



Rahway Special Improvement District Report

Monday, July 10, 2023

I. **SID Business Improvement Program** – Forgivable loans for new and existing Rahway businesses for the following areas:

- Fit Out/Interior Improvements = Up to \$2,000 per business
- Signage = Up to \$2,000 per business
- Brand Marketing/Design Services = Up to \$2,000 per business
- MBE Certified – Minority, Women, Veteran, LGBTQ = \$1,000 per business that has or gets the certification
- The maximum given to one business is \$7,000.
- Businesses must stay in operation for one year to have it be 50% forgiven and two years to have it be 100% forgiven.
- Applications were open from March 1st and closed on April 30th.

Update

- A letter is being sent this week to all applicants of the BIP notifying them of their eligibility status. Anyone who has been deemed an eligible business must now submit a vendor quote, proposal or other documentation showing how funds will be used. In the case of signage, applicants will also need to provide a sign rendering and a commercial zoning permit to receive approval.
- All funding requests are due by September 1, 2023.
- There was a total of 130 applicants for the BIP. 107 businesses met the established criteria for eligibility.

Facade Improvement Program - \$250,000 has been allocated for property owners to improve their exterior facades and storefronts as \$10,000 forgivable loans.

Update

- A letter will be sent to all applicants of the FIP notifying them of their eligibility status. Eligible applicants will need to schedule a consultation with the SID Project Manager and City Planner about proposed improvements.
- There was a total of 32 applicants for the FIP. 23 applicants met the established criteria for eligibility.

II. **ServSafe Food Handler & Manager Training**

- SID sponsored a ServSafe Manager training for restaurant food handlers. Training was offered by the Rahway Department of Health. The training took place on Tuesday, June 20 from 8:30am-4:30pm in the Rahway Recreation Center.
- The cost was \$60 per participant for Rahway Restaurants and \$120 for non-Rahway restaurants.
- 10 people attended the class.

III. **Lewis Street Market**

- The Lewis Street Market seeks to offer locally produced goods as well as offering local businesses an opportunity to showcase their products and services.
- The market will take place on Fridays from June-August from 4-8pm behind the pavilion on the corner of Lewis and Main Street and will coincide with music at the Paseo (6:30-9pm).

- In 2022, the Lewis Street Market took place 5 times from July-September with 8-10 vendors and local businesses participating. Vendors sold items including candles, clothes, honey, hand carved wood signs, jewelry and flowers.

Update

- This year we have 14 vendors scheduled for each date.
- The June 23rd Market was cancelled due to weather.
- Remaining Dates for 2023: July 14, July 28, August 11, and August 25.

IV. New Business Openings

- **WhitPR** - Rahway officially welcomed WhitPR June 15th to the newly renovated National located at 1420 Irving Street. WhitPR is an award winning, woman owned, nationally recognized strategic communications firm that merges creative strategies to promote culturally diverse clients to the right audience.
- **Copacabana Coffee & Bagels** - Mayor Giacobbe officially cut the ribbon welcoming the coffee shop to 77 E. Milton Ave. The owner, Hani Eldieb roasts his own coffee beans and bakes fresh handmade croissants and bagels on the premises daily.

V. Up Coming Events for July & August

- Music at the Paseo – Every Friday night from 6:30-9:30pm
- Music at Arts District Park – Every Saturday night from 6-8pm
- Junktion Funktion – July 29 1-7pm at Train Station Plaza
- Lewis Street Market - July 14, July 28, August 11, and August 25 from 4-8pm
- Dinner & Show with UCPAC for the Outlaws show on August 25
- Soirée en Blanc – August 27 on Cherry Street