

**SSA #23 Meeting Minutes– Wednesday, November 29, 2006
Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce, 1925 N. Clybourn, Suite 301**

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

Absent: Doug Schubert, Simpson Gold, David Schmeissing

LPCC Staff: Jamie Toussaint

Call to Order

- I. Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Berliner.

Approval of Minutes

- II. Approval of 10/11/06 meeting minutes

Motion by Auerbach to approve 10/11/06 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Quick. Unanimously approved.

Public Forum

- III. Toussaint announced her resignation from the LPCC, effective December 15, 2006. Schilf will act as Program Manager until a replacement is found.

Reports

- IV. Financial – *Toussaint*
 - a. Commission reviewed both the YTD Balance Sheet and Budget vs. Actual reports
 - b. In response to a question from Berliner, Toussaint noted that both 2006 events cost approximately \$20,000 to produce so budget amendments might be considered for 2007 should the commission want to continue with two annual events.
 - c. Berliner noted that if all requested levy is received and carryover is not available and/or utilized, the SSA operates with a break event budget.
 - d. It was noted that the tax base increases annually, that there is \$184 K in the SSA bank account and that currently, SSA Program Managers are beginning to work on collective bargaining in hopes to reduce prices across the board. These things do help to plan ahead for slightly better than a ‘break even’ annual budget.
 - e. Toussaint suggested that the total events budget for 2007 is increased to \$40,000 (\$20,000 per event), utilizing money from savings and that the additional money in savings be utilized for one time expenditures, such as the architectural markers discussed in the past. (Research and planning for architectural markers is scheduled for 2006 with purchase and installation planned for 2008).
 - f. It was also noted that the full \$62,200 (approx.) budgeted for landscaping in 2007 will not be used. Phase 3 hanging baskets were not planted with spring/summer flowers this year, as was originally planned, so the city will plant these in 2007, reducing the expense to the SSA. [Toussaint contacted Brickman Group, the 2007 Landscape contractor on 11/30/06 to get the revised cost.]

Special Orders

- V. Fave Media
 - a. Presentation by Fave Media– *Jon Seymour, Jeff Seymour, Jim Pomposelli*
 - i. Fave is an online solution for local business advertising; a way to manage personal e-commerce. This is a new, free, downloadable software program allowing people to search for services, retailers, etc. using their nine digit zip code to find businesses located closest to them. Fave believes that the next generation of internet advertising is video and their software focuses on offering this medium
 - ii. Fave is located at 2350 N. Clark, started writing software in September, 2004 and is launching in January/February, 2007.
 - iii. The goal is for 103,000 people to load the software in the next year.

- iv. In response to questions from the commissioners, Fave noted that search results are listed in geographical order (closest to furthest), that there is no current online review system planned due to possible negative manipulation by reviewers, but that users can email advertisers with feedback or questions.
- v. Fave provided a two part proposal to the commissioners:

1. "Clark by the Park" as Launch Partner for Fave Media

- 1. Every new consumer that uses Fave for the first time will see the "Clark by the Park" banner ad
- 2. Every consumer that clicks thru the banner ad will see the "Clark by the Park" video
- 3. Fave estimates 16 million consumer impressions (or viewings) of Fave advertising and 103,000 consumer Fave downloads in Chicagoland centered around Lincoln Park over the next 12 months
- 4. Fave Media's entire consumer marketing budget will be focused in Lincoln Park from our retail location at 2350 North Clark Street and will spread out to the surrounding Chicago neighborhoods
- 5. Fave Media has already paid for the expense of the "Clark by the Park" video in Fave and is offering it at no cost to either the Clark Street SSA or Clark Street merchants (estimated value of \$5,000)
- 6. Fave Media will host the "Clark by the Park" banner ads and video in Fave at no cost to either the Clark Street SSA or Clark Street merchants (estimated value of \$400 per month, \$4,800 annually)

2. Proposal for Co-operative Advertising on Fave

- 1. Fave proposed that Fave Media, the Clark Street SSA and Clark Street SSA merchants share the cost of producing and hosting videos targeted for individual Clark Street SSA merchants on Fave
 - a. For Clark Street SSA merchants, Fave Media will lower its hosting charge from \$400 per month (\$4,800 annually) to \$299 per month (\$3,588 annually), a reduction of over 25%
 - b. The merchant and the Clark Street SSA will equally split the cost of video production
 - c. The merchant and the Clark Street SSA will equally split the cost of hosting the video on Fave
 - 2. Fave Media has partnered with Ironknee Productions, Inc., a Lincoln Park-based video production company, to produce the "Clark by the Park" video and at least some of the future Clark Street SSA merchant videos
 - 3. Fave Media offers three video production packages ranging from \$600 to \$2,400
 - 4. No hosting charges are paid by any Clark Street SSA merchants or the Clark Street SSA until Fave Media has obtained 5,000 registered users (the cost of video production is paid upfront prior to hosting)
- vi. Current contracted advertisers will not pay the monthly fee until 5,000 users are registered with Fave.

After the Fave presentation was completed, Toussaint gave the commission the Phase 3 construction update (listed further down in the minutes), allowing Fave the time to break down and remove their equipment from the conference room. Once the Fave staff left and Toussaint completed the Phase 3 construction update, the commission began discussion about the Fave proposals.

b. Commission Discussion of Fave Media Presentation

- i. Bienias shared two thoughts:
 1. She likes the ad and thinks Fave would be willing to tweak the banner or video if we felt it necessary to do so;
 2. She was initially concerned about a conflict of interest/issues with preferential treatment if the SSA worked with Fave, however, since Fave does seem to be dedicated to the local area, this is not such a major concern. In addition, Toussaint reported that she had discussed any legal issues arising from this type of agreement (both acting as a 'launch partner' and subsidizing discounted advertising) with both Gina Caruso of the Department of Planning and Development and Chris Matern, a lawyer serving on the LPCC Board, and neither found any legal problem as long as Fave is not now, nor plans in the future to serve on the SSA commission.
- ii. Further discussion was had amongst the commission regarding why we would participate (to further our mission or the mission of Fave?), what the mission of the SSA is in regards to supporting businesses, supporting businesses in various stages of development, setting precedents for this type of relationship and the overall plans of the SSA in regards to subsidizing advertising vs. negotiating discounted rates.
- iii. It was agreed that larger question of the mission of the SSA in regards to how it should support businesses (through subsidizing of advertising costs or beautification and marketing of the service area to benefit all and entice new businesses or hiring a consultant to make available to new and/or struggling businesses or differentiation in treatment of different types of businesses, etc.) should be discussed at a future meeting due to time constraints and the overall importance of the discussion.
 1. Toussaint confirmed that the 2007 work plan does include money for 'economic development.' The intention was to create marketing materials to aid in attracting businesses and customers to Clark Street.
- iv. The commission then discussed the first part of the proposal "Clark by the Park as a Launch Partner for Fave Media" and came to the following conclusions:
 1. The SSA wants to see Fave Media succeed, as the SSA wants to see all businesses in the SSA area succeed
 2. Should the SSA accept this opportunity, nothing is lost should Fave not succeed
 3. The SSA commission will not allow Fave to use the terminology "Launch Partner" to describe this relationship to avoid implied endorsement or investment.
 4. The agreement with Fave is not exclusive. Should similar opportunities arise with other media outlets, the SSA retains the right to consider and participate in these agreements.

Motion by Bienias to accept the first portion of the Fave Media proposal with the following caveats: 1) this needs to be a contractual, not verbal agreement. 2) Fave cannot imply that SSA is a partner in investment or endorsement. 3) SSA #23 reserves the right to engage in similar agreements with other businesses should the opportunity arise. 4) The Clark by the Park logo on the banner needs to be

increased in size and the Special Service Area #23 text needs to be decreased. Motion seconded by Quick. Unanimously approved.

- v. The commission then discussed the second part of the proposal “Cooperative Advertising” and came to the following conclusions:
 - 1. There is a concern amongst some commission members about the action of subsidizing advertising and that doing so represents a type of endorsement.
 - 2. This advertising plan as currently proposed has no cap to expenditures, which is problematic.
 - 3. There is concern about subsidizing and endorsing Fave at this time without any data regarding the success of Fave to back up the endorsement.
 - 4. It was recommended that Fave approach the commission with a package including a special discount for SSA #23 constituent businesses which does not include an SSA subsidy. In addition, Fave should re-approach the commission once more data is collected should they want to further the discussion about subsidized co-operative advertising.

Old Business

VI. Phase 3 Construction Update – *Toussaint*

- a. Remaining work to be done includes:
 - i. Traffic signal at Dickens, to be completed in the next 2 weeks
 - ii. Red ADA compliant pavers in Phase 1, still in dispute between the city and the fabricator (Toussaint confirmed for Bienias that since these are in dispute, the city has not officially purchased them, so cannot turn them over to the SSA, ensuring that the SSA is not liable for any injury due to their current state).
 - iii. Dads’ Park at Grant Place needs to have irrigation, flood lighting and signage completed.
 - iv. Punch list items have been completed excepting the above work
 - v. In December, all meters will be changed for consistency and will be \$0.25/ 30 minutes (two hour max).
 - 1. Bienias expressed concern about the two hour limit and if this would be enforced with ‘chalking’ or other means. [Toussaint confirmed with Alderman Daley’s office on 11/30 that the two hour limit would not be enforced.]
 - 2. The commission expressed concern about the \$0.25/30 minutes vs. \$0.25/one hour. Toussaint informed the commission about a discussion with Alderman Daley in regards to this. In order to be eligible for ‘pay and display’ parking meters, which the commission had previously expressed interest in, the area must show an increase in parking revenue. Having the higher the meter rate will be a big help in achieving this increase, and thus the larger goal.
 - vi. In December, the city’s sign department will come out to revise all flashing and loading zones per previous discussions. These are planned to be strictly enforced.
 - vii. Concrete sidewalks in front of Francis Parker will need to be redone (they failed a stress test) but a date for this work has not yet been determined.
 - viii. Toussaint reported on her meeting on November 2, 2006 with Cheri Heramb, CDOT Commissioner, and Janet Attarian, head of the Streetscape project:
 - 1. Most issues were not recognized as valid
 - 2. Concerns were not addressed
 - 3. Overall, Toussaint felt that this was a very disappointing meeting.
 - ix. Toussaint acknowledged that, since that initial meeting, Janet Attarian has been in regular contact and has worked diligently to resolve some issues and has

asked for an additional meeting to discuss how CDOT can work better with local businesses on future projects.

- x. Due to the current progress underway in discussions with CDOT, Toussaint questioned if the commission still desired her to write a letter outlining construction issues.
- xi. Bienias suggested that the letter should be written to summarize the current status of projects as well as future expectations so that, when Toussaint leaves, the ball is not dropped by either party. This approach would also avoid any implied criticism at this stage, given that the process has been going better than when the issue of writing a letter first arose. The other commissioners expressed unanimous support for this idea.

VII. Clarktoberfest Review

- a. Toussaint briefly reviewed the information collected in the Clarktoberfest Review previously distributed to commissioners via email.
- b. Longanecker offered the use of Lincoln Park Market for future events. Stores from throughout the service area could set up a table and, in the past, the space has hosted approximately 1000 people .
- c. Auerbach noted that he received the best response from coupons from the July issue of the SSA News. Other commissioners noted that might be because July is a peak demand time for ice cream cones, versus October.
- d. Bienias noted that she prefers that coupons in the 'Shop and Stroll' and future event packages not be valid for the day or weekend of the event only, because people can only eat and drink so much in 1 or 2 days; having the coupons valid for at least a couple of weeks after the event encourages people to return to Clark by the Park. Toussaint stated no changes could be made to coupon expiration dates for this year's 'Shop and Stroll' but that it would be changed for future events.

VIII. Holiday Shop and Stroll Update

- a. Saturday, December 9, 2006, 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- b. Activities:
 - i. Sales
 - ii. Strolling Carolers
 - iii. Refreshments
 - iv. Santa's Workshop (noon – 4:30 p.m.)
 - v. Polaroid photos w/frames for kids and adults
 - vi. Gift bags for kids
 - vii. Free hot chocolate and logo imprinted mugs for adults
 - viii. Tree Lighting Ceremony (4:30 p.m., Northwest corner of Clark and Fullerton, Santa and Alderman Vi Daley to attend, Local businesses to 'sponsor' tree and be recognized on signage, Free hot chocolate and mugs for adults)
- c. Participants (updated on 11/30):
 - i. Discounts and Coupons: 46
 - ii. Refreshment Stations: 10
 - iii. Vacant Storefronts Decorated: 5
 - iv. Hat and Mitten Collection Locations: 9
 - v. Area Nonprofits Participating: Lincoln Park Community Shelter and Christopher House (hat/mitten collection recipients) and others TBD
 - vi. Tree Lighting Sponsors: 2
 - vii. Tree Lighting Refreshment Donors: 4
 - viii. Mugs to be Distributed: 200
 - ix. Walking Map and Coupon Books to be Distributed: 2000
- d. Advertising:
 - i. Red Eye for 2 weeks prior to the event

- ii. Skyline
- iii. Inside – article
- iv. 8500 postcards mailed to area residents using the voter registration database
- v. 10,000 postcards distributed to area businesses
- vi. Posters displayed in area stores

IX. Expansion – *Toussaint*

- a. Expansion will not move forward until 2008.
- b. Gina Caruso of DPD was unable to procure the needed information from the county on time to put our request before city council in time for the last session of the year.
- c. Toussaint confirmed that the SSA should not need to revise the budget, but that the increase expected from the expansion should be covered by the increase in assessments.

X. Meeting with Mid North Association (MNA) – *Toussaint*

- a. Toussaint made an effort to meet with area neighborhood associations to update them on the work of the Clark Street SSA.
- b. Toussaint met on 10/16 with MNA and had the opportunity to speak during their ‘open forum’
- c. This was the first meeting during which they returned to an ‘open meeting’ format
- d. Toussaint reviewed Clarktoberfest, the commission’s tentative 2007 plans, directed people to the new website and invited them to meetings
- e. Peter Zelchenko was in attendance and spoke after Toussaint at the MNA meeting
- f. Overall, despite Zelchenko’s commentary that was critical of SSAs, Toussaint felt that the information was well received.

XI. Internet Search Results – *Toussaint*

In response to a request made by Bienias at the prior meeting, Toussaint ‘Googled’ the following words and phrases to see where the new Clark by the Park website appeared in the search engine:

Searched For:	Websites Found:
“Clark by the Park”	LPCC (1 st), Stamp on In (2 nd), Clark Street website (3 rd)
Clark by the Park	Not even in the top 40
Clark Street or “Clark Street”	21 st
Clark Street SSA	Clark Street website (1 st and 2 nd), LPCC website (3 rd and 4 th)

XII. Cable Advertising Survey Results - *Toussaint*

- a. In response to discussions at the last meeting in regards to possible cable co-operative advertising plans for the SSA, Toussaint included questions about print and cable co-operative advertising in the follow up survey from Clarktoberfest.
- b. The survey was mailed to all Clark Street businesses and made available via surveymonkey.com.
- c. Results are as follows:

Would you be interested in participating in discounted advertising opportunities if offered by the Clark Street SSA?

- Yes: 17
- No: 4

If you would be interested in participating in print media discounted advertising opportunities for Clark Street, at which level would you be interested/able to participate?

- \$50: 2
- \$100: 2
- \$200: 7
- \$500: 3

- Not interested in print :2
- Other: Corporate doesn't allow for participation, would like to offer free coupon placement

If you would be interested in participating in cable TV discounted advertising opportunities for Clark Street, at which level would you be interested/able to participate?

- \$2500: 3
- \$5000: 1
- Not interested in cable: 10
- Other: Depends on offer

- d. Toussaint noted a low number of respondents to the survey overall, and particularly for these questions. Her suggestion is that, should the commission decide to move forward with this type of activity, a survey be done visiting each business on the street with an exact proposal in hand to gauge interest. Per the previous discussion regarding participation with Fave Media and the mission of the SSA regarding how it should support businesses, this item will be tabled for a future meeting.

New Business

XIII. Letterhead – *Toussaint*

Toussaint provided the commission with a sample of the letterhead and envelopes which were created utilizing the new Clark by the Park logo.

XIV. Tracking Effectiveness of Branding and Marketing - *Toussaint*

- a. Currently, there are 23 vacant storefronts within the service area.
- b. Now that the branding and marketing plan is underway, discussion needs to be had in regards to how the SSA is going to track the effectiveness of the branding and marketing efforts.
- c. Due to time constraints and the overall importance of the discussion, this item was tabled for a future meeting.

XV. Etching – *Toussaint*

- a. Acid etching (a particularly destructive approach to graffiti) has become common throughout the city and is especially problematic on Clark Street.
- b. Toussaint noted that Pressure Washing Systems, the company we previously employed to pressure wash the sidewalks, is now offering a service to buff out etching on glass.
- c. Other SSAs are offering to share a standard or percentage portion of the cost of this service with businesses and Toussaint wondered if the commissioners might be interested in this type of program.
- d. Quick is having this done and Toussaint saw the results on the windows of Dilly Lily, a LPCC member business.
- e. Berliner suggested a plastic coating for the outside of windows which keeps etching from reaching the glass. Should etching occur, only the coating, not the glass, would need to be replaced.
- f. Bienias questioned why the Mayor's Graffiti Blasters were not taking care of this type of graffiti. Toussaint confirmed that they had not yet become involved in resolving this type of graffiti and some other commission members commented that often, Mayor's Graffiti Blasters often do more harm than good to building facades.
- g. It was decided that Berliner would look further into the plastic coating and that Quick would report on the results of his upcoming buffing by PWS and that this would be discussed further at a future meeting.

XVI. Banner Update - *Toussaint*

- a. Winter banners to be up by 12/9

- b. Permits for street pole banners are managed through the Bureau of Electricity and are renewed in part or in whole at their discretion.
- c. Francis Parker requested the use of poles on Clark Street and now has double banners so we will not have use of the poles from Belden to Webster
- d. At times, the Mayor's Office of Special Events does put up other banners, at their discretion. This is not something we have control over.
- e. Gallanis suggested that we ask Francis Parker if they are willing to add the Clark by the Park logo to their banners.

XVII. Community Bulletin Boards - *Toussaint*

Toussaint and Longanecker had discussed the idea of community bulletin boards placed in Lincoln Park Market and other large businesses throughout the service area to help publicize the activities of the SSA and other neighborhood organizations. In the interest of time, this discussion was tabled for a future meeting.

XVIII. Website Addition Request - *Toussaint*

- a. The Lincoln Park Conservancy and its North Pond Conservation Council, www.lincolnparkconservancy.org Per Susan P. Fargo, Chair, North Pond Conservation Council, V.P., Lincoln Park Conservancy (Fargo2@prodigy.net) asked that their website be added to the Clark by the Park website resource page.
- b. Overall, the commissioners did not see the connection between the two organizations and felt that this was not appropriate.

Motion by Auerbach to refrain from adding this website listing on the Clark by the Park website resource page. Motion seconded by Quick. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting

February 7, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Bienias to adjourn the meeting at 5:59 p.m. Motion seconded by Quick. Unanimously approved.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jamie Toussaint