

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2015

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Tallgrass Business Resources

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

Absent: Mary Meisterling and Mike Sundall

Steering Committee/Guests: Gordon Epping, Kris Gulick and Seth Gunnerson

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

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

Committee Updates, Next Steps and Timeline

Branding/Marketing

Thomas noted that UnityPoint Health – St. Luke's Grant Wood mural initiative was in the morning's Gazette, then proceeded to provide an update on the FY15 Marketing Strategic Plan mid-year progress report (report was included as a handout with the meeting packet). The Committee plans to reach out to businesses for inclusion in the brochure (and website), and share benefits of adding link to the MedQuarter's site to their website. She noted that since social media is labor intensive, they will hold on that until the professional services contract is figured out. Thomas also noted the new table skirt and pop-up banner will be produced shortly and can be used for events. There was interest among some Commission members to acquire pop-up banners for their facility. Bhakta said the Committee has discussed this and costs are being checked. District partners also could co-brand on the pop-up banners. The Committee is considering use of the pop-up banner design for street banner for rotation in the spring. There was inquiry if the website should be on the banner—but Jensen said that de Novo's recommendation was that it would be used on pieces like brochures, but is not needed for signage.

The mural at St. Luke's was briefly discussed and Charles mentioned that Mercy is investing in a sculpture in front of the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center on 10th which will contribute to the Master Development Plan's vision of enhancing public art.

Operations

Due to Meisterling's absence, Bhakta shared the Operations update. The gateway entry monument RFP will have two phases. 1st phase is for design services – both the Operations and the Branding & Marketing Committees have reviewed the RFP which was released by the City to 26 vendors, including The Lakota Group who expressed interest in vying for this project. The 2nd phase is releasing a RFB for the fabrication and installation of the monuments. Once preliminary costs are determined, locations can be finalized as there may be opportunity to fabricate and install more than the four recommended locations:

1. 8th Ave & 5th St
2. 8th Ave & Mt. Vernon Road
3. 1st Ave & 8th St
4. 1st Ave & 12th St

Standards

Wasta thanked everyone for their feedback on the MedQuarter Overlay District document. He noted that the final draft was included in the meeting packet and asked Seth Gunnerson from the City Planning department to clarify timing of next steps. Gunnerson explained that if public outreach and open house was done in February, the public hearing would be the 4th Tuesday in March, with Council approval at April's meeting.

There was discussion about how best to facilitate the outreach process with district partners, especially property owners as they are difficult to connect with as experienced in the past when petitioning for the SSMID creation. Consensus was a multi-prong approach with press release, information on website, mailing and other communications ahead of the public open house.

Operations committee will coordinate a date for the open house to be held before March 31st at a neutral location like the downtown library. The Committee will also create cover letter with 1-page fact sheet that includes the main, salient points and a couple of pictures to be mailed to business owners.

Gunnerson offered to help with content for the factsheet, provided renderings for the presentation and help with the outreach strategy.

Thomas said the Branding & Marketing Committee will also help communicate the open house in their outreach strategies.

Gunnerson mentioned that it may be worth adding language for the MedQuarter's district-wide signage plan into the District Overlay document—which would reduce some of the red-tape when adding signage.

The Operations Committee recommended approval of the draft plan with recognition that language for district wide signage will be added. The Commission voted unanimously to approve.

4th Avenue—Tall Street Lighting

Bhakta shared that lighting plan on 4th Avenue will include concrete aggregate poles with LED fixtures for the tall street lights. If the Commission would like to change the plan to use the same tall light poles on 10th Street, there would be an upcharge of \$8500 per pole. The Commission is in agreement to go with the concrete aggregate poles with LED fixtures for 4th Ave. However, it was discussed that the intersection at 4th Avenue and 10th Street should be consistent with the 10th Street standards. Bhakta will verify intersection lighting and inform the Commission.

Other Street Issues 7th, 8th and 10th Street Update

Bhakta shared that the City has selected Anderson-Bogert for preliminary design and will involve the stakeholders in the next 30-45 days in the scope of services preparation. Charles thought the earliest that construction would take place was in 2016. Bhakta will verify the 10th Street construction timeline as well as additional information and timeline for 7th St & 8th St. There was inquiry into what needs to be done to reroute truck traffic off of 10th St per the Master Development Plan. Especially if construction occurs on 10th Street, then we need to be cognizant that any resurfacing on 7th St & 8th St needs to be able to sustain rerouting of truck traffic should these streets be the thoroughfare.

Auto Row Historic District

Bhakta shared that a private citizen is pursuing nomination for creation of an Auto Row Historic District. The district lines are much more condensed than previously proposed. There are only 4 properties that overlap with the MedQuarter. The Commission does not feel the need to take a position on this matter as it is being funded and pursued privately by property owners.

Professional Services

Townsend shared that a draft job description around the professional services the Commission would like was created and included in the packet. He asked Neumann to share his thoughts.

Neumann said that he and Bhakta reviewed the job description. The things included were all good, but there are some additional items that would probably need to be included. He mentioned:

- Manage or oversee budget, finance, accounting/audit.
- Seek grants, voluntary contributions and other financial support.
- Advocacy, liaison on local government, attendance at Council and Committee meetings.
- Foster partnerships with adjacent districts and neighborhoods.

Gulick noted that finding someone with all of those qualifications is unlikely, so the Commission should consider which services might be outsourced.

Neumann and Meisterling will look at more job descriptions from similar positions (Iowa City, Czech/New Bo director, the old CR Downtown District job) to flush out and finalize the job description.

Before the Commission went into executive session, Neumann urged the Commission to move toward more staff capacity, whether that be with the Economic Alliance or not. Commission members have done unbelievable work as volunteers in moving some initiatives ahead. But funding less than 20 hours of weekly professional staff time devoted to MedQ business has slowed momentum in some areas.

If MedQ had a full-time leader by now – as part of the Economic Alliance or outside of it – that person could have attended a major ground-breaking ceremony yesterday of developer Richard Sova's new project. He has interest in several MedQ area developments, yet little effort has been made to cultivate a relationship with him. Additional staff capacity also could have aided in having a complete stakeholder list, so that on days like today when there's MedQ good news in The Gazette, that item could have gone out to all stakeholders in a mass e-mail that linked to the MedQ website, thus driving website traffic and sharing good news that many may have otherwise missed.

Neumann also noted that in the seventh month of the fiscal year, just \$80k of a \$700k budget has been invested in the District, and it's apparent that some budgeted priorities will not get done in this fiscal year. For all the great progress Commission volunteers are making, the overall progress has been slowed by not having enough day-in-and-day-out attention to District priorities.

2015 Schedule/Next Meeting

Townsend shared that meetings will move to the second Wednesday of the month starting in February. The next meeting is February 11th at 8:00 a.m.

The Commission adjourned to executive session at 9:21 a.m.