SMALL BUSINESS OWNER FOCUS GROUP – EAST CENTRAL AREA

APRIL 8, 2019

ATTENDEES:
- Miles – Steering Committee member
- Frank Locantore
- Libby – Tough Mudder Boot Camp
- Pete – Illegal Pete’s
- Shaun – Rosen Properties; prop owner and manager
- Dan – Bluebird BID
- Buzz – property owner; Paradise Cleaners business owner
- Rebecca – Studio Colfax
- Don – Groundswell, and ___ Boutique
- Scott Robinson
- John – Streets of London (now has a new name)
- Kat – St. Charles Company
- Anne – Bluebird BID

MEETING NOTES:

Regulatory Process
- #1, 4 and 7 could be combined (or grouped together)
- Code inspectors have inconsistencies in how they interpret/make decisions
  - Shouldn’t be a way for inspectors to reopen already OK’d topics
- Timing – anything to do with permitting takes too long
- Better and more simplified online portal to gather information
  - Create ways to not have to go to the City for everything
- Change in use is extremely unfair
  - An incentive to demo the building, or just do nothing
  - Inhibits creativity
  - One small change can trigger a snowball of others
  - Prevents a churn of uses
- Colfax is an eclectic street; everything is a little different – Code runs counterintuitive to this notion
  - Unique track or process for the corridor, given the fact that Colfax is unique and Denver is so busy
- Concern about how BRT will affect 4-6 blocks surrounding Colfax – traffic and who lives in these surrounding neighborhoods – these businesses rely on strong neighborhood demographics

Technical Assistance
- #1 – yes, this is needed (from landlord) – often deals with business owners who don’t have capacity to understand their lease, succession, etc.
- A lot of these TA elements (#2-6), BIDs could take a role in
- Leases have gotten significantly more complicated in the last 15 years
- Multiple ‘votes’ for #5 from small business owners
Financial Incentives (businesses and/or landlords)

- Brownfields grant – Shaun used this along Colfax, and it was a huge help – would be great to utilize more of this program, assuming it’s still available
- Tap fees and utilities are what first come to mind when hearing the word ‘fees’
  - Can City help with upgrades?
  - There is spinoff benefit to neighbors once one property pays for these services/connections
- There’s been an overall push of responsibilities to private sector – rebalancing of public and private responsibilities
- BRT disruption
  - Communication between departments (a general need for any public infrastructure projects)
  - LA Metro BIF program – as an example
  - City just started doing this for GES area
  - Staged, station by station construction
  - Grants, not loans
- Make Colfax a local street – take CDOT out of equation
- Match grants for #6 – signage and storefronts (façade improvement grants)

General Comments

- Lot depths and parking requirements are the largest hurdle to more housing on Colfax
- Online submittal