

Clark Street SSA #23 Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2016, 4:00 p.m.
Basil Leaf Café, 2465 North Clark Street

Commissioners Present: Rae Lisenby, Peigi Jean-Blanc, James Kroeger, Holly Lodarek, Elizabeth Rossdeutscher, Cathy Gallanis

Commissioners Absent: Bruce Longanecker, Patrick Wrona

LPCC Staff: Kim Schilf, Martin Sorge, Bryan Biello

43rd Ward Alderman's Office: Matthew Allee

Public Forum: Matt Allee

Call to Order

- I. Call to order by Jean-Blanc at 4:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

- II. Jean-Blanc asked for and received approval of the minutes from the November 18, 2015 Commission meeting.

Motion to approve November 18, 2015 minutes. Motion seconded. Unanimously approved.

Public Forum

- III. Matthew Allee from Alderman Smith's office:
 1. The Alderman's office has several new staffers that have recently started. Should the commission need assistance within the community, Allee instructed commission to reach out and introduce themselves.
 2. Sidewalk café renewal permits are now open to be completed. Sidewalk café season begins March 1st.
 3. The Edge Bar and Grill very recently closed due to the redevelopment of the property. It will now become the Alt School, a San Francisco-based private elementary school that will house about 150 students total. The school will be housed on the second and third floors with ground level retail.
 - i. A special use permit was granted, but no other re-zoning is required at this time.
 - ii. The redevelopment plan included a robust traffic study and plan.

Reports

- IV. Financial Report (Rossdeutscher)
 1. As it is the start of the year, the SSA is below budget and has not yet received any tax levy income

Old Business

- V. Officer Elections (Sorge)

1. Sorge reviewed bylaws and noted that commission officers cannot serve more than three consecutive two-year terms. The options would be to either amend the bylaws to extend term limits or elect new officers.
2. Lisenby recommended amending the bylaws as she is happy with the current slate of commission officers. Rossdeutscher, Jean-Blanc, and Lodarek were happy to stay in their current positions as well.
3. Sorge will put together a bylaws amendment proposal to be reviewed at the next meeting, so it was agreed to table the motion until next meeting.

VI. Vendor Review (Sorge)

1. Sorge took time to review our current team of vendors and asked for any feedback from the commissioners.
 - i. Clean Street – litter abatement team
 - ii. Brickman – 2016-17 landscaping contract
 - iii. Christy Webber – Snow removal vendor
 1. Sorge noted that he has received compliments this year for snow removal,
 2. The 1-inch tolerance contract makes a big difference.
 - iv. Big Buzz Idea Group – special events (Cravings on Clark and Spooktacular/Scarecrows on Parade)

VII. Ethics Forms (Sorge)

1. Sorge reminded commissioners that city and county forms are required to be completed and are due by May 1st.

VIII. 2016 Budget Overview (Sorge)

1. Sorge quickly reviewed the approved budget for 2016 with commissioners. He reminded commissioners that the budget is very similar to the 2015 budget, with a few exceptions.
 - i. For 2016 there is \$30,000 allocated to way-finding signage. Sorge noted that there is planning for a possible neighborhood-wide wayfinding project, and we will work to make sure our plans for wayfinding are integrated in any project.
 - ii. There is also budget to install a new bike corral, which will be discussed more in an upcoming meeting.

IX. Program Manager's Report (Sorge)

1. Public Way Aesthetics
 - i. Landscaping – Brickman
 1. Winter displays are now in and trees were pruned last week.
 - ii. Street Cleaning – Cleanstreet
 1. Sorge mentioned that they have done a good job so far.
 2. The crews are also emptying recycling bins.
 - iii. Snow removal – Christy Webber

1. The SSA's snow removal contract for this year is now live and goes through April.
 2. This season we have a 1" tolerance contract, which means that crews should be deployed for any snow that is predicted (or actually) over 1". Crews will NOT be deployed for any snow event less than 1".
 3. The only problems that have been noted include:
 - a. Missing "around the corners" to the property line or alley.
 - b. Over-salting
 4. This year we have received a couple compliments on their service.
- iv. Holiday décor – Liberty Flag & Banner
1. Décor was installed and will be removed very soon.
- v. Façade Rebate
1. Chelsea Jones (2425 N Clark) was rebated \$500 for a new awning and banner sign.
 2. There is \$12,500 pending in rebates that were conditionally approved in 2015.
 - c. Steve Quick was conditionally approved for a full façade rebate at the maximum amount of \$10,000. His rebate will be processed as soon as he submits the required receipts.
 - d. Firecakes Donuts was conditionally approved for a rebate of \$2,500, which will be processed as soon as they submit the required receipts.
 3. In total, 2015 rebates (including conditionally approved rebates) totaled \$18,490, which means that the program incentivized \$64,616 of façade improvements in the district.
 4. Communication is ongoing with new business owners and with commercial brokers and landlords about this program.
 5. We will be doing an assessment this winter and spring of target properties for façade rebates.
- vi. Sidewalk infrastructure
1. The commission has continued to ask Alderman Smith's office to fix streetscape elements that are damaged—Clark Street is looking especially sad. Road striping and crosswalks are in desperate need of attention. Sorge will be working with the local neighborhood associations to keep pressing this issue with the Alderman.
 2. Next year, it may be wise to budget for "general streetscape maintenance." This would include hiring a handyman to repaint light poles and trash bins as necessary, fix tree grates that may need some attention etc. Other neighborhoods do this.
 3. In the early spring, we will be doing another assessment of infrastructure needs along Clark and Diversey.

2. Sculpture Program

- b. Merchants did seem to like the program as it required little involvement from their end. However, we didn't see or hear from more than a dozen or so merchants that promoted the event outside of the postcards and posters (i.e. social media).
 - c. A few shoppers called the Chamber informing that the program rules were too complicated.
 - d. Shoppers also mentioned that they liked Lakeview East's rewards program better, which is a neighborhood gift card.
 - e. Biello's recommendation would be to take a new approach to Clark Street's holiday campaign, to engage more merchants at a low cost, as well as engage more customers/neighbors in the area.
- ii. Cravings on Clark
 - 1. The restaurant crawl is scheduled for Thursday, June 16 from 6-9pm. The event worked well last year, so it will be very similar to last year.
 - 2. Plan to target more restaurants that are unique to Clark Street.
 - 3. Looking for a way to have more retailers involved in the event, which might include hosting a restaurant in their store.
- iii. Spooktacular & Scarecrows on Parade
 - 1. The overwhelming response from merchants after the 2015 Spooktacular was how much the event impacts their business on Saturday, so the event will be moved to a Sunday in 2016. Spooktacular is scheduled for Sunday, October 30.
 - 2. Scarecrows on Parade will still occur again and in an effort to involve more merchants and the community, the SSA plans to work with local schools to have students create scarecrows and merchants host them in their storefront window.
 - 3. Lodarek requested that if it must be Sunday to have it condensed. Maybe run it for 3-4 hours instead of 5 hours.
 - 4. Jean-Blanc, Rosseutscher, and Lisenby mentioned how the event doesn't actually generate business for businesses, but it just crowds the neighborhood during the day.
 - 5. Gallanis mentioned that it is a good event to publicize the neighborhood and make the street active and lively. Several commissioners agreed, but also requested that the event be shortened for 2016.
- iv. 2016 Holiday Promotion/Event Ideas
 - 1. New ideas for a fresh holiday campaign are being developed to engage merchants and increase customer participation. Some thoughts include a Small Business Saturday holiday kick-off event, late night shopping hours, and pop-up shops.

2. Biello will be reaching out to merchants in the coming weeks to discuss thoughts and to gather feedback.
3. It's important to engage businesses on Clark Street and have them actively participate in events, without creating too many costs or time commitments.

2. Marketing

- i. Merchants are being contacted more regularly to find out their specials, events, and promotions going on so Biello can help to promote their special events on the website, via email, and on social media.
- ii. Highlighting Super Bowl parties and specials on the website as well as on social media.
- iii. Highlighting Valentine's Day specials and promotions on the website, a dedicated eblast, and on social media.
- iv. Looking at creative ways and partnerships to promote the restaurant crawl.

XI. Economic Development Report (Sorge)

1. Items of note:

- i. Recent closings:
 1. La Fournette (2468 N Clark)
 2. The Market Place (521 W Diversey)
 3. LaSalle Café Luna (2439 N Clark)
 4. Crafters & Weavers (2429 N Clark, end of January)
 5. Best Buy (2650 N Clark, January 30th)
- ii. Newly opened:
 1. Firecakes Donuts (2543 N Clark)
 2. Happy Play Café (2346 N Clark)
 3. By the Park (2342 N Clark)
- iii. Coming soon:
 1. Aha Crepe Café (2435 N Clark)
 2. Teavanna/Starbucks (639 W Diversey)
 3. Molly's Cupcakes expansion (2540 N Clark)
 4. Target (2650 N Clark, replacing Best Buy, summer 2016)
 5. Cupbop + Ramen (2439 N Clark, briefly LaSalle Café Luna)
- iv. Developments:
 1. As Matthew Alle noted, there is a proposal to redevelop 2720 N. Clark, where The Edge currently is, into ground level retail with a small private school on the second floor. After two community meetings, this property received the required zoning approval in November. They plan to open in fall 2017. Sorge has been in touch with representatives from Centrum Partners, the developer.
 2. The Market Place property (521 W. Diversey) was purchased by people associated with Lexington Homes, who proposed the development back in 2014 that never went anywhere. No news about what is happening next at that space.

2. The Chamber's available storefront signage program in partnership with Chicago History Museum has launched. If commissioners know of a property owner and broker who would like to hang a sign they should let Sorge know.

New Business

XII. 2017 Budget Planning

1. Next meeting Sorge will prepare a draft budget for 2017. If there's anything the commission should change they should let Sorge know before the meeting.

XIII. Additional Comments

1. Kroeger informed the commission that he is working to enhance his property at the corner of Fullerton and Clark and making it a more functional corner with better traffic flow. He has been working closely with Alderman Smith's office and the Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce.
2. Rossdeutscher asked if Sorge could look into if current commissioners can take advantage of the façade rebate program.
 - i. Sorge will follow-up with city to try and get a clear answer.

Meeting Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting. Motion seconded. Unanimously approved.

- XIV. Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bryan Biello.