



City Council Economic Development Subcommittee

MINUTES (DRAFT)

Conference Room A
City Hall, 501 Primrose Road – Burlingame, California
Wednesday, November 13, 2019 – 8:15a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Councilmember Ann Keighran

Members Absent: Vice Mayor Emily Beach

Staff Present: City Manager Lisa Goldman (CM), Community Development Director (CDD) Kevin Gardiner, Parks Superintendent/City Arborist Bob Disco, Economic Development Specialist (EDS) Joseph Sanfilippo

Members of the Public Present: John Kevranian (Nuts for Candy Owner; President Broadway BID), Christopher Diez (Pot-Pourri Owner), Denise T. Groebner (Gateways to the World Owner), Regina Francis (Gigi's Boutique Owner), Ross C. Bruce (AVR Realty)

READ AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER MEETINGS

Continued to next meeting to allow both subcommittee members to participate.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Councilmember Keighran introduced the topic. The intent was to gather input on matters of interest to the Broadway BID representatives and identify how to make Broadway more vibrant. Matters initially raised included:

- **Vacancies:** Chris Diez mentioned vacancies give the street a “dead feel” and are not conducive to pedestrian traffic, but noted that retail is struggling and landlords are reluctant to do tenant improvements (fire sprinklers), thus unduly burdening tenants to perform the work. CDD Gardiner reiterated that it is the landlord’s responsibility to pay for installation of fire sprinklers, though the landlord has a certain amount of time in which to install the sprinklers.

Members raised questions as to whether just restaurants trigger fire sprinklers, or whether retail also triggers fire sprinklers; CDD Gardiner will follow up. John Kevranian mentioned cumulative square feet of tenant improvements often trigger fire sprinkler requirements. He also referred to a tax incentive for a one-time tax write-off for fire sprinkler tenant improvements, likely from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act; he will follow up with an official link.

Members noted that landlords do not want tenants that trigger fire sprinkler installation (as they will eventually be liable for the installation), which exacerbates vacancy issues. CDD Gardiner mentioned it may be helpful to create a flyer to be sent to landlords that outlines fire sprinkler requirements to avoid misconception/confusion, particularly if landlords are reluctant to accommodate new uses if they are under the impression that only a change of use would trigger the installation of fire sprinklers versus tenant improvements for any use.

Members raised concerns with businesses being closed during the daytime. CM Goldman noted the City does not regulate business operating hours.

Members discussed new and potential tenants for filling vacancies. Ross Bruce mentioned a new izakaya fusion restaurant on a corner space and that a frame shop relocated to Broadway and business is now booming compared to its previous location on Capuchino Ave. Mr. Bruce also noted that property owner John Britain is in talks to re-tenant the former Earthbeam building, and there is another potential tenant for the former Footwear etc. space (though Footwear etc. is still paying lease). These tenancies have been delayed due to tenant improvement expenses or constraints. John Kevranian mentioned the former Fluffy Doggy (1247 Broadway) building will be remodeled, though no tenant has been secured.

- Parking issues: Chris Diez encouraged extending the current 1-hour parking on Broadway to 2 hours as tickets cause undue customer stress and are not conducive to patronizing multiple businesses on Broadway in one trip. John Kevranian asserted that the demographics of the street have changed from mostly retail to mostly service, and 1-hour parking is not enough time for customers to browse stores, get lunch, and experience Broadway.

Smart meters have caused stress due to their limited reloading capacity (“feeding” meters to extend time is not allowed). John Kevranian noted loss of business due to customers rushing in anticipation of meter expirations.

Members asserted that metered parking is an inconvenience for both business owners and customers. Education and signage may help alleviate some concerns of 1-hour parking, but the BID members present have a strong desire for a change to 2-hour parking with on-meter signage. John Kevranian suggested the BID could reimburse the City for any changes in parking signage. Members and staff agreed that 24-minute parking will be left for short-term customers, but BID members asked that the remaining smart meter 1-hour spots be changed to 2-hour.

John Kevranian inquired about the status of the parking study that was requested by the City Council when this matter was discussed by the Council previously. Parking studies had been done for Burlingame Avenue in the past, and the intention is to do something similar for Broadway. CM Goldman noted it is on the work plan, but transportation staff are extremely busy so the study may not be at the top of the list right now. CM Goldman will follow up on the status of the study. John Kevranian cited 70 signatures were collected on a petition requesting 2-hour parking. John Kevranian expressed concern that he would need to close his store within a year due to economic stress if no changes are made to the parking timeframe.

BID members noted the urgency of the problem as the holiday season is coming soon. Councilmember Keighran mentioned that parking lots adjacent to Broadway on the side streets are not often full, but BID members asserted that Burlingame Avenue has a competitive edge because 2-hour parking is permitted there. They noted that a change to 2-hour parking on Broadway will ultimately result in more utilization of Broadway lots if spaces on Broadway become filled. John Kevranian mentioned that there would not be an issue with raising meter rates from \$0.50 to \$1.00/hr if it will make the change more viable.

As a related parking issue, it was mentioned that delivery vehicles often take up multiple parking spaces, but John Kevranian mentioned that Police enforcement is good.

Other matters discussed by attendees included:

- Lack of flags present on Veterans Day: Members mentioned that the local Boy Scout troop is typically in charge of placing flags for holidays. There may have been some confusion about the Boy Scouts' role in putting up the flags on the most recent Veterans Day due to Troop leadership turnover. John Kevranian will follow up with Councilmember Keighran and provide the new Scoutmaster's contact information.
- Implementation of new holiday lighting: John Kevranian noted that holiday lighting is scheduled to go up November 23rd and stay in place until January 22nd or 23rd. Cascade lighting was chosen because the original quote of \$48,000 was too expensive for wider implementation; the chosen light lease is for about \$15,066. This is intended to bring people to the district. CM Goldman reminded the BID members that the City has pledged \$7,500 to holiday lighting that will be paid directly to the BID (rather than the lighting company).
- The Holiday Cheer: The annual Holiday Cheer event has been cancelled because of budgeting concerns and lack of available volunteers.
- Toy Drive, Saturday December 7th 12-4 p.m.: John Kevranian will host a Toy Drive in conjunction with the Fire Department and a Parks and Recreation representative. There is the possibility of having a Santa participate.
- EVgo chargers on Chula Vista lot: Usage of the new EVgo chargers has been slow (1-3 cars a day), but traction is gradually building. Members noted a previous Volvo one-week event that showcased electric vehicles was successful. Members theorized that the low usage may be due to the City's high proportion of renters who do not have electric vehicles because they have not had access to parking spaces for charging, compared to homeowners who could more easily install charging equipment at their homes. Members raised concerns with people sleeping in and loitering around cars.

John Kevranian mentioned that the signage at the EVgo stations needs to be changed for additional enforcement (it currently only mentions Monday-Saturday and omits Sunday, where people may be using the spaces as regular spots and not charging their vehicles). CM Goldman mentioned the lack of City parking enforcement staff on Sunday, but John Kevranian asserted that new signage may potentially help nevertheless. Members suggested that it may be a beneficial idea to promote the EVgo spaces in the City's weekly e-newsletter.

- Benches: Chris Diez suggested that installing additional benches on Broadway would improve walkability.

- **Traffic:** Chris Diez mentioned that Broadway traffic is extremely fast, and it may be beneficial to implement stop signs, flashing lights, etc. John Kevranian asserted that forcing traffic to slow down may help businesses with improved visibility. CM Goldman mentioned that Police will be informed for selective enforcement against speeding. John Kevranian mentioned the perils of the crosswalk in front of Walgreen’s in particular due to its close proximity to the California Drive traffic light and said that a pedestrian flashing light would likely help. Emergency vehicle traffic is a concern but is likely not possible to be changed due to requirements for emergency vehicles to take the fastest possible route on calls.
- **Signage:** Ross Bruce inquired about the installation of new Dale Perkins-designed shuttle bus signs. CM Goldman mentioned that the signs were delayed due to the Public Safety Power Shutoff, but they are anticipated to go up this week (November 11th, 2019).
- **Façade Improvement Program:** Councilmember Keighran mentioned the planned Façade Improvement Program, with a launch scheduled for January. John Kevranian mentioned preliminary interest from 4-5 businesses for the program, though notes landlord approval may be a concern. EDS Sanfilippo will present a refresher course of Façade Improvement Program requirements, etc. at the November Broadway BID meeting. John Kevranian mentioned it may be beneficial to obtain an updated mailing list from Finance so notifications can be sent to all qualifying businesses and property owners. CDD Gardiner noted the importance of BID consensus to confirm a start date for the Façade Improvement Program. Members tentatively agreed to a potential program launch in the second week of January.
- **Action items:** City staff will review the parking discussion from the Council meeting last year and potentially resurrect the issue at a future Council date. City staff also will take steps to re-educate landlords for fire sprinkler requirements and will explore the addition of stop signs or flashing crosswalk lights at the Walgreen’s intersection. CM Goldman will talk to the Police Chief for selective enforcement against speeding. Staff will utilize the eNews to promote EVgo chargers. BID members will forward information for the December 7th toy event to the City for joint promotion; John Kevranian will send an invoice to CM Goldman for reimbursement of holiday lighting and also send contact information for Scoutmaster Dan Callahan (Veterans Day flags) to Councilmember Keighran. Finally, City staff will secure fliers and application packages for BID members to promote the Façade program.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

- December – Downtown BID
- January meeting – agenda planning

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no further public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Sanfilippo
Economic Development Specialist