

SSA #23 Meeting Minutes– Wednesday, June 14, 2006
Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce, 1925 N. Clybourn, Suite 301

Present: Commissioners: Julia Bienias, Steve Quick, Doug Schuberth, Phil Auerbach, Bruce Longanecker, Cathy Gallanis, Bob Berliner, David Schmeissing

Absent: Simpson Gold

LPCC Staff: Kim Schilf, Jamie Toussaint

- I. Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Doug Schuberth.
- II. Approval of 4/5/06 meeting minutes

Motion by Schuberth to approve 4/5/06 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Quick and unanimously approved.

- III. Logo discussion and review - *Commission*
 - a. Ten different graphic treatments and ten different text (logo) treatments were presented to the commission and displayed around the room on 2x2 posters (to help visualize how the logos will work on banners). After a great deal of discussion and a process of elimination, the vote was narrowed to three options: B, C and A with modified font from G (See included sheet for reference). Vote was as follows:
 - Option C – 1 vote
 - Option B – 0 votes
 - Option A/G – 7 votes
 - b. Per suggestions from Toussaint & Schilf, the color scheme of trees from C and perhaps others will be considered for use on seasonal banners and a rotation of 3-4 banners can be created for usage on Clark.
 - c. Commission would like to see the spacing for 'by the' in the selected logo changed and/or enlarged. In addition, they would like to see the text (logo) in different colors, specifically brown and green.
- IV. Phase 3 construction update – *Toussaint*
 - a. Phase 3 of the Clark streetscape project is currently 33 days behind schedule
 - Paperwork has not yet been filed by the general contractor to ask for an extension so all city representatives and employees (CDOT, general contractor, subcontractors, Alderman Vi Daley and staff) must still inform people that the project will be completed by the original 7/31 date with punch list items completed by 8/31.
 - Toussaint was told unofficially that realistically the project may be complete by 8/31, however, the water department will be coming in to do work and the park to be installed at Grant Place will be more complicated work so the assumption among business owners and residents is that the project will be complete in late September/early October.
 - b. Copies of the second and third issues of the *Clark Street SSA News* were included in the meeting packet for the commission review
 - c. The Discount parking program has been well received. 14 sheets of parking stickers (140 stickers) have been sold so far with the following companies participating: The UPS Store, Essential Nail Spa, Flow Studio, Keller Williams. Pro Musica. This has helped to improve the SSA image on Clark Street and helped to build new relationships with otherwise unknown business owners.

- d. The signage that had been created for the construction zone and used during phases 1 and 2 was thrown away by the general contractor at the end of phase 2. Per a previous suggestion from Gallanis and as previously approved by the commission via an email vote, there is new signage being created to help Clark Street businesses and residents understand the role of the SSA in the streetscape project and to provide them with names and numbers of people to call with streetscape questions and to aid them in getting issues resolved ASAP. The wording for this sign is the same wording used in issues 2 and 3 of the *Clark Street SSA News*.
- V. Phases 1 and 2 news – *Toussaint*
- a. Bids were solicited for the repainting of the crosswalks in phase 1 (not the white thermoplastic outlines, just the paint inside the crosswalks). This project would cost approximately \$24,000.00. It was suggested that no construction work/work that would cause obstruction on the street should be planned for 2007. This work was put on a 'look ahead' plan of work for 2008.
 - Bienias questioned the scope of work wondering if the thermoplastic should be redone in addition to the repainting. Toussaint confirmed that she had looked at the crosswalks and felt that the white outline was still very visible so safety was not being compromised. The repainting would be done to improve aesthetics and could wait until 2008.
 - b. Completion of work in phase 2 is nearly done. The installation of trees began today. Hanging baskets will be installed soon. The sidewalk work is complete and street markings are nearing completion
 - c. In response to a question from Bienias, Toussaint confirmed that the red bumpy tiles on the sidewalk ramps in phase 1 will be replaced by the city. The fabricator of these tiles has agreed to provide the city with new tiles and has admitted that the current tiles are faulty. The actual work is in dispute, however, because the fabricator has not agreed to reimburse the city for the cost of removal and replacement of these tiles.
 - The commission discussed the idea of putting money in the 2007 budget or the 2008 look ahead plan for replacement of these tiles. However, it was decided that this is the responsibility of the city and they should complete this project. Furthermore, since these tiles are in place due to ADA regulations, there may be liability issues stemming from their current state and/or the replacement tiles that should rest on the city, not the SSA. It was also suggested that the current state of these tiles may be an issue with ADA compliancy and may prompt the city to resolve this sooner.
- VI. SSA #23 expansion project update - *Toussaint and Schilf*
- a. Toussaint noted that, to date, not much progress had been made in regards to contacting property owners to discuss the expansion.
 - b. Bienias confirmed that she has been working to set up a meeting with the president of the condo association in the property to be annexed, however, communication with him has been slow.
 - c. Schilf explained that she will be contacting past SSA commissioner and SSA supporter Buzz Ruttenberg to ask him to meet with the property owners (Harlem & Irving) and help garner their support for this project. Schilf noted that it is her intention to also ask a current SSA #23 commissioner to be present for this meeting as well. Bienias suggested that the Schuberth, as Chairman, should attend.
 - d. Schilf shared information with the commission about the process to be used for communicating our actions with the public and the press. In particular, we will be

sure to contact the media (particularly Inside and other local publications) to help avoid miscommunication/misinterpretation.

- VII. Loss collection and carryover review - *Schmeissing*
- a. Schmeissing reviewed the information included in the commission packet which outlines income and expenses both annually and per levy year. In addition, he reviewed the actual carryover per year verses the estimated carryover. Discussion was had about why the carryover occurred (changes in the streetscape construction plan that were out of our control) and why it was important to not have carryover and have more accurate budgets from this point forward (which should be easier due to the completion of streetscape).
 - b. The commission questioned if the income for past years had been completely collected. Toussaint noted that just recently we have been notified of refunds from 2003 and additional income from past years as well so it is difficult to know if or when the total income for a year has been collected and/or will be subject to refunds.
- VIII. Review of 2006 Budget and Work Plan/Discussion of 2007 Budget and Work Plan - *Toussaint*
- a. Review of 2006 objectives and action steps to achieve objectives as outlined in the 2006 work plan.
 - b. Review of additional actions, vendors and expenditures for 2006.
 - Discussion was had regarding various vendors contacted for commercial window washing. Due to the scope of work, this was a very difficult bid to solicit and evaluate. The lowest bids were not selected due to perceived lack of understanding of the scope and concern about the quality of work to be done.
 - Discussion was had regarding additional holiday decoration for Clark Street. Toussaint to look into the cost and electrical issues for lighting the trees on Clark in place of having lights on the street poles.

Motion by Berliner to approve revised 2006 work plan and additional vendors and expenditures.
Motion seconded by Bienias and unanimously approved.

- c. Review of the 2007 objectives and action steps to achieve objectives
 - It was agreed that pressure washing would be done twice per year in conjunction with celebrations on Clark when possible
 - Commission agreed that window washing was a good gesture and as a way to make the street sparkle prior to the kick-off celebration, but that this is not necessary for 2007. In addition, some were concerned about liability issues and it was agreed that the contracted window washer for 2006 would go into each store and ask permission to wash prior to commencing work, as well as explain that he was funded by the SSA. The SSA should also flyer to inform businesses about this work.
 - Toussaint had suggested that the commission continue with the parking subsidy program for 2007. The money will be left in the budget, however, the commission will have discussion in the future about the shape of the program.
 1. The money may not be put toward subsidizing parking as is being done during phase 3. Instead, this money may be used to fund work by Sole Service Provider to act as a 'connector' between businesses and area lots to develop relationships and establish their own discount parking programs or to fund discount parking

- programs offered to new businesses on Clark during their first year as an incentive.
2. It was later suggested that the commission look into shuttle services for employees from places such as the zoo lot in order to free up parking on the street for business patrons.
- Discussion was had regarding the vast difference in cost between landscaping contractors. Concern exists about customer service from Brickman and the quality of their work for such a low fee. Concern also exists in regards to flip flopping between contractors each year.
 1. Bienias asked if Finkl would rebid. Toussaint noted that, in the past they had declined to do so and that they choose not to competitively bid projects (due to their non-profit status). Bienias encouraged Toussaint to ask them again and Toussaint agreed.
 2. Berliner expressed extreme concern that the majority of the budget was to be spent on landscaping (landscaping, powerwashing, snowplowing, sidewalk cleaning). He feels that the money should be spent on attracting businesses to the street, even if it is ugly. Longanecker and Schuberth noted that we are committed to the care of the street per our contract with the city.
 3. Berliner suggested re-opening conversation with the city and the possibility of removing trees. He feels that the maintenance agreement was made naively on our part. He further suggested we might wish to consider seeing if we could increase the amount of our levy, because clearly we will have ongoing difficulty simultaneously maintaining landscaping and fulfilling our mission to market the street. (Bienias also asked, at the end of the meeting, how other SSAs can afford to pay for maintaining streetscape. Schilf and Schuberth replied that many of them have much larger budgets, and some have goals that are explicitly about beautification and do not include marketing as we have in our goals.)
 4. Berliner also expressed the opinion that wider sidewalks are of the utmost importance in attracting customers, but that the addition of trees and parking meters diminishes the wider sidewalks. He would prefer to make the street vibrant instead of green and would prefer parking stands like the ones that exist on Oak Street.
 5. Conversation ensued about the current state of Clark Street: Longanecker countered that the vacancy rate for residential buildings is down. Auerbach noted that his sales are up 60%. Schuberth noted the size of stores on Clark (average is approximately 900 square feet) and that the lack of space for an anchor is a problem. Berliner cited Southport as a model of success even though they lack an anchor. Schuberth stated that their success is due in part to the number of sidewalk cafes. Toussaint noted that the neighborhood associations have agreed to approve sidewalk café permits for 2007.
 6. It was agreed that, up until this point, we have been struggling through streetscape unable to move forward with proactive plans. The suggested plans for 2007 should allow us to put marketing plans in action. After this, we can revisit these issues.
- d. After a suggestion by Bienias, all agreed that the initial \$10,000 budgeted per celebration on Clark in 2007 was insufficient. This number was changed to \$20,000 per celebration.

- e. Berliner suggested that Marwen Foundation, which supports young artists, be contacted regarding window decoration for the kick-off and holiday celebrations.
- f. Auerbach expressed concern about the cost of cable cooperative advertising and suggested that, due to the high cost of this, we stick to local print vehicles. Quick noted that he does a good deal of cable advertising and that 400 spots a month are available for as little as \$3,000. Quick suggested a 'donut' like idea for cable advertising where the first and last 5 seconds of a 30 second spot market the area and are the same and include the Clark logo, etc. but the 20 seconds in the center are sold to individual retailers (possibly subsidized).
- g. Bienias expressed concern about the \$2,500 in the suggested budget for a marketing plan for economic development materials. The commission agreed that it may be wise to hire a professional for this important project and suggested \$10,000.
- h. Schilf reviewed the proposed increase in management fee to the Sole Service Provider. A time study analysis has been underway internally with the LPCC since April 2006 and the time spent on behalf of the Clark Street SSA is not being proportionately compensated. The fee has not changed since the SSA inception but now, due in part to the significant increase in paperwork from DPD and time spent by Toussaint in turn; LPCC suggests a \$4,000 increase in fees.

Motion by Berliner to approve 2007 work plan including changes suggested by commission, 2007 budget and Lincoln Park Chamber as the 2007 Sole Service Provider. Motion seconded by Auerbach and unanimously approved.

- IX. Discussion of resident concerns – *Toussaint, Berliner and Commission*
 - a. Toussaint presented concerns and ideas from past commissioner Paul Reiter. It was noted that many of these concerns have already been addressed/resolved by Toussaint and that some have been included in the 2006 revised and 2007 work plans.
 - b. Berliner shared information about the formation of a new group of area residents concerned about Clark Street. The group started initially about 2-3 years ago but fizzled, but the leaders are working to form it again and they invited him to a meeting about 6-8 weeks ago. He communicated with this group that he was not willing to be their SSA representative nor to work with the group if their goal was to work at odds with the SSA or "beat it up." He acknowledged that the potential members of this group are smart and influential, but not eligible as SSA commissioners because they live around, but not in, the SSA's boundaries. In addition, this group would not be bound by the limits of an SSA commission and could be helpful.
 - Various members of the commission expressed the following concerns:
 1. That this group would revisit issues this commission had already discussed and cause us to spend additional time revisiting these items.
 2. That we would be working at odds with this group or duplicating one another's work
 3. That the perspectives of these groups (in relation to their same goal of revitalizing Clark St.) might be mismatched – residents vs. businesses.
 4. That this will be another group to whom the Alderman will have to defer when making decisions.
 5. That, after three years of streetscape, the commission is just getting to implement proactive plans and that this group may not understand that and may, understandably have not seen any significant progress.

- c. The status of this group and their timeframe for meeting again is currently unknown, however, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to have someone who could be a liaison for both the SSA and the new group. Berliner reiterated that he would not attend as an SSA representative, however, nor would he work with them should they wish to beat up on the SSA or SSA staff.

Motion by Berliner to adjourn. Motion seconded by Bienias and unanimously approved.

Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the final budget forms could be approved via email communication and that the next meeting will be in August and the date selected set via email.

*Note that parking will no longer be available in the lot across the street from the Chamber office.

5:35 p.m. Meeting Adjourn

Action Items:

1. Toussaint to get final logo comps to include the following: spacing for 'by the' in the selected logo changed and/or enlarged. In addition, commission would like to see the text (logo) in different colors, specifically brown and green.
2. Toussaint to revise 2006 & 2007 work plans and budgets per commission decisions. Pending DPD preliminary review, Toussaint to forward to the commission for approval via email.