

# Minutes of the Old City District Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, October 17, 2012 4:00 pm

231 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA

**In Attendance:** Sheryl Bar, Jane Cowley (NPS), Lynn Martin Haskin, Avram Hornik, Christopher Laufer, Pat Lavelle, Jafar Maleki, Christopher McGill, David Neff, Carolyn Pfeiffer, Joseph Ritchie, Peter Rothberg, Joe Schiavo for Ryan Berley, OCCA, Luca Sena, Albert Taus, Laurie Townsend-Rapp, Ellen Yin.

Graham Copeland (Executive Director), Greg Diehl (Economic Development Coordinator), Brett Mapp (Operations Director)

**Absent:** Ryan Berley (OCCA), Harvey Spear, Josh Grimes

**Guests:** Janet Kalter

**Call to Order:** Chairman Joe Ritchie called the meeting to order at 4:05.

## **Minutes:**

Minutes for the September 2012 meeting were previously circulated to board members via email. L. Haskin moved to accept the minutes, amended to reflect that Josh Grimes was present at the September board meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup>/D. Neff. All in favor, approved.

## **Chairman's Report:** J. Ritchie

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Lighting Ceremony - the event to inaugurate the new street lighting on October 5 was organized by OCD and well-attended by elected officials, city agency representatives and the general public, and was covered by regional news media. This was a success for OCD - a long-anticipated, "high-visibility" project that did not require capital expenditure on our part.
- Branding Campaign Launch - the kickoff event on October 12 was another successful high-profile event, held at the new Hotel Monaco with good attendance from neighborhood stakeholders and project supporters.

## **Executive Director's Report:** G. Copeland

- OCD has been receiving positive feedback as an organization. We have positioned ourselves with large and small stakeholders as adding value and taking a leadership role, based on the Old City branding project and launch event, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street lighting project.

Minutes prepared by Graham Copeland

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- Positive media attention - stories about branding, lighting and Old City tech firms have effectively replaced the negative press that Old City had two years ago.
- Street trees - 20 new trees are being planted this fall in partnership with Phila Parks & Rec; we received the tree inventory from Fine Garden Creations and working with Carolyn Pfeiffer on the next steps with a management plan.
- Economic Development -
  - Business attraction - OCD is now positioned so that retailers, groups like Select Greater Phila & Convention & Visitors Bureau, real estate brokers and developers are contacting us for neighborhood tours and company-specific site visits.
  - Registered Community Organization - we have been accepted by the Planning Commission as an RCO and developing our procedures.
  - Storefront improvement grants - we are working with applicants and the Commerce Department, which selected Old City for their program.
  - One Franklin Place a.k.a. 401 Race Street - Developer ARC Properties is giving positive indications that they are proceeding with their project.
  - 320 Walnut Street - purchased by Phila Management. Developer is proceeding with renovations, creating 70 apartments + 2,200 sf first floor retail.
- Clean & Safe
  - OCD lobbied the City and received more police, and have implemented an effective program with Prodigal, and the two are working nicely together, and Prodigal also is working well with the nightlife establishments.
  - The result is the street incidents are down, the arrests for quality of life nuisances are up, and the negative publicity has ended.
- Utility construction
  - Water main break at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Chestnut: PWD will be working through end of year; street closure on 3<sup>rd</sup> from Locust to Chestnut and on Walnut from 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> St. sewer project - targeting end of November for completion; weather permitting.

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- Street paving - City paving operations are proceeding now in Old City, in the evenings to minimize disruption; nearing completion on the number streets.
- Under the Ben Franklin Bridge - DRPA is now rethinking their position on uses of the space under the bridge - Fran O'Brien, Customer & Community Relations, reached out to OCD and OCCA to conduct walking tours and consider possible alternative uses and physical improvements.
- 7-11 store - P. Rothberg expressed concern for a 7-11 store possibly opening at 242 - 244 Market, and requested that the staff contact landlord Kimco and 7-11 corporate to discuss alternative storefront designs. D. Neff also offered to contact Kimco to establish a dialogue.

## **Treasurer's Report:** C. McGill

- Assessment collections revenues slowed as typical for this time of year. Current year and prior year assessments are ahead of budget.
- Expenses are on track, with one issue on the timing of payments for police overtime services, as invoices are received 2 - 3 months after each service month.
- With the pending acquisition of VIST Bank's Old City branch by East River Bank, C. McGill suggested that OCD close our account there and move it to another institution to avoid a conflict of interest.

## **Committee Reports:**

- **Marketing:** S. Bar
  - Branding Launch - the event was a success, and based on the project, there is a feeling that the community is coming together.
  - The committee will be considering next projects in the brand implementation.
- **Clean & Safe:** P. Rothberg
  - Recess Lounge, 125 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. - the transfer of the license between partners has been pending; the committee has withdrawn our Petition to Intervene,

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and there was a PLCB administrative hearing, with the outcome to be determined.

- A set of standards is being developed by the committee to review an applicant's background for any pending license transfer.
  - Red Sky, 224 Market St. - OCD submitted a PTI for this person-to-person transfer, which was rejected by the PLCB.
  - Ben Franklin Beer Distributor, 27 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. - a Conditional License Agreement has been negotiated between the applicant, OCD and OCCA, and an administrative hearing has been scheduled with PLCB, due to the continued Protest of a neighbor.
  - Philadelphia Bar & Restaurant, 120 Market St. - has filed a federal suit against the City of Phila and the Commonwealth of PA, challenging their Conditional License Agreement.
  - Traffic & congestion study - staff is going back to Dean & Dolan to clarify items in their proposal with the goal of moving forward to a contract.
  - Big Belly purchase - proceeding before year-end for the purchase.
  - Taxi zone on Market Street - E. Yin commented that the new taxi zone across from her restaurant is not being used.
  - Fire & Ice, 312 Market St. (formerly Patou) - E. Yin expressed concern about this venue now under construction, as it is projected to operate as a nightclub.
- **Economic Development:** A. Hornik
    - Registered Community Organization (RCO) - a document outlining RCO internal guidelines was distributed in the board package and reviewed by the board. It proposed that the OCD Board delegate certain authorities to the Economic Development Committee, empowering it to serve as an RCO on behalf of the board. J. Ritchie emphasized that the process will include all board members, by way of inviting them to meetings and providing for their ability to vote, in person or via proxy.

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- L. Haskin moved to achieve delegation of duties from the Old City District Board to the Economic Development Committee to operate as a Registered Community Organization, as amended:  
The OCD Economic Development Committee and staff are hereby authorized by the OCD board to operate Old City District's Registered Community Organization, including the following:
  - Meet with applicants per guidelines established by Philadelphia City Planning Commission to conduct application reviews;
  - Develop positions on behalf of the OCD;
  - Draft and submit letters to PCPC, ZBA and other interested parties on behalf of OCD, stating the committee's voted position and rationale;
    - Letters may be signed by Executive Director after review and approval by Board Chair and Economic Development Committee Chair.
  - Issue position statements in the OCD newsletter, in a "RCO Update" or in another regular form of publication.
  - Advocate to support the OCD's position with elected officials, economic development entities, brokers, and others.
  - Allow staff to provide information about the approval process (both City and OCD) to applicants.
  - Allow the Economic Development Chair and Executive Director to make statements to media and reporters, which will be consistent with the language in the approved letter.
  - Adopt and abide by a procedure that includes all OCD board members in the process via meeting invitations and voting rights at all RCO meetings.

2<sup>nd</sup>/S. Bar. All in favor, approved.

- **Board Development:** no report

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- Business accelerator proposal - a series of documents prepared by Peter Gold was included in the board package and reviewed. Mr. Gold has created entities at Rutgers and Arizona State universities similar to the one proposed for Old City. He seeks to approach other universities, and is seeking OCD's support to facilitate his project development efforts. Mr. Gold requested a letter of support from OCD for his proposed initiative, but with no request for funding assistance or other resources at this time.
  - P. Rothberg moved to approve the execution of the letter of support to Peter Gold for the proposed Old City Business Accelerator. 2<sup>nd</sup>/L. Haskin. All in favor, approved.

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:** a written monthly update on assessment collections via Lee Herman was requested.

**Public Comment:** none

**Adjournment:** P. Lavelle motioned to adjourn the meeting/2<sup>nd</sup> P. Rothberg. All in favor, approved. The meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm.

**The next meeting will be held on Wed. November 21, 4:00 pm, at 231 Market Street.**