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SSHD Board Meeting

April 12th, 2023

10:03 a.m.

SSHD Office & Zoom

Board Members Present: Rick Millan, Allison Hindman-Harvey, Adam Shapiro, Taylor Jenkins

SSHD Staff: Mike Harris, Katrina Johnston-Zimmerman, Dana Feinberg, Sarah Cowell

Other Attendees: Lieutenant Steven Ricci, Rafi Licht

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: 10:03 a.m.

2. Board Chair's Report: Rick voices his frustration with City Council not yet officially sanctioning the new incoming board members, potentially due to prioritizing their own political pursuits. As far as SSHD is concerned, the incoming board members are official board members. Their votes will count and they will be able to participate fully on committees. He and Mike officially welcome them to the board. Mike has been in communication with City Council to finalize their positions.

Rick also welcomes Katrina as the new assistant director after having served on the board. Her addition will solve understaffing issues and empower current staff to execute ideas. She will be based out of the Off Center, keeping staff presence on the street more consistent. Katrina's spot on the board and executive committee will be given to Shannon Maldonado who has invested greatly in her future in the district.

The recent Rex Manning Day pop-up on 4th Street got good press and social media, but most importantly, the people who came had a good time. The next day, the Easter Promenade brought success to district businesses, television coverage, and the front page of the Inquirer. In its 90th year, the event brought many attendees who had a great time. Rick thanks the staff and all who helped with the event. Energy will now be focused on the upcoming festival in May.

Rick has been talking to former district chairs and other BID directors in the city to learn best practices for the district. He will be implementing captains for blocks in the district. He proposes that if a board member owns a business on a block, they will automatically become that block's captain. This hierarchy will help pass information between businesses and SSHD.

3. Public Safety Update: Lieutenant Steven Ricci introduces a fellow officer from the South Street Police Mini Station who has been in the 3rd District for 25 years. She will be working with Lt. Ricci. There was only one violent incident at the Wawa, an armed robbery. Video footage is being used in the investigation. There have been no significant changes in the rates of vehicle or retail theft. Lt. Ricci introduces the new PAD (Police Assisted Diversion) program which involves allowing nonviolent citizens who commit low level offenses such as small theft or minimal possession to bypass a part of the prosecution process that would normally keep them from being able to access housing and employment and instead provide counseling resources. Nearby districts have had issues with juveniles causing disturbances. Lt. Ricci encourages attendees to use the Slack channel to communicate about issues. Store logs are being implemented and there will be bike patrols coming to local businesses to interact with businesses about any issues they may have.

Summer police details will begin Friday of the second week of May, bringing additional police officers to the district. Lt. Ricci would like a vote on street closure location and timing preferences. A councilman is interested in conducting a pilot program to experiment with options. Picnic tables, planters, tables, and benches are suggested as a way to activate the closed streets in the summer. Lt. Ricci suggests that if the changes are successful, they may become permanent. An attendee suggests a block that would make sense to close to vehicle traffic. At 24th and South, there is a triangular intersection that has been enhanced with lighting, benches, and small games. Katrina expresses interest in working with stakeholders to plan improvements to the pedestrian experience. An attendee mentions how successful their recent block party was, especially with neighboring businesses on the street who had successful traffic that day. The activity in the street also brought customers to nearby locations. Lt. Ricci wants to see more events like theirs happen in the future. Committees will discuss how to best move forward with plans.

Mike has been researching Charleston, SC to learn from how they have used pedestrian-only areas of King Street to control crowds. He will also be attending a conference of night managers and other city officials who handle policies relating to nightlife districts such as noise, parking, and crowd behavior. An attendee mentions that South Street gets a bad reputation while negative social incidents happen proportionately as often in other places. They suggest trying to change minds on a small scale. Mike and Rick suggest that the attendee joins the marketing committee to help improve public perception of the district. For the first time in 20 years, there were no negative press implications regarding Mardi Gras. Rick notes that the public events such as Rex Manning Day and the Easter Promenade do help to change public perception of the district, as well as Steve Ramm, who is a positive promotor of the district on social media. An attendee notes that the magazine which they work on will be focusing on promotions for businesses in the district in their upcoming summer issue.

4. Marketing and Public Relations: The South Street Egg Hunt was extended by one week this year, and 2,500 unique people submitted entries to win prizes, bringing an increase to foot traffic. Sarah witnessed people participating on St. Patrick's Day, early in the event's timeline. This year's Easter Promenade got more press coverage than in previous years. The press event at Paddy Whacks brought support from Philly Bagels, Federal Donuts, Wawa, and the official candy sponsor, Frankford Candy. The Inquirer and Metro gave their front page

coverage to the Easter Promenade, and Fox 29 was the media partner for the event. Coverage for a major event like this can open doors for coverage of smaller events that will happen in the future. Philly 17, NBC, Fox, and more covered district related events recently. An attendee notes how cheerful the attendees of the Easter Promenade were and applauds those who brought bunny ears to the crowd. Many people expressed that they will be coming again in upcoming years. Some new additions to the Easter Promenade this year included an opportunity for children to have their photo taken with a backdrop and costumed workers and community partners handing out gifts.

Sarah and Dana are working on a pitch to partner with a nearby parking lot to provide competitive options for visitors to the area. Sarah is providing convenient flyers for signing up to Slack and communicating details with the district. As business partners move into block captain roles, communication will be a focus between SSHD and the community. SSHD has begun planning South Street Fest, and a press release will be made available by the end of the week. Sarah is looking to work with businesses to bring activities that may occur inside onto the streets. A mixer at the Off Center will happen on April 20th before South Street Fest for business owners to meet each other. Attendees are asked to spread the word about this event. Meet Me On South Street will be coming back. A forum will take place to get feedback from businesses on how the weekly event concept can bring more customers to the district.

An attendee asks about parking partnerships that may enhance signage related to parking. Police officers are often asked to help visitors with parking availability questions, and these questions may be answered by more informative signage related to parking in the district. Signage will be an important element of any parking initiatives, and business owners are asked to provide feedback related to where and how signage may be implemented. An attendee notes that an event will be taking place in the Rittenhouse area on the same day as South Street Fest. Mike adds that a few years ago, South Street Fest took place on the same day as a Rittenhouse event and a Franklin Institute event. The media covered it as a day of festivals. While there is not a direct partnership between the districts on these events, it could help in bringing more potential visitors. South Street Fest's date was set in October. Sarah asks that attendees bring this kind of information to the district's attention, even if they may already know. Now that Katrina has begun her new role, Sarah will have time to print items for businesses. An attendee talked to Councilman Squilla about implementing angled back-in parking on numbered streets to add spots.

5. Strategic Design and Planning: The Off Center's storefront is being enhanced currently. Sarah is working on claiming the Off Center, the Shambles, and the Plaza internet listings.

6: Real Estate: Rick notes that there are openings for businesses on a block he has been working on. Sarah congratulates Shannon on being featured in the Queen Village Crier in an article about a real estate matchmaking program. The article is available online and in the print edition. An attendee references a television program call FYI and a segment about a topic related to South Street. Mike notes that the BID Alliance has posted an article online about maintaining commercial corridors and informing the next mayor on policy issues. The paper is also available on paper at this meeting. An attendee asks about a cannabis dispensary that may

be opening up on South Street. BIDs are not consulted on zoning issues such as this. A smoke shop or a smoking lounge may face zoning issues even after being provided a license that appears to allow their business to be performed. However, the license can be carried to another property. Cleopatra Lounge holds a license to be a smoke shop or a smoking lounge, but health issued that license without consulting zoning, which does not allow for that type of business at that location. They are allowed to conduct business while the decision is being made.

7. New Business: Steve Ramm mentions an event taking place at Paradigm Gallery and Studio's new location in Old City. Wawa's birthday is the day following this meeting, and they will be giving out free coffee. He also mentions *Eleven Eleven*, a brunch restaurant, will be opening at a former taco restaurant outside of the district. Dana suggests businesses go online to add their event listings into the South Street website's calendar.

- *Spin Rotisserie* restaurant will be opening at 222 South Street, the former location of South Garden.
- Dana mentions a new wellness center called *Divinity* has opened at 313 Bainbridge at the former location of Bainbridge Realty.
- Taylor Jenkins will be tripling the size of the *Philly Game Shop*. The lease is still being negotiated, but plans are underway to move into the space next door to their current location and activate the sign on the building, bringing visibility to their business.
- Dana recommends *Nam Chon* at 228 South Street.
- *Redcrest Fried Chicken* will be serving fried chicken for brunch on Sundays and will be looking for a new location to offer the chicken that Steve Ramm asks for.
- *Esso Ramen Workshop* is open at the former location of *Ants Pants*.
- 526 South 4th Street is slated to open very soon.
- An attendee is developing a project to open in early June.
- *Heirloom Market* is currently in the L&I process.
- Construction is beginning for reopening Jim's Steaks in the Fall.
- A candy store may be entering a large retail location, according to Steve's conversation with a construction worker.
- Steve has found information on social media about an upcoming restaurant.

8. Finance: Adam has made financial numbers available at this meeting. SSHD is at 50% of income, and expenses are at 27%. Trash removal continues to be the biggest expense, cleaning graffiti and extra trash.

9. Adjournment: Joel is on board to make a new exhibit in July at the Off Center which will cover the history of the City's defeated expressway initiative once the Zipperhead exhibit ends on Memorial Day. Rick invites attendees to join committees to take action for the street. Rick motions to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 a.m.