

MINUTES of the  
The University City Loop Special Business District Board Meeting  
June 11, 2019

Board Meeting:

West Loop SBD Members: Mike Alter, Joe Edwards, Ben Evans, Ryan Patterson, Tom Schmidt, Nakita Smith, Steve Stone

Absent: Kathy Caton, Jen Rieger

Joe Edwards called the board meeting to order at 10:18 a.m. After introductions, Nakita Smith moved to approve the minutes from the May 2019 meeting (as published in draft form in the May newsletter); Ryan Patterson seconded, and all voted in favor.

Executive Director Rachelle L'Ecuyer updated the board on upcoming fall and winter events, and noted that a marketing committee will begin meeting in July. Rachelle handed out a proposed schedule of events. The "Get Loop'd" events (first Fridays of the month) have been a simple way to draw visitors to The Loop and get good media coverage. WashU will be using an event planner as well for scavenger hunts and other events. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, the nationally-recognized "Parking Day" will celebrate open public spaces. Rachelle noted the opportunity to plan events around these types of events that are not yet overdone in the region (e.g., Mardi Gras). Parking Day is the same weekend as the Great Forest Park Balloon Race, which (together with the Balloon Glow event) draws many people to The Loop. Based on feedback, the "Chalk the Loop" event (previously part of Arts Fest) has been moved to the Parking Day event. A discussion was had about how to theme the Parking Day events. The Loop plans to work with U City staff to use on-street parking spaces and side streets for various activities (including art, music, and food). The group discussed the possibility of closing Delmar to traffic for the event, but Leland, Westgate, or Limit are probably better choices.

Continuing her report, Rachelle noted that the "Howl-O-Ween" event would be re-worked as a scavenger hunt in order to draw attendees into businesses. "Galentine's Day" will be celebrated the day before Valentine's Day. Rachelle would like to work with Audrey Jones to bridge the gap between the end of the Mannequins on The Loop event and Arts Fest. The group discussed the former "Style on the Loop" event that could be coupled with the Mannequins event. Steve Stone noted that he believed The Loop could host the recently-canceled "Fair U City" event. Rachelle noted that in her last meeting with Libbey Tucker (U City Director of Economic Development), she said U City staff was currently talking about what to do with that event. Councilwoman Carr noted that although the City does not own the fair and does not intend to underwrite the cost of the event, she would like to see larger events held in The Loop on a quarterly basis. Joe noted that Rachelle has brought in a lot of new events. The group discussed other possible large events (on the scale of The Loop Ice Carnival), including events like Loop in Motion, Fair in the Square, Taste the Loop, etc. (but not a Mardi Gras event, according to several board members). Councilwoman Carr noted that JazzFest is looking for a home right now. Joe requested that everyone get their ideas to Rachelle and the marketing committee for further consideration. A question was raised as to whether U City has hired a planner that can assist with larger Loop events.

Joe noted that the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Rocky Horror Picture Show might be held in The Loop on August 6 – 8, 2020, and is expected to draw a lot of attendees from around the country.

Joe next reported on the following insurance premium quotes he has received from Daniel & Henry: personal property insurance, \$805/yr.; workers' compensation, \$379/yr.; commercial general liability, \$969/yr.; umbrella liability coverage, \$827/yr.; \$1,000,000 Errors and Omissions coverage for directors, \$2,195/yr. The group agreed to look at coverages held by the East Loop CID for comparison purposes. Michael Alter made a motion to approve obtaining coverage up to the foregoing amounts, and to delegate further decision-making authority on the matter to a subcommittee comprising Joe Edwards and Steve Stone. Ryan Patterson seconded, and all voted in favor.

The group next discussed a proposed strategic plan for The Loop. Councilwoman Carr stated that she believed an in-depth plan was last conducted in 2005 (though it was later confirmed to actually be 2011). Ms. Carr noted that the plan should be updated every five years. Joe noted that the SBD needed its requested EDRST funds for this purpose, and that a consultant could then be hired via RFP. Councilwoman Carr said the SBD needs to meet with Gregory Rose to determine how this is getting funded. A study session and subsequent vote on the budget was coming up, and the SBD was advised to meet Mr. Rose to understand what he is requesting in terms of the strategic plan and how he sees it being funded (Steve Stone and Michael Alter said that they were willing to join Joe Edwards in the proposed meeting). Tom Schmidt noted that the SBD currently has approximately \$150,000 (some of which is already committed) in the bank.

Steve Stone next gave an update on the proposed West Loop CID, noting that it was gaining support to move forward. Public hearings with property owners will need to be held as discussions progress. Joe noted a goal of hiring an assistant for the Executive Director, but that there were not enough funds right now. Joe emphasized he thought it was important to present the West Loop CID proposal to all property owners and merchants for their input and have a public hearing(s) to hear their comments. Councilmembers Tim Cusick and Paulette Carr said that there is no political will to dissolve the SBD. Steve Stone requested that further discussions on the dissolution of the SBD cease; after an animated discussion on the subject, Steve Stone and Dan Wald left the meeting. Ryan Patterson noted that he didn't see the problem with the SBD structure because the SBD generally gets the funds it requests that the City approve.

Councilwoman Carr reported that she went to a senior event recently and was given a Loop-themed coloring book design. Joe volunteered to follow up with the artist to see if the design could be used for placemats.

Following a motion by Tom Schmidt that was seconded by Michael Alter, the board meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.