I. Call to Order
A quorum being present, Chair Wynne called the meeting to order at 8:20 p.m.

II. Consideration of Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2010

The minutes were approved unanimously, 8-0.

III. Discuss and Consider Recommendation for Cook County’s 6B Class for Ward Manufacturing
Ms. Nyden introduced Tom and Michael Ward of Ward Manufacturing, and Dave Forté, architect of Ward Manufacturing. They are the third generation of Ward Manufacturing, who has been operating in Evanston for 60 years. They hope to stay in their current location at 2230 Main Street by expanding to the adjacent property to build out and use as their warehouse, which entails a $5 million investment. Cook County’s 6B Program will provide a reduction in the assessed value of the property for 10 years: instead of the regular 25% of market value it goes to 10% for the first 10 years. It ramps up from 15%, then to 20%. To qualify, it must be investment property, new construction or rehab and industrial. They need approval from the municipality where they are seeking the 6B to submit with their application. City Council must pass a resolution in support as part of their application. Ald. Rainey commented that our industrial districts are very important. Ms. Nyden explained that the 6B will only apply to the new property expanded property. If they do not get the 6B, they may have to leave Evanston, so it will impact the existing property also. The building they propose to purchase has been vacant for 2 years because Tom Thumb moved out of Evanston for the same reason they would need to, a lack of industrial space.

Michael Ward thanked the City of Evanston for his company’s success. Ward Manufacturing started at 1218 Sherman in a 2 flat and bought the warehouse behind them. They moved to 1110 Emerson and moved away from there when Northwestern University took over that area, and moved to 2230 Main Street, all in the effort to stay in Evanston. There are not many blue collar industries left in Evanston and they are
probably the only metal stamper in Evanston. They employ 43 people, some who have been with them for 40 years, 6 of which have been moved to Morton Grove for a lack of warehouse space. They will be bringing those 6 jobs back to this area. They need to stay cost competitive because industry is going offshore. They are buying millions of pounds of steel. In this economic environment their business has survived because of the conservative nature of his father and grandfather. By trying to remain in Evanston they are doing something that is beneficial to themselves and the township. He feels they are benefit to Evanston and it would be a loss if they had to move. They are involved with the Youth Job Center and looking at employing out-of-school youths. 38 of their employees are non-skilled hourly employees and, he pointed out, there are hardly any blue collar employers left in Evanston.

David Forté presented plans for the expansion/renovation: He was the architect for the original building at 2230 Main and the additions in 1998 and 1999. He said the 2 parcels are pie shaped and challenging. The company needs another 12,500 sq. ft. of manufacturing area. Mike Ward added that the company is beating China and India by keeping production in the United States and this is what they need to do to accommodate the growth that they have the opportunity to capitalize on. He said there is a huge investment that goes along with the metal stamping business and that they are growing at a very fast rate, noting that the 3rd generation is not usually the one that grows the business. Mr. Forté explained that the addition will be connected to the original building which is only 5’ away. They plan to build a warehouse on the 25,000 sq. ft. of vacant property in the rear, as large as allowed by zoning regulations. That will help to bring the leased property in Morton Grove and Skokie back to Evanston for efficiency.

The Cook County Assessor will ultimately make the decision whether to grant the 6B to Ward Manufacturing.

The Committee voted unanimously 8-0 to recommend approval of the 6B to Ward Manufacturing.

IV. Discuss and Consider Recommendation for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Assistance for Ward Manufacturing

Mr. Forté explained that the 12,500 sq. ft. slab is not adequate to support their machinery. They will put a new slab on top of the old slab, as it has settled in many spots. This will entail removing and re-pouring the cement. One of their goals is for sustainability (and one of their clients manufactures the edging for the green roofs), so they will be removing the existing slab, crushing it and putting it back in.

Mr. Forté said the electrical service will have to be replaced entirely with a 480/277 service which ComEd will need to bring in and will cost approximately $60,000, plus $40,000 to $60,000 to get the service working. New lighting will have to be installed also. They plan to start in the fall of 2011, as soon as they close on the purchase. They are now in Phase 2 of the environment analysis involving probes into the soil as the yard has been used for many different purposes: the Chicago Northwestern tracks went through the site and there may be railroad ties underground, which must be disposed of properly. They have their all of their contractors lined up. Their expansion will accommodate a new, state of the art piece of equipment. Without the space, they have no room for this piece of equipment. Mr. Ward explained that a new
stamping press can be bought for $100,000 with so many businesses closing, but their new stamping press cost $800,000 because of its totally programmable advanced technology, and circuit driven high torque motor. It is the only one like it in the United States. They have a large project with Caterpillar, for which this equipment is needed.

They will be hiring press operators, material managers, quality inspectors and tool and dye makers. Their tool and dye maker has been with them 40 years. Their grandfather started the business on Southport in Chicago for the first 5 to 10 years. Years after moving to Evanston, they purchased a $1.5 million piece of machinery which forced them to lease property outside of Evanston.

Chair Wynne said she and Ald. Jean-Baptiste toured Ward Manufacturing’s industrial space and it is extraordinary.

Ms. Nyden explained that the remainder of funds in the Southwest Evanston TIF, which will expire in 2015, is $1 million. The Ward’s cost for building out 2222 Main Street including the slab, rebuilding the loading dock to accommodate the change in the slab floor, electric, plumbing, making it more energy efficient, is $700,000. It will be up to the Committee to recommend to City Council what portion of the fund balance they want to use to support their renovation.

The Committee discussed the wisdom of keeping Ward Manufacturing in Evanston, such as eliminating the blight of the empty lot and the graffiti and using the TIF fund money, which will be lost to Evanston if it is not used.

The Committee voted unanimously 8-0 to recommend approval funding $700,000 of TIF funds to Ward Manufacturing.

V. Discuss and Consider Downtown Evanston (EvMark) Budget and Annual Request for Budget Contribution

Carolyn Delutri presented Downtown Evanston’s request for the annual budget contribution of $90,309; $20,000 less than last year. She presented designs for the new directory which will include arts and theaters, the Spin to Win Program, brochures, gift cards and a coupon book. They are launching the gift card program in the downtown district for sale between Thanksgiving and the 1st of December. The gift card is a private label mastercard which can be sold by any downtown business in increments of $5.00 to $500 and they are working with Rickey Voss to have the gift cards usable for parking. The passport program is a booklet to be carried which contains special offers. This year there will be 200 posters on the El, CTA buses and the Metra promoting downtown Evanston. They are also advertising the park free holiday parking program. She noted that the holiday tree lighting is on Tuesday, November 24th. Ms. Delutri reported that 53 businesses participated in the banner program for 105 banners. They had done extensive research on banner companies and the banners are holding up well. She announced that the Christmas decorations will be installed in the next few weeks. Ms. Delutri also noted that Downtown Evanston keeps an available retail space database on their website. They are continuing to work on the Varsity Theater, about which more will be known in February.
Regarding maintenance, Ms. Delutri said this year they will include recycling containers next to the regular trash containers, at Suzette Robinson’s request, so they will need money for the pickup of materials to be recycled. The maintenance contract with Brickman will be for only 10 months as Downtown Evanston transitions into the new fiscal year along with the City. She explained the difference between this year’s and last year’s maintenance contract and the budget request. Mr. Lyons explained why the SSA is no longer included in the budget.

**The Committee voted unanimously 8-0 to recommend approval of the budget request.**

The Committee commended Downtown Evanston for their work. Ms. Delutri thanked the Committee.

**VI. Discuss and Consider Changes to Scope of Façade Improvement Project at 1459-1463 Elmwood**

Ms. Nyden explained that the building at 1459-1463 Elmwood is directly across from the Police Station. The Economic Development Dept. has not gotten an approval letter to the owner who said his project may fall into spring because of the weather. He said the façade improvement is 90% finished but he will need to stain the clay tiles on the front of the building and will have more clay tiles made. He is not asking for additional money, but his request is that he get reimbursed because he is so close to finishing, but the completion has been delayed because he cannot paint because of the weather.

He is asking for an extension of time so some of the façade improvement will roll over from one fiscal year to the next.

**VII. Staff Update on the Business Advisory Center**

Mr. Lyons explained that he understands that this is a high priority project but that the update will be forthcoming as soon as possible and has been delayed because of absences and other obstacles.

**VIII. Communications**

A. Monthly Real Estate Transfer Tax Report, September 2010 (RETT Report)
B. Staff Status Reports

**IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbie Newman