



Highlands Business Partnership

2002
Annual Report

HBP Board of Directors

The HBP Board of Directors provides leadership, oversight and financial control of the operations of the corporation, Highlands Business Partnership. The 3rd year, 2002 operations budget was \$_____. The Board is comprised of 17 voting members and four non-voting members. Mayor's designee, Administrator John Tedesco and the Planning Board Member and Councilwoman, Sherry Ruby, represent the governing body as voting members of the Board. There are seven commercial property owners and seven business operators that comprise the HBP Board of Directors.

3rd Year Objectives:

During the third year of operation the primary objectives include:

- Expansion of destination marketing (events) and advertising to strengthen the anchor businesses, restaurants.
- Securing NJ Office of State Planning Smart Growth funding to facilitate a Strategic Revitalization Plan (SRP) that will provide:
 - Borough leaders and HBP a Vision for redevelopment of Highlands underutilized waterfront and commercial areas.
 - By creating the SRP jointly, the Borough and HBP will built consensus for business growth and expansion that is business friendly and is consistent with Borough's Master Plan and SRP, adopted as part of Highland's Master Plan.
- New visual improvements to enhance the public areas that traverse the central business district and provide an attractive public space environment for customers and visitors to experience when utilizing Highlands' businesses.
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Officers of the Corporation:

Carla Braswell, ShoreGrafx, President; Sherry Ruby, Planning Board Representative, Vice President, Joan Wicklund, Sand Dollar Card & Gift, Secretary; Loriann Bodnar Nolan, Lori's House of Beauty, Treasurer. The Officers serve according to the bylaws and form the Executive Committee of the corporation providing the executive and oversight decision making body on behalf of the Board of Directors. These Executive Committee members also serve as Board members and answer to the Board of Directors.

2002 Board Members:

Larys Cartaya, Bolero Café, Katharine James, commercial property owner; Michael Kovic, commercial property owner; Roger Mumford, commercial property owner, David Stafford, Seastreak Ferry; Kathryn Lustig, Christine Michelle Handmade, Kathy Armstrong, Cottrell's Lobsters and Fish Market; John Koenig, New York Fast Ferry; Henry Moyer, Off The Hook; and Bill Duncan, resident member. The Executive Committee members, comprised of the corporate Officers, who also serve on the Board are Carla Cefalo-Braswell, ShoreGrafx; Joan Wicklund, Sand Dollar Card & Gift, Loriann Bodnar-Noaln, Loris' House of Beauty, Treasurer and Sherry Ruby, Planning Board Rep, VP.

Non-Voting Board Members:

These members bring institutional and corporate private-sector talent to the Board. These members bring an added outside viewpoint to the board that assists in their decision making process. Patti Baxter, Executive Director of the Northern Monmouth Chamber of Commerce; Tom Laverty, Twin Lights Historic Site; Larry Novick, Brookdale Small Business Development Center; Roberta Sheridan, GPU Energy.

Committee Chairs

Board Members Roger Mumford, commercial property owner; Bill Duncan, resident; Carla Braswell, ShoreGrafx; Kathy Armstrong, Cottrell's Lobsters all took leadership roles to Chair and Co-Chair HBP Committees. This ensures linkage to the objectives of the Board.

HBP Administration:

Several professionals were hired after soliciting quotes and reviewing professional backgrounds. HBP Attorney, Ron Reich was retained for HBP business for the year 2002. Mr. Reich provided legal assistance for various HBP issues including corporate record requirements and litigation. Attorney Robert Goldsmith, Greenbaum, Rowe represent HBP and the Borough with litigation regarding property class inclusion in the district. Legal publication notices, as outlined in the state statute for BIDs, announced HBP meeting schedule for four regular meeting in 2002. State of New Jersey filing fee, dues for membership in Downtown New Jersey, postage, stationery, educational conferences were administrative expense line items. As required by the state statute, an audit was completed April 2002 and filed with the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, and Borough of Highlands and with HBP corporate records. Charitable Registration was completed for HBP 2002. HBP Insurance is provided through a partnership with the Borough and the Monmouth County JIF, Joint Insurance Fund. Professional management services are provided by Nick Evangelista, a resident and business owner who is experienced as he has managed the Rahway SID. Nick Evangelista serves as HBP Manager. The HBP phone # is (732) -291-4713. HBP has a Professional Services Contract with Nick for 20% of the HBP BID Assessment Budget.

Marketing & Communications/Events Committee:

Chaired by Carla Cefalo Braswell, also HBP President, the committee set an aggressive agenda. Destination marketing is the objective of the marketing activities. Create - Highlands as a destination for visitors. Having so many visitors in the surrounding area - Sandy Hook, Twin Lights and Shore areas - Highlands desires a greater share of the visitors to discover our restaurants and businesses. As a community with three Ferry landings hosting New York commuters and visitors, there is a year-round opportunity to direct market "Highlands as a destination". Commuters are creatures of habit who just want to go home after a day's work.....like most people who work. HBP has initiated direct marketing programs with a coupon distribution system that extracts Highlands business coupons from our Website. Through the services of HBP businesses can register and design their own coupons free of charge. Coupons can be changed as frequently as the business operator desires. Upon purchase of monthly or weekly ticket book, complimentary coupons are provided. HBP oversees, administers the coupon books and the Ferry Companies include the HBP coupon books with each commuter ticket purchase. Use of Highlands' restaurants and businesses by Ferry riders is being nurtured, encouraged and brought to their attention on a daily basis through our partnership with ferry. Making Ferry riders familiar with Highlands' businesses and restaurants along with upgrading the quality of our business offering is a long-term marketing investment that has unique and valuable assets for Highlands' businesses. Most downtown's striving to come back from decline must develop a destination agenda from scratch. Highlands has been able to develop and nurture a partnership with an existing resource.

Marketing Consultant

Marketing Consultant, Allen Consulting (ACI), was hired for 2 years. The contract will end the calendar year 2003. A summary will be provided by the HBP Marketing Chair to Board members at the Annual Meeting for year 2002 outlining a total cash from events income, grants and corporate sponsors, ACI has worked with Chair & Committee to expand the event calendar events. Marketing services from ACI includes all public relations, media contacts, event calendar development, implementation and solicitation of corporate sponsorship to promote events that will showcase Highlands as a destination. It is important that corporate sponsorship be secured from outside of Highlands, as the community is small; and new partnerships need to be developed to undertake a successful destination marketing plan for Highlands. Sponsorship provides the backbone of funding for events and advertising. Sponsorship funding maximizes the local BID investments funded by special assessment to fund advertising, event expenses and promotions to create destination environment to attract visitors.

Events 2002

The 2002 event calendar provided a "complete marketing package" for ACI to use to broker and solicit greater sponsorship opportunities for Highlands. Through this process Highlands can expand our destination marketing activities that will enhance the local business environment by attracting new and repeat customers. A comprehensive event schedule is packaged and our consultant serves as a broker between corporate and media partners who will provide sponsorship in return for media exposure.

Seaport Craft Show 2002 was held on Memorial Day weekend with a successful start of 36 crafters. The event was well received by crafters and visitors alike. This type of event grows over time but we intend to keep it on the calendar for expansion.

Cruise Nights 2002 were held under the direction of Lori Bodnar-Nolan (Lori's House of Beauty) and spouse, Frank Nolan, the local business volunteers and Highlands Police worked closely with the Jersey Shore Cruisers and Bob Dooly. Participation from local businesses provided certificates and prizes for the visitors. Over 125 enthusiasts participated during the event. Games and DJ were on hand for everyone. The second Cruise Night was cancelled twice due to severe rain conditions.

Northern Monmouth Chamber of Commerce Concert Series

Through a partnership with NMCC and HBP, there were four Tuesday evening beach concerts in July at the Seastreak beach- front area. The concerts were funded through the NMCC and promoted in partnership with HBP. HBP was a \$1000 sponsor of this event. The concerts are always a big draw to visitors and HBP promotes our other events here as well. We are striving to keep the concerts in Highlands. The concerts will be one again held in Highlands for 2003.

Highlands Farmers Market HBP prepared and submitted the 2002 Farmer Market grant to the NJ Department of Agriculture. HBP was awarded \$500 to be matched in advertising and promotion of the Highlands Market. The 2002 season began the first Saturday in July and continued through until the last Saturday in October. Farmers participated with the Octoberfest event with mums, fresh fall produce, pumpkins and squashes. Mike Kovic and Kathryn Lustig along with ACI took on the responsibilities of the market each Saturday. Outside vendors were solicited for the market and there were various successes with adding vendors to the market. Advertising and highway signs were installed to promote the market.

Clam Festival 2002 maintained entertainment, rides and vendors for a four-day event. Printing, advertising, signs, maintenance, entertainers, and installations of electric, contribute to the event success and these functions were managed through HBP volunteers, Business Advocate and Allen Consulting. ACI expanded the Clam Festival 2002 with forty new vendors. A Clam Fest advertorial was produced with an HBP minimal investment. Expansion of vendors when from thirty to forty. Electric demands will require a new look at Huddy Park electric requirements and new investments from HBP to upgrade event electric.

Twin Towers to Twin Lights Bike Tour - The Bike New York Twin Lights Bike event was held in Highlands at Huddy Park Area. The first time event was a success and hopes to grow. It was schedule in 2001 but cancelled due to 9-11-01. Both ferry companies cooperated with bringing bike enthusiasts to Highlands for a multi-tour bike event. The response to the event was in excess of 900 registered bike enthusiasts to visit Highlands and sections of Monmouth County. There were 4 routes available. Most businesses that were open this day were visited by many cyclists. We are in the planning stages of the 2003 bike event and hope to draw 2000 cyclists.

Oktoberfest 2002, Was very successful. There were no police reports for the second year, which is always a concern with an alcohol event. A liquor license was secured and Mayor Rick O'Neil, Councilmen John Urbanski and Bill Ciazza volunteered to man the beer operation. A non-Highlands food vendor provided German food loved by the crowds along with a lively German Band that warmed the crowds

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with traditional music that young and old enjoyed. The Police support was outstanding and this event is definitely will be a repeat performance for 2003. Over 5000 visitors attended.

I Love Highlands replaced the Rediscover the Treasures for the 2002 event calendar with a greater response for success. The Marketing Committee will expand this event timeframe from Memorial Day through Halloween to get more participation. No purchase is necessary to participate but entries can go into retail establishments and fill out the form to win a basket of prizes from Highlands Establishments. It is a method of building a mailing list.

Holiday Lighting 2002 Councilman John Urbanski & Bill Ciazza lit the tree on behalf of the Mayor and Council. Local residents volunteered in many areas of this event. The severe rain and weather conditions were against us. Loriann Bodnar-Nolan and Nick Evangelista prepared a program guide which proved to be successful and informative. Entertainment was provided by Not Your Ordinary Dancers, under Lillian Zuar's leadership, along with local organization and service groups joining in holiday song to make the event full of community spirit and pride. HBP volunteers, under the direction of Lori Bodnar-Nolan, VIC Chair, decorated Huddy Park and several public areas with the assistance of Tim Hill, Recreation Director and the Highlands Garden Club Members.

Holiday House Tour – The Holiday House tour was very unique and sold over 140 tickets to visitors taking the tour. This event will also grow over time and as usual we are always looking for more homes to expand the event.

Website www.highlandsnj.com

Maintenance and expansion of the Highlands' web site during HBP's has been continued. The Website enables HBP to provide maximum access to HBP information by all business operators and commercial property owners of Highlands included in the BID, as well as, the general public. Minutes, reports, newsletters, organization chart, mission statement, ordinance, budget, events, photo album, bylaws are accessible and printable from your computer. Linkage to the ferry riders through the Internet is a primary goal for the Marketing Committee. HBP is highlighting the Highlands' businesses and direct marketing to ferry customers through the web site and our other complementary marketing initiatives. HBP requested and received brochures or printed promotional information from business operators that are showcased on board the ferry. The Highlands/HBP web site is promoted on all HBP media contacts reinforcing the destination marketing objective activities.

"Print and save" promotions from our Website and all printed media brought a new dimension to marketing for Highlands businesses. All events held in 2002 provide visitors with coupons and additional event information as well as promoting our Website.

Advertising/Media

Media Impressions

For 2002 in excess of 40,066,166 measured print impressions have been made. That means that Highlands' name is getting out there as a destination. Changing perception and customer habits take persistence and consistency. Allen Consulting prepares all new press releases for HBP that are approved through the Marketing Chair and Manager. Any business innovations or news are welcomed topics for a HBP media release.

HBP Newsletter - On the Move

This internal communication is mailed to all business operators and commercial property owners in Highlands. Additional copies are distributed to committee volunteers, Borough Officials and staff and extra copies are left at Borough Hall and the Highlands Community Center. The newsletter is archived and printable from the Website. HBP is seeking ways to produce to the entire community of Highlands.

The Highlands Visitor's Guide was created in 2002 and includes information on Highlands such as history, coupons, event information, ferry schedules, a map and a business directory. The visitor guides were distributed at all HBP events.

Group Media Buys

Two (2) advertorial special sections were created through ACI and the Asbury Park Press. A total of \$3,000 in double truck ads during October and June of 2002 was initiated through the Marketing Committee with Board approval. Contained in the special pull-out section of the Asbury Park Press were five or more stories highlighting Highlands' as a destination. ACI provided the editorial information that was approved by the Executive Board.

Funding Development - HBP

Private Sector Partners - Sponsorship Development

HBP Marketing Committee has served as the primary catalyst for attracting private funding to maximize the local assessment investment. Through professional efforts of Allen Consulting a corporate sponsorship track record is being developed that will ensure our corporate sponsors are provided value in the marketing initiatives set forth through HBP. Corporate sponsors budgets are allocated on an annual basis and long-term brokering must take place to deliver value to both partners.

- **Awards and Matching Grants**

ACI and HBP Business Advocate submitted a nomination of the HBP Destination Marketing Strategy to the **NJ Travel and Tourism** matching grant for 2002. Highlands HBP was awarded a Best of the Best Award for Destination Marketing which will be presented in January, 2002 at Steven Institute by DNJ. Awards will be published in a best practices manual for downtown revitalization. HBP was awarded a \$10,000 matching grant by NJ Travel and Tourism, NJ Commerce and Economic Development Commission. The grant is to be used to expand destination marketing outside of New Jersey targeted for New York Ferry riders and NY State rack card marketing at visitor centers. HBP was the only marketing award recipient for the DNJ Best of the Best Awards; while Highlands HBP

Marketing Committee Summary

Hiring of our Marketing Consultant, Allen Consulting, is HBP's largest investment from our budget. Marketing was clearly what the Board of Directors, Committee volunteers and business community at large identified as the most important need for the businesses. ACI Contract is up for renewal end of 2003. The Board will be reviewing, interviewing or re-negotiating in the 3rd and 4th quarters 2003.

Visual Improvement Committee -VIC

Chaired by Kathy Armstrong until September 2002. Loriann Bodnar-Nolan is now chairing this committee. This HBP Committee has a wide scope of objectives including Parking, Safety, Beautification, Capital Improvement, Maintenance and Design. During 2002 the committee continued their agenda expansion with parking. Private parking contract were established through HBP at the VFW Post and Doris & Ed's with NYFF for ferry parking. Highlands' neighborhoods are a mix of commercial and residential blocks along Bay Avenue and the HBP will continue to explore planning options and activities recommendations on parking issues. The speed monitor equipment purchased by the business community is not being utilized by HPD. Board members are hoping that police will begin using equipment again as it educates speeders and acts as a deterrent.

Parking Recommendations

parking recommendations were drafted and approved by the VIC Committee in 2002. The HBP Board approved and forwarded the written recommendations to Mayor and Council regarding inventory of parcels for potential parking use. In order for HBP to implement the parking recommendations the volunteers worked to update the previously adopted database of parking information. The central

business district was broken into eleven (11) districts. Volunteers were assigned areas to inventory and prioritize parking areas fully utilized and parking areas underutilized both for public owned and private owned lots. Borough owned properties were identified in the database for parking utilization. With this database the volunteers could assist in identifying leased parking opportunities. HBP, as a private sector corporation, can facilitate the brokering of leased parking arrangements. Leased parking will improve parking utilization and provide existing underutilized lots with potential income to "pay the bills". This plan will assist the Borough and private property owners to manage the parking issues with a flexible strategy.

Public Area Maintenance

Clean Communities Entitlement

The public area maintenance plan is part of an ongoing program funded through a publicly funded entitlement of \$9,394. Highlands' allocation from the Department of Environmental Protection, Clean Communities Grant Program fiscal year 2002. The public area maintenance plan had been approved by the Borough to be administered in partnership with HBP. The program had been administered successfully under the former Highlands Neighborhood Preservation Program, and HBP VIC Committee requested an opportunity to continue the program. Public area debris removal, maintenance, organization of volunteers and Highlands Adopt-A-Highway area — the Highlands Bridge Ramp are the primary components. During the past seven years there were five areas that this entitlement program served to maintain by a private sector landscape contractor. Highlands Bridge Embankment, Veterans Park Planters, Huddy Park planters, Highway Sign at Linden Avenue and Cornwell Park planters. These are areas of steep slope or areas that were severely neglected.

A scope of work was created and quotes were secured from licensed landscape contractors who could perform herbicide applications. Borough employees have not yet certified for conducting herbicide applications. These areas were cleaned with:

- debris and litter removal
- herbicide applications
- plant replacement and maintenance and replacement mulch three times April, July and October. These areas were maintained through the 2002 publicly funded entitlement.
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Flower Containers, Trash Receptacles, Bike Racks, Container Plantings - Bay, Waterwitch Avenues and Atlantic Street

The VIC Committee purchased flowers and hired a landscaper that planted flowers in all streetscape planters. The Highlands Department of Public Works provided services for watering.

Public Area Maintenance Schedule — Electric Holiday Decorations

VIC Committee created a maintenance schedule to ensure that regular maintenance of public area electric is undertaken. This project was started as a result of Committee attempts to design and purchase new electrical holiday decorations. With our existing improvements suffering from maintenance neglect, the Committee developed a maintenance schedule to bring our existing public area electric up to standard before adding new improvements. In addition to the 16 Holiday decorations purchased in 2001, HBP paid GPU to install the final sensors on utility polls to complete the Holiday streetscape. 12 New snowflakes were purchased but were unable to hang since GPU technicians installed sensors too low for truck clearance. Councilman John Urbanski drilled brackets and worked with HBP and the DPW for Holiday Lighting Project. HBP is working with utility company to relocate for 2003 holidays. Candy Canes, Red velvet bows, garlands, tree and wreaths were purchased for several streetscape areas. VIC chair Loriann Bodnar-Nolan, Manager Nick Evangelista, President Carla Cefalo-Braswell, and Tim Hill, Highlands Recreation Director, installed bows, garland and the decorated tree in Huddy Park. Bows and garlands, and the Huddy Park gazebo tree were purchased by HBP from the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department.

Inventory of Way Finding Signs, Utility Poles, Parks and Streetscape Amenities

Further inventory records have been created and maintained of existing amenities through new management of HBP. This base information will allow the VIC Committee to plan and purchase new amenities in the public areas of the central business district.

Sign Projects

Way Finding

VIC Committee has undertaken two sign projects. The Way Finding Signs along Bay Avenue needs to be expanded to allow for additional businesses to appear on the posts. That will mean additional structures added to existing posts and new post locations. Currently, Business Owners pay for their own sign and installation. Expansion will require an investment by HBP in 2002. Removal and installation of old signs have been taken on by HBP to ensure that signs are hung in an orderly fashion. Several signs were hung too low and they posed a danger to pedestrians. HBP is working with the Borough on this program. HBP purchased the wood materials, Borough installs wooden posts to sign fabricators specifications and signs are installed by the fabricator to ensure the sign programs expansion and that a comprehensive program can be offered and maintained to businesses.

Welcome Signs at Bridge Ramps

New welcome signs were installed opposite Eastpointe and the bridge ramp. The new signs have been since damaged from car accidents. Claims have been placed through HBP insurance and signs are being repaired and replaced. HBP continues to maintain the Bulkhead sign and showcases Highlands's events and sponsors.

Economic Development Committee

Business Recruitment & Business Retention

Former Co-Chairs Bill Duncan and Roger Mumford

Smart Growth Application for funding from NJ Office of State Planning

As part of HBP efforts to develop a business recruitment and retention program, an application was submitted with Monmouth County Planning Board and the New Jersey Office of State Planning. HBP Business Advocate met with Joseph Donald, Ed Fox, Office of State Planning; Bonnie Goldschlag, Bill Sampson to explore options for Highlands and HBP. The initiative was discussed and identified as a means for updating local master plan documents and facilitating a process to improve the business climate and how re-use and expansion fits into the whole town picture. HBP understands that re-development must have a vision for the waterfront and underutilized commercial areas. All Smart growth funding was placed on hold by the Governor's office.

Livable Community Pilot Grant – HBP applied for a grant on behalf of the borough to obtain vacant lots at Waterwitch and Bay Avenues for Parking areas and a visitor Center.

This committee was pretty much at a stand-still due to awaiting the outcome of the Smart Growth application. This committee plans to pursue the Business planning guide for potential investors to be available at Borough Hall.

Annual Report 2002 Summary Statement

The development of resources, people, and activities is an ongoing process that has attracted many diverse people during the year 2002. The re-investment by Highlands' business community, of time, talent and money, is a commitment that has and will bring improvements to Highlands. The Borough has experienced the talents and impact of what creating a vehicle for change can have on a community. The re-investment by the business community will bring improvements to Highlands at a steady, systematic pace. The systematic, consensus building strategies that HBP will put forward will allow all Highlands' partners to share in its continued success.

Submitted by Nick Evangelista, Manager 01/31/03

Edited 1/28/03 by Highlands Business Partnership Executive Board of Directors