

River to Rail Initiative Notes

Meeting Date/Time

August 4, 2021

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Agenda

Attendance

- Bruce Buxton, Tyler Glynn, Jennifer Bergman, David Chanski, Eric Charpentier, Karl Samp, Mary Devine-Johnson, Matt Kilian, Allison Medeck, and Shane Riffle

City of Brainerd

- David Chanski –
 - EDA – They are going through the goals/priorities/ budget process. They are considering using some of the American Recovery Plan money Brainerd got to do some things.
 - Trailhead Park – Money was approved in June and is now available to spend. Brainerd has set up a Project Management Team and will be going out with an RFP for design work with hopes of spring bid and construction beginning in May 2022.
 - Zoning Ordinance – They are now working on language for the ordinance and the City has a moratorium on zoning changes until complete. Potential developments are still okay so they should see the planning department.
 - American Recovery Plan – Brainerd has received ½ of their allotment with the rest coming in 2022. They are considering what they want to do with it. They have a lot of time since it does not have to be obligated until 2024 and spent by 2026.
 - There was a joint workshop to review the concept of the proposed improvements to TH 210 through town to be constructed in 2025. There will now be public sessions to gather input from citizens and businesses.
- Jennifer Bergman –
 - Jennifer gave a summary of where the planning was at for the sesquicentennial events during the week of Sept. 18-25, 2021. Others added on and the list is at the end of this report.

Brainerd Restoration

- Mary Devine-Johnson –
 - They have a concert in the parking lot scheduled for 8/12/2021 at 7:00 pm in the parking lot downtown.
 - They are also going through some strategic planning which will include discussions on a phased holiday lighting plan, bike share options, dog park downtown, and another mural.

Crossing Arts Alliance

- No report.

HRA

- Eric Charpentier –
 - They are making application for a small cities grant for 2025. It will serve the area of Washington St. during the upgrade by MnDOT.

River to Rail Initiative

Notes

- They are investing \$900k in the HVAC system for the hi-rise. They have the funds and want to keep the building in good shape.
- They would like support letters for the Thrifty White Drug mixed use development project as they apply for the housing incentives.

YMCA

- Shane Riffle –
 - They are working with Camp Vanazek and have hosted 160 kids.
 - They are working with Community Ed./CLC on child care staffing.
 - In youth sports, they have had 120 in T-ball, 115 in soccer, and a total of 350 kids in their program.
 - They have a purchase agreement on 703 Oak St.

Downtown Business Council

- Mary Devine-Johnson –
 - Riley Weber has been hired as a coordinator
 - They are planning their fall events – spooktacular, Small Business Saturday, Hometown Holiday, etc. They are always looking for ideas and help.

Riverfront Committee

- Karl Samp –
 - Since the funding for the riverfront park was approved for less than the estimated cost, BLACF is looking at a challenge grant if the City is willing to put some money towards it. There is a system and he explained it but I will rely on him to explain it to anyone interested.
 - BLACF is hosting a “Soul of the Community” webinar on September 16, 2021 from 11:00 to 1:00 in the CTC room.
 - He also reminded everyone of their annual dinner at Grand View Lodge for the Philanthropy and other awards. The dinner is set for September 2, 2021 from 5:30 to 8:30 at Grand View Lodge Grand Ballroom.
 -

Chamber of Commerce

- Matt Kilian –
 - He would like to be some help in getting the information about the TH 210 project to all the affected businesses.
 - He is working on the time capsule and has an idea for individuals and businesses to buy a box they can fill with things they want in the capsule. The proceeds are to benefit the Tower Restoration Committee.
 - The BLACC annual awards dinner will be held October 2, 2021 at Craguns in the sports arena. Lexington Manufacturing is the business excellence award winner, Close-Converse and Ron and Al Lindner are the other winners to be recognized that night. Covid prevented them all from getting it last year.
 - He said the Children’s Museum efforts are temporarily based in the ArtSpace building. I wanted to ask more about the status but got sidetracked and did not.

BLAEDC

- Tyler Glynn –
 - Rebranding is going to be unveiled to the BLAEDC Board at the next meeting and then it will be presented through a quarterly meeting for members and the public.
 - The American Recovery Plan has Crow Wing Co. receiving \$12.6M that has to be allocated by 12/31/2024 and spent by 12/31/2026. The county is considering

River to Rail Initiative

Notes

about \$6M for broadband, \$2M for childcare, and have not decided on the balance. There was some discussion on what is possible and what is not possible. The rules are out but will be amended again.

- BLAEDC and BLACC are working together on a focus group for employment and workforce issues. It was noted again about how many jobs are available and what businesses are doing to find people. Group will also discuss retention issues as times go on.
- The Mainstreet Revitalization Program is using some of the Amer. Recovery Plan money to continue their efforts. They have access to \$80M and there are grant available based on 30% match up to \$750K and loans up to \$2M.

Sesquicentennial Planning Discussion (Some of this was added after the Sesquicentennial meeting on 8-9)

- Jennifer Bergman, Mary Devine Johnson, Matt Kilian –

Confirmed

- 18th— Brainerd Airport Family event 9:00 to 3:00 – medallion hunt, airplane rides, etc.
- 18th – Rubber Duckie race 4:00
- 18th – City Hall Open House & historic display 4:00 – 6:30
- 18th – Kick-off proclamation City Council alumni event Mayor Badeaux – 5:00
- 20th— City Hall open house + historic display (4-6:30pm)
 - Old City memorabilia will be displayed throughout City Hall before the council meeting
- 21st— Here for Good Market (3-7pm)
 - Live music, vendors, face painting
- 21th – Downtown History Walk 5:30
- 22nd – Trivia Night
 - 6 rounds, 10 questions
 - Prizes to the winners
- 22nd to 25th – Downtown scratch off sales
 - Participating businesses will offer scratch off discounts
- 22nd, – Brainerd Lakes Chamber Business after hours/time capsule event / community festival (4:00pm–6:00pm)
 - National Anthem; Proclamation
 - Guest speakers: Mayor of Brainerd, Historical Society, contributing organizations, Brainerd Lakes Chamber
 - Live music
 - Food – possible tie in with Eagles or Jaycee’s Rib Fest
 - Burying Time Capsule – location TBD; possibility of recovering and opening a 1969 time capsule, community survey for items, class of 2021 item
- 23rd – Downtown History Walk 3:00
- 23rd – NP Center Event – bean bag toss, barbeque contest, NPC family heritage family guest book, live music, tenants have other events, tenants dress in clothes of the era, kids activities, short program, fireworks at 8:00
- 24th – Courthouse Open house
- 24th— “The Crossing” dedication
 - Marker referencing the “Crossing” and the bridge collapse

River to Rail Initiative

Notes

- May work with Fire department to create a 'draw'
- 25th— Stride n' Seek (8:30am–12:00pm)
 - Brainerd wide scavenger hunt,
 - Notch 8 as beginning and end points
 - Website/registration up and running
- 25th – Downtown History Walk 10:30
- 25th— Brainerd Parks and Recreation community Bash (12:00 to 4:00pm)
 - Picnic at Gregory Park
 - Possibly small fair rides (Safari North), bouncy house, and family friendly activities
- 25th – Jaycees Street Fest/pie eating contest 12:00 to 4:00 games, face painting, bean bag tournament, pie/ice cream eating, band, 6:30 Rib Fest, 9:00 – 12am music.
- 26th – Flapjack event 8:00 to 12:00 Water tower group (National Lumberjack Day) American Legion – costume contest, pancake eating contest, pancake races, perhaps an axe throwing contest

In the works

- Stage North Paul Bunyan musical production – dates TBD
- Cemetery Tours
- Ribbon cutting for Memorial Park – date TBD
- School tours – high school not yet sent
- Traveling Art Pub Demonstration – event and date TBD

Promotion:

- Light pole Sesquicentennial banners logo installed on Washington St, South 6th St, Downtown, and Mill Ave
- Weekly history tidbits in the Brainerd Dispatch on Mondays
- Sesquicentennial page on the City's website including calendar of events, history tidbits, etc: <https://www.ci.brainerd.mn.us/596/150-Years>
- September 11th Dispatch wrap and Echoland Shopper - 43,000 households deadline is 23rd of August to get in the wrap.
- Co-branding – the 150th logo will be available to download on the sesquicentennial website page along with an events flyer. Please include the logo on all individual event promotional materials.
- Community Focus leading up to Sesquicentennial Week
- Here for Good Market booth space
- Advertisement to the schools
- Contributing organizations' individual media channels
 - Matt will schedule a meeting soon but they are still talking about options (series of events branded for the sesquicentennial along with one major event, historic walking tours, time capsule, etc.). They all said they would help but could not be in the lead position. There was a suggestion to do a public notification for people with interest to come forward.

Next Meeting Date

- October 6, 2021, at 11:00 am in the CTC Room of the BLACC/BLAEDC offices.