of moving a storm sewer would be – which would be required if narrowing the street. She thought it would be in upward of \$200,000-\$250,000.

Winter referenced planter boxes on 3rd Street as an example of a cost effective alternative to narrowing the street. Davis shared that parklets and median planter boxes cost about \$75,000 vs. an estimated \$2 Million to narrow 3rd street. Thomas voiced concern that narrowing or obstructing the street causes problems with maintenance. Thomas also stressed that it was vital to ensure easy access for patients into the parking lots of businesses on 4th.

Meisterling briefly mentioned that there are two streetlight options being considered by Alliant and the City and she is lobbying to have the 10th street tall decorative street pole as the choice. If a different pole is selected, the SSMID could pay the difference to upgrade to the keep a unified look in the

district. Davis clarified that the upcharge to install the more decorative tall street lights would be approximately \$8,500 per light at this time.

If we want to do nothing, that doesn't require a vote.

Charles moved that the 4th Street plan move forward as it is planned today, including the stamped crosswalks with concrete intersection. Thomas seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was 6-to-6. While the motion technically failed on the tie vote, because there was not majority support for taking the time to change the design on 4th Avenue, the effect was the same as if it would have passed. With no direction to the contrary, the City will proceed as planned.

10th Street Update

Davis shared that 7th and 8th Street, A Avenue to 8th Avenue, are under design for rehabilitation under the Paving for Progress program. It's currently scheduled for construction 2015 or 2016. Conversions to two-way included from 4th Avenue to the south.

He shared the following update on 10th Street streetscaping:

- Intersection with 4th Avenue will be replaced in 2015 with street scape features similar to the completed section from 1st to 3rd Aves.
- Within 60 days, the City will hire a consultant to prepare conceptual plans for streetscaping from 4th Avenue to 8th Avenue. The intersection of 8th Avenue and medians on 8th Avenue are not scheduled to be included at this time. This contract will take the block from 4th Avenue to 5th Avenue to final design, like the blocks from 1st to 4th Avenues.
- Construction of streetscape from 4th to 5th Avenue is scheduled for 2016.
- Funding for final design and construction from 5th Avenue to 8th Avenue is not in place and will be developed upon completion of conceptual design with Mercy and School District.

Professional Services

Townsend asked Neumann to briefly share an overview of the Economic Alliance's draft proposal for how to address the professional services contract. The proposal was handed out at the meeting.

Neumann said the Economic Alliance agrees with virtually all of the concern points made by the Commission: more staff time is needed to continue momentum, there should be a single-point of contact and doing so would satisfy the need for a champion and an advocate for Medical District issues if those would ever compete with broader Economic Alliance issues. The cross-functional expertise of the Economic Alliance can continue to be shared, so that six or seven or more people may be involved in delivery of service depending on whether it's a communications issue, research/data issue, administrative support, public policy, executive oversight, etc. Costs to the commission would be actual salary, benefits and overhead with no mark-up or premium.

The Economic Alliance is waiting for the Commission to determine the hours or level of service that it desires and the duties and responsibilities that should be specified as part of the contract. Those are all open points for negotiation, but action is needed soon in order to accelerate implementation of the master plan and other Commission priorities that have slowed. In any service contract, the Commission would set policy and direction and the Economic Alliance would execute on the directions from the Commission. That should address the independence issue, and if there are assurances on this point that can be written into a services agreement, the Economic Alliance would agree to that.

The Commission adjourned at 9:37 a.m. and reconvened for a brief Executive Session for those that were interested in staying.