**Greater Freeport Partnership Downtown Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2022, NJS Studios**

Meeting Goal: Personal conversations to help downtown business and building owners stay informed about upcoming projects and promotions to support the growth and revitalization of Downtown Freeport.

Attendance: Dennis Rinkenberger, Carmela Jackson, Cal Wescott, Donna Obert, Naomi Johnson-Schaar, Kim Rampenthal, Drew Broge, Devin Mielke, Mark Mannino, Kevyn Sutter, Rob Boyer, Wayne Duckman, Katie Gentz, Andrea Schultz Winter, Nicole Haas.

Zoom: Kelly Chesney, Aubra Palermo, Jon Palmer.

1. Introductions
   1. Thank you to hosts Naomi and Kim. Drew Broge discussed Bazing app and how all businesses can list deals on the app. May be helpful for other businesses.
2. Updates from City of Freeport – Kevyn Sutter/Wayne Duckman/Rob Boyer
   1. Update on Pocket Park-Andrea and the City will be working with the owners of Jet Beauty, about installing a hose bib within the pocket park. The city has started sweeping downtown streets and asked if business owners could push any debris they have onto the streets, on Thursday nights.
   2. CDBG Grant – The City received this grant to redo intersections with ADA accessible ramps.
   3. Updates on Chicago Ave- Project has gone to bid Bids will be open mid-April. Once bids are received, the construction timeline will be more defined, and information will be communicated to downtown business and building owners.
   4. Façade improvement grant is now open for 2022. Meeting will be set for those interested to answer questions. $20,000 in grants available to multiple projects on a 50/50 match basis. Contact Wayne for more information.
3. Design & Placemaking Committee Updates
   1. Items discussed at yesterday’s meeting-The Façade Grant Program is accepting applications. All applications are due on April 15th. There will be $20,000 for this year’s projects. Banners will start going up this month.
   2. Countywide clean-up April 10-17
   3. Main Street Accreditation update- Andrea is working on the application. She is in the process of meeting with business owners to record building data. The application will be turned in by the middle of May.
4. Marketing Updates
   1. Community Guide is being finished up and should be available first week April. Looking for local distributor to drive around and deliver guides a few times a year.
   2. Highlights for 2022 – Working on plans for promotion around/through Chicago Ave reconstruction to be discussed after timeline for construction is established.
5. Promotions Committee Notes
   1. Back Country Roads – Fundraising concert on April 9. Please encourage purchasing tickets for event.
   2. Sound System – Issues with existing system and it’s safety. Looking for help in reviewing system and it’s needs.
6. Events
   1. 2022 Event schedule – Schedule handed out and available on DT Business website.
   2. Festival District dates 2022 – Also included on schedule
   3. Event Deadline policy – When Partnership is helping to promote individual businesses in an event, need to have deadlines for promotion and permit entry 6, 4, and 2 weeks out. Full deadline policy available on DT website.
   4. Pretzel Fest – April 23 – Katie outlined current activities planned. Would love for other businesses to participate in their own way or give us ideas/volunteer to help with additional activities.
7. New Downtown Businesses:
   1. Ribbon Cuttings – Cici’s Salon (now rescheduled TBD), Quite Souls March 31,
   2. Other New Businesses
8. Business Education
   1. New Member Orientation – May 3 at 10 am
   2. Steps to Connect Business to Events – Survey being distributed this week (now available on greaterfreeport.com/dtsurvey) to help understand from shoppers how to and when the shop downtown. Survey data will be used in presentation from IL Main Street.
9. Adjourned at by 8:20 am.

Handouts:

Next Meeting: May 11th, Location TBD.