

BID BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thurs., Aug. 15, 2019
Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

1. Attendees

Board - Jaime Ortiz, Erika Bowker, Jeff Brusati, Bonnie Ayers Namkung, Adam Dawson

Staff – Eda Lochte

Guests – Bishlam Bullock – Salon B, Stan Gibbs – Art Works Downtown/DSRAD, Tobi Lessem – Bodywise Massage

City – Simon Vuong

2. Called to order by Jaime at 8:07

3. July minutes approval – Adam moved, Erika seconded and passed

4. Jaime Ortiz – President’s report

Eda, Adam Violante and Jaime are working on West End Village Celebration, happening on Sunday 11/3. Jaime is working on getting sponsorships. Will ask for volunteers later.

CFI, Youth in Arts, the City, BID and Art Works Downtown are the stakeholders in the Downtown San Rafael Arts District (DSRAD). We’re thinking it’s a good idea to combine forces and get more done. The group has a very small budget from the grant awarded by the state, \$5,000 a year for 5 years. They are looking for more funding and have joined a coalition of districts headed by San Diego.

BID supports DSRAD and contributed \$5,000 to their efforts. Would like to have DSRAD at the table. It’s a way to connect beautification with the City and arts.

The idea is to not duplicate efforts and be more efficient. Would like to add the DSRAD members to the board. One project we could work on together is making landmarks or signage to show beginning and end of Arts District or welcome to SR. Will need to explore the alliance, which will offer DSRAD the consistency of regular monthly meetings and collaboration.

BID focus in 2020 is marketing and promotion, so we will help promote the Arts District.

Is it a good idea to bring DSRAD into the BID board?

The ideas are great, but the reality is DSRAD is small, loosely organized, underfunded and spread thin. Need to be careful and focus on quality projects and not take on too much. Murals, for example, cost \$2,000 to \$5,000 to produce. Scaffolding, paying the artist, etc. Another barrier is many property owners are from out of state and don’t care as much about Downtown.

What is a mural? The City says a mural sign is specific to advertising a product. You must go to the planning commission to get approved. But the City doesn’t want barriers to public interest and beautification. Mill Valley has a brief ordinance and long policy document, which helps staff interpret the rules. Danielle O’Leary is working on creating an intersection of economic development and the arts.

A mural ordinance is under discussion at City. This effort is led by Community Services, they’ve gotten 6-10 requests to produce murals in the last couple months. Process is not established or straightforward. City wants to make it easier.

A great opportunity if DSRAD could co-exist with BID. More as a partnership, not folding the entire operation into BID. How to make a realistic partnership happen? It will give everyone a bigger voice with the teams combined. Jeff moved BID board will continue to explore this partnership. Adam seconded. Motion carried. Elisabeth Setten of Art Works has indicated her interest in applying for the BID board.

How about adding more surprise downtown art, like the current painted utility boxes, maybe small murals, etc. Have seen it in SF alleys. Help changing the City's mural ordinance will make things happen.

Chamber is working on a map, considering marking Arts District assets on it, since it would be difficult to include all businesses.

Are Target funds available?

The committee wants to spend the remaining funds on the marketing and promotion of downtown.

5. Eda Lochte – ED's report

Summer Sidewalk sale coming 8/24. Thanks to Danielle and Simon, for the City's donation of digital ads for Sidewalk Sale.

We have a deadline for our annual plan coming up. We will show 2019 accomplishments and our plan for next year. Includes beautification/signage and maps for marketing and promotion. Bonnie, Adam, Erika and Jed volunteered for the committee.

Mixer on Thurs. Sept. 26, 5:30 to 7:30 at Istanbul Rugs. Maybe SBDC for marketing a retail biz in digital world.

7. Simon Vuong – City of San Rafael

Marriott Hotel - submitting for building permits for the 5th Avenue location and breaking ground soon.

On-street dining – sent out questionnaires about them, 90% positive response. A few don't want them in front of their businesses. The City is revising plans slightly to include additional buffer space. Comment period has ended but City is looking at ways to enhance program. Tam Commons looks busy and people love it.

Goldstone project – coming along. Attorneys are working on agreement for sale of public parking garage to the developer so he can redo the whole site. He may submit the application for redevelopment in October. Goldstone wants to be a volunteer member of BID and participate in the Downtown.

Pizza Orgasmica site – Lotus Cuisine is negotiating to take the space for a restaurant-grocery.

San Rafael Jewelers site – there's been interest in the space, but difficulty finding a business that's compatible with Scandinavian Designs, since they get final approval of the tenant.

First Bank site – a fitness studio is moving in. They're working on the property now.

Discussion – Talking about having a broker event with everyone in same room to elevate marketing of Downtown spaces. Asking them to make the signage more useful, by add square footage, whether there's a kitchen, etc. Also requesting to make the process more a partnership in helping fill the spaces.

7. Bonnie – Downtown San Rafael Arts District

Most covered earlier in the morning—possible alliance of BID and DSRAD. One option is to include the Steering Committee, which is the other 4 original grant applicants, as a committee of the BID.

An aesthetic advisory subcommittee is part of DSRAD and can help advise on artistic or visual projects. Example, Stan advised on how to interact with artists and be an artistic voice to help maintain consistency and messaging.

8. Adjourned at 9:17.

9. Next meeting - Thursday, Sept. 19, 8-9 AM at Chamber of Commerce.