A regular meeting of the Downtown Advisory Commission was held on Thursday, October 12, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. in the O’Neill Room of Kelleher’s, 619 SW Water Street, Peoria, IL 61602, with Chairman Mark Misselhorn presiding and with proper notice having been given.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

Roll Call confirmed the following Commissioners physically present: Mark Misselhorn, Becky Frye, Ray Lees, Jon Jenkins, John Gibson, Katy Shackelford, Alma Brown, Alison Daly (8).

Absent: None.

City Staff Present: Chris Setti, Scott Reeise

Chairman Misselhorn thanked Pat Sullivan and Bryan Harlan for their hospitality in hosting the meeting and providing refreshments. He introduced Alma Brown as the new Commissioner, replacing Adam Hamilton. Commissioner Brown provided her background, including her long tenure as a City employee and her current position in guest services and community outreach at Caterpillar. Chairman Misselhorn also announced Commissioner Daly was also resigning from the Commission due to her impending move to Houston for work. Commissioner Daly thanked the Commission for its work and promised to visit often in the future.

Chairman Misselhorn asked Grace Elisco, the Commission’s informal liaison to Bradley’s student body, to give a quick update on her work. Ms. Elisco reported that the Student Senate wants to create a newsletter highlighting downtown events. She will be working with the Peoria Riverfront Association on this project.

MINUTES

Commissioner Frye motioned for approval of the minutes of the rescheduled regular Downtown Advisory Commission (DAC) meeting held on September 21, 2017 as printed; seconded by Commissioner Lees. The motion was approved unanimously.

BUSINESS PRESENTATION: WHISKEY CITY SALVAGE AND DESIGN

Bill Sullivan, co-owner of Whiskey City Salvage and Whiskey City Design, discussed his business located at 1101 SW Washington (the “Mill” building). He said the businesses started in June 2015. He spoke of the Salvage company as a business that recovers building elements from buildings slated for demolition that are resold in their store and on the internet. They partner with the City to obtain salvage rights to buildings, but also work in other communities and with private owners. He said they can work on two to three houses each month. The Design company works to incorporate salvaged items into unique designs for local businesses. Whiskey City Design did all of the design work for Tannin & Hops and also did work for the Bearded Owl.

Mr. Sullivan discussed their recent purchase of 836 SW Washington. They intend the building to house the Salvage retail space plus a coffee shop. They are hoping to attract a tenant for the remaining portion of the building, ideally a brewery or distillery. He stated that there was no intention to begin redevelopment until they found a tenant.

BUSINESS PRESENTATION: BEARDED OWL

Nick Babcock discussed his and his partners’ new microbrewery, The Bearded Owl. The bar will be located in the space formerly occupied by Rizzi’s on State. Mr. Babcock described himself as a lifelong Peorian who had been homebrewing for 5-6 years. He partnered with Christian Payne, formerly of Peoria Brewing Company, on this
endeavor. They hope to open by the end of the year. Their motto is “prairie inspired hand-crafted ales” and they hope to buy as many ingredients locally as they can. He stated that he felt the presence of multiple breweries and bars in one area of town was good for business and he welcomed additional competition.

In response to questions by Chairman Misselhorn and Commissioner Daly, Mr. Babcock stated that they would have limited food options to begin but hoped to have a full kitchen in the future. While they were primarily a beer bar, they would have a limited selection of other alcohol.

BUSINESS PRESENTATION: GONE IN 60
Matt Rueder and Sarah Fickes presented their new business, Gone in 60 Escape Games. The business is located on the first floor of Persimmon Lofts at 1028 SW Adams. Mr. Rueder stated that their goal was to “bring the fun” back to downtown. The two described their backgrounds and business model. They currently have two rooms but would like to build two more rooms. They described their clientele as a mixture of businesses seeking team-building exercises, families, groups of friends and couples. In response to Ms. Elisco, Ms. Fickes said they were considering offering student discounts but did not at the time. She described the current pricing model and hours of operation.

UPDATE ON RIVERFRONT VILLAGE DEMOLITION
Public Works Director Scott Reeise gave a brief update on the plan to demolish Riverfront Village and build a park in its place. He stated that his team had recently visited with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to discuss the limits of building within the flood plain. IDNR will allow them to tear down the structure and have up to a year to replace it. They will also allow the City to construct more defenses for the River Station building. He stated that his team was getting a lot of public feedback on their draft plans. They are looking at making changes along Liberty Street between Water and the river, including removing the gazebo. This will allow for a better area to host the riverfront market. The City is also considering a master plan for the entire riverfront. In response to a question by Commissioner Shackelford, Mr. Reeise said that the plan was to begin demolition this winter.

DISCUSSION OF DOWNTOWN CENSUS
Mr. Setti introduced the idea of creating a census of downtown residents. The goal would be to obtain an accurate headcount of people living in the area. The Commission discussed the difference between a census and survey, describing the former as an effort at counting specific things. They further discussed the value of a survey to determine habits, preferences and other characteristics. In a discussion between Commissioners and Ms. Elisco, it was decided that Mr. Setti and Michael Freilinger, along with Ms. Elisco, would investigate whether this topic would make a good project for Bradley students. They committed to making contact to start the process.

NEW BUSINESS
Commissioner Shackelford thanked the owner of Tannin & Hops for hosting a recent pop up event.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Pat Sullivan commented on the proliferation of aggressive panhandling in downtown and suggested this be a topic of a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
The Downtown Advisory Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:05 pm.

Chris Setti, City of Peoria
City Manager’s Office