

**COMMON COUNCIL
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT AND PARKS COMMITTEE
MARCH 28, 2025**

The City of Noblesville Council Downtown District and Parks Committee met pursuant to public notice on Friday, March 28, 2025 in room A213 at City Hall, 16 South 10th Street. Aaron Smith called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with Dave Johnson, and Megan Wiles present. Darren Peterson was absent.

Also present were City Clerk Evelyn Lees, Deputy Mayor Matt Light, Community Development Director Sarah Reed, Street Commissioner Patty Johnson, City Engineer Alison Krupski, Engineering Project Manager Andrew Rodewald, Parks and Recreation Director Savannah Wines, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Charlie Elliott, Community Engagement Manager Aaron Head, Noblesville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Bob DuBois, SERVE Noblesville Board President Michelle Schmidt, Noblesville Creates Executive Director Ailithir McGill, Noblesville Main Street Board Treasurer Chris Theisen, Noblesville Main Street Executive Director Kate Baker, Noblesville Preservation Alliance Executive Director Joshua Glassburn-Ruby, Noblesville Main Street Board Member Geoff Davis, and Main Street Board Member Stephanie Smith.

Ms. Baker, Mr. Davis, Mr. Glassburn-Ruby, Mr. Head, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Smith also serve on Noblesville Main Street's Design Committee. This meeting was considered an official meeting of that committee for Noblesville Main Street's purposes.

1) Introduction and Welcome

Mr. Smith welcomed those attending. Everyone introduced themselves. Mr. Smith stated the committee was formed in 2017 by then Council President Wiles to enhance and beautify the Downtown and has since made great progress.

2) Status of Funds Update

Mr. Light reviewed the status of funds in the Downtown Development Fund. He referred to a handout. He stated updates were highlighted in green, but there were no real changes from last month. He stated there were plans to enhance the Downtown planters. He stated there would be a contribution from the Stormwater and Wastewater funds once the budget was clearer for the Embrace Downtown project. Mr. Smith stated a bond would be used to finance the Embrace Downtown project.

3) Embrace Downtown Updates

a. Takeaways from public meeting

Mr. Light stated boards with project renderings that were on display at the public meeting were outside the meeting room in the hallway for the committee to see. He stated the stakeholders at the meeting the night before showed interest and appreciation for the flexible spaces rather than permanent amenities. He stated they felt the spaces could be used year round. Mr. Head stated

overall the feedback was very positive. He stated they received helpful feedback on specific areas that would be relayed to the design team. He stated there was not much feedback about concerns. He stated they need to hear concerns so that they can be resolved. He stated the project needed to match the beauty of the buildings. He stated the focus on pedestrian safety was appreciated. He stated in 1990, Downtown was mostly service-oriented, but now it was mostly retail and dining. He stated more sidewalk space was needed to accommodate the current uses.

Ms. Krupski stated there was a plan to accommodate bicycles, which would not be allowed on the sidewalks. She stated there would be areas to park the bikes and walk in Downtown. Mr. Johnson thanked Ms. Krupski for her presentation at the public meeting and Mayor Jensen for setting the tone of the meeting, that Downtown was integral to the City. He stated some critics had said that Downtown was forgotten, but the meeting was held with a positive audience and a packed house. He commended the comments concerning infrastructure.

b. Next Steps and Timeline

Mr. Rodewald stated he had already received emails from the design team with suggestions. He stated the focus of the design would be infrastructure and setting curblines and the like. He stated aesthetics and finishes could change. He stated the designers were determining what could be constructed in one summer. He stated there should be a plan for 2026 construction by the end of the year. Ms. Krupski stated it was very important to hear concerns now. She stated people may have been excited at the meeting and not wanted to raise concerns. Mr. Head stated he would continue to hold office hours at Noble Coffee and Tea on Wednesdays.

Mr. Rodewald stated the project may also provide an opportunity for owners to complete building improvements while there are closures for construction. He stated there also would be infrastructure in place that building owners could upgrade and connect to. Mr. Theisen stated there could be cost savings for building owners to do work while the project is under construction. Mr. Smith encouraged those present to look at the renderings when they leave the meeting and share their feedback.

4) Logan and Clinton Street brick rehabilitation review

Mr. Rodewald stated the project was an effort to care for the brick streets east of 10th Street. Mr. Light stated the City wanted to invest in the neighborhoods with brick streets, and a consultant would be engaged to determine how much the City would be able to spend and complete. He stated the consultant had experience with brick streets. He stated the consultant would determine possible costs and make recommendations, which would then be brought to the committee. Mr. Rodewald stated the consultant has LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology, which can “see” below the bricks to the sub-surface to determine what was needed. He stated staff was ready to move forward pending funding. He stated the outcome of the project would retain the brick streets. He stated the contract would be paid hourly, not to exceed \$90,000.00. The committee agreed to recommend the expenditure to the full Council. Mr. Light stated he would take the proposed expenditure to the Finance Committee at its next meeting.

5) Parks Program and project updates

Mr. Elliott stated the Princess Ball was held on March 15. He stated almost 600 people attended. He stated they plan a bigger event next year. Mr. Smith stated his daughter had said she loved her dance. Mr. Elliott stated the annual Easter egg hunt was scheduled for April 12. He stated the renovation project for the splash pad and playground at Dillon Park was being designed. Ms. Wines stated they hoped for construction to take place early next year during the off season. Mr. Elliott stated the planned electronic sign at State Road 19 and Logan Street would be heard by the Plan Commission at its April meeting. Ms. Wines stated they hope to break ground for the sign in May or June.

6) Upcoming Downtown events and preparation

Mr. Head stated the Indiana Peony Festival organizers meet with City staff from several departments every month. He stated there was a firm plan for this year's festival. He stated the footprint would be expanded to connect Downtown with Seminary Park with a pedestrian corridor. He stated vendors would be stationed outside the park, on 10th Street from Division Street to Maple Avenue. He stated Maple Avenue would be closed between 9th and 10th Streets, and 9th Street would be closed between Maple Avenue and Conner Street. He stated 46 businesses had signed up to participate in Brunch and Blooms. He stated the festival was still seeking sponsors, but their business partners had eclipsed their sponsorships. He stated the festival was receiving national attention, and sponsors had been approaching them first. Ms. Johnson stated the food vendors would be spread out based on feedback from last year. Mr. Head stated the Pacers G-League team was interested in having a presence at the festival. Ms. Wiles stated the festival had grown exponentially in five years. Mr. Head stated the festival organizers wanted to show Noblesville in the best light, since most attendees were from out of town.

Mr. Johnson asked if the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) would be expanded for the festival. Mr. Head replied a new ordinance would need to be adopted for events. He stated the DORA needed to complement local zoning, and they do not want the DORA to encroach into residential areas. There was a discussion concerning enforcement. Mr. Head stated the Police Department had had no issues since the DORA was established. He stated DORAs were not new, but they were new to Indiana.

Ms. Baker stated there were issues with traffic last year due to Downtown road construction, but it should be better this year. Ms. Johnson stated the new Pleasant Street should make a significant difference. Mr. Head stated shuttle service was still planned for this year. Ms. McGill stated Fairyville would take place from April 23 through 26. She stated there would be a joint event with Bar Ellis in the South Alley on that Friday. She stated the Hamilton County Artists Association would host Art Fair on the Square the weekend before the Peony Festival to help kickoff Peony week. She stated it would be the beginning of the festival season. Ms. Baker stated the Bed Race would be May 30, and the Duck Race would be May 31. Ms. Schmidt stated SERVE season would kick off on April 18.

7) Other stakeholder updates for situational awareness and collaboration

Ms. McGill commended the façade improvement grant program for helping fund renovation of the Noblesville Creates campus on 8th Street.

Ms. Reed stated a new business was Muscle Mobility, which provided deep massage. She stated it was next to The Mix. She stated the Tea and Spice Exchange would open soon.

8) Other New Business

Ms. Wiles stated Smith's Jewelers had created a 5th Anniversary charm for the Indiana Peony Festival this year.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 a.m.



AARON SMITH, COMMITTEE CHAIR



EVELYN LEES, CLERK
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE