

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING  
**SHOPPING AREA REDEVELOPMENT BOARD (SARB)**  
Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 9:00 am

PRESENT: Board members –Barnes, Gentry, VanHoven, Visser  
Mayor Klynstra

ABSENT: Vos

Staff: Marketing Director deRoo

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Board Member Visser.

1. Motion was made by Board Member Barnes and seconded by Board Member Gentry to approve the March 9, 2023 minutes.  
All present voting aye, Motion Carried
2. Motion was made by Board Member Klynstra and seconded by Board Member Barnes to approve the April 13, 2023 minutes.  
All present voting aye, Motion Carried

3.

4. **DOWNTOWN MEETING RECAP**

Marketing Director deRoo asked Board Members who were at the May 8, 2023 Downtown Meeting to share some feedback from the evening. Board Member VanHoven stated that the parking study data presented was heavy – he thought it was good info but hard to follow if you were not already familiar with the study. VanHoven continued that, in his opinion, we don't have a parking problem, we have an employee parking problem. VanHoven admitted that individual businesses – his own included - need to get past the idea that everyone else has to be the first to change.

Board Member Gentry asked if it was practical for the City to require businesses to have their employees submit license plate numbers so that ZPD can track who is using which lots, and if employees actually are using the new lots that they will be assigned to. She suggested that perhaps downtown employees would at least think twice before using the North and South lots.

Board Member Visser added that we have been having the same conversation since 1980. Parking – and bad parking habits - has been an ongoing issue.

Marketing Director deRoo read aloud an email from Jim Donkersloot, expressing his opinion about employee parking. Mr. Donkersloot's email is attached to these minutes.

Board Member Gentry suggested that we should assign certain businesses to certain parking lots. She felt that if the new recommendations are specific they might be more successful.

deRoo shared that she has been considering rolling out employee parking changes to the South Municipal Parking Lot first, since First CRC and NorthStreet CRC are adjacent for

accessible employee parking. The North Municipal Parking does not have conveniently accessible overflow parking at this time.

5. **MAIN AVENUE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

deRoo described the next steps of the Snowmelt Special Assessment process:

- May 15, 2023 Public Hearing to determine the necessity of the special assessment.
- June 5, 2023 Staff will present the assessment roll to City Council.
- June 19, 2023 Public hearing to adopt the roll.

6. **GIFT CARD PROGRAM**

deRoo shared that she presented the Zeeland Gift Card Program to City Council at their last meeting. She presented for information only, at the Work Study, and was not seeking an action/approval at that time. City Council was very receptive to the program. deRoo plans to speak with the City Attorney to ensure that the presented program is, in fact, a service that the City can offer. If so, deRoo plans to bring the concept back to City Council and request approval. deRoo would target the holiday season to rollout the program. The Board discussed the importance of making sure the marketing of this program reaches local HR departments so the cards could be used as employee gifts.

If the City were to implement this program, the fee to the host company, Compoto is very reasonable. There is a one-time expense of \$1,500 and a program expense of \$149 per month. If a gift card is purchased, a credit card fee of 2.9% plus \$0.30 per each transaction. No other percentage is taken. The gift certificates would be purchased through the City. This would be considered as a City service/marketing program, therefore, only City businesses would be able to participate. It would be recommended that the City absorb all service fees and that customers and businesses appreciate the program at cash value.

7. **LIQUOR LICENSES / SOCIAL DISTRICT**

Marketing Director deRoo stated that she is working on Social District signage to put on the City of Zeeland tables that would label that all Social District cups are welcome. Also, working on ways to bring awareness to the various Social District seating areas. Board Member Gentry asked deRoo if she could include No Smoking on the signage. deRoo confirmed that other downtown signage includes No Smoking and she will incorporate that into the new Social District signage as well.

Scott Ingersoll, who visited SARB at their April meeting, has signed a lease for the restaurant space at 120 E. Main. The new restaurant will be called the Gritmaker Social House. Ingersoll is working on filing his liquor license application asap. He hopes to open this fall.

8. **COFFEE AND CARS**

deRoo reported that she and Events Coordinator, Kerri VanDorp had been contacted by a local Corvette club to bring a reoccurring "Coffee and Cars" event to downtown Zeeland. This group has been meeting for dinner at Frank's about once a month and would love to assemble a meet-up type casual car event for one Saturday morning/month during the summer. The dates this group has in mind are: Saturdays May 20, June 17, July 15 and August 19 – from approximately 9am-11am. The car club has requested to use part of the South Municipal Parking Lot for these events. They would like to be as close to the downtown businesses as possible. While deRoo and VanDorp are encouraging of these events and feel that they would be light, fun, and a simple way to bring more people downtown Zeeland, the Marketing Department explained, to the event organizers that blocking off public parking for these events would not be available. Some of the reasons this request was denied was that this a privately-organized event (not coordinated by the City) and we just completed a parking study

and are sensitive to parking shortages. Additionally, once public parking is involved and needing to be reserved before the event, this creates a situation where City staff are now responsible for the logistics of the event. This is not a responsibility the Marketing Department is able to take on with any already full summer event calendar. Furthermore, the City has, on record, an application process for street and parking lot closures. It was deRoo's opinion that these Coffee & Cars events do not qualify for approval, at this time. deRoo presented these events to SARB to confirm this. SARB was in agreement that these events sound wonderful but they are best suited in private parking lots. deRoo and VanDorp have coordinated available private parking in the First CRC and/or Second CRC lots, if the group wishes to use it.

9. **OTHER INFORMATION**

deRoo read the recent announcement that Community Restaurant posted on Facebook.

“Rebuild update....

It has been almost 13 long months since the night of the devastating fire, but at last the rebuild construction of Community Restaurant is about to begin! There are still plenty of rumors, speculation, and even erroneous information put out by a local radio station, but here is the real information:


After a lot of time, planning, and help from the City of Zeeland, approval was given and building permits were issued this week allowing construction to begin soon. A lot of things are being lined up and scheduled, and ground work should be starting the final week of May, just after Memorial Day.

It's been a long road to get to this point, but we are beyond excited to bring back the Zeeland icon of Community Restaurant! THANK YOU to EVERYONE who has stood by us and supported us throughout our journey! We wouldn't be in the position we are now without each and every one of you behind us, striving towards our goal of rebuilding and once again serving the great community of Zeeland. If you wish to help be part of this massive undertaking, our Go Fund Me is still up and all proceeds are going towards the rebuild: <https://gofund.me/b5e86338> We all hope to see you soon!”

There being no further business to conduct, Board Member Barnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by VanHoven.

All present voting aye, Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned the meeting at 10:05am.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director