

City of Tonawanda Local Development Corporation (LDC) Meeting Minutes

Date / Time: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 - 5PM

Location: 37 Main Street (Above the Tonawanda Senior Center)
Tonawanda, NY 14150

Board Members Attending: Jason Knight, Alice Roth, John Guido, George Ferber, Fred Foels.

Board Members Absent: Charlie Rech, Jackie Smilinich.

Others in Attendance: Doug Taylor, Allison Harrington, Roxanne Kise.

1. Call to Order at 5:07

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 17, 2017.

Motion by Alice, Second by John, all in favor.

3. Old Business

- Update on Agreement and 501(c)(3) application by Harrison Studio – Chuck Bell from Harrison Studio put together a draft agreement between the LDC and the City of Tonawanda to request a transfer of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to the LDC. A meeting will be scheduled with Jason Knight, Charlie Rech, Allison Harrington and Mayor Davis to refine the draft. The agreement will then be brought to the Board. The 501(c)(3) application needs to have a budget for submission, to determine what that might be we need to see if CDBG funds can be transferred to the LDC through the Agreement. The CDBG funds are currently controlled by the Community Development Agency (CDA) and does not have to go to Council. CDA is made up of Mayor Davis, Charlie Rech and Jean Harmon. Regarding the budget, in the 501(c)(3) application we can go out a year from the incorporation. The organization is funded through the Main Street Program until June of 2018. We will want to complete the agreement before elections.
- Discussion of Conflict of Interest Policy. Note, in addition to what is written in the Policy, it states, “This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to not-for-profit corporations or which may be applicable to the Organization by virtue of any grants or other funding received by the Organization.” Determined we should approve the new board members first.
- Approval of new board members: Fredric Foels and George Ferber. **Motion by Alice, Second by Jason, all in favor.**

- Need to determine term limits so that the Board member renewal is staggered. Also need to discuss officer appointment. Determined to address this at another date.
- Discussion of Preservation Guide & Complete Streets / Vacant Property Abatement that were completed as part of the Tonawanda Main Street program. Documents are finalized with minor revisions requested. Discussion of preservation tools in place in the City of Tonawanda. There is a Historic Preservation Committee but there is not Historic Preservation Commission. The City has made resolutions to stop buildings in the Central Business District from either being demolished or having façade alterations. Discussion of the potential to create a historic district. Only local laws can regulate historic buildings, but National Register listing provides an opportunity for owners to receive tax credits for improvements to historic structures. Discussion with State Historic Preservation Office representative state that while currently many of the buildings are show on state mapping as “not eligible” the determination was made in 1992 and a lot has changed since that time. Stated that, given the size of the area it may not be necessary to do a historic survey. The National Register listing is a substantial process, overlapping historic survey information, potentially we could start this process rather than conducting a survey. There would need to be coordination of owners’ support for listing. Phone call into the State to discuss an initial assessment to see for the area. Potential to bring in a consultant for National Register listing work. Clinton Brown has expressed interest in working with the program. Old Fulton Postcards identified as a source of information that was used in North Tonawanda. Tonawandas Historic Society has information about historic buildings. **Motion by Alice to adopt the Complete Streets documents and the Preservation Guide with September 23, 2017 revisions, second by Jason, all in favor.**
- Committee member ratification: The Historic Preservation, Economic Revitalization and Marketing Committees are up and running. All but the Marketing Committee has a chair. Jackie Smilnich discussed as a potential chair. Linda Foels identified as someone to be involved in the committee (chair of the committee needs to be a board member). Typically, Committee members will be approved during our Annual Meeting, but in advance of that we can ratify all members who have stated they would like to be official members in email, except Bill and Nancy Karcher but they regularly attend meetings. Committee membership is similar to an advisor. **Motion by Alice to approve Committee Members as listed in the Agenda, second by John, all in favor. Need to develop an Org Chart for the LDC and its committees.**
- Training Session for Tonawanda Main Street grant needs to be completed. **The Board will move forward with the training session on Saturday, October 28, 2017 from 9 am to 12 pm.** All Board Members and Committee Members should attend for all or part of the meeting as their availability allows. **Senior Center will be reserved as a space to hold the session. Will contact the City to see if they would provide refreshments (donuts and coffee).**
- Transition from Tonawanda Main Street to City of Tonawanda LDC – A newsletter announcing incorporation of the LDC has been distributed (via email).

Don't want to lose all the good work that went into developing Tonawanda Main Street. Our current focus remains the downtown. Tonawanda Main Street sounds friendlier than an LDC. North Tonawanda has Oliver Street program under Lumber City, our model will be similar to that, maintaining Tonawanda Main Street as a committee under the LDC.

- Discussion of the Work Plans for Tonawanda Main Street. Will have a special meeting on a weeknight to discuss updating the Work Plans with Roxanne Kise, Charlie Rech and Allison Harrington, and any Board Members that are available. Don't need to do an additional SWOT.
- Planning for Tactical Event conducted on Tuesday, September 19th. Determined we would move forward with an event on Thursday, November 2nd at 5 pm. There was a discussion of having it the same time as Haunted Harbor, but given that last year there were 3,000 participants, it was determined that that it would not be an appropriate time to host the event. On November 2nd we hope to close Main Street from Niagara Street to Broad Street and half of Adam Street from Main Street to possibly the Adam Street parking lot, Fred Foels stated that this wouldn't be an issue.
- Roxanne and Allison will work on developing an Entrepreneurial Training Program to include an element for existing business owners (social media/website development) and potential business owners (how to start up a business). Rachel, who is managing the redevelopment of the former Legion and is working on developing an indoor market as something of an incubator, while interested is not to the point where she is contacting tenants of the indoor market. Potential to contact the Tonawandas Chamber of Commerce to coordinate with their Business Connections program.
- Erie Canalway Grant – While we are unable to submit on this because we are not a 501(c)(3), the City could and it would be a great opportunity to ask for funding for a kiosk in the Intermodal Hub. Additional State funding was just announced by the Governor. Jason will talk to the City to see what they are interested in. City has a grant writer that they work with to submit grant applications. Robin Schimminger is also a good person to contact for funding. Possibility to look at joint funding opportunities between Tonawanda and North Tonawanda.
- Upcoming Events – Allison contacted the Cornell Extension Master Gardeners Program regarding assistance with a planting event in the spring. Will move forward bring groups together this fall to start to coordinate a spring planting event. Potential to bring in Buffalo Niagara Water Keepers (formerly River Keepers) organization to assist with determining plantings. Email sent to businesses about upcoming events. North Tonawanda is moving forward with planning for Winter Walk.

Next Meeting Date: October 24, 2017 at 5:00 pm. Motion to close the meeting by John, Second by Alice, all in favor. Meeting closed at 6:20.