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**WEST READING MAIN STREET JOINT BOARDS
AUTHORITY & FOUNDATION**

**MINUTES
DECEMBER 1, 2008**

Call to Order

Shane J. Keller, MSA Chairman and MSF President, called the meeting to order at 6:12PM.

Foundation Board of Director Members Present

Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), President; Deborah Hutcheson (Charles Hutcheson Fine Jewelry), Vice President; Michael Morrill (West Reading Borough Council), Treasurer; George I. Tindall (West Reading Borough Manager), Member; Lynda Kuhn (West Reading Resident), Member; Kevin Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member. A quorum was present.

Foundation Board of Directors Members Absent

Dr. Mark G. Dougherty (Penn Avenue Dental), Secretary; Rebecca Simmons (Firefly on Penn), Member; Margaret Bligh (The Reading Hospital and Medical Center), Member.

Authority Board of Directors Present

Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), Chairman; John C. Woodward (Third and Spruce Café), Vice Chairman; Caitlin Degler (Berkshire Bank), Treasurer; Kevin Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member. A quorum was present.

Authority Board of Directors Absent

Carol Wells (Sweet Surprises), Secretary.

Staff Present

Nevin Hollinger, Main Street Executive Director; Melanie B. Weidner, Main Street Administrative Assistant; Dean L. Rohrbach, Elm Street Manager; Daniel Becker, (Kozloff Stoudt), Solicitor.

Guests Present

Robin Ambrosiani (Resident); Gregory Braley (Resident); Sandy Braley (Resident); Tom Evans (Bethany Lutheran Church); Eileen and Keith Fox (Residents); Don Haines (Elm Street Volunteer); Elizabeth Heckler (Resident); David A. Kostival (Reading Eagle Company); Jay Kupiszewski (Neighborhood Advisory Committee); Karen Livingood (Resident); Bryce D. Matthews (Resident); John Nierle (Resident); Ken Pick (Berks County Redevelopment Authority); Lori and David Weidenhammer (Elm Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee); Marcy Wilkes (Resident).

Public Comments

Ms. Livingood reported that the planting strip in the one hundred block of Second Avenue was not being maintained. Mr. Rohrbach confirmed it was the property owner's responsibility to maintain the planting strips. Ms. Livingood questioned the frequency of street cleaning. Mr. Tindall reported street cleaning was done on a random schedule. Ms. Livingood suggested the 100 block of Second Avenue should be cleaned weekly. Ms. Livingood questioned when the Community Garden would be cleaned up. Mr. Rohrbach reported a clean-up day was scheduled for December 10, 2008.

Elm Street Program Public Meeting

Elm Street Manager, Dean L. Rohrbach, addressed residents to explain the West Reading Elm Street program's goals, objectives and public funding for the final two years of the Five-Year program in the Ten Point's neighborhood and plans to expand Elm Street into a new target neighborhood beginning in 2011. West Reading Elm Street is applying for \$375,000 in matching grant funds to the PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) under the Pennsylvania New Communities Program including \$100,000 in operating funds (\$50,000/year for two years), \$25,000 in planning funds and \$250,000 (Residential Reinvestment grant) in capital funds that can be used for public infrastructure improvements including sidewalks, curbs, tot lots, public parking and more. Funding may also be used for purposes such as public art, façade improvement, home renovations and down payment assistance. Residents of the target area would determine the types of programs and services based on documented needs expressed in a Five-Year Revitalization Plan. Mr. Rohrbach noted that it was anticipated there could be an expansion of the Elm Street program proposed within the next year. Upon approval by the Department of Community and Economic Development, planning could begin for the expanded area. It is anticipated expanded program

operations would not begin before 2011. The new target area would be bordered by Cherry Street to the north, Fourth Avenue to the east, Kent Way to the west and Chestnut Street to the south.

Mr. Rohrbach highlighted the achievements of the Elm Street program over the past three years of operation and the future direction setting anticipated. Information regarding the Elm Street program was distributed and Mr. Rohrbach encouraged the residents living in the newly proposed area to become actively engaged in the planning process.

A question and answer session followed.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Approve the November 2008 minutes as amended. Mr. Conrad made the motion, seconded by Ms. Kuhn. Amendments applied to: (1) the meeting starting time; (2) approval of the Market Managers salary was a Foundation action and Mr. Keller abstained from that vote. **Motion passed 8-0.**

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Degler presented the Board with the Authority's November 2008 Income and Expenses, that reflected a balance of \$6500. Ms. Degler reported with the anticipated \$8200 deposits in December it would leave a balance of close to \$15,000. She suggested if such is the case, some of the funds should be applied to paying off debt. Mr. Hollinger and Ms. Weidner will meet with Ms. Degler to review outstanding December expenses. An updated report will be provided in January.

Ms. Degler reported that the Elm Street Program's operating reserve would last until May 2009. Approximately \$32,000 is in the account. The Elm Street Program's expenditures were \$1,300 less in the month of November.

Mr. Morrill reported on his meeting with Mr. Hollinger and Ms. Weidner. He reported on a few of the financial improvements that had been discussed, including procedures, clearly defined segregation of responsibilities and improved reporting. He reviewed the Summary Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Report.

Motion: Approve the November 2008 treasurer's report. Mr. Woodward made the motion, seconded by Mr. Conrad. **Motion passed 8-0.**

Renewal of Business Improvement District (Authority)

Mr. Keller reported that the board was not required to award the bid at this time, however Borough Council did accept the Authority's recommendations at their last meeting.

Executive Directors Report

Mr. Hollinger referred to his written report, previously distributed. He brought the current Mission Statement to the attention of the board suggesting that prior to the next meeting, they review the statement and consider if it still provides the primary direction setting for the Main Street program.

The Pennsylvania Downtown Center has no record of West Reading receiving Achiever status. Mr. Hollinger reported that he was going proceed with that designation. This will require a ten point assessment by the Pennsylvania Downtown Center. Successful attainment of the ten points will allow the program to be recognized as having received Achiever designation. The designation lasts for three years and our program would receive priority consideration in the granting of supplemental funds.

Good Eatz Green Café will be opening within a week in the former GNA location at 701 Penn Avenue. Mr. Rick Allebach who has been involved with Good Eatz in another community is the business owner.

Motion: Approve to accept the December 2008 Executive Director's Report. Mr. Conrad made motion and Ms. Kuhn seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0.

Promotion & Marketing Team Report (Foundation)

Ms. Hutcheson reported on Holiday Glow advertising with Lamar. The Main Street office is still waiting to hear from Lamar regarding the number of businesses who have agreed to participate in the Holiday Glow billboard promotion this year. Mr. Hollinger would like to extend the deadline in hope of getting a total of 20 participants, in order to lower the expense. Ms. Hutcheson spoke of the 12 Days of Christmas as part of the Holiday Glow celebration. She also spoke of the ongoing First Thursday activities that are now celebrated monthly throughout the Penn Corridor. This week, Santa Clause will be making an evening appearance in both Reading and West Reading. Mr. Keller would like all Holiday Glow activities sent to him so he can mention them during the upcoming Borough tree lighting event. Mr. Tindall reported that the Holiday decorations would be up this week.

Adjourn

Motion: Meeting Adjourn at 7:09PM. Motion made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Tindall. Motion passed 8-0.