

MINUTES
U City Loop Special Business District Board Meeting
Via Tele Conference
Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Attending Board Members: Michael Alter, Steve Stone, Derek Deaver, Mary Gorman, Dan Wald, Kumar Satish.

Absent Board Member(s): Mohammed Qadadeh, Wendy Harris.

Others on the Call: Mayor Terry Crow, City Manager Gregory Rose, Assistant City Manager Brooke Smith, City Attorney John Mulligan, Marketing and Event Contractor Jessica Bueler, Stephen Ibendahl, Suzanne Schoomer, Marla Stoker Ballenger, JoAnna Schooler, Ryan Griffore, and Joe Edwards.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order as per Board Chair Michael Alter at 10:03 a.m. and attendance was taken for those on the call.

Public Comments: Deb Henderson submitted a letter in support of the Loop in Motion event that she requested be read into the public comments, which has been attached. Joe Edwards requested to speak on agenda items 6 & 7 regarding the VisitTheLoop.com website, social media accounts, and the Loop in Motion event.

Approval of the Minutes: Mary Gorman made a motion to approve the August 10, 2021 minutes, Dan Wald seconded the motion. Without any further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

City Hall Updates: Mayor Terry Crow shared that the Olive and 170 development has started night time construction. Two conditional special use permits have been approved for the Tivoli Theatre and increasing the number of pets that U City residents may have in their home. A strategic planning meeting is scheduled to take place for University City Council in the upcoming weeks. Mayor Crow thanked the police and fire departments for participating in the honor guard and showing of colors for the 9/11 remembrance ceremony during Loop in Motion.

Brooke Smith added that the new resale shop, Found by the Pound, has moved into the city-owned retail space in the parking garage next to Rich Rags. They hope to be open before the end of September.

Security Update: Captain Fredrick Lemons thanked the LSBSD Board, Mayor Crow, City Manager Gregory Rose, Chairman Alter, and Jessica Bueler for including the police and fire department in the Patriot's Day 9/11 event. Michael Alter thanked the University City police and Fire Departments for participating and helping the LSBSD create a meaningful event.

Strategic Plan Update: Stephen Ibendahl announced that the second version of the strategic plan has been emailed to all board members. If the LSBDB Board believes the plan is ready to be adopted after reviewing the documents, it can be voted on for approval at the October 12, 2021 LSBDB Board Meeting. The board thanked Stephen Ibendahl and the i-5 group for their hard work.

Visit The Loop Website: Jessica Bueler reported that the East Loop CID sent a letter to the LSBDB board with a "proposed marketing agreement" where the East Loop CID would maintain ownership of the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts. A copy of the letter was sent to all LSBDB board members in advance for the topic to be discussed at the meeting.

Michael Alter suggested that the next step should be a meeting scheduled between himself, Jessica Bueler, East Loop CID Chairman Dave Mastin, and East Loop CID Executive Director Rachelle L'Ecuyer to discuss the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts.

Mary Gorman asked for clarification of how many people currently followed the "Delmar Loop" social media accounts that were originally created by the LSBDB and currently controlled by the East Loop CID. Ryan Griffore reported there were approximately 65k followers on Facebook and 10k on Instagram. Mary Gorman then asked for clarification of how many people follow the newly-created "University City Loop" social media accounts. Ryan Griffore reported there were approximately 700 followers on Facebook and 400-500 on Instagram.

Dan Wald asked for clarification if the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts that are currently controlled by the East Loop CID were originally funded on instruction of the LSBDB. Ryan Griffore and Jessica Bueler reported that statement was correct and all "Delmar Loop" social media accounts and the VisitTheLoop.com website were created and funded by the LSBDB, years prior to the East Loop CID's formation.

Joe Edwards said he spoke at the most recent East Loop CID meeting and shared the importance of solving the ownership issue of the VisitTheLoop.com website and social media accounts because it is confusing to the public. Joe Edwards highlighted the importance of the two organizations working together for the production of the Loop brochures and illuminated directories.

Derek Deaver shared that he does not believe the printed Loop brochures add significant marketing value in 2021 because most people use their phones for information, not phone books. But the illuminated directories should be updated for customers walking on Delmar Blvd.

Derek Deaver explained that the conversation regarding the VisitTheLoop.com website has not progressed in regards to the LSBDB taking back ownership of the website and social media accounts. Numerous discussions and meetings have taken place over the past year which have yielded no results. Derek Deaver said he does not believe that another meeting will help and it may be time to hire an attorney to get return to the LSBDB's digital assets.

Mary Gorman agreed with Derek Deaver and stated the board was exhausted from hearing excuses how the East Loop CID would review the LSBSD's request, but there was never any definitive action. Countless months have gone by without a response from the East Loop CID.

Dan Wald said that collaboration cannot take place between the LSBSD and East Loop CID until the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts are returned to the LSBSD. If the assets are not returned, the LSBSD should follow up with legal action.

Steve Stone explained that when the LSBSD regains control of these assets, he believes that everyone is in favor of allowing the East Loop CID access to the University City Loop's website. He suggested that Michael Alter and Jessica Bueler attend one last final meeting with Dave Mastin and Rachelle L'Ecuyer and ask for the website back as the LSBSD legally owns the digital assets and paid for them. If a resolution cannot be reached where the East Loop CID returns ownership promptly, then the LSBSD should request an emergency meeting and ask for University City's help in pursuing legal action. Mary Gorman agreed.

Joe Edwards asked if Jessica Bueler could please share with everyone the results of the meeting between Rachelle L'Ecuyer and Brooke Smith about the website and social media account. Jessica shared that it was a positive meeting and then dropped off the Zoom call due to technical difficulties. Brooke explained that Rachelle, Jessica, and she talked about several ways to collaborate together, but that main issue was the website and ownership needed to be resolved before collaboration could occur between the two entities moving forward. Rachelle responded that she would share this request with the East Loop CID board and report back. Jessica returned to the Zoom call and informed all board members that Rachelle submitted a "proposed marketing agreement" that was circulated to the LSBSD board via email the previous week for their review.

Michael Alter explained that he is mindful of the fact that the website is owned by the LSBSD and was developed and funded by the organization. If the LSBSD wanted to pursue legal action, that could be a lengthy process. Michael asked if it would be worth one more conversation with the East Loop CID to see if LSBSD could regain control of the VisitTheLoop.com website, or does the board feel as though it's a waste of time and not worth the effort.

Mary Gorman stated that she is not opposed to one last meeting, but she requested that it be a productive meeting where a solution is resolved and a result is achieved.

Michael Alter said this would be final meeting with the East Loop CID and the focus would be on two topics; 1) ownership rights returned to the LSBSD and 2) transferring complete and total control of the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts to the LSBSD. Michael Alter stated that East Loop is working on a redesign of a website but he understands that the LSBSD may not be able to accomplish that goal of collaborating together until the website ownership issue is resolved.

Derek Deaver agreed with Michael that Jessica and Michael should schedule one final meeting with the East Loop CID, but with the demand of returning ownership back to the LSBSD immediately of both the VisitTheLoop.com and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts. If the East Loop CID does not provide immediate ownership to the LSBSD, the board should schedule an emergency meeting with University City for assistance in pursuing ownership. Mary Gorman agreed.

Steve Stone stated that he has a legal strategy that he has shared with city attorney John Mulligan that the LSBSD will accelerate if the East Loop CID decides to not return ownership and work with the LSBSD in a peaceful and collaborate way.

Michael Alter said he has little confidence that an agreement could be reached and would be surprised if the East Loop returns ownership after the demands of this final meeting.

Steve Stone asked that Joe Edwards encourage the East Loop CID to return immediate ownership to the LSBSD of VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts. Michael Alter agreed.

Michael Alter said he understand the requests of the board and would schedule a meeting with the East Loop CID to discuss the situation and will report back to the LSBSD board with hopefully good news at the October meeting.

Loop in Motion: Loop in Motion took place on September 11 and 12 from 12pm until 8pm and Jessica Bueler asked for feedback from the event.

Derek Deaver said Three Kings Public House sales had increase by 70% over the weekend and Loop in Motion was a phenomenal event and hopes to have more in the future.

Joe Edwards commended the organizers of the Loop in Motion event and encouraged schools and neighborhoods to get involved in next year's event. Sales increased at Joe's businesses on Saturday, but he suggested that Delmar not be closed for vehicular traffic and to reduce the event to a single day. Joe also said he received many complaints about Delmar Blvd. being closed and suggested considering holding the event on a side street, like Washington Ave.

Dan Wald reported that Loop in Motion was great for his tenants and he hoped to see more street closure events in the future. The street had a great vibe and families in large numbers were enjoying the open surface area of the closed street. Mary Gorman agreed that children and families both loved the event.

Michael Alter said he thought the event was very successful, especially because the street was closed down. In the age of COVID-17, people feel safer having more space to spread out and enjoy the area. Michael said Fitz's sales increased for the weekend and he did not receive any complaints about the street being closed. Michael hopes the event takes place next year and that Delmar is closed again to continue encouraging families to visit the area.

Joe Edwards suggested closing Delmar from Leland and Limit next year instead of Kingsland to Limit and that it may help with traffic issues.

Steve Stone asked that Joe Edwards please apply the same energy and thought he has given to the Loop in Motion event as to resolving the ownership issues of the VisitTheLoop.com website and "Delmar Loop" social media accounts.

Joe Edwards volunteered to attend the website meeting and said he would try to help solve the issue. Steve Stone requested that Joe Edwards please attend the meeting between the LSB and East Loop CID to return the digital assets to the LSB. Mary Gorman agreed. Michael Alter asked that Joe Edwards take the time to speak with the East Loop CID board to resolve the ownership issues of the website and social media accounts before the meeting. Joe Edwards agreed and said he was taking notes to share with Dave Mastin and Rachelle L'Ecuyer regarding the website and social media issues.

Howl-o-ween Pet Parade: Jessica Bueler shared that approval has been received from the Loop Trolley Company and Metro to reroute the businesses on this date. The LSB will provide candy for participating businesses and 21 vendors will set up booths on Saturday, October 30, 2021 and more details will be available to share with the all of the businesses on how they can participate beginning October 1, 2021.

Small Businesses Saturday: November 27, 2021 kicks off Small Business Saturday and the University City Loop will feature all of the amazing retail locations and restaurants within the district. Please keep a look out for upcoming advertising opportunities as the holidays approach.

LED Lighting on Delmar: Assistant City Manager Brooke Smith is working with Clifford Cross to review the lighting permitting process. It will then be presented to City Manager Gregory Rose. Upon his approval, it will need to be presented to University City Council for approval.

Old Business: Derek Deaver asked if there is any criteria for LSB businesses of how they may decorate their outdoor expanded dining areas on Delmar. Assistant City Manager Brooke Smith said she would inquire to see if there was a reference guide that could be shared.

Joe Edwards stated that tree well grates were needed along Delmar Blvd and he created a map of all of the locations and submitted it to City Hall in the past.

New Business: Mary Gorman inquired if the trash and recycling reciprocals could be cleaned on the outside because they are covered with stickers, graffiti, and dirt. Dan Wald said he would look into estimates for power washing the Loop and will also look at painting the utility boxes.

Announcements: Jessica Bueler announced the next LSBDD Marketing Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. and the next LSBDD Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. If you have any business promotions, sales, or news to share, please send to jessica@exploreucity.com.

Mary Gorman inquired if the next meeting could be held in person in October, assuming the situation has improved with COVID-19. Michael Alter volunteer Fitz's as a potential location.

Having no further business, Mary Gorman makes a motion to adjourn the meeting, Steve Stone second the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

Loop Special Business District

September 14, 2021

Dear University City Loop Board Members,

I'm pleased to report positive feedback about our Loop in Motion experience on Saturday, Sept 11. The U City Farmers Market did very well in terms of market-goer attendance and in vendor sales.

We did extra marketing for our event which included information about the larger Loop in Motion event. We also brought in more vendors. This and being included in the Loop in Motion interactive map helped a lot in our positive results.

We were open from 8:30am to 1:30pm. Our regular customers including University City residents came mostly during the early part of the morning. New visitors, younger market-goers, and visitors to the larger event came late morning until we closed.

We provided music in the plaza along Delmar until 1:30pm. This helped provide a very positive atmosphere for the early Loop in Motion events on the west end.

We were also pleased to help a few Loop in Motion vendors who arrived very early in the morning to set up for the international area. We showed them to their area and helped a couple of them set-up.

We had a very positive day at the U City Farmers Market and enjoyed being part of the larger Loop in Motion event. Thank you for including us.

Sincerely,

Deborah Henderson

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