



**Thayer Street District Management Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, September 7, 2021  
118 Waterman Street, 2nd floor

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Thayer Street District Management Authority (TSDMA) board meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M.

**1. Roll Call**

Directors: Joe Mardo, Chair; Paul Griesinger; Richard Dulgarian; John Luipold; Lauren Berk; Alexis Kievning; and Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Absent: Katie Silberman

Ex officio: Ed Bishop

Guests: Megan Lewis, Brown University; Audrey McClelland; Kelly Mitchell, Sergeant, Community Policing and Outreach, Brown University Department of Public Safety; Mark Rapp, ACME Architect, LLC; David Boutros and Michael Boutros of Two Cousins, LLC; Peter J. Casale, Code Consultant; Lucy Zhn, Ayame Hibachi Express; Leo Perotta, City of Providence Director of Public Works; Demo Roberts, Director of public property at City of Providence; Marisa Albanese, Manager, Community and Customer Mgmt. at National Grid (via phone).

**2. Thayer Holiday Lighting Update from Demo Roberts, Director of Public Property at City of Providence; Leo Perotta, City of Providence Director Of Public Works, City of Providence; and Marisa Albanese, Manager, Community and Customer Mgmt. at National Grid**

Ms. Albanese informed the TSDMA Board that National Grid and Verizon, who own/lease the poles (to which the TSDMA attached the holiday lights) does not allow any attachments with city partnerships. The issues are safety and liability. The TSDMA would not be allowed to attach their holiday lights going forward. On city owned poles, metered electric service could be ordered. This service must be approved by National Grid. The issue on Thayer Street is lack of room to add a riser to the poles. Mr. Perotta stated that another reason for not allowing attachments is the additional weight creates changes in the stability of the poles. He stated that use of city owned Cobra street and traffic lights might be an option. These pole locations would need to be approved in advance. He recommended that any across the street banners be attached to individual buildings with the use of guide wires. Ms. Personeus was asked to present a recap of the possible attachment locations to the Board at the October meeting.

**3. Presentation of 279 Thayer Development by Peter J. Casale, Code Consultant; Mark Rapp, Architect; David Boutros and Mike Boutros, property owners.**

Property owners David and Michael Boutros and their architect Mark Rapp presented their early stage plans for the redevelopment of 279 Thayer Street to the TSDMA Board. Their plan was to demolish the existing structures and build a four story mixed use property. The first floor will have commercial space and the second to fourth floors will have residential space. They stated both drainage and power were currently being worked out. After review of the exterior renderings, Mr. Luipold expressed concerns regarding the balconies and rooftop exterior locations as shown. He stated potential liability and safety issues with college students being the majority of the renters in the area. Several Board members stated they would like to see the materials palette being considered and recommended using larger windows. The development team mentioned they still needed to meet with DPE and CHNA. They were hoping to have their major land development hearing in either October or November of 2021.

#### **4. Social Media Report from Audrey McClelland**

Ms. McClelland presented to the Board her social media monthly report for the month of August 2021. Highlights of the report included an update on Influencer related activity and influencers that are scheduled to be activated in September. Instagram engagement remained high. Facebook interaction dropped last month. She mentioned planning for her next social media training in the 3rd week of October.

#### **5. Thayer Street Marketing Committee Update**

Ms. Personeus updated the Board on the progress of our new TSDMA Merchant website and that she and Ms. McClelland continue to reach out to TSDMA businesses to get them to participate and provide the information that they would like included on the site.

#### **6. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting on August 3, 2021.**

Minutes from the August 3, 2021 Board meeting presented by Ms. Personeus, were approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Mr. Griesinger. The vote was unanimous.

#### **7. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Financial Reports as provided on September 7, 2021.**

Financial Reports were presented September 7, 2021 by Ms. Personeus, and were approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Ms. Berk. The vote was unanimous.

#### **8. Discussion and Vote on Nomination of TSDMA Board Members**

Ms. Personeus explained to the Board that she had spoken to Paul Boutros and although he would like to be considered for nomination to the TSDMA Board of Directors, at this time he did not have the time to commit. He would appreciate a future consideration once his redevelopment project is completed. Mr. Griesinger reported that the Mayor had not yet offered his appointment choice for consideration.

#### **9. Executive Director Report**

Ms. Personeus emailed her Executive Director report on September 6, 2021, to each Board member.

Ms. Personeus reported that the Thayer Street Summer Musics Series had come to completion for the season.

#### **10. Thayer Business Update**

Ms. Berk reported that business had improved since the Brown students had returned.

#### **11. Other Business**

- Flooding and Drainage Issues from Recent Heavy Rain Storms

Ms. Personeus reported to Mr. Perotta complaints that were made to her regarding clogging street drains at the top of Thayer at Cushing during the last heavy rain storm.

- Mr. Perotta mentioned to the Board that the city was moving to 100% touchless meters with the pay by phone option.
- Ms. Personeus asked Mr. Perotta to follow up on the status of two dangerous sidewalk locations on Thayer Street. The first in front of Pleasant Surprise (297 Thayer) around the tree well, and the second in front of Chinatown/Baja's (277-273 Thayer) where work had been done under the sidewalk which was roughly patched and not made level to the existing sidewalk.
- Discussion on Increase in Violence Locally: Kelly Mitchell, Sergeant, Community Policing and Outreach, Brown University Department of Public Safety updated the Board that street harassment from aggressive panhandlers had increased. She recommended that businesses pay attention to what is going on right outside their businesses, and report any aggressive behavior immediately to 272-3121.
- Mr. Griesinger mentioned that Tiger Sugar Bubble Tea would be moving into the former CBD location on Thayer, and a service business would be moving into the former Impact Everything location.
- Mr. Luipold mentioned that Bank of America would be moving into the north side of 271 Thayer with plans to open by the end of October 2021.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:24 A.M.