A regular meeting of the Downtown Advisory Commission was held on Thursday, December 14, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. WTVP Studios, 101 State Street, 1st Floor, Peoria, IL 61602, with Chairman Mark Misselhorn presiding and with proper notice having been given.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

Roll Call confirmed the following Commissioners physically present: Mark Misselhorn, Ray Lees, Jon Jenkins, Katy Shackelford, Becky Frye, Kip Strasma, John Gibson, Paige Dodson President Gary Roberts (4:17)

Absent: Alma Brown

City Staff Present: Stacy Peterson, Leah Allison, Kim Smith

Council members: Sid Ruckriegel

Chairman Misselhorn thanked WTVP for hosting the Commission meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Dr. Gary Roberts and Paige Dodson were introduced as the new members of the DAC. Ms. Dodson is a structural engineer with Farnsworth and has been there for 8 and a half years. President Roberts is a Bradley alum, taught at Limestone High School, was asked to apply to for the role of President. His wife, Donna, is an artist. They are involved in different boards and want to see Peoria thrive.

Chairman Misselhorn recognized the work of Kip Strasma and his wife, Ann and congratulated them on their move to Chicago.

MINUTES

Commissioner Shackelford motioned for approval of the minutes of the regular Downtown Advisory Commission (DAC) meeting held on November 7, 2017 with a correction to indicate that Commissioner Alison Daly was present at the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Lees. The motion was approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION BY JERRY KOLB, COO OF WTVP AND SUSAN HOFFMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PEORIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Mr. Kolb discussed the origin of WTVP. He discussed how the founder had the license for WCBU, but was so inspired by Sesame Street that he acquired a second license for WTVP. Originally slated to be channel 59, he managed to get channel 59 to switch to 47. 47 was initially a Decatur number. Their current building was built in 2003 with one of the largest studios in downstate IL and was designed by Reece and Associates. H Wayne Wilson commented on the quality of the studio and complimented the soundproofing, despite being located but a railroad track. Other WTVP offerings were mentioned by Mr. Kolb including create and the children’s channel.

In 2012, the PSO moved their offices into the building. Mr. Kolb came to Peoria in 1965. He mentioned the bounty of businesses and restaurants that were available downtown at that time. He then discussed the transition of businesses moving out, later followed by the new development, art studios, museums and restaurants in the Warehouse District. WTVP does programming specific to Peoria including screenings at the studio, at the PRM, programs on prohibition in Peoria, At Issue, State and Water, programs with the Chiefs, Pigs and Swigs and Ignite Peoria.

Susan Hoffman, Executive Director of the PSO pointed out that the DAC was meeting in the space known as CUBE - C to the 3rd power: community collaboration and creativity. The space is used for master classes, board meetings, recitals and more.

The PSO does a season of 8 concerts. The majority are performed at the Civic Center (6 at the PCC). Economic impact includes musicians who get paid, attendees who stay in hotels, eat at the restaurants and even fly in to attend. The recent LaLa Land concert brought people from all over Illinois. Additional offerings include outreach with local schools and programming like the Bright Futures program, which starts with preschool leading up to senior living communities. The student concert series serves 2,000 students every year. This has been running for 45 years and can be the only time that many of the students get the opportunity to see a symphony.

The PSO also hosts Residence Artist Week (RAW) with a guest artist who arrives one week prior to the concert. They go into the community, hospitals, schools and even perform in the street at Kelleher’s. Now in it’s 5th season with a two series collaboration with WTVP, focusing on a program for children (with live audience) that gets taped and broadcast and the other program is for an adult audience.

PSO is celebrating their 120th anniversary this year. Upcoming programs to support the PSO include: Whiskey in the Warehouse or business sponsorships. If you’ve not been to the PSO, make an effort to try. You will get the opportunity to see wonderful musicians. Ms. Hoffman asked that the DAC act as advocates on behalf of the PSO.

PRESENTATION BY RENEE CHARLES, SPOKESPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR BRADLEY UNIVERSITY ON BRADLEY’S NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

Ms. Charles first gave a presentation on the different community partnerships in the city with Bradley University. The presentation showed examples of student’s experiences in Peoria including entertainment, jobs and convergence projects. Bradley students raised over $253K for non-profits. They volunteered over 66, 234 in hours of volunteer work last year. Many student service groups volunteer at different places (as part of Service Saturdays). This is not a requirement, but something the students do to be a part of the community. Student athletes also donate their time to several agencies, in addition to their school and athletic responsibilities. Capstone Projects allow students to work with a profit and non-profit, including this year’s “Fight The Blight” project which worked with several community groups.
A recent Convergence Project involving air valve design afforded students the opportunity to work with CAT. That project is currently going through the ip process at CAT with hopes of coming to production.

Additional partnerships with Bradley include: Peoria NEXT (recently celebrating their 10th anniversary) as well as the Turner Center. Other efforts include having Mayor Ardis write a letter to the incoming students of Bradley. Future efforts include a student newsletter entitled “Beyond Bradley” to notify the students of what’s happening off of campus. This will allow students to reach out to different areas. Ms. Charles stated that students want to be a part of the academic and cultural aspect of Peoria, as well. Commissioner Shackelford asks what citizens can do to better engage with the university. She stated that she engages with a sorority on campus, but challenges other agencies in the city to approach the university, rather than wait for the students to come to them.

Commissioner Dodson asked how to get a non-profit on the list of choices for volunteer projects. Ms. Charles explains that the choices are made a semester in advance. Ms. Charles said to contact her so she can get the information.

Molly Beth Rice, Molly Crusen Bishop (citizen) talked about the SERVE students who worked in the North Side community garden. She offered help to Ms. Charles. Chairman Misselhorn talked about the impact that the students have made and encouraged that this information gets publicized. He acknowledged the student liaison from Bradley who was an invaluable. Ms. Charles encouraged the group to welcome the students into their businesses. Chairman Misselhorn stated that it’s important to make a connection so their experience is good, which could perhaps lead to the students wanting to stay, post-graduation. President Roberts talked about the new development on Bradley’s campus and the collaborations with Peoria Public Schools, as well as the impact of the Small Business Center.

President Roberts points out that Bradley is isolated from downtown. If the Main Street corridor could be more appealing, it would help connect the university to downtown. Chairman Misselhorn talked about different efforts that have been made and points out the work down by Jon and Angie Walker, along with the West Main business association.

Commissioner Dodson asked if there’s been any discussion with CityLink. City Planner Kim Smith said that they tried to have that discussion when we hosted the pilot shuttle.

**PRESENTATION BY NICK BRUNER ON THE AIA DESIGN COMPETITION REGARDING THE FULTON STREET STUDY**

Mr. Bruner introduced himself and his role with American Institute of Architects as a board member

Two years ago they hosted the warehouse gateway competition and had over twenty participants. It was decided to do this every other year. Focus was on downtown and Chris Setti proposed Fulton plaza.

Competition was announced in August. The received 22 submissions (18 were Bradley students) and had a panel of judges. Judges looked at context to the site, innovative ideas, and sustainability for the criteria for the project. There were three winners: student award, runner up and grand prize. The project designs were turned over to the city for their records. There has been no promise, plans or money to build any of the award-winning designs. Commissioner Lees asked if the designs could be found online. At this time, Mr. Bruner said they are on display in the PRM board room, but are not online at this time.
Chairman Misselhorn thanked him for partnering with the city to identify relevant areas. Chairman Misselhorn points out that this is another area where there is a lack of connectivity and lack of storefronts.

Chairman Misselhorn thanked Mr. Bruner for the competition and encouraged the city to consider the designs.

**UPDATE ON WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE STUDY**
At the November meeting, Assistant City Manager Chris Setti discussed an opportunity to receive funding for a wayfinding study through Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC). He explained that TCRPC had some transportation planning funds that could be used for any project that fit their criteria. He described the City’s previous efforts to develop a comprehensive downtown wayfinding system. He stated the City would request $50,000 to fund a study that would produce a plan, suggested design of signage, and budget for implementation. He said that the systems would accommodate the needs of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. He asked for the Commission’s support of a resolution that would be sent to TCRPC.

Today's update from Nick Stoffer, Traffic Engineer (not present) stated Tri county accepted the application for wayfinding the grant (58K) and next step is steering committee, RFP, and working with national firms in expertise with wayfinding.

Chairman Misselhorn stated that this grant ties into user-friendly place making, parking, etc. This grant will be very well used. The study will need to be done by June 2018 and the idea for the study will offer phased implementation. If prioritized and phased, it will be implemented in an easier way.

**UPDATE ON DOWNTOWN POPULATION SURVEY**
Chairman Misselhorn stated that Chris Setti is with Mike Freilinger to reach out to Bradley. There is potential to use students from Dr. Mitch Griffin’s Marketing Research class.

**NEW BUSINESS**
Chairman Misselhorn opened the floor to new business from commissioners. There was none.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**
Chairman Misselhorn requested that Pat Sullivan talk about aggressive peddlers. Mr. Sullivan said that he’s encountered more aggressive panhandlers near his place of business. He knows that Don Johnson from the Salvation Army and the Veteran groups are aware of it. Mr. Sullivan recommended that these gentlemen speak to the DAC. Chairman Misselhorn points out that this is a good idea and that this is a social service issue and a challenge to cities around the country. He thanked Mr. Sullivan for bringing this up. Chairman Misselhorn noted that some of this will relate to education and how people should respond to panhandlers. He affirmed that it’s important to address the issue as it’s not safe for residents, students or visitors.
ADJOURNMENT
The Downtown Advisory Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:15pm.
Becky motioned to close.

Next meeting is January 11.

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Stacy Peterson, City of Peoria
City Manager’s Office
RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PEORIA DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMISSION CONCERNING SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF PEORIA’S REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION FOR THE COMPLETION OF A STUDY OF WAYFINDING IN DOWNTOWN AND THE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT:

WHEREAS The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has disseminated a call for proposals to utilize Special Transportation Planning funds; and,

WHEREAS The City of Peoria on October 24, 2017 submitted a request for said funds to help pay for a study of a new wayfinding system for Downtown Peoria, the Warehouse District and surrounding areas; and,

WHEREAS Wayfinding is a critical part of infrastructure for a community and assists motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians; and,

WHEREAS Soliciting the input of the public is a critical part of any planning activity.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it hereby resolved, this 9th of November 2017, that the Downtown Advisory Commission of the City of Peoria endorses and supports the City of Peoria’s application for such funding and furthermore pledges to assist in its capacity as a Commission with public outreach and input activities.

APPROVED:

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Chairman, Downtown Advisory Commission