



Ad Hoc Business, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 3, 2024, 5:00 PM - 6:00PM
In Person at Hamilton Stage, 360 Hamilton Street

Committee Members in Attendance:

JoAnn Gemenden – NJ Clean Communities

Michelle McTamney – Edward Jones

Jeff Spelman – The Coffee Box

Absent: *Deanna Hunt – UCPAC, Laura Lopez – Millie & Joy*

Danni Newbury – City of Rahway, Nick Rosal – Atelier Rosal,

Armanii Saahd-Tann – Rahway Dance Theatre, Dawn White – Hannum's Harley Davidson

Staff: *Anthony Armando – Special Improvement District, City of Rahway*

Karin Napier – Special Improvement District, City of Rahway

Guest: *Kim Farrier - UCPAC*

SAVE THE DATE: The next committee meeting is Monday, August 5th at 5:00pm at Hamilton Stage.

Welcome: Anthony Armando opened the meeting and updated the committee on a variety of projects and then opened discussions for new business amongst committee members:

I. Event Recaps and Projects:

SID Business Improvement Program & Facade Improvement Program: The committee was updated about additional eligible businesses that have been recently funded. Also, new businesses were contacted to be included in the grant funding application.

NJ Arts & Music Express held on Saturday, May 4th, went well for an inaugural event, even with a cool and overcast day and then rain near the end of the event time. The Coffee Box had musicians performing all day, UCPAC had a Star Wars screening, and the Arts District Park mural dedication ceremony was well attended. The Cherry Street vendor market and the art galleries reported good traffic. A committee member suggested that next year, please create maps that are distributed to the shops and have an info table near Cherry Street. Also relayed was that no one was receiving visitors at the other townships and not many people used the train. Those who did take the train said they were stuck in Avenel for two hours and as the stop schedule was sparse after 12:00pm.

Action: Anthony will reach out to Avenel to discuss a post-mortem with the organizers of the other townships.

II. Upcoming Projects & Events:

- a. New Public Art Incentive Grant Program will be funded directly from a SID Grant to encourage new murals, sculptures or light art into Rahway. Installation requirements are that they art would need to be visible from a public gathering standpoint. The grant will be available starting on August 1st.
- b. The Extra Space Storage on 2255 Elizabeth Avenue, will have a mural painted on a façade wall starting on Monday, July 1st.
- c. The Latin Stroll is scheduled for Saturday, June 22nd with four stroll locations. NJ Salsa is hosting the event which starts at the Recreation center, with live musicians accompanying participants to three locations – Romero's, The Waiting Room and the Lounge at the Watt Hotel.

- d. The Soiree En Blanc dining event is scheduled for Sunday, August 25th, with a rain date of Sept. 1st.
- e. Small Business Saturday planning starts up in late August.

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- f. Holiday Lights – Holiday décor information will be supplied at the next Ad Hoc Meeting. A committee member suggested that more lights be installed on East Cherry Street.
- g. Social Media and Branding Program: Fourteen small businesses applied for a grant that allowed a social media specialist to work with three finalists. The chosen businesses were: Wet Ticket, Millie & Joy and Sabor Peruano. Check out new postings from each business soon to see the difference.

III. Old Business:

Anthony updated the committee that the new wayfinding signage discussed at a prior meeting is moving forward. He will update the members at the next committee meeting.

IV. Open Discussion / New Business:

Anthony updated the committee about the East Cherry Street Streetscape construction which would start in 2025. The plan was altered and all businesses are invited to a public presentation about the changes to the design which will be held on June 14th at 10:00am at the Rahway Public Library auditorium.

Save the date: UCPAC will be holding a new fundraiser event called Flight Night on Thursday, October 10th, they will be looking for auction items.

The owners of the Rahway National building on 1420 Irving Street are presenting at the planning board on June 12th to seek approval to allow a restaurant, including an outdoor rooftop, and music venue to operate at the former bank building downtown.

A vacant property list is on the city's website, soon to be available on the SID website as well for easy reference.

V. Ribbon Cuttings

a. June 3rd - World of Beauty on 84 Monroe Street. Owner, Teresa Grande and her team of licensed professionals, offer the latest beauty services and treatments for all ages and styles in a beautiful and modern beauty salon. To feel and look your best, stop by and indulge in a world of beauty. The business is open Monday through Saturday. Please call 908-936-2429.

b. June 5 – The Lymphatic Massage on 1544 Irving Street, Suite 2. Owner, Yamilca Montero, specializes in medical and therapeutic modalities, post operative and lymphatic drainage massage. Check out her full range of services. The business is open Monday through Saturday. Please call 732-277-7552.

c. June 26th – Akasa Yoga, located at 208 Central Avenue, offers a safe place for all to connect their mind, body, soul and heart through the beautiful practice of yoga. Owner, Melanie Gonzalez Kennedy, is an inspired Latina woman who strives to bring the community together through movement. Please call 908-514-3992.

www.akasayoganj.com

Future ribbon cuttings are planned for: The Chicken Box, Mana Spanish Food 2 and Marantha Coin and Jewelry

Adjournment: Anthony Armando thanked everyone for and the meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.