



September 2020

MEMO



Natalie Pineiro



I. Infrastructure:

Parklets

Were completed in mid- August. They were received with much gratitude and many of them are used all week long by businesses like Central Pizza. DeMartino's, Alfonso's, Savor, Kyma and more.

Fall Decorations:

Will be going up in the next week. We have once again ordered corn, for the polls downtown and will be putting up the scarecrows and fall bows. We have also ordered mums and fall cabbage for the Giardina Walkway. The corn and flowered were installed on 9/22.

NJTPA Grant: We have been in talks with the Borough about applications for an upcoming grant opportunity: the NJ Transportation Authority Transportation Set Asides Grant. We are hoping to create an application for a streetscape that will enable us to make improvements to the walkways, landscaping, furnishings downtown and more. I will confirm with everyone once we are 100% certain that will be the application scope.

Winterizing/Outdoor Seating:

We are working with the Borough to draft communication to business owners pertaining to the extension (or limitation) of outdoor dining, parameters for heating elements, deadlines for the elimination of tents/coverings, and the official date when sidewalk cafes will have to be brought in. We are looking forward to issuing a communication at the end of this week.

Billboard windows/Asian Market:

Because of the resolution of some of the graphics for this project, the timeline has been delayed to ensure that we are investing in a quality piece. We are projecting the piece to go into production after next week and hope to have it installed the 2nd week of October.

Main Street Banner Poles:

Due to a change in price and the potential for the involvement of DOT the timeline of this project has been pushed back as well. We hope to clarify if this location is in the DOT ROW and look forward to sharing an updated timeline with the Board soon.

II. Events

Local Love Wrap up –

The Local Love Event was a great success. We could not have asked for a better day in terms of weather. Many merchants reported record numbers of shoppers. We were able to utilize the courthouse lawn for picnicking and had live music at both the courthouse lawn AND Division St. "The floor is yours" dance center also did a dance demo on Division St as well.

Update on Spooktacular/Halloween events –

Due to COVID and the limitations for outdoor gatherings, we will not be able to host the Spooktacular event. However, we will still be reaching out to merchant to see who will be giving out candy and will send out an email to the public with a list of those locations so they can make their stops accordingly.

We will also be putting out a survey to our business community to see who will be hosting special events, costume contests, drink/dining specials and will be putting together a map with a “Self-guided” Spooky Somerville Halloween tour.

Update on Holiday Jubilee –

Similar to Spooktacular it is unclear whether we will be able to host the Holiday Jubilee to the same extent that we do every year. We will still have the Holiday tree on Division Street but are starting to plan for a “virtual” jubilee program.

We will also be looking to sponsor photos with Santa, Carriage Rides, Carolers, and possibly a Holiday Market every weekend between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Art Market –

We will be partnering with Arts on Division to host an Art Market on Division Street, between Vets. And South Street on October 11, 2020. We have about 22 artisans/artists/crafters registered for the event. We will also have live music and possibly a live painter.

Details are below:



SAVE THE DATE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2020
12:00PM - 6:00PM
DIVISION STREET
SOMERVILLE NJ 08876

Art · Music · Handmade Goods



 @ARTSONDIVISION
@DOWNTOWNSOMERVILLE

 @SOMERVILLEAOD
@DOWNTOWNSOMERVILLEALLIANCE

sponsored by
Downtown
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Alliance



in partnership
with Arts
On Division

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ON DIVISION**
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Hispanic Heritage Month –

I was recently asked, in my capacity as ED of the DSA, to join the RWJ Latino Council. In Partnership with RWJ, and the Latino Council, we will be hosting our 2nd annual Hispanic Month Celebration. We will be promoting Hispanic-Owned businesses in the District and hosting two events on Division St. The First will take place this Friday, Sept 25th from 6-9PM and will feature cultural performances from various Hispanic countries, as well as the performance of a Mariachi Band. The second event is a salsa concert by David Cedeno and his orchestra. Details on both of these events can be found below. Finally, we will be working with RWJ to produce a video series focused on healthy Latin Recipes that will air on our YouTube channel, website and social media. RWJ will also be sharing through their network.

CELEBRATE
HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER
25
HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION
PERFORMANCES
LIVE MUSIC
GIVEAWAYS
6pm-8pm
division street | somerville nj

FRIDAY, OCTOBER
16
DAVID CEDENO
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
playing salsa, merengue, latin jazz
division street | somerville nj | 6pm

TUNE IN TO DOWNTOWN SOMERVILLE'S
SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES FOR SPECIAL
HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
RELATED CONTENT!

DOWNTOWN SOMERVILLE
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Downtown SOMERVILLE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset | **RWJ Barnabas HEALTH**
@RWJSOMERSET

Summer Stage Music Lineup-

Summer Stage has been extended through the end of October. The lineup for the rest of the season is as follows:

9/26 - The Outcrops

10/3 - John Busse

10/10 - Tyrone Stackhouse

10/17 - Mike Holland - Elvis Impersonator

10/24 - The Paul Nagy Project

Due to COVID, we converted the series into a passive event and have been encouraging those who need to be seated to bring their own chairs. The event has been largely successful from week to week and we have had few complaints with regards to masking and social distancing.

III. Retention and Recruitment

Regional Center Grant –

Our grant application for the SOM-POP, pop-up shop program was recently approved. We are in contact with a couple of property owners to discuss options for locations. The next step is to start engaging potential pop-up shop vendors and create a timeline/supplemental budget for leasing a space, design and opening. I look forward to talking about putting together a subcommittee for this project at our next meeting.

Update from Richard Cohan –

We finalized our contract to work with the retail consultant Richard Cohan last month. We are in the process of preparing a market report that should be available for our next meeting. In the meantime, Mr. Cohan and I have begun to discuss anchor stores and started working on a list of Athleisure brands for recruitment that included attempting to lure brands like Lulu Lemon, Athleta, and Fabletics, out of the Bridgewater Commons and also reach out to new brands like Alo and Sweaty Betty.

Lululemon and Athleta (both located in Bridgewater Commons) have advised, that at this time, they are not interested in either a pop up or longer-term location in Somerville. They cited lack of desired co-tenancy as their rationale.

The plan is to not to give up on these brands, respect their opinion and continue to build our friendship with these brands. We do not want to be like every other marketplace pursuing them -trying to convince them. We will continue our discussions, educating them about all that is going on in Somerville and in time, they will determine that they need to be here. This is a marathon not a sprint, especially as long as COVID is in the picture.

New digital campaign

We will be launching a new digital campaign via social media/through organizations like Women’s Center for Entrepreneurship, Black-owned NJ, NJ Small Business Network and others with info on how you can open a business in Somerville. The campaign will include new infographics as well as a video series with testimonial from businesses on why they choose to operate their business in Somerville

IV. Marketing

Billboard –

As I reported previously, we secured a billboard on Rte. 287 through the end of the year. The reach on this billboard is much wider than what we were getting with the Patriots Stadium Billboard across from Target/Costco etc. We have leased it through the holiday season and will be changing our artwork to correspond with the seasons/events.

Image of the billboard is below:



New Optimum Vids –

We just produced a new set of commercials to run via Optimum. We are expecting to start the new commercial run before the end of the month and run them until Nov. 24th when we will be switching to run the Holiday commercials. Yu can check out the new commercials here:

Videos: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/877em4m4nbkxi4s/AAARQTnxy_k-s5ACxBm7Fm4ta?dl=0

Edible Jersey Ads:

We have been running ads all year with Edible Jersey focusing on our restaurants. Each edition (Spring, Summer, High Summer, Fall) has focused on a different set of businesses. You can check out all of the advertisements that we designed (all full-page).

Click the link below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9sv2tjhuo5fzpc8/AABVFXlyXxOing4pDIgwkNAXa?dl=0>