
TO: Sandy Schwan, Executive Director Summer Nights
FROM: Malcom Chapman, the Chapman Group
DATE: 28 March 2012
RE: FORUM FOR SUMMER NIGHTS AND DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memo is to provide a hot wash-up regarding the Summer Nights forum held on Tuesday, 6 March 2012 to explore the relationship between the event and the downtown area and downtown businesses. The meeting's structure was simple, straightforward and clear. While we understand the matter is not simple and affects businesses, non-profits, the City, churches, and residents, the structure was employed because we wanted to get it right the first time. As a result, we went back to the basics: identified the issues, created a list of committed stakeholders to address those issues, and recommended the stakeholders be given the space accomplish their tasks.

This memo provides a summary of the meeting, list of responses to questions asked at the meeting, list of stakeholders identified by the meeting's attendees, summary of post-forum discussions, and recommendations for going forward.

MEETING SUMMARY:

On Tuesday, 6 March 2012 sixty community members gathered in the Community Room of the City/School Administration Building to discuss Summer Nights and its impact on Downtown Rapid City, South Dakota.

As the facilitator, I asked that people come to "play" with a certain community spirit. We set ground rules and I quickly walked the group through Suzanne Morse's seven leverage points as outlined in her book, *Smart Communities*. The points are that smart communities:

1. Invest right the first time
2. Work together
3. Build on community strengths
4. Practice democracy
5. Preserve the past
6. Grow Leaders
7. Invent a brighter future

With that as a backdrop, the group answered the question, "Is there anyone here that would like to see Summer Nights go away?" No one raised their hand or said yes so we began on the premise that this event was here to stay for a while and the group could turn its attention to how to put energy toward continually improving the event for the whole of Rapid City.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS:

The following questions were posed to forum attendees and their responses are below. The responses are listed in no particular order.

"What's good about Summer Nights?"

- It's a gathering place
- Has good music
- It's free
- Encourages family time
- Is for all ages
- Is friend oriented
- Creates a sense of community
- It's supportive of local charities
- Enhances volunteerism
- Establishes another tie to EAFB
- Showcases businesses
- Has a variety of entertainment
- Creates Business Opportunities
- Aids tourism
- Adds to job market
- Is a positive event for Rapid City
- Is about downtown revitalization
- Increases revenue
- Is a quality event
- Is another great idea from a Leadership Rapid City class
- Highlights our public safety officials
- It's fun

“What are your concerns?”

- Parking
- Closing Main Street so early on Thursdays
- How to expand vendor participation
- Set up of the event
- Communication with businesses (As one attendee states, “No one asked me.”)
- ID policy as it relates to wristbands
- Transportation (Potential use of trolleys and/or other methods to transfer people to and from designated areas.)
- More things for teens and seniors to do
- Art Alley as a “hang out” for youth
- A need for more tables/seating areas
- Over emphasis of alcohol

STAKEHOLDERS:

The participants at the meeting identified the following stakeholders with respect to Summer Nights. The stakeholders are listed in no particular order.

- City of Rapid City
 - Public Safety
 - Transit
 - Parks and Recreation (this was brought up but was answered that Parks and Rec has no major role in Summer Nights)
- Downtown Businesses—Retailers (Rapid City Downtown Association)
- Summer Nights Executive Committee
- Downtown Churches
- Youth
- Seniors
- Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Main Street Square

POST-FORUM DISCUSSIONS:

Since the 6 March 2012 forum, I have met or had conversations with City Council members, City officials, downtown business owners and employees, Summer Nights Executive Board members, and several folks who just like downtown Rapid City. They all seem to agree, that Summer Nights is an event that is worthy of the discussion that it has generated and committed stakeholders should make every effort to continue to improve it.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Following are my recommendations derived from the forum and post-forum discussions.

Collectively

- Formation of an Advisory Committee from the stakeholders group and address the issues listed above.

Advisory Committee

- Determine the scope of the committees work and structure for how to accomplish that work.
- Explore other footprint options for the overall event and present recommendations to the Summer Nights Executive Committee.
- Examine the relationship with and potential use of Main Street Square during Summer Nights.

City of Rapid City

- Consider an Ordinance allowing downtown businesses to extend their businesses to the sidewalks during special downtown events like Summer Nights.

Summer Nights Executive Committee

- Create a succession plan for the leadership of Summer Nights to ensure the event's sustainability.

Enclosures: 2

List of Attendees

Rapid City Journal Article and Online Comments

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Summer Nights Forum

Attendees March 6, 2012

Name	Business Name	email address	phone
Sandra Schwann	Summer Nights BID		343-1823
Bret Angl	SUMMER NIGHTS - BENTON DIST		399-4244
Steve Alexander	RAPID CITY POLICE DEPT		394-4153
Mallory Heintzenreder	Summer Nights		391-7904
Sam Koiker	City	Sam.Koiker@regov.org	394-4110
Kelly Miller	Summer Nights BOB	Kelly.Miller@hyndata.com	440-2929
Tina Phelps	Summer Nights BOB		348-2160
Laura Peel	SUMMER NIGHTS BOB		786-3930
ARRY Brown	City Council Member		390-2989
Todd Gressop	Old Skool Concessions	GRESSOP@RAP.MISO.NET	484-0783
Dave Gredlein			430-1592
Juan Gallagan	Summer Nights BOB		721-5846
DeLofa	Roben Real Estate	dutharoberealestate.com	391-3992
Kay Baker	BHC/Western Assoc Council		341-1010
Kim Tves	BHQA/DODDINGTON ASSOC Committee		390-0723
MIKE KONTBLIND	MICHAEL'S MEATS DEAR		342-0127
Pick Brady	Black Hills Community Park		716-6073
Annie Curtis	Spears Studio/ARML		342-8700
Lynette Olmick		olmick@juno.com	343-7100
Kelly Curtis	ADJ Concessions		791-3947
Jay Penaro	Murphy's	foxydemarco@yahoo.com	617-504-5735
Dawn Connors	Summer Nights BOB		391-3631
Mary Seibert	Summer Nights BOB		639-1626
Robin Miller	Summer Nights- RCRH	rmillere@regionalhealth.com	716-5865
Seaf Carrand	Rapid City Wineson	scarrand@wineson.com	484-3990

Summer Nights Forum

Attendees March 6, 2012

Name	Business Name	email address	phone
HELEN USERA	CITIZEN	helen-jenkins70@yahoo.com	431-1473
Barb Schrader	Global Market	global.market@pop.mt.net	831-0496
FRANK Monahan	Thirstys	frank5@yahoo.com	484-9780
SCOTT TEMPLE	DYN/Slumseal	SCOTT@struedumveland.com	445-2383
Beth M. Mathen	Rodolph's SHOE	Mathenb@gmail.com	393-0203
Todd Christensen	Citizen Summer Nights BRAND	TCHRIST1@RAP.MIDCO.NET	391-6569
John B Roberts	CITY COUNCIL	JohnRoberts@RSGOV.ORG	484-9247
Nick Hanson	FISHER BEVERAGE	NoNickNickRood@Hotmail.com	484-9607
Craig Van Dam	Fisher Beverage	crandem64@midco.net	480-7335
Tim Doyle	citizen / PD	Tim.Doyle@regov.org	484-7409
Charity Doyle	City Council	Charity.Doyle@regov.org	343-1842
Jean Davis	citizen	jeandavis@rapmidco.net	348-2290
EMILIE RUSCH	RAPID CITY JOURNAL	emilie.rusch@ec.net	394-8453
Auct Small	RSTREPRE/KIDA	theatre@rushmore.com	390 3012
Beth Hotel	Rapid City Business Assoc	beth@rapidcity.com	715-749
Coor Raterman	SAC - Sov. Div.	CadyR@co.pemington.sd.us	394-6809
Jessie Wright	City Rapid City - Council	jessie.wright@regov.org	415 - 2288
Ron SASSO	CITY Council Rapid City	ron.sasso@regov.org	593-3759
Nathan Larson	Western Dakota Insurers	nathan-larson@leavith.com	392-3130
Tim Dowding	Retired	toddgibber@rap.midco.net	348-3291
Nancy Dowding	Citizen	"	"
MIKE MAHAN	RC FIRE DEPT	mike.mahaven@rcgov.org	394-4180
JEFF A. BUSH	Justice	JEFF@rushmore.com	391-4443
ALICE SANDERSON	Ally Guards	ALICE@ALICEGUARDS.COM	398-4657
Sue Heil	Mon Lisa's on main	monalisa@main.com	716-7801

Panel established to address Summer Nights concerns

Emilie Rusch Journal staff | Posted: Wednesday, March 7, 2012 8:00 am

Summer Nights needs to do a better job of providing activities for teenagers and communicating with downtown business owners, according to the people at a public forum Tuesday about the weekly street festival.

More than 60 people packed into the first floor community room at the City/School Administration Center to discuss the future of the event, which will celebrate its fifth anniversary this summer.

The Rapid City Council had asked Summer Nights organizers to meet with downtown business owners after last year's events ended, after a number of businesses complained about the effect of the street closures on their bottom line.

The 2011 event was the first to include shutting down Main Street between Sixth and Seventh streets.

But rather than try to solve all of the problems Tuesday, the downtown business owners, musicians, city officials and event organizers at the forum focused on identifying the stakeholders who would be best suited to address them in the short and long term.

As a result, an advisory committee of downtown organizations, city officials and other community stakeholders will be formed in the coming weeks to work with Summer Nights on the issues before the first event, scheduled for June 7.

Other complaints included the early hour of the Main Street closure and the lack of strong wristband policy for alcohol purchases, as well as the availability of downtown parking and limited number of vendors.

Sandra Schwan, president of Summer Nights, said organizers look forward to getting more input from the community. Many of the groups that will be included on the committee were consulted as part of the event's formation more than five years ago.

"I think it will be very valuable to form an advisory group so we can know what people are thinking all through the year instead of just at the end of the summer or at a forum like this," Schwan said.

The board has also begun addressing many of the issues on its own, she said.

This year, for example, members are planning a Battle of the Bands event in conjunction with the Elks Theatre, which will be targeted at musicians younger than 20. The winner will be the opening act on the main Summer Nights stage at the last event of the year.

"We want to hear their concerns and adjust if at all possible," Schwan said. "Not all of the things on the list are 100 percent fixable, but they are fixable to a certain percent."

Malcom Chapman, a former city council member, moderated the forum and said that in his own conversations with business owners and residents, no one ever said they think the city should just get rid of Summer Nights altogether.

"The No. 1 issue was: 'No one asked me. No one had a conversation with me,'" Chapman said. "I think we just agreed that we'll expand the conversation."

Contact Emilie Rusch at 394-8453 or emilie.rusch@rapidcityjournal.com

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Panel established to address Summer Nights concerns

- Story
- Discussion

(3) Comments



1.

Summer Nights said on: March 7, 2012, 2:46 pm

ripoff said: "I appreciate the concern for our teenage population, but as I see the complaint: in order for adults to have a good time the City must pony up to babysit people's teenagers? I don't go to the skate park and demand that the City put in a beer garden. "

The City will not have to "pony up to babysit". The battle of the Bands, an event designed to entertain the teenage patron, will be sponsored by the Elks Theatre. Summer Nights is an event that takes place on a city street, but is not funded by the City of Rapid City.

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2.

ripoff said on: March 7, 2012, 11:19 am

I appreciate the concern for our teenage population, but as I see the complaint: in order for adults to have a good time the City must pony up to babysit people's teenagers? I don't go to the skate park and demand that the City put in a beer garden.

Quote This Report Abuse



3.

monsternash2 said on: March 7, 2012, 11:04 am

This has been an amazing event and as a downtown business owner the traffic has been a great thing for all of the businesses downtown. Overwhelmingly the only problem that our business as well as the others that we have talked to is theft by the groups of teens that come into the store and split up upon entering the door. We have had to bring extra staff on Thursdays for this reason.

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Be nice. No racism, sexism or any other sort of -ism that degrades another person. PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CAPS LOCK, and forgive people their spelling errors.

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Stay focused, and ask questions. Keep on the story's topic.

