



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 13, 2023**  
**9:00 AM – Hybrid Meeting**

**Call to Order**

Board Chair, Doug Schwab, called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

**Attendance**

**In Attendance:** Melinda Kelleher, Matt Miller, Doug Schwab, Laurie Marchini, Bob Mayhew, John Buchanan, Larry Jackson, Dave Romero, Ruth Davis-Rogers, Ryan Brenneman, Penny Walker, Micheal Harris, Dan Bowser, Stu Czapski, Trina Runner, Sandi Saville, Mayor Ray Morriss

**Media: Absent:** Lori Lepley, Rhett Wolford, Ed Huber

**Introduction of New Board Member**

Doug Schwab introduced Micheal Harris, our new board member. Micheal is the owner of Pepper in a Bottle downtown and soon to be opened second business.

**Minutes**

March meeting minutes accepted as submitted.

**Treasurer's Report – Melinda Kelleher in Ed Huber's absence**

We are at 75% of the fiscal year and are at 68% on expenses, so we are in line. The FY24 City budget that includes the DDC budget will be reviewed at the Mayor and City Council work session next Tuesday. The DDC board will be able to review the budget at the June meeting.

**DDC Executive Director Report – April 2023**

Completed:

- Review CEDC grant applications and help make decisions about awards.
- Baltimore Street Groundbreaking – Created and sent out program agenda, wrote talking points and intros for guests for Mayor, met with sound engineer, created shot list for photographer, ordered signage, set up at Ottaviani's for luncheon.
- Attended ribbon cutting ceremony for The Three Stars shop and for 60 Pershing Street building.
- Met with Dave and Meg Romero about new promotional video content.
- Presented at ACM Lifelong Learning program about the Baltimore Street Project.
- Submitted Main Street grant reports and payment requests for the Technology Assistance Grant (TAG) and the Main Street Improvement Program (MIP).
- Spring Fling Event - Walk through with Canal Place staff to plan logistics, finalized promotional poster and distributed, wrote press release and distributed, wrote copy for radio ads and ordered ads, finalized all vendors, set up and breakdown of event, made goodie bags.



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**DDC Executive Director Report – April 2023 continued**

- Finalized Friday After Five promotional posters for May, June and July and began distributing.
- ARPA Marketing Meeting – created agenda, scheduled and led meeting.
- Leadership Allegany – Human Services Day.
- Created and sent out E-Blasts for Sunshine Daze, Groundbreaking, Lost Mountain BBQ.
- Website updates and additions.
- Meetings/events attended: Chamber Economic Development Committee, Baltimore Street Workgroup, Chamber After Hours, Brooke Lierman reception, Canal Place board meeting, City Events group, Cartridges Galore 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ribbon Cutting.
- Executed March social media calendar (3.5K likes; 4K followers).
- Completed Main Street Maryland report for March and submitted.

**April/May Projects**

- Order signage for downtown for construction messaging.
- Apply for FY24 Main Street grants.
- Continue website updates for Baltimore Street Project.
- Distribute Farmer's Market posters and promote on social media.
- Finalize Brand Ambassador package with Curly Red for the downtown merchants and distribute.
- Press Release for Friday After Five; place radio ads.
- Main Street monthly report.
- Meetings/Events: Chamber Economic Development, Main Street Organization Committee, Chamber Like a Woman event, Speak at Ft. Hill High School for Leadership Allegany, Baltimore Street Workgroup, Chamber Economic Development Stakeholder discussion, City Events Committee, Historic Preservation Steering Committee, Baltimore Street Progress Meeting with contractor, Women Leaders meeting, Leadership Allegany Environment Day.



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**Main Street Committee Reports**

**Clean Safe and Green**

- John Buchanan – Asked about police presence downtown once project is completed. Melinda explained that they always have presence at downtown events. Due to being short staffed, they most likely won't be down there all the time patrolling, but time will tell.
- Chris Myers – Shared that charging stations were mentioned at the recent City Council meeting. Chris asked if we could upgrade the slow-charging ones we have on Liberty Street to fast charging. We are not sure, but Chris will do some research to find out. Melinda also suggested that Chris reach out to the Frostburg Main Street Manager to ask about the ones they have – Melinda will give Chris the contact information. We will also need to speak with Bobby Smith, the City Engineer, and involve his team in our decisions. Melinda shared that there is a good bit of grant money out there for charging stations.
- Adele Mkua - asked about cleaning up Rose's Plaza. Melinda explained that it is managed by a company out of Pittsburgh. Ally asked if we could speak to Melinda's contact about the future plans for the plaza – Melinda said she could do that. Adele also mentioned there is too much trash downtown. Melinda shared that the DDC has only one staff person to clean the whole district. Chris suggested we look into people needing community service hours and see if they can help. Chris also mentioned that he used to serve on the Historic Preservation Commission and we might have some leverage on the signage on the shops at the Plaza not meeting the guidelines.
- Dana Tinnen – Expressed concern over any rodent problems that may occur downtown with the increased number of restaurants. Melinda said so far, she hasn't heard of any, and that we have monthly pest control. Dana suggested we consider some rock gardens instead of just flower and plant beds as they look nice and can help with rodent problems as the rodents can't hide as well. Chris said he had seen or heard about painted rocks around towns that the community places around – perhaps the Arts Council knows about these projects.
- Chris Myers – Suggested that this group can help with upkeep and beautification of the Cumberland Times-News parklet as it is very visible from the bike trail and Scenic Railroad train.

**TASKS BEFORE NEXT MEETING**

- Chris Myers – Contact Frostburg First Director and ask about their charging stations – information gathering
- Dana Tinnen – Look for examples online of other communities and how they use simple rock gardens or how rocks are used for beautification.
- Melinda – Will speak with Manager of Rose's Plaza to find out if there are any future plans for development or improvements. Will speak with police about community service support.



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**Clean Safe and Green Committee continued**

Other tasks that committee members can do – please email your fellow committee members and let them know if you are willing to work on any of these so we aren't duplicating work:

- Speak with Ruth Davis-Rogers, our city Historic Preservation Planner, about any leverage we have with Rose's on their signage – [ruth.davis-rogers@cumberlandmd.gov](mailto:ruth.davis-rogers@cumberlandmd.gov) or 301-759-6431.
- Check out the parklet at the Cumberland Times-News building and see if there are things we can do to spruce it up (this could be multiple committee members).
- Take a walk downtown and see if there are immediate things we can do to beautify the areas in the DDC district. (Keeping in mind streets other than Baltimore Street).

John Buchanan will reach out to the group to schedule the next meeting.

**Design Committee**

In attendance: Meg Romero, Ruth Davis-Rogers, Sandra Saville. Absent Betsey Schwab and Rhett Wolford  
We reviewed the purpose of a design committee and Ruth explained most of the verbiage referred to working cooperatively with other organizations who are doing those type of projects in the historic district. Since the Baltimore Street Project is the major design project in the historic district, we discussed public art that has been adopted by the City for the project. Ruth indicated that the City was interested in forming an Arts Commission that would oversee any public art in the district. We discussed the make-up and possible scope of such a committee and Ruth suggested that she call a meeting of interested stakeholders in early June to iron out the details. Also she indicated that developing some criteria for the Historic Preservation Commission to review art would be developed.

**Economic Restructuring Committee**

Attending: Garrett Eagan, Chris Hendershot, Juli McCoy, Steve McGray, Stu Czapski, Doug Schwab, Larry Jackson

A review of the last restructuring committee from 2013-2014. Noted that some many things have changed since that time, including some targeted stores, infrastructure, real estate environment. Some other objectives and targets not me. All participated in the discussion.

The future and structure of the special taxing district and the DDC as existing today was extensively discussed. It was noted by all the disincentive of the extra special tax on investment. Pros and cons were brought up as for the idea of a tax for services. Should main street program and director merge in to the CEDC? How would City maintain the services downtown (trash cans, plant maintenance, snow removal etc.)? Should the general taxpayer help subsidize a community/civic area of the community, not just the building owners?



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**Economic Restructuring Committee continued**

An extensive discussion ensued on attracting an “anchor” retail tenant to ignite incremental development. Large space like first floor of the Lila Building and redevelopment of Rose’s Plaza entered the discussion. It was noted by many that the Rose’s site is a key project site. Stu noted that attracting an anchor, like Old Navy or other national chains, an obstacle of making the site fit to criteria is an obstacle. Larry brought up the idea of an entertainment district at the Rose’s site running along the George St. corridor, anchored by a multiplex movie theatre.

Chris brought up zoning as a tool to deal with occupancy desired as Baltimore St. redevelops. As retail becomes preferred and residential occupants continue to grow downtown an exclusion list may need to be expanded for first floor occupancy (for things like methadone clinics etc.)

**Organization Committee**

Will meet on April 19<sup>th</sup>

**Promotions Committee**

Attendees: Lori Lepley, Doug Schwab, Becky McClarran, Dan Bowser, Dana Tinnen

Doug opened with how we could do promotion for what Baltimore Street is going to look like? It was discussed that someone was doing this, but we are open to ways. We could promote what Baltimore Street will be like when construction is complete. We discussed how to help the current businesses on Baltimore Street during construction.

Becky - Using back doors for Baltimore Street businesses. High banners on the buildings. Entrance of Merchant’s Alley - Banner that says parking. Allegany Museum has a banner. Hometown Heroes banners will continue.

- Dana - website / social media and coupons to promote businesses.
- Cumberland - DDC and City Council have strong social media platforms.
- For marketing/promotions, can we do a newsletter? Buses / transportation (county issue)
- Biggest issue - negativity "Cumberland isn't what it used to be" How can we influence this issue?



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### Promotions Committee - continued

#### Some suggestions for discussion

- Cumberland forward is something Dana does today. (Wednesday spotlight)
- Possible podcast?
- Dave Norman live spots as to what is going on downtown with all businesses
- promotions (Farmer's market is at Canal Place)
- Merchant's Alley
- Reimagine Cumberland (DDC site)
- QR Codes (hotels, other restaurants, business, etc.)
- List of Air B&B Build a database from search engines to promote events
- Do we have something that gives us demographics with age groups to promote to?
- Discussed a possible football night/home coming party

### Old Business

#### **Baltimore Street Project** – Matt Miller

Project is underway; Mechanic Street to Liberty Street is focus right now.

#### **Safety Grant Update** – Matt Miller

We are looking at where to put the security cameras and talking to the building owners about using their buildings.

#### **CEDC Update** – Stu Czapski

All phases up and running for the CEDC grants. Phase II helped 8 properties and will create 39 new residential units. Phase III – we have four applications so far – it will be open until funds are exhausted.

#### **Historic Preservation Update** – Ruth Davis-Rogers

The Lakota Group out of Chicago has been hired to create a Historic Preservation Plan for the City. We will have a public session to give input to them on Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.



## **MEETING MINUTES**

**March 9, 2023**

**9:00 AM – Hybrid Meeting**

### **Public Comments**

- Mayor Morriss thanked everyone for all their hard work on committees and collaboration. Positivity fights negativity. Charging stations for electric vehicles are a great idea – be sure we coordinate with the City engineering department.
- Councilwoman Laurie Marchini asked that the businesses be open when they say they are going to be open and stick with their posted hours on their doors. She mentioned that some of the projects we are looking at for the Community Legacy grant include: 1) Canal Place connectivity with downtown in tandem with public art projects; 2) Residential roof replacement. Many other great projects we are considering.
- Ryan Brenneman asked if we could share the notes from each committee meeting with the other committees so we don't duplicate tasks and projects.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 AM.

**The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 9AM.**