



CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CBDAC)

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 10, 2025, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. via Zoom

Attendees: Pamela Perron, Niena Jerdee, Stacey Tsapatsaris (Vice Chair), Glenn Carlough, Stephen Del Percio (Chairperson), Steve Aspero, Miranda Soffian, PD Chief Forest Lyons

Guests: Jeanne Johnson, Tom Hillmann

Administration: Approved Meeting Minutes for Jan., Feb. & March 2025.

Updates:

- **Village Council & SID updates:** Pam Perron
 - **Village Council:**
 - 2025 VC budget was introduced & is published on website. May 14 public hearing.
 - New arrangement passed for yearly permits for food at temporary events
 - Contracted for watering of newly planted trees across Village, including in CBD.
 - Bond ordinance passed with funding for pedestrian tunnel renovation (\$411K). This will show entities (grant funders) that Village has skin in the game.
 - Ordinance 4044 – prohibits use of scooters, etc. on sidewalks in CBD. Issue with bikes. RPD will report back in fall as to how summer goes with this new restriction.
 - Bus station is gone! Temporary shelter in its place.
 - Tatte Bakery is opening up soon. Lula is very good.
 - Next CBDAC meeting is 5/8 in Courtroom at Village Hall.
 - **SID:**
 - Steerco met last month. Consultant working on report/feasibility study, incorporating response from business community, which should be released soon.
 - **Planning Board update:**
 - New restaurant/sweet shop proposed at 245 E. Ridgewood Ave, across from Fox's. New owner wants to build out back to unify three parts of property. Approved, but there is a parking problem being worked out.



- **Ridgewood Beautification Team** (formerly Project Pride):
 - o Planting flowers in CBD on 5/17 – meet at Van Neste at 7:45AM. Next day is rain date. Mulch Monday as well.
- **Daffodil Festival/Earth Day Fair:**
 - o H2Optimize – on 4/27, from 11 to 2:30PM. Band, dogs, etc.
- **Chamber of Commerce:** Glenn Carlough
 - Easter in the Park is coming on 4/19. Fashion Show on 5/14. 81 attendees at recent women in marketing event. Well-received and positive for Chamber.
 - Membership is growing. Up to 351 – goal is 400 members by 2027. Good mix.
 - Professional sector is best opportunity for growth. Membership base is evolving.
 - Mission stays the same but – need to consider that growth potential is largely outside of Ridgewood. Individuals can join!
 - Mountainview Auto is one of Chamber’s newest members. Looking to beautify lots on Broad Street. Looking to discuss efforts with CBDAC at a future meeting.
- **Ridgewood Guild:** Niena Jerdee
 - Some recent Guild socials at Paris Baguette and Spice/Tea Shop.
 - Film festival (14th year) started 4/8, ongoing at different venues.
 - Spring marketplace coming on 5/3 with vendors/food trucks.
 - Pride marketplace in June. Summer programming coming soon.
 - Warner Theater redevelopment group will be meeting mid-April. Niena to attend and report back to CBDAC in May.
- **CSAC:** David Rosen No updates this month.
- **Pedestrian Tunnel & Public Art Initiatives:** Jeanne Johnson
 - NJT meeting on 4/4. Engineering department compiling info this month on the mural. Work will not start until everything down there is cleaned. Hoping it will be up by late summer/early fall. Another RFP is out there – meeting on May 6 at Schoolhouse Museum to discuss. Looking for grant funding.
 - Music in the Park – is filled and ready to go. Sixth year this summer in Van Neste.
 - New initiative coming soon – Porchfest. Started in NYC. Bands on people’s porches. Meeting on this in mid-May. Has been successful in Princeton.



- Is it okay to have outside vendors coming in to our events in the CBD? When food trucks come in, this puts a damper on sales for local restaurants. How do we encourage more foot traffic to businesses that are already there? Future topic for CBDAC.

Presentation:

Jeff Buehler, Assistant Director of NJ Business Action Center (Transit Village Designation, Main Street application, *etc.*)

- **Intro:**
 - o Civic engagement is so important to a vibrant CBD.
 - o And Ridgewood has that in spades! Lots of great organizations.
 - o Jeff focuses on business enhancement services.
- **What is NJBAC? What are “business enhancement services?”**
 - o Answers. Advocacy. Connection.
 - o “Swiss Army knife” that helps businesses reach prosperity goals through community. No cost! These are your tax dollars at work.
 - o Not regulatory. Does not enforce rules. Helps businesses in NJ get stuff done.
 - o Can’t write grants but “lead them to water.”
 - o Can help go to bat with other agencies.
- **Examples of business enhancement services provided by NJBAC:**
 - o To local governments and district management entities (like a SID, for example).
 - o Identifying grants, etc. State-level advocacy. Project concepts/renderings.
 - o Business enhancement emails (get on this list, 2x/month). Templates. Best practice ordinances/policies. Complete Streets Demonstration Library. BE Special Assessments – on-site walk-throughs.
 - o Fair Lawn Main Street used this process to get a \$300K federal grant! 65 winners of 500 applications.
- **What is Transit Village status?**
 - o NJDOT/NJT designation. Nothing to do with federal government. You just get it – there is no expiration.
 - o Half-mile radius around your train station. Densify and do things to add “people traffic” to that area so you drive less and use more transit. If you get this designation, there are annual grants you can apply for. Jelena.lasko@dot.nj.gov is the Transit Village coordinator.
 - o You need a transit-oriented development (TOD) redevelopment plan or TOD zoning ordinance. What does your underlying zoning look like in the TV area? If it



allows/encourages mixed-use additional density, etc. then even if you don't have projects in the pipeline they will still have that conversation with you.

- **What is Main Street NJ status?**
 - o Four towns were designated in 2024. No more until 2026. Haddonfield. Plainfield. Princeton. You need an Executive Director. Can get grants, on-site training, etc. Note that Fair Lawn had been recognized previously as a Main Street community.
- **How do we encourage business diversity within our CBD?**
 - o Invisible hand of the market versus mandating/legislating?
 - o It is possible to create thresholds for maximum square footage of certain uses.
 - o But this legislative tool is not currently implemented anywhere in NJ as far as Jeff knows – but it's worth looking at.
 - o He encourages us to be more proactive about asking for the use we want!
 - o If you don't ask, you don't get. Put it in the window. "Perfect for this use."
- **Street fair/food truck conversation:**
 - o ROFR should be to the local businesses and food service providers. Bring restaurant out into the street as an extension of that restaurant.
 - o If they don't want to do it, then you fill that spot with someone else that balances out your business mix.
 - o Note that Ridgewood's street fairs are run by Parks/Rec Department and not third-party vendors.

Public Comment....None

Next meeting May 8, 2025 in person.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Del Percio