

**BID Committee
February 7, 2018**

Attending: Kelli Trumble; BID chairwoman	Corena Ricks
Kevin Ricks; BID	Ben Borchert
Justin Draper; BID	Ben Anderson
Jesse DeFosse; BID	Brian Holzem
Dan Gavinski; BID	Tara Anchor
Kyler Royston; BID	Jim Decker
Mark Sweet; BID	John Schoenherr
Mayor Brian Landers	Jenifer Dobbs; WDVCB
Chris Tollaksen; Public Works	Katie Fermanich; WDVCB
Hannah Kirby; Dells Events	Eric Helland

Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Kelli Trumble.

Motion made by Kyler Royston to approve January 24 minutes. Second by Dan Gavinski. Approved.

DUCHESS PLAZA:

City investment in Duchess Plaza is \$209,000 of which about half was for the furnishings. The Plaza entertainment program is already being advertised in the summer travel guides. The Farmers Market would like to relocate at Duchess Plaza. Development of public plazas was a key component to the Roger Brooks Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Open discussion from the audience and committee members showed strong support from business owners and favorable experiences reported from visitors. It was felt local usage is stronger than people think. Plazas fit well with the emerging retail trends which focus more on the overall experience at a shop or at a mall. Removal of the plaza would ultimately rest with the City Council and not the new mayor. Removal of Duchess Plaza, without a plan for a new location in place would be a significant step back in revitalizing downtown.

Kevin Ricks made a motion that BID strongly advocates for public plazas in the downtown and that they are necessary to a revitalized downtown. The committee asks the City Council to delay decisions about the Duchess Plaza until after the summer allowing time for discussion and exploration of alternative plaza locations if Duchess Plaza needs to be moved at all or evolves from a temporary to a permanent plaza. Second by Dan Gavinski. Approved unanimously.

The future of the Plaza is on the agenda for the Public Works Committee on February 19th.

FARMERS MARKET UPDATE:

The Farmers Market would like to relocate to the Plaza in 2018 and has submitted the necessary paper work with the City. After checking with vendors, the Sunday morning time will remain and will commence on Sunday, May 20th. Vendor rates will go down with the hopes of attracting a larger response. More sponsors will be sought. Culinary demonstrations were suggested for the Plaza location.

RIPLEY'S AQUARIUM DEVELOPMENT:

There are two different groups considering the development of a downtown aquarium. The project requires 35,000 - 50,000 square feet. The investment by either group would be on the order of \$50,000,000 - \$70,000,000. There are two other communities being considered by them besides Wisconsin Dells. Two downtown locations have been identified by both groups

and appraisals have been received but not yet reviewed. At the present time, negotiations with the property owners are ongoing. If either property can be acquired, a list of incentives can be expected from either group. Kevin Ricks indicated that it is not unusual for free use of the land being one incentive in a package. Once an incentive package is formally presented, it was felt the Visitor Bureau's Economic Development Committee needs to be contacted to consider the project.

DR. EVERMORE COLLECTION AND TRAIL SYSTEM:

Kevin and Corena Ricks shared a vision and some discussions held on the collection of Dr. Evermore's sculptures. The family remains very interested in having the entire collection displayed in Wisconsin Dells and have not pursued interest from other places. To display numerous pieces in the collection, The Ricks' envision a trail system being developed as part of the new Riverwood project on Bowman Road leading to downtown where it would connect with the River Walk. There have been early discussions by Kevin and Corena about purchasing land on the west side of the Wisconsin River next to the Timber Falls Miniature Golf course and then negotiating with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources about establishing hiking trails moving up along the river. The Canadian Pacific Railroad would again be contacted with the hope of coming to an agreement to use the lower portion of the existing bridge as a pedestrian walkway connecting both sides of the river. Former Governor Tommy Thompson and former Sen. Mary Panzer, who are both involved with the Riverwood project, could be helpful in working with the Railroad. This new walkway would provide numerous opportunities to display pieces from the Evermore collection including the showpiece "Forevertron". Other pieces could be located at strategic areas to be determined downtown.

The largest parts of a city investment in the Evermore collection would involve providing land and also necessary work to sandblast and prepare the "Forevertron" to be illuminated. At the next BID meeting, discussion will focus on financing for this project to reside in Wisconsin Dells. State and federal art grant programs may be an important focus point. At the March 7th BID meeting, the Ricks' will plan to provide more details in a presentation. At its core, this expanded vision of the Evermore collection should be viewed as a significant attraction rather than solely an art project and as such should have BID involvement.

2018 -2019 ICE CASTLE:

Jenifer Dobbs had recent contact with the company responsible for the ice castle construction. They remain interested in coming to Wisconsin Dells next winter and requirements remain that the City provides the water and about 2 acres of land for the castle.

The company will need a decision by April.

AGENDA: FEBRUARY 21 MEETING:

Items will include continued discussion on the Aquarium development, Evermore Collection, Duchess Plaza future, Ice Castle and 4th of July Celebration.

Motion made by Kevin Ricks to adjourn. Second by Kyler Royston. Approved.