



MINUTES

April 13, 2005

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. There were 40 people in attendance, including 48th Ward Alderman Marianne Smith, Greg Harris, Alderman Smith's chief of staff, and Doug Frasier of the Edgewater Community Council.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the March 9, 2005, meeting were unanimously approved without changes.

Treasurer's Report

Sue Morales reported \$503.55 account balance. Chris Lawrence requested that attendees renew their memberships or sign up to join ETNA. Although money is being collected for ads in the community newsletter, dues also help defray costs to produce the newsletter.

Roy Steinke Community Service Award

For his many contributions to the community, Roy Steinke was presented a flag that flew over Congress by 48th Ward Alderman Marianne Smith. The flag had been procured by Jan Schakowsky. In addition to Roy's dedicated activities with community groups such as ECC and ETNA, Roy initiated the "Greening of Ridge" where 50 flower boxes had been installed from Clark to Hollywood and flowers are planted each year to beautify this heavily trafficked section of Ridge.

Alderman Smith "State of the Ward"

Alderman Marianne Smith provided a "State of the Ward" address focusing on community issues.

As residential development changes the neighborhood, **public safety** concerns are shifting. Traffic management has become a priority as traffic becomes heavier along the area's major thoroughfares. Although violent crime is still an issue, preventive measures, such as increased police presence and cameras along el stops, are reducing violent crimes. In terms of **economic development**, the priority has shifted from attracting any retailer to fill a vacant store to getting the right balance of retailers in the neighborhood that will serve community needs. Retention of local retailers who keep the area unique and reinvest in the community is also a high priority. **Education** is also a top community priority because good schools will retain and attract families. Currently every public grade school in the ward is off probation. Major sponsors for the Ward's public schools include the Chicago Bar Association, The John Marshall Law School (Swift), and the Union League Club (Pierce).

Other issues addressed:

Broadway Armory: Currently gathering suggestions on how to best leverage the largest indoor recreational center to better service the community needs. Traffic management is especially important so that children can safely cross the street to attend after-school programs.

Ridge Ave. Firehouse: A new firehouse will be built next year at Clark and Elmdale. Community input is needed on how the community would like to use the old firehouse on Ridge Ave. The ECC would work with the block clubs to decide.

In addition to urging residents to be active participants in block clubs, Alderman Smith would like to see children invited to block club activities and meetings; e.g, a Saturday pancake breakfast.

Alderman Smith turned over the floor to her Chief of Staff, Greg Harris.

Mr. Harris provided highlights of a report on residential and commercial development of Broadway and Clark Streets. The report is a joint project with the Metropolitan Planning Council and Urban Land Institute. Issues addressed in the report for both streets included transportation, parking, distribution, property taxes, development incentives, and mass transit. Of particular concern on Broadway was mixed residential and commercial zoning. The Broadway development report will be presented at a Town Hall meeting later this spring.

Clark Street (Ainslie to Devon) development is not as simple as Broadway due to varying commercial development along different stretches of the street. There is no cohesiveness. On the South end in Andersonville, the need is to preserve architecture and provide incentives for local businesses to stay and re-invest in the community. Increased taxes and rents will drive out the businesses that make the area unique. North towards Devon there are vacant and larger buildings which are in need of development. However, national chains and big boxes may not be the answer as large delivery trucks and increased traffic will disrupt the surrounding neighborhoods. The Clark Street findings will be available towards the fall.

Alderman Smith took questions from the floor:

- Capitol Garage status (Clark St): There will be a sports medicine and indoor soccer facility.
 - Scientific Cleaners Building (Broadway): Status unknown.
 - Gethsemane materials on sidewalks/alleyways complaint: They are making a good-faith effort to remove materials and stop dumping. They buy land to accommodate their business and re-invest in neighborhood.
 - Metra Stop at Peterson: Peterson and Ravenswood not feasible, but Rosehill stop definite possibility.
-

Old Business

5647 N. Clark Update: Developer Pat Daley reported that his development—a 12-unit condo with 24 parking spaces and 2 storefronts— is underway. He anticipates starting this summer, most likely in June. Problems with laying the foundation held up the development. An attendee noted the rat problem at the site and Mr. Daley reported that he is baiting the property in the coming week. Chris mentioned that alleys have also been baited around there.

1515 W. Victoria: New owner stated that he is tearing down the frame-house and building a two-story, single-family home which he will put on the market. He will begin the teardown in a couple of months as soon as permits are issued. He stated that the construction site dumpster will be placed in the back of the property.

5874-84 N. Ridge: An Ardmore Street resident complained that residents on Ardmore were not informed about the developer’s request for zoning variance for the Ridge St. conversion that is behind them. They were not in attendance when the developer made his presentation to ETNA (March 9 Minutes). This particular person was against the development and would have liked the developer’s feedback on some concerns she had. Alderman Smith suggested that the resident put her objections in writing and send it to her office.

New Business

Education Listserv: Doug Frasier, Executive Director of ECC, passed around a sign-up sheet for an Edgewater Discussion Group on Education. He Also asked for community input for various neighborhood programs for the Cultural Center at 6219 N. Sheridan. Some suggestions already provided included a chess club and African drumming program.

Operation Ridge: Motion was made for ETNA to donate \$50 towards buying flowers for Ridge Ave. planters. Motion passed unanimously. Roy Steinke requested volunteers for “Operation Ridge” for Saturday, May 14 from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Colello
Secretary
