

Albany Park and Irving Park Special Service Area #60
SSA Commission Meeting
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 5:30pm

Commissioners in Attendance: Saima Causevic, Stephanie Fishel, Frank Kern, Tom Guagliardo, David Maletin

Residents/Business Owners in attendance: Jeff Sobczyk, Blaine Roberts

NRC staff: Duka Dabovic, Thomas Applegate, Alexa Schutz

Meeting called to order at 5:34 pm.

Frank Kern has served two terms over 4 years and is rolling off due to a relocation to California. *Many thanks for your time and service to our communities, Frank!*

Minutes: Minutes were reviewed. Tom moved to approve. David seconded. All in favor.

Financials: Financials were reviewed. Duka will provide budget-to-actuals starting at the March SSA meeting. It's still the beginning of the year, so tax dollars are trickling in. David moved to approve. Saima seconded. All in favor.

District Branding Strategy: RFP

District-wide branding strategy, through an RFP process, will start in the SSA due to available funds with future hopes to expand the branding into the greater Chamber boundaries. RFP deadline is 3/21 which proposals will be reviewed at the April SSA meeting, not just the Marketing Committee. RFP to go out this week; Duka asked to review the handout for any comments or changes. Duka recapped that the RFP stemmed from Commissioners' response to the Kedzie Demonstration project since they seek more consistent strategy and cohesion among the varying business corridors. Saima made a motion, Tom seconded. All in favor.

Fall Arts Event

In order to have this event, we will reallocate \$5k of security camera funds to this event. Thomas recapped the purpose of the art event is to showcase our growing community of arts and culture organizations in area which also shows a different side of our neighborhood, not just the known international restaurants. A weekend event was purposed over just one day; however, we need to coordinate the event during a time when arts orgs are in production. We can market our district for customer attraction with help from an event planner. The event is not designed to make money but \$5k will be allocated to marketing and event planning. A motion to move \$5k from security camera funds to the fall arts event was moved by David, Saima seconded.

Façade Program

Duka and Alexa discussed program pipeline applicants. The first deadline for 2018 funds is Feb. 14, the review committee meets on Feb. 26, and Commissioners to review on March 7.

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Public Relations Roundups

The February “Valentine’s Day story” highlighted 11 local businesses. The Marketing Committee and Commissioners are seeking to re-evaluate the contract with Kurman Communications since the audience reach is not focused in on Chicagoland nor are the articles being picked up by local outlets.

Vacancy Site Marketing

Alexa presented the final version of the vacancy posters. Staff are currently working with landlords and brokers in the area to get the posters distributed and hung up in their vacant storefronts. The posters ask “what do you want here” to solicit community input about a particular storefront location; by texting NRC’s main line, we collect their input.

SSA Elections

Per our by-laws, we must hold elections for a chair, co-chair, secretary, and treasurer. By-laws allow 2 two-year terms, so after those terms are served in full, Commissioners must change positions. Commissioner terms are separate from internal officer positions. If a Commissioner is interested in a particular role, contact Duka.

Public Input

Local resident Blaine Roberts supports the start of an anti-littering campaign and asked for a status update of the campaign posters. Stephanie and Blaine seek signage/posters in storefront windows and ideally in different languages due to cultural differences in our area. To couple with our outreach to local businesses through the Kedzie Demonstration group, Stephanie proposed starting with anti-littering posters on Kedzie and using a small amount of the project funds to print the posters. 100 posters costs around \$80. Thomas raised a concern on the expectations of a poster to curb people’s habits which is hard to do, so this poster will act merely as a reminder. To beautify the district and curb trash is already covered by our SSA trash pickup service. Blaine volunteers to get the posters out in the district and does not expect this to be a cure all but rather to have a conversation; although printing the poster isn’t costly, staff time is spent getting them in the district.

Staff encouraged Commissioners to be present and participate in any 33rd Ward meeting related to the business district/SSA such as the community meeting about Blanz Pantry and the upcoming Feb. 12 safety meeting about Interstate Blood Bank.

Meeting concluded at 6:25pm. The next meeting is Wednesday, March 14 at 5:30pm at NRC’s office (3403 W. Lawrence Ave, Suite 201).