

# Old Webster Special Business District Advisory Commission MEETING MINUTES

## APPROVED

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, April 25, 2023  
 LOCATION: City Hall & Zoom  
 CALLED TO ORDER: 8:01 AM  
 MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:55 AM  
 NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 23, 2023

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
Ron Clipp, Chair	X	
Tim Delanty	X	
Bill Newhouse	X	
Stacie Swederska	X	
Dan Warner	X	
Karen Drexler	X	
David Smith	X	
Frank Romano	X	
Emerson Smith, Council Liaison	X	
Eric Peterson, City Liaison	X	

Also, in attendance:

Joe Rath – Former Commission Member  
 Sgt. Jason Flanery – Webster Groves Police Department  
 Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Karen Drexler, seconded by David Smith, and unanimously approved.

**Budget Clarification** – Discussion was held on the distribution of advertising funding to ensure the Old Webster Holiday Open House was included in the line-item breakdown.

**MOTION:** David Smith made a motion to reduce the Old Webster WalktoberFest to \$2,500 and Rooftop Lighting Program to \$2,500 and increase the Old Webster Holiday Open House from \$0 to \$5,000; no change to the budget overall. Frank Romano seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

### **Parks Department Services**

- **New Hanging Baskets** – The Commission had previously made the decision to keep the existing pots of plantings on the sidewalks west of Elm and add hanging baskets on the lampposts on Lockwood east of Elm. The Parks Department, however, installed the new hanging baskets west of Elm instead of east of Elm. As a result, the cost of the new baskets and brackets will not come out of the District’s budget, but the City’s general revenue budget. Pots of plantings will continue to remain west of Elm. An undetermined number of the hanging baskets will be moved east of Elm.
- **Concrete Park Plantings** – The area at the Lockwood entrance of the public parking deck adjacent to McCaughen & Burr Fine Arts is known as the “Concrete Park.” It will receive some permanent plantings as a result of an MSD grant the City received. Initially, the grant was to be used in the six-foot concreted area adjacent

to the sidewalk next to 130 East Lockwood. That area had previously been identified as a location to enhance District landscaping east of Elm. Unfortunately, the property owner wanted \$13,000 for an easement to use the area for a natural garden; as a result, an amenable agreement with the property owner was not reached and the Parks Department pivoted to the Concrete Park as an alternate District location. Commission Members expressed concern as the entire area is used during events for staging; for example, the Information Booth during the Open House and the large band during the WalktoberFest. Members were not opposed to the plantings as long as the area could still be used for these type of functions as there is no other centrally located and open street-side area of sufficient size in the District that can be used. If the design is simply adding a tree at the back of the area near the stairs that should be okay as the entire pad forward is used for staging during events. If needed the existing bike rack can be moved to another location in the District.

- **Schnaar's Flagpole Planting Box** – Since the natural garden will not be in the east end of the District a possible alternative area for plantings could be the Schnaar's flagpole planting box if they are open to it. It is not as large but would contribute to the landscaping at that end of the District; Eric Peterson will reach out to Schnaar's.
- **Straub's Sidewalk Plantings** – The other area in the District previously identified for improved landscaping is the strip of plantings and trees along the street and sidewalk in front of Straub's; the section between the two entrance/exits of the Straub's parking lot. A grant for this project is expected. The design of this project could incorporate a change in the width/use/curve of the sidewalk with potential area/s for adding benches.

**Decorative Rooftop Lighting Update** – The Public Works Department will be coordinating the logistics of the program going forward. If funds identified in the line-item breakdown are maxed out, additional funding can be allocated if needed.

**Decorative Tree Lighting Supplies** – Decorative lights available for potential additional trees need to be purchased now to ensure delivery by the holiday season. Eric Peterson will pursue.

**Decorative Parking Sign Update** – Tim Delanty reports he has taken no action on this project. Frank Romano offered to help and will reach out to Mr. Delanty. The design for the new signs will be similar to the existing signs but will have the 2-hour indicator more prominent; they will also be the same shape and size so as to reuse the existing brackets.

**Old Webster Summer Night Street Dance Update** – Plans for the event are moving forward. The event takes place on June 17 on Gore Avenue; the street will be closed at Gore and Lockwood and north to the railroad crossing at 2PM so set up can take place. Music opens with Baker Symes and Margo Petracek performing James Taylor and Carole King songs at 5:30. Ticket to the Beatles follows at 7:00. Frank Romano is handling the food vendors; Old Webster eateries will be asked first. David Smith, chair of the event, will hold a separate meeting with the sub-committee to continue pulling the event together.

**Old Webster Jazz & Blues Festival Update** – The event which takes place on September 16th is moving forward. The organizers have been meeting monthly. Sponsorships are projected to be enough to pull off the event. Patrick Murphy is chairing the event this year.

**BDC Update** – The BDC is hosting a Business Coffee for Webster Groves business owners on Wednesday, May 17 at 8:30 AM. It will be an informal socializing affair with seven stations of information set up to peruse and give input, ideas, and feedback. This session is looking to identify needs of business owners and where the BDC go next with their work. The Sustainability Commission will be tending one of the stations with information about a potential Webster Groves Green Dining District and how such an effort could be supported by the City.

### **City & Council Update**

- City Council passed the revisions to the ordinance for boards and commission. One of the revision items affecting both the Old Orchard and Old Webster Advisory Commissions is a reduction in the number of members on the commission; reduced from nine to seven.
- City Council passed a sponsorship and event policy. The policy suggests and encourages a memorandum of understanding with those entities which the District Commissions and the City have long-standing relationships. This will satisfy the auditors as to the public purpose for which money flows out of the District. A memorandum will be a clear understanding between the parties involved and what each party is going to be responsible for. For example, the long-standing relationship with the Old Webster Trade Association. To that end, the City Attorney will put together a rough draft memorandum which will be shared with the Trade Association to start the process; there is no time clock on this process.
- Upcoming Events – Jim Schoemehl 5K Run the morning of May 6th, Fiesta de Mayo 5K Run the morning of May 7th, Webster On Wheels the afternoon of May 7th, 4th of July Parade applications are open, the 4th of July Lions Carnival and BBQ is expected to be held on the grounds at Eden Seminary; dates and time schedule to be determined.
- The City’s current judge is retiring so the City Council will start looking for a replacement.
- The City continues to work on the City’s budget; there are “some hard decisions to be made.” Commission members are encouraged to give their input using the Balancing Act Software.
- The Charter Review Advisory Board continues their work.
- There will likely be a bond issue on a future ballot to fund changes to the aquatic center. Public input will be available closer to the process.

**Next Meeting** – Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 8:00 AM.

**Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 8:55 AM.