



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

4:00-5:00 p.m.

via

Zoom Virtual Meetings

### MINUTES

A meeting of the Downtown Dayton Partnership (DDP) Executive Committee was held Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at 4:00 p.m., via Zoom Virtual Meetings. Co-Chair Mayor Nan Whaley presided.

Also in attendance were Mr. Edward Bentley, Mr. Michael Colbert, Mr. David Dickerson, Ms. Shelley Dickstein, Mr. Mark Donaghy, Mr. Peter Haley, Ms. Madeline Iseli, Ms. Julie Liss-Katz, Commissioner Deborah Lieberman, Mr. Daniel Meixner, Mr. Ryan Powell, Mr. Ty Sutton, and Mr. Sam Warwar. All other Executive Committee members were absent and excused.

Downtown Dayton Partnership staff members in attendance were Ms. Sandy Gudorf, Mr. Scott Murphy, Ms. Colleen Turner, and Ms. Laura Woeste.

#### Welcome & Approval of Minutes

Co-Chair Mayor Nan Whaley opened the Executive Committee meeting at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed all who were present. After receiving a quorum, Ms. Whaley asked for a motion to approve the November 24, 2020, meeting minutes. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Julie Liss-Katz and seconded by Mr. Mark Donaghy. The motion unanimously passed.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

##### Place Lab

Ms. Gudorf reported that, per the request of property owners, the new SID Services Plan includes an increased focus on placemaking efforts. New initiatives will include tactical placemaking and projects that make our downtown more pedestrian friendly, walkable, and interesting. Ms. Gudorf introduced Ms. Laura Woeste, who is leading the staff team in putting a framework for projects together.

Ms. Woeste gave a presentation on a new initiative called Place Lab. Ms. Woeste said the DDP put together a staff team to come up with a tactical placemaking program that would leverage existing assets and help grow downtown Dayton street vibrancy. There are four different areas of placemaking that the DDP focuses on:

- Larger Greater Downtown Dayton Plan Projects: The DDP plays an advocacy role for such projects as RiverScape, bike share, flood wall mural, signage and wayfinding. The DDP does not execute these projects on its own; they are often implemented by other organizations.
- The DDP also plays an advocacy role in projects such as infrastructure and streetscapes, which are implemented by the City and other organizations.
- Events also fall under placemaking, including both events that the DDP coordinates, and also those partner events it supports and leverages.
- Tactical placemaking projects, now known as the Place Lab, include the Urban Art Intersections mural program, storefront activations, First Bloom planters and pop-up patios. These efforts are led and implemented by the DDP with partner support.

Ms. Woeste explained the framework and gave an example of how projects could flow through the Place Lab process. The DDP plans to maintain a map of potential spaces in downtown for projects, along with a project road map that outlines the essential checkpoints for Place Lab projects. After COVID, the DDP will look at generating community engagement and public input on desired projects. Every project will have a unique set of stakeholders who have key roles in the project.

Ms. Woeste indicated recommendations for the Place Lab's success, including an advisory board with leadership from SID Property Owners that would meet at least quarterly to set project priorities. The DDP has \$25,000 allocated for projects this year. Also recommended is an action team for each Place Lab project with DDP staff members managing projects.

In the next few weeks, the DDP will work to establish the advisory board and plan its first meeting in March to review the project ideas and work toward starting the first Place Lab project in late spring or early summer.

### **Amtrak Rail Project**

Ms. Dickstein reported that Amtrak has come forward with a plan to build out their national rail and bus network that includes downtown Dayton in its network. The plan proposes a five-year expansion program, where Amtrak would receive \$5B of funding. The City of Dayton has engaged state and federal lobbyists in the conversation. There was a briefing at the ODOT and Rail Commission where they testified to the finance committee about the opportunity. The transportation committee have an informal hearing scheduled with ODOT to discuss the rail project. Amtrak is interested in having advocacy and support to advance their national expansion effort. The City has assembled a group of stakeholders, and Ms. Dickstein thanked Ms. Gudorf and Mr. Chris Kershner, whose teams are helping put talking points together. The idea is to develop an advocacy/communications plan to present to the stakeholders, and partner with organizations to try and get support from the federal government for funding a concept.

Ms. Dickstein reported the City has assembled a planning team to look at the opportunities that a passenger rail investment can bring to Dayton and the greater downtown. The city is scheduling briefings for downtown businesses to give historical concepts of the project. Ms. Dickstein invited all to schedule a briefing. Mayor Whaley commented that having the advocacy and the strong support from the community will be important as this conversation moves forward.

Ms. Gudorf indicated that there will be unknown work and costs, and she requested an endorsement that the DDP will support and advocate the project until it moves forward and more information on costs is known. Ms. Whaley entertained a motion to endorse the Amtrak proposal. Ms. Julie-Liss Katz made the motion and Mr. Dan Meixner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **UPDATES**

### **Downtown Recovery Plan**

Ms. Gudorf introduced Mr. Scott Murphy, who gave an update on the Downtown Recovery Plan. He reported that the Greater Downtown Dayton Plan (GDDP) team researched best practices in other cities regarding the re-opening of their downtowns and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Through that research, conversations, and ideas, the GDDP team decided to develop a recovery plan for downtown Dayton post-COVID. Mr. Murphy reported that there are significant challenges ahead for downtown, but also some opportunities for cities through COVID recovery. There is real value in rallying the community around downtown's recovery and re-opening. There will also be some significant funding opportunities associated with the recovery plan. There is urgency to setting a shared vision for downtown's recovery, but with a long-term strategy in mind.

Mr. Murphy explained the example framework, organizational structure and timeline, which include:

- Planning efforts that are very much focused on COVID relief. The DDP will continue to do those things as quickly as possible.
- Focus on what has been the impact to some of the key sectors, such as venue re-openings and the Arcade's opening, and a public that is coming back to socialize with each other.
- Other focus areas include long-term challenges that will have a lasting effect on the market and how it impacts future re-opening offices. The impact of how to activate the first floor since financing first floor projects has gotten harder because of COVID, and there's a need to assess how all of this impacts the future of development.
- 15-member steering committee, representing key stakeholders and constituencies, who would help decide which focus areas to cover and bring in other stakeholders to the committee. That group would also be the stewards and overall advocates for the process. Each of the committees would have the support of a DDP staff member, with staff members engaged in other areas as well.

Process and timeline:

- The first steering committee will meet in early March to discuss the framework and overview/goals, and collect any data available at the time about the economic impact of the pandemic. Mr. Murphy said the DDP will be sending out the business survey soon and hope to get more data regarding the pandemic's impact on businesses
- Subcommittees will be formed, with a timeframe of subcommittee work. Subcommittees meet March/April. Subcommittees report draft recommendations by mid-April. Publish initial Recovery Plan recommendations early May.

Mr. Dan McCabe has agreed to Co-Chair this initiative. There will be more information available soon. Ms. Gudorf entertained any questions or comments.

### **Crowne Plaza**

Ms. Gudorf reported that the Convention Task Force's recommendation was to keep the facility. A Convention Facilities Authority was formed and is in the process of interviewing management companies for the Convention Center. There was much conversation about the need for more hotel

rooms. Ms. Gudorf reported from her discussions with the new Director of the Convention Facilities Authority that, ideally, for a convention center of downtown Dayton's size, downtown would need 400 adjoining hotel rooms.

Ms. Gudorf announced that a potential owner for the Crowne Plaza hotel has surfaced. This ownership group has indicated an interest in turning half of the hotel rooms into veterans' multi-unit housing. There are a lot of unknowns, but Ms. Gudorf indicated this plan could present a challenge for all the work that has been put in place to help move the convention center forward. The prospective owners have not officially applied for any zoning, but that is expected to happen very soon.

Ms. Dickstein reported that downtown has the most allowable zoning mix of uses, but the City could put conditions on the zoning and usage. The City and DDP attorneys are working to figure out a strategy going forward. Mr. Sam Warwar commented that his law firm will gather some ideas to present to the task force. Ms. Gudorf will keep the Executive Committee abreast of the situation.

### **Miscellaneous Relief Updates**

Ms. Gudorf reported that the DDP continues to work with businesses to help them through these difficult times. The DDP has continued the Downtown Dollars program and is working with the Oregon District again this year in planning Out On 5<sup>th</sup>. The Out on 5<sup>th</sup> program was a lifesaver for the Oregon District businesses, and they are very appreciative for the City of Dayton's engagement. Ms. Gudorf announced that the DDP is kicking off a Digital Boot Camp, with four marketing firms volunteering their services to work with a dozen retail businesses on their online presence. Since the last Executive Committee meeting, the DDP has put curb-side pickup zones in place, among many other efforts to help businesses get through the winter months.

Mr. Murphy announced that the DDP recently developed a partnership with 937 Delivers, a food delivery program Co-Op Dayton started in November 2020. Door Dash and Uber Eats take about 30% of sales, which has been a strain on downtown restaurants. By contrast, 937 Delivers only takes 10% of sales.

Ms. Gudorf commented that she will come back to the Executive Committee in March to discuss a possible drawdown of any additional funds from the reserve account.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Gudorf gave thanks to Mr. Mark Donaghy for his years serving on the Executive Committee, and wished him well in his retirement.

Co-Chair Nan Whaley was excused early from the meeting, and Vice-Chair Dan Meixner thanked all for coming. With no further business to discuss, Mr. Meixner asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ryan Powel motioned, and Ms. Julie-Liss Katz seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.