



MINUTES FOR THE MILLBURN SHORT HILLS BUSINESS ORGANIZATION, INC.

Special Improvement District Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, June 17, 2021 – 6:30 P.M.

The meeting at Millburn Town Hall, 375 Millburn Avenue, Millburn, New Jersey will be held both in person with possible occupancy limitation and also electronically beginning at 6:30PM via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/97896106862?pwd=ajJubFB3WEhsbGt6MVNYYWpTUWNuUT09>
[Passcode: 258286](#)

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. SUNSHINE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

- Notice of the time, date, location, and agenda of this meeting, to the extent known, was provided at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of this meeting in the following manner pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq. (The Open Public Meetings Act). By posting such notice in Town Hall and the Township's website, by notification to newspapers on December 23, 2020 of the schedule for 2021 with an updated to the date/time on May 14, and by providing notice to the Township Clerk

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

3. ROLL CALL - *Tracy Katz Levine, Secretary*

Present in person: Tracy Katz Levine, Michael Parlavecchio, Nadege Nicoll, Stephen Winer, Richard Wasserman (arrived at 6:47 p.m.), Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg, Alex McDonald & Executive Director Steven Grillo

Via Zoom: Jumana Culligan, Andrew Morgan (joined at 6:45 p.m.)

4. SID MISSION STATEMENT - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

- The purpose of a Special Improvement District (SID) is to promote, grow and support local businesses, property owners, residents, and visitors. Millburn Township's SID ordinance designates a new District Management Corporation (DMC) whose mission is to encourage the economic, cultural, and social vitality of Millburn Township through increased marketing and visibility, improved and renewed infrastructure and local business development and engagement.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

- Minutes from May 13, 2021 - Attachment 1 - Motion by Stephen Winer, second by Nadege Nicoll. Approved unanimously by voice vote by all present at that time.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

When invited to speak, come to the lectern, clearly state your name and address, and speak into the podium microphone so that your comments can be understood by all and properly recorded. Whenever an audience or Committee member reads from a prepared statement, please provide a copy to tracy@exploremillburnshorthills.org. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to 3 minutes. Members of the public who wish to participate in the meetings may do so in person with possible occupancy limitation or electronically by phone or computer via ZOOM. Individuals calling in will be able to fully participate in the meeting

during the appropriate public comment periods.

Jeffrey Feld, 11 Alexander Lane, Short Hills

- Noted that a denial letter was received after May meeting denying the applications for the Main Street NJ designation – there are disputes about why it was denied, whether the entity is valid under state law which he has questioned since September; noted that no written opinion has been received via OPRA about the validity of the entity. Questioned the effect of filing a lawsuit within the 20-day estoppel period of the original adoption of the ordinance.
- Urges caution to the Board and noted that the Township Committee meetings have been very heated; suggests to heed the comments by attorney Thomas Hildner.
- Discovered that the Township filed a discovery motion on June 15 requesting tax returns, he cites as harassment (lawsuit not involving the SID board)
- Noted that the court can order mediation. Frustrated that the Township is not heeding advice to mediate and encourages a time out.
- Concerned that attempting to spend money that was not approved by TC.
- Concerned that one of the members is an attorney for another municipality.

Jean Pastenak, 342 Hobart Ave, Short Hills

- Comments about following the law.
- Has heard strong feedback from Glenwood neighbors about ordinance given more leeway to restaurants – residents she’s spoken to are against it and wants this group to be aware. (Not a SID related issue)
- Discovered that a food safety license was issued to a restaurant on Upper Millburn Ave that didn’t have correct zoning licenses; the Business Administrator admitted that this needed to be corrected; this has eroded trust. (Not a SID related issue)
- She has spoken with 3 businesses she is friends with and all 3 are planning to exit Millburn
- Frustrated that things are being disregarded for new businesses.
- Frustrated that music concerts are described as free; they are not free, being funded by residents, which should be acknowledged.
- Steven Grillo requested names of the businesses to reach out to them; Jean P will provide if they are OK to be reached out.

Vicky Powell, Shala’s, 358C Millburn Ave

- Loves the music, hearing positive feedback from customers and businesses; happy for earlier times so businesses can further benefit. Weekends are hustling and bustling which is great.
- Social media needs more “oomph”; would like to see more promotion of sidewalk sales, not just reposts of others’ content – more original content. Suggested getting kids involved in a TikTok campaign to promote businesses in all districts.
- If go with Flex Parking removal, especially need positive messages for downtown.
- Thanks for doing a great job.

Perri Urso, 514 Millburn Ave, Short Hills

- Inquired cost of using Zoom – that it will be an injustice to not enable Zoom for those who cannot be at meetings in person – highly recommends to continue Zoom option for the meetings. (Not a SID issue)
- Commended Mr. Lieberberg and Mr. Wasserman for being inclusive of districts, but the music is all downtown – have failed to be inclusive.
- Noted that Mr. Parlavecchio is an attorney for another township and should be aware of what Mr. Feld is referencing.

Nancy Stone, 266 Essex Street

- Consultants being hired – questioned why are costs not being approved by TC, that is what was supposed to happen – TC overseeing every step of SID.
- Welcomes Steve Grillo to make an appointment with her to discuss her issues and will be non-confrontational; she is a merchant not in favor of the SID; share her experience of prior organization over 25 years and her business which has been successful without the SID: email nancy@nancyanddavid.com, cell phone 917-587-4070.
- Described the agenda as outrageous in terms of funding and budget items; doesn't see anything different than prior organization.
- The music is not free, being paid for by residents; more than 50% of budget is toward administrative costs, which she has objections to vs. going to merchants in all the districts.

7. GENERAL UPDATES

- **New Jersey Main Street Program & 501c3 Non-Profit Application (*M. Parlavecchio*)**

In March 2021, Explore Millburn-Short Hills submitted our Main Street New Jersey application to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. Our hope was that by the time the Main Street application was submitted we would have our 501c3 designation. The Main Street application requires that an entity be an approved 501c3 non-profit at the time of review. Therefore, we were denied based on eligibility requirements. This is an unfortunate event of timing and nothing else.

The argument that the denial of the Main Street application somehow reinforces the unsubstantiated allegation that the SID is illegal is completely incorrect. A SID is in no way required to be a designated Main Street New Jersey participant and not being included in the program has no bearing on the validity or legality of the SID. The two things are completely and totally unrelated. To state that the denial of our application implies that DCA believes that the SID is illegal is a complete and total fabrication and untrue in every respect. Explore has been invited by DCA to apply again in 2022 when we have our 501c3 designation and we fully expect to be awarded the Main Street designation.

- December 16, 2020 - Explore submitted 501c3 application to the IRS
- March 25, 2021 - Town Committee approved Resolution to submit Main Street application
- March 30, 2021 - SID receives support letter for Main Street from Assemblymembers McKeon & Jasey
- March 31, 2021 - SID submits Main Street application to DCA
- May 3, 2021 - SID receives a letter from DCA requesting that two additional required documents be submitted
- May 4, 2021 - Town Committee approved the 2021 SID budget at their meeting
- May 10, 2021 - SID provided the two additional required documents to DCA

- May 18, 2021 - SID receives notification that Main Street application is denied due to not having 501c3
- May 20, 2021 - SID receives notice from Rep. Malinowski's office that the 501c3 application has not been reviewed by IRS as of yet
- June 3, 2021 - SID submits a casework request to Sen. Booker's office for assistance
- June 8, 2021 - SID receives a confirmation of receipt by Sen. Booker's office and is told to wait 2-3 weeks to an update from the IRS

We await approval, reaching out to government representatives, other items are taking priority

- **Township Committee Updates (R. Wasserman)**

- Apology for arriving late due to commuting traffic
- Township passed zoning ordinance major update at last meeting on second reading by 4 approvals (one person recused); more permitted uses for vacant spaces and a host of upgrades. Many residents, notably abutting Morris Ave/Highway District - districts 2 & 3 - expressed concerns about restaurants, notably related to noise, filtration, setback. Ordinance does provide a lot of protection for residents.

8. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT – Stephen Winer, Treasurer

- New budget report format developed by Stephen and Steve for even more transparency. Updated report posted yesterday. Info as of 5/31/21
- Bank balance was 23,130 as of 5/31/21. June 3 deposited \$154,000 received from Township; total as of June 16 approximately \$164,000. That represents remaining payment for the budget for this year.
- Report on Expenses through May 31 and Overall Budget - Attachment 2
- The master categories are same as discussed. The projected column varies over time – best estimate as progress through the year, invoices received, programs solidified.
- The current projection is about \$2,900 over budget – only because many are still best guess, and can cut back in many places. We will not go over the total budget.
- A few new items: Intern line under staffing, which has been posted (10 applications received so far).
 - Accountant and Auditor line originally \$4,500; we received an invoice related to the application for non-profit status, which is why total projected is higher, will be rebalanced.
 - Other category
 - Meals and Travel \$500 – so that Steve complies with conflicts policy – when he goes out to lunch with others, he will pay for himself; will probably be less
 - Board training \$3,500
- Steve and Alex discussed budget process for 2022 – present draft in October, final in November, then to Township Committee for final approval, then the assessment. The 2022 budget will be more detailed than 2021, when there will be a year of experience.
- A few examples were provided of expenses that will be higher or lower than originally estimated (Such as Executive Director higher but Marketing Consultant lower; events lower). Steve Grillo confirmed that the total will be under budget.
- Will need to manage to the fact that another payment will not be received until end of 1Q 2022 – Steve Grillo will make sure this will be covered, really a 15-month budget.
- It was recommended to add a note that the total will be within budget.
- It is not unusual to move money across categories and the budget is a macro, overall budget – Steve Grillo will check the ordinance to ensure aligning with any parameters and any approval that is required.

9. PLANNING AND EVENTS UPDATE

- Live Music Schedule (J. Benjamin Lieberberg) – Attachment 3
 - A very robust calendar now through Labor Day
 - New addition – Friday, August 6 – Poet’s Section
 - There are performances at various locations beyond downtown – Main Street Closure, Taylor Park Gazebo, Boxcar, Lot 1 etc.
 - Varied times, including afternoons and evenings
 - Hearing very positive feedback – attracting local community and people from other towns
- June 27 CEDA Event (J. Benjamin Lieberberg) – Attachment 4
 - Township is hosting Paper Mill in the Park from 1-2:30pm, entertainment for the whole family
 - Also CEDA art installation All Together Now is underway in Taylor Park
- Morris Turnpike Merchant Mixer (J. Culligan) – Attachment 5
 - Steve Grillo spoke for Jumana – first merchant mixer on June 29, 4:30-6pm in the Morris Turnpike district, hosted by Evolve Medspa and Icebox Cryotherapy to help connect merchants
 - Open only to businesses on Morris Turnpike; will rotate to other areas each month
 - Thank you to the Wine Rack and Millburn Deli for hosting refreshments
 - RSVP to steve@exploremillburnshorthills.org
- Millburn Sidewalk Sales & Musician Recruitment (A. McDonald & S. Grillo)
 - Encourage merchants to participate - Friday, Saturday, Sunday in June, July and August
 - Recruiting local amateur musicians for during the day
 - Marla to reach out to Vicky Powell about marketing the sidewalk sales

10. MARKETING, BRANDING & PLACEMAKING UPDATE

- Social Media Report (S. Grillo)
 - Instagram, LinkedIn, LGBTQ+ Campaign & Weekend Warm Up Newsletter – 5 platforms including Instagram, Facebook – more for events and calendar events, LinkedIn (just launched – 80 followers – more for business information, grants etc.), email blasts (Weekend Warm Up goes up on Thursday evenings), YouTube – filming commercials, launching in July
 - Stats - comparisons of May 17-June 15 vs. prior month – Instagram reached 2,900 accounts up 120%; 827 profile visits, up 62%; 937 followers, 9.2% increase; content interactions 1,024, up 8%; also 2,199 non-followers seeing us through shares etc.; 31 posts, 88 stories, 2 reels (bands playing live); impressions 24,136, up 72%; 36% of followers in Millburn-Short Hills and balance in nearby areas; 66% ages 35-54, 75% women.
 - LinkedIn 80 followers, 6.6% engagement vs average 2%. 20 posts with 20% engagement
 - Email blasts – 35% average open rate; high proportion of clicks are for live music
- “Meet the Merchants” Commercial Campaign (S. Grillo) – 60 second commercials – steady-cam style filming. 10 have been filmed. Average of 5 takes. This will be the campaign for July. 5-6 per district. Looking for more businesses in Wyoming, Short Hills Station, and Morris Turnpike. Icebox sample was shown – will be edited for sound etc. Email steve@exploremillburnshorthills.org if interested in being filmed.

- Branded Coaster Promotion (S. Grillo) – Branded coasters with logo and social media tags are being distributed to food and beverage businesses in town to raise brand awareness and social media traffic.
- Website Development Update (T. Levine) –
 - A RFP was issued, selected local resource, now built and ready to launch. Goal is to be the gateway to all the districts of Explore Millburn Short Hills, for residents and visitors.
 - Site is almost ready to launch, and there will also be continued enhancements.
 - Thank you to New Frontier for excellent work; to Jumana and Diana for design work; Marla and Jamie for the work on the database which is the basis for the directors; volunteer Tim Hubbell who has coordinated with local photographers who volunteered their talents including Ravneet Chadha, Arlene Pomerantz, Jamie Ryan, Herb Brian Smith.
 - Conducted a tour of the site which can be viewed at www.exploremillburnshorthills.org. Images showcase all 5 districts. Directory is searchable by location, type of business, name, etc. Each entry has contact info. Events includes Live Music Line-Up; other events listing is pending. Do Business has key info for prospective businesses. If a business within the SID wants to be added or has updates, please contact info@exploremillburnshorthills.org; this will be continually updated, intern working on expanding.
 - Stephen suggested having businesses include a link to the Explore Millburn Short Hills website.
 - Steve and Marla (and Tracy as needed) will make the updates; on WordPress platform, which is easy to update for basic items. Final testing underway as well as mobile version, aiming to officially launch early next week.
 - Terms and conditions/privacy policy are in place; entire site was reviewed by Legal Counsel. Follow up to confirm if OK to list copyright entity as Explore Millburn Short Hills vs. official name Millburn Short Hills Business Organization – Legal Counsel will double check.
 - Recognition of Tracy Levine for the efforts of significant hours to develop this.
- Yiftee Gift Card Program (N. Nicoll)
 - Stephen and Steve had a very helpful call with CEO, final legal question spending
 - Idea to launch a pilot – Explore MSH would purchase \$1,000 of Yiftee cards to use as prizes and giveaways in the community to assess the response, what portion is spent, where spent
 - The cards are limited to the businesses that sign up to accept them and connect to POS system
 - Awaiting answers on several contract items, will wait for more info before authorizing next step
- Parklet Grant Program (R. Wasserman)
 - Related to \$10,000 in budget for COVID relief grants
 - Discussed initial thought about parklets for food establishments – cost of about \$9,000-\$10,000 (town provides barriers, the establishment funds the rest – Explore Millburn Short Hills would cover a portion)
 - There was discussion and then consensus around the alternative idea of smaller grants for more businesses such as \$500 micro-grants for 20 businesses, and consensus around that idea
 - The ideas related to storefront activation – refresh, cleaning, table and chairs or other supplies to enhance sidewalk sales
 - Steve Grillo to prepare proposed criteria and process to present at the next meeting; this will be under Business Development and Advocacy

11. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

- Community Focus Groups (Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg)
 - Residents Debbie Fox and Alan Steinberg who are Market Research professionals have offered to plan and facilitate focus groups, starting with Upper Millburn and Morris Turnpike with business and property owners – tentatively scheduled for July 20 and 21
- Business Success Kit (Steve Grillo) – Attachment 6
 - Complete the kit, hard copies are available and on website
 - Construction office will send notifications when there are large scale construction projects
- Direct Business Outreach (S. Grillo)
 - Flex Parking, Restaurant Revitalization Fund, NJEDA Small Business Emergency Program & SBA LGBTQ Program
 - A key part of Steve’s job is fieldwork – walking around to the merchants – sharing factual info about Flex parking (RFP being issues), resources for small businesses (for example, for Pride Month – shared resources for LGBTQ+ businesses)

12. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL – Steven Grillo, Executive Director

- A Frame Sign Promotional Program – Attachment 7
 - Propose 4-5 branded directional signs to encourage people to go beyond the main streets
 - 10 signs (2 per district) – rotate to different businesses with Explore logo
 - Probably chalk signs; Nadege noted caution and investigate quality (minimize damage due to weather)
 - Approximately \$1200
 - Richard suggested possible signs in future for historical sites that are not marked
 - Motion by Nadege Nicoll; second by Richard Wasserman; roll call vote – unanimous approval
- Curb Efficiency & Signage Improvements Study – Attachment 8
 - Study area is downtown district, quick study by CDS
 - Alex suggested to split into easy-to-do items vs. longer term;
 - Analyzing parking, including parking deck (to increase utilization)
 - This would coordinate with the Downtown Vision Plan; this should focus on smaller items, not major expenditures
 - Jumana noted enforcement issue; that employees park in streets, feed meters all day and take up spots – per Steve, while these issues won’t be reviewed in detail in this study, they will be included in the report
 - Begin study within 2 weeks, at cost not to exceed \$3,500 in total
 - Motion by Stephen Winer, second by Michael Parlavecchio – roll call vote – approval by all except No vote by Nadege Nicoll
- Streetpole Banner Installation - Attachment 9
 - CDS solicited bids – received 4 bid; recommending low bidder, Riley’s Outdoor Décor
 - 3 options: 225, 100, 75 banners – recommend 100 banners (50% of total poles) at cost of \$11,634 (including all hardware)
 - Will coordinate with DPW; Alex noted to ensure approval by JCP&L which Steve confirmed

- Design subject to Marketing Committee Approval – each district its own color and name
 - Would be done approximately every five years
 - There will be a service agreement to replace damages etc. – Steve will follow up as part of contract
 - Motion to proceed with negotiation and execution of contract by Nadege Nicoll, second by Stephen Winer; roll call vote – unanimous approval
- NFP Training – Attachment 10
 - As a new board, focus on budgeting, governance, legal requirements etc.
 - Aim for ½ day in mid-July, presented by SRT Advising and Consulting who has a lot of related experience
 - Ensure recorded
 - Motion by Stephen Winer, second Michael Parlavecchio; roll call vote with all approvals except for abstention by Nadege Nicoll
- Chatham Short Hills Magazine – Attachment 11
 - They are very interested in promoting and supporting the SID
 - Marketing proposal to test print media of \$1780 package for balance of this year (\$444/month - \$3,540 annually) – monthly vertical ad, editorial feature 1x on the SID, 7 around town, 7 good times, 7 calendar items
 - Distributed to zip codes 07078 and 07928 – businesses receive also
 - There was discussion that residents in 07041 don't currently receive the magazine
 - There is a goal to also engage with people outside of our community to attract visitors
 - 59,000 circulation – trying to understand #'s – as Short Hills is approximately 7,000 HH's
 - Consensus for Steve to do more research of different publications and advertising opportunities to compare the options – Vicinity Magazine, Millburn-Short Hills Magazine, etc. – target to have in place for the holidays
- Morris Turnpike Beautification RFP – Attachment 12
 - Steve was seeking an impactful yet affordable project and proposed improving the strip of grass between curb and sidewalk on Morris Turnpike from Walgreen's to Benihana (except those that are already landscaped) – targeting timing is the fall
 - Include planters (durable flowers) with logo
 - Minimal maintenance – need to confirm maintenance responsibility of grass, planters etc.. by DPW (the property owners vs. the township)
 - Need to ensure Department of Transportation OK
 - This would be a nice type of project for a private grant (for example a bank, supermarket etc..) – can pursue that as well
 - Motion to proceed with putting out scope of work out to bid – Motion by Nadege Nicoll, second by Andrew Morgan; roll-call vote, unanimous approval
- Parking Kiosk Logo - Attachment 13
 - Bid for adhesive wraps on kiosk – 6 panels, 24 x 18 print of logo
 - Alex noted that these are our machines and we can put up visuals of our choosing
 - \$1200 for the installation of 24 visuals (6 x 4 kiosks)
 - Following discussion, consensus on potentially doing one as a pilot, and also to vary the designs vs. same logo 6 times - Steve will check with the company on cost

13. BOARD COMMENTS - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

- Next meeting is July 8, 6:30 p.m. – Michael Parlavecchio will not be present, Nadege and Jumana can attend online but not in-person
- Numerous thanks to Steve Grillo for jumping in so quickly, helping us do so much and meeting the businesses
- Thanks to Marla Itzkin for a great job, notably running the bands is a huge job– 30 shows
- Main Street Closure will run the full time from June 24 – August 30
- Tuesday evening – board encouraged to attend Volunteer Appreciation Cocktail Party

14. ADJOURNMENT - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

Motion by Richard Wasserman, second by Stephen Winer Adjourned at 9:08 p.m.