

Projects and Improvements – the Latest News!

The Williams Avenue Improvements project (improved storm runoff, drainage, sidewalks, and parking) has been in design for quite some time. After obtaining consensus of the businesses, the PSJRA, and the City Commissioners; Preble-Rish began working diligently on the bid documents for this project. Last week USDA Rural Development completed their review on the “preliminary plans, specifications and front-end contract documents” which they deemed “acceptable for bid.” The City Commission will be asked for permission to advertise for bids at the February 5th meeting, and pending their approval, the RFP (Request for Proposal) will be advertised in the February 14th issue of the Star. We should be seeing work commence within the next couple of months. The work will start at Cecil G. Costin Sr. Boulevard and work toward 1st Street. There will be times when sections of the street will be blocked off, and we will keep you informed on the schedule to enable you to make plans and adjustments. We will do everything possible to minimize any impact to business along the way.

As this project has become more involved than originally anticipated, USDA has recommended that we apply for this grant again in the next cycle to cover any increased costs. During this cycle, we will also add landscaping and the required irrigation, along with some street art and sculpture. The scheduled improvements will provide a tremendous benefit to both business and every visitor to our Historic District.

The Façade Grant program is ready to roll-out pending final approval of the PSJRA board and the City Commissioners. After approval, the PSJRA will distribute notification to businesses for a meeting to provide all interested parties with the application and information. During this meeting, we will answer your questions about city requirements (such as permits), if there will be any increase in your appraised value, if building inspections will be required for specific types of work and anything else you need to know. We will also let you know about the process and schedule to meet with the Design Review Committee to receive their recommendations and approvals.

The deck plan for the Dr. Joe Memorial Park has been signed and sealed by structural engineer, Terry Anderson, of Anderson & Associates. We are grateful to Terry and to Steven Rudd of the Blueprint Port/Rudd Designs for providing the design, the drawing, the plans for each bidder and structural reviews at no charge. This deck will be very large and will accommodate small civic functions or family get-togethers. The design has also incorporated a viewing area to read the tribute to Dr. Joe.

The final significant upcoming event is the adoption by the City of the Redevelopment Plan Revision. After the proper notices are filed by the City and the revised document has been provided to the taxing authorities, our target date for adoption is the first City Commission meeting in March. This is the same document that has been reviewed over the past 10 months; however, because the boundaries have now been revised to include only the original area, the plans also had to reflect this change and reference to the expanded area had to be removed.

On a side note, we attended a wonderful, funny and thought-provoking play on Sunday afternoon at Palm Tree Books. What a neat opportunity! Thanks to Jamie Smith for opening on Sunday and thanks to Michael Lister (the playwright) and the Pottersville Players for a fun and enriching experience. Encore!