



## SSA Meeting Minutes: September 11, 2019

### ATTENDEES

**SSA Commissioners present:** Saima Causevic, Andrew Levin, Stephanie Fishel, Mark Aistrope, Kareeshma Ali

**Staff present:** Alexa Schutz, Thomas Applegate, Dalia Aragon

**SSA Commissioners absent:** Tom Guagliardo, David Maletin

**Guest:** Carol Maher (resident), Carlos Diaz (Legislative Aide to Gilbert Villegas)

Meeting called to order at 5:36 pm by Chair-Mark Aistrope. **Quorum is achieved.**

**Approval of minutes:** 1st Fishel, 2nd Causevic; all in favor.

**Approval of financials:** 1st Levin, 2nd Ali; all in favor.

### Financials:

- Now that we have halfway through the year, Schutz and Applegate conducted a deeper dive analysis over the summer to ensure we are on track for the latter half of the year and into 2020. Schutz clarified that the SSA is thriving and over performing as it matures; however, there are some changes that must be made to ensure we have adequate carryover into 2020, plus we have to account for less projected income from levy or late collection dollars. This includes cuts to secondary programs or priorities, but not our essential services.
- Applegate discussed the large delta in the carryover that we started the year off with since we have successfully chipped away at our carryover over the years, which we have been striving to do by increasing services. We have made an assessment that there is less income coming in than expected, including our smaller carryover. Additionally, we investigated if there is a delay in the levy collection or disbursement, and after speaking with DPD we have been informed that this revenue will not be coming in.
  - Applegate clarified that \$69,000 has been allocated for carryover for next year per our 2020 budget we recently approved, however, we want to make this \$69k as small as possible so we can continue to deliver more services in the district.
  - We have an itemized list that includes things we will not be able to do in 2019 because of the financial situation. See below.

Line Item	Amount	Notes
4613 - Monitoring & Compliance	300	Cut as never typically spent
4618 - Conference & Training	300	No upcoming conferences
4610 - Commission Meetings & Trainings	400	Funds remain for last facade review committee meeting (\$30)
4609 - Postage	1,500	Funds remain for 6 year in review
4212 - Window Merchandising Consultant	2,000	Funds remain for 2-3 more consults especially those not pursuing facade project
4502 - Safety	2,000	Funds remain for 1 more camera project in 2019
4107 - Print Materials	2,000	Funds remain for winter bingo cards or other printing
4601 - SSA Annual Report	2,500	Funds remain for 6 year review; 2019 report once 2019 is fully closed into early 2020
4303 - Public Transit Enhancements	3,000	Benches - not top priority in pilot area vs. landscaping
4410 - Pop Up	3,758	Cut pop-up event idea; need more time for concept, vendor recruitment, and location for our first-ever attempt
4304 - Bike	4,000	Bike Racks - rely on free city galvanized racks to later be painted our palette
CREDIT from 2018 Facades	4,017	Net credit from 2018 Rainbow Daycare facade project whose rebate was less
4301 - Garbage Cans	5,000	Trash cans - not of highest priority vs. banners and landscaping boxes
4208 - Litter Abatement	5,750	Amending contract to remove last weeding (\$4,750) and leaf removal (\$1k) as these services provide minimal impact
4401 - Site Marketing	6,000	Cutting any SSA sponsorship of CTA advertisement pilot to coordinate ads around our community events in 2020
4206 - Public Art	9,000	Cut mural for 2019; Tortuga's wall can not be directly painted on plus encroaching colder weather, want community input
4202 - Landscaping	10,000	Funds remain for new and existing planters for landscaping services for winter/holiday plants; cut tree plantings/inventory
4205 - Streetscape Elements	11,000	Funds remain for new planters on Lawrence/Kedzie) and/or painting of existing bike racks depending on sizes selected
<b>TOTAL FUNDS OF REDUCED EXPENSES</b>	<b>72,525</b>	<i>This total amount will help us make up the carryover and shortfall of projected income/levy payments from Sept - Dec</i>
		<i>a. Reduction in the carryover from Budget \$68K to \$35K, delta of \$33K</i>
		<i>b. Reduction in the amount of collected Levy \$351K in 2019 than budgeted \$388K, delta of \$37K</i>



- Aistrophe asked how close we are cutting it to running out of funds. Applegate explained that we are close to exceeding our allowance per our SSA ordinance which is not good. Cash flow analysis says that if we spend the full budget with our lesser income, we are \$60,000 in the red and the SSA may need to use NRC's line of credit come February. Ideally, we do not want to, but as the service provider are prepared to do so, if necessary.
- Schutz assured that we will not be cutting any of our essential services and popular programs like facade or snow removal; however, we will need to cut some that we have talked about like pop-ups, mural, or marketing/CTA advertising efforts.
- Schutz asked if there are any large concerns of the proposed cut services.
  - Levin feels strongly about weeding. Causevic & Diaz advised on the Cook County Sheriff SWAP program, which is for nonviolent offenders who community service; via the SWAP program, they can be requested to come out to the community. Schutz to pursue this!
  - Site marketing will be left for 2020 and we will consider CTA advertising with more time and planning to coordinate with our district events and outreach to local business community for interest in participating.
  - We have already identified a mural location at Tortuga's wall on Sawyer at Lawrence which will get pushed to spring/summer 2020.
  - Landscaping boxes along Lawrence Ave will still be pursued but less quantity in more strategic locations.
  - Maher wants to know if we have requested the galvanized bike racks and mentioned that we can request them online. If we can't get a city bike program staffer from CDOT to come out for permitting/placements, we will pursue requesting via online for free U racks.
  - While discussing facade improvement program, Aistrophe stated that due to the high demand and limited remaining funds for 2019, the program should be more competitive in the pipeline.

### **SSA Commissioner Applications & Renewals**

- Diaz spoke about the process of the Committee on Economic, Capital, and Technology Development; for new and renewing commissioners, they must go downtown to introduce themselves. Alderman Villegas is the Chair of the committee; Diaz works for Ald. Villegas.
- Levin asked if the community and service provider process for selecting commissioners is not efficient enough for them to be vetted by the Committee. Diaz clarified that they are trying to work on alternate solutions to having people travel downtown on a Tuesday at noon. One of the alternatives would be submitting a video recording.

### **Updates:**

- A. Landscaping Planter Boxes:
  - a. Due to our narrow sidewalks, staff requested input from Commission on two options to pursue (a) smaller planter boxes and paint amenities like bike racks and parking meters, or (b) large planter boxes and not painting until 2020. The group chose to pursue option B, which is 8 large planter boxes, 1 XL by Lindo Michoacan, and hold off on painting existing amenities until 2020.
  - b. Schutz informed the group that we had a great conversation with Lindo about beautification, they will be improving their sidewalk and have given approval for our one extra large half sphere planter.



**B. Banners:**

- a. We printed 176 of the banners and installed by TFA Signs. They look amazing, and they are well-received by the community and business sponsors.
- b. We are now expanding this program because of the large interest, so we have round 2 for Montrose Ave from Horner Park to Kedzie. These to go up in October and swap out the existing "verb" banners so the designs are cohesive.
- c. Goal is to have banners up in the entire SSA by end of 2020.

**C. Facades:**

- a. Schutz showed before and afters of many recently completed projects.
- b. We have a very strong pipeline that we believe will max out our facade funds for 2019 including a new storage facility, Sanabel Bakery, Lindo Michoacan, etc.

**D. Events:**

- a. Last Lot Jams of 2019 is this Thursday which is sponsored by NRC education committee. Each Lot Jams is bringing 100+ people; great second year so far!
- b. Mosaic Arts Festival is our last event, with a kickoff party at Twisted Hippo on Thursday 9/26. Check out the website [www.mosaicartsfestival.com](http://www.mosaicartsfestival.com) for all the 20+ activities throughout the weekend.

**Gas Station Proposal @ Kimball/Montrose, southwest corner:**

- Levin notified NRC about this proposal which the existing 7-11 corporation is seeking to add a gas station to their lot located at Kimball and Montrose.
  - NRC is co-hosting a community meeting at Henry Elementary with local stakeholders to get the community's input and stance on the proposal before it goes to ZBA. That meeting is taking place congruently with our current SSA meeting so we will report back.
- Applegate informed the group that everything we have heard from residents and community businesses is opposition because of the negative impact it will have on the environment, economic growth along Montrose, non-pedestrian friendly nature, and residential property values. We will continue to play our role of making it possible to have community input on any developments in our neighborhoods.

**Public Input:**

- Regarding the gas station proposal at the existing 7-11 site at Kimball and Montrose, Maher stated that corner needs to be activated because of its prime location in the district. Applegate agreed, although there are better alternatives than having a gas station; this is the opportunity to have the community say what they want in that corner.
- Fishel mentioned a problem with people drinking in the parking lot between Templestowe and Walgreens. She requested we put pressure on the owner and the Alderman to get this situation under control. DMSfit has been told to stop calling 911.
- Causavic brought up the issue with prostitution near Village Discount on Lawrence and Spaulding.

Meeting concluded at 6:47pm.

**Next meeting is Wednesday, October 2** at North River Commission, 3403 W. Lawrence Ave, 201.