

BID PLANNING MEETING MINUTES
Thurs., Oct. 17, 2019
Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

1. Attendees

Board - Jaime Ortiz, Erika Bowker, Jeff Brusati, Bonnie Ayers Namkung, Adam Dawson, Jed Greene
New members – Elisabeth Setten – Art Works Downtown/DSRAD, Tobi Lessem – Bodywise Massage
Eda Lochte - BID Staff, Joanne Webster – Chamber of Commerce
Guests – Meg Reilley – Marin Society of Artists
City – Simon Vuong – Economic Development Dept.

2. Called to order by Jaime at 8:08

3. Jaime Ortiz – President’s report

West End Village Celebration will be on 11/3 at 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Please volunteer for the day of the event if you can. We raised money for the event through sponsorships. With beer sales, we should reach the \$20,000K budget.

Parade of Lights – will happen the day after Thanksgiving. The biggest expense is importing the snow and we’re looking for sponsors. The City contributes \$2,500 and BID can contribute up to \$1500, if the City needs it. We’re thinking maybe have the event on a smaller scale this year, without snow, and regroup for next year. Bringing in snow costs \$15,000. It used to be funded by the Redevelopment Agency, which doesn’t exist now. Then Target money came in, but legacy events are being weaned off the Target funding. Steve Restivo, the producer, hasn’t been able to make the event self-sustaining and needs contributions to make it work. Jed moved that if the City needs the funds, BID will provide. Jeff seconded. Unanimously passed.

Joanne Vosmek has been very busy opening and running a second Copperfield’s store and resigned from the board. She will be missed.

Discussion of potential board members - Applicants attending the meeting and guests stepped out of the room during the deliberations. It was noted that each candidate would bring distinct and valuable knowledge, skills and contacts to the board.

Candidates:

Elisabeth Setten – Art Works Downtown
Tobi Lessem – Bodywise Massage
Ogi Teker – Istanbul Rug
Morgan Schauffler – Youth in Arts

Jeff moved we accept the four great people. Elisabeth and Tobi will be active members now, replacing members who stepped down, Dezy and Joanne. Ogi and Morgan will become voting members beginning in 2020. Jed seconded. Unanimously passed.

4. Jed Greene – Financial report

We’re generally on budget and prepared for pretty much the same in 2020. We were a little over our expense budget on the Hops & Vines event, maybe because it was new and the event planner lack of sponsors and wineries. But the net effect is we’re very close to budget.

Key things to look at for next year are event and initiative expenses. If we run the events, we'll have the income come to us rather than to a paid event producer. Adam moved to approve the budget, Erika seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Elisabeth Setten – Art Works Downtown/DSRAD

DSRAD receives \$5,000 a year from the State of California. Elisabeth is meeting with other district representatives from No. Calif. in Eureka in November, for inspiration and to learn how they operate. All of those groups have arts councils in their cities, unlike San Rafael.

In 2019, we had a project manager briefly and it didn't work well. Now we're closing 2019 with \$2,400 in state grant funds and \$5,000 from BID unspent. The state money is use-it-this-year or lose it. We've also spent on Facebook advertising to boost DSRAD members for 2nd Friday Art Walks.

We're looking for ideas on how to allocate the \$2,400 this year. The grant stipulates it should not be just an art exhibit but must involve the community and creative placekeeping to attract and engage a wide array of people and thrive through the arts. It's not about serving the arts elite, but needs to reach a cross-section of the community, all levels, serving as many people as possible. We're thinking about murals like Diego Rivera, stories about San Rafael. The Grand Ave. Bridge was a project with Canal Alliance that had that feel. However, there are many barriers to murals now, including the timeline and City ordinances.

Ideas - maybe more painted utility boxes, a vinyl mural that can be applied and later peeled off the outside of a building or windows, like the old Body Kinetics building. Utility box paintings already have a proven process, maybe one of the artists who did it can do more. What about bike racks – maybe instead of U-shaped rack, how about a different, more artistic design. The City is working on bringing standard U-shaped bike racks to the 4th St. corridor, and DSRAD could use the \$2,400 to upgrade a few and place the DSRAD logo at the site to boost recognition of the district. It was decided that this would be the best option for using the funds by the end of the year. Elizabeth will work with Simon on this.

7. Simon Vuong – City of San Rafael

Marriott Hotel - demolition started at the site. Fencing is up and trucks are there.

Goldstone project – becoming active, an agreement is coming before the City Council at the next meeting on the purchase of the parking garage. The project is intended to be something like San Francisco's Ferry Plaza, with multiple retailers and restaurants.

2nd and B Street – the site has been leveled and will be turned into 40 housing units

8. Joanne Webster – Chamber of Commerce

We did a survey after the end of the Farmers Market season. Looking to improve the market next year. Merchants liked it but there's work to be done. 50% rated it very good or good, 40% rated it fair, 10% poor. Similar ratings on the vendors.

Downtown Streets Team – they had a 3-year contract with City that's coming up for renewal. Has been \$125,000 and will go to \$75K.

Comments - Generally positive comments about the Streets Team. Downtown looks better, nice to see them, a positive visual to show steps are being taken to keep the City clean. Can they clean the sticky sidewalks? Is it possible to have them clean the trash cans one a month? The program helps participants build job skills, get housed. We will try to initiate a tweak in improving the services.

Carolyn Bopp on the Chamber staff helps Eda with BID work, such as passing out event posters, etc. They will schedule periodic meetings so she can relay feedback from merchants to Eda.

Parking Services may change their citation rate. We will invite Jim Myhers to come to next meeting.

9. Ed Lochte – BID director

Trick or Treat event will happen Sat., Oct. 26. Many shops are decorating their windows. Although there's no window design contest for Halloween this year, we're hoping to do it for the Christmas holidays.

West End Village Celebration – 11/3 11-7 p.m., please help if you can.

Joanne invited Eda to a Chamber Economic Vitality committee meeting. A realtor passed out list of downtown vacancies. They explained that a downtown is looking to have around a 4% vacancy rate, to offer options for new businesses to come in. Even though we see empty spaces, surprisingly, our vacancy rate is 2%. Kaiser was at the meeting and wants to work with community businesses and buy from them. They're setting up a registry so local businesses can be included on the list of vendors they purchase from. Joanne and Eda toured Ritter Center and noted that case managers handle a huge number of people.

10. Adjourned at 9:06.

11. Next meeting - Thursday, Nov. 21, 8-9 AM at Chamber of Commerce.