



DRAFT

**SPECIAL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**MINUTES
DATE: May 5, 2025**

Attendance:

Directors Present: Caya Aufiero, Ann Smart (via Teams Meet), Dwayne Nelson (via Teams Meet), Mel Brockley (via Teams Meet), Dainielle Fox (via Teams Meet) Michael Powers

Directors Excused: Fadumo Hassan

Directors Absent:

Guests: LaTasha Smith – DTMS - (via Teams Meet)

Call to Order:

Caya Aufiero called the meeting to order at 6:14pm and announced a quorum was present. Stated the purpose of this meeting was to review and decide on additional funding for the Light Project on Virginia grant funded in the 20204-2025 funding session.

Old Business:

1. Virginia Corridor Roofline Lighting:

- a. LaTasha made a request at the April Board Meeting to request additional funding for the Virginia Light Project and was asked to provide material to support the request and the Board would consider it.
 - DTMS received the \$10,000 grant from the CID.
 - A deposit of \$7,690 was paid toward the installation.
 - \$2,310 remaining from the original funds.
 - The total cost of the project is \$15,380.
 - An additional \$5,380 is requested to close the gap and complete the project.
- b. Ann stated that not all buildings are covered by the lights in their plan and mostly are Current and Past Board members of DTMS and DTCID. She was concerned about the optics to the public of this plan. It appears the lights are for only DTMS/DTCID board members, not ALL CID members. this was solely for them and not the community on Virginia as a whole. The reason the budget committee stipulated Building roof outline lights instead of string lights parallel to the street was that there are not enough businesses down there to warrant that and to make that look good or be able to continue the lights to the 5500 block.
- c. Latasha said she thought the grant was originally for Commercial Property Owners only.



- d. The DTCID board read the original grant wording Ann sent to Latasha, which specified it was for the "4700 and 5500 BLOCKS" - not just commercial properties- all inclusive of both Residential and Commercial properties.
- e. Michael, concerned about the budget, suggested the price is by linear foot and going down the sides of buildings would cost more and keeping lights to the front to reduce costs and possibly add more properties. Stated it should go from the 4700 block of Virginia from the corner to Intertwine Bar and that confirmation from the homeowners at 4708 Virginia would be needed. He also mentioned the remainder of the 5500 block of Virginia needed to be added as only 1 building had the lights. The building owner at Bates and Virginia needs to be contacted as well. He also suggested a future budget to be made for cohesive installation of more properties in a possible next phase. Currently the cost is \$68 per linear foot. Michael also stated that the prices may change this time of year because this is a high demand time. And said the corner buildings would be ok to do front and maybe a short amount on sides as they are the end buildings but didn't think the full length of the side was necessary. He also mentioned the possibility of getting Desales involved since they are working on building out their building.
- f. Dwayne said that Your Place Diner was the only one on the 5500 block that would have the lights, as the rest between them and Bates except the corner were residential. He also mentioned that the owners of the corner building could possibly be out of state and would be "impossible" to get ahold of and said that the building may possibly be up for sale. Ann said DTMS must at the very least, make an effort to contact the other building owners, and the offer made. If there was no response, at least we have reached out and made it available to all. Caya agreed.
- g. LaTasha said that she provided a status report when the bids came in (just recently) and that some residential owners may or may not have electricity to offer and may not want lights on their houses.
- h. Ann stated this meeting was to address the original budget requested was \$12,000- \$15,000 and that the board approved \$10,000. She suggested that future add-ons to this project could somehow be included with façade grants.
- i. Mel stated that she doesn't want to award the additional funds, that more specific plans would be needed going forward.



- j. Ann said she loved the idea of being able to expand the project, but that the original scope just included the 2 blocks. She also stated that Residences needed to be included, and the original funding wasn't intended for the sides of buildings just the fronts.
- k. Michael said that the CID Board must be carefully aware of offering and managing grants as it is public funding, and the projects need to be inclusive of all buildings and that it can't be just pick and choose. The optics are not right, even if not actually against CID guidelines. Michael said to let him know if Tasha was having trouble reaching all the building owners. He offered to assist at that point.
- l. LaTasha said that she doesn't have the time to reach out to everyone to be all inclusive. She said that she feels more hurdles have been created by the CID and complained she has been told that no additional funding would be given in the future if these funds don't get used by the end time. She left the meeting during the conversation, upset, and stated that the Board would do whatever it wanted to anyhow and to let her know. Michael suggested we table it and adjourn if the Grant requester didn't care to be at the meeting. Tasha did rejoin the meeting a few minutes later.
- m. Michael and Dwayne both said that they were ok with authorizing the additional funds.
- n. LaTasha said she was confused on everything that was suggested and asked if the CID was prepared to fund the extra money needed for more lights if the residents approved adding the lights to their houses.
- o. Mel replied this was only for properties touching the footprint and only for the façade and wanted to vote for the extension of funds as is and put limits/better descriptions on future phases.
- p. Mel moved to vote to authorize the extra funds of \$5,380 to finish with the light project, installing the lights on the front of the buildings and that they were to make an effort to reach out to the immediate neighbors at 4708 Virginia to see if they were interested in being added to the program. And it was seconded by Michael. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Steps

Task	Responsible Party	Target Date	Status
Reach out to property owners at 4708 Virginia and adjacent buildings	DTMS	ASAP	In progress



Task	Responsible Party	Target Date	Status
Adjust lighting plan to cover facades instead of sides	DTMS with Trimlite	Before install	Pending update
Document outreach attempts for transparency	DTMS / Board Secretary	Before next mtg	Planned
Consider new grant round for broader inclusion of other blocks	CID Board	Next cycle	Not started
Evaluate inclusion of DeSales building lighting	Michael Powers / CID Board	Future planning	Suggested
Clarify lighting installation permits & insurance responsibility	Latasha Smith / DTMS	Immediate	Completed
Finalize vendor contract pricing to ensure no cost increase	Latasha Smith	Before install	In progress

Noted Gaps / Issues for Improvement

- **Communication Gaps:** Lack of clear shared expectations on “block-wide” vs. “business-only” execution
- **Documentation:** Incomplete or delayed status updates also led to confusion
- **Equity Lens:** Future projects need formal outreach procedures to ensure inclusivity
- **Governance:** Volunteer burnout and defensiveness noted; board needs clear roles, orientation, and project oversight process

Adjournment:

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Mel at 7:30pm, Motion unanimously carried, the Next meeting is **May 27, 2025** (4th Tuesday of each month) The meeting will be open to the public at the Neighborhood Innovation Center (NIC STL) 3207 Meramec, 63118 & online at <https://dutchtownstl.org/cidmeeting>

DUTCHTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
3207 Meramec Street, St. Louis, MO 63118 <https://dutchtownstl.org/cid>

Minutes submitted by Terry Coleman