ECOROMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 26, 2010
ROOM 2402 – 7:30 P.M.
LORRAINE H. MORTON CIVIC CENTER

Jean-Baptiste, Ald. Rainey, Ald. Tendam, Robert
Creamer, Seth Freeman, Raymond Zenkich

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Mennemeyer

PRESIDENT OFFICIAL: Ald. Wynne, Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Lehman Walker – Director, Community & Economic
Development Department, Johanna Nyden - Economic
Development Planner, Annette Logan - Economic Development
Planner, Marty Lyons - Assistant City Manager, Doug Gaynor –
Director City Operations, Grant Farrar – Corporation Counsel,

OTHERS PRESENT: Emily Brawley – Openlands, Susan Clarke – Grandmother
Park Initiative (GPI), Carolyn Dellutri – Downtown Evanston,
Jen Goldstein – Resident/ GPI, Adam Finlayson – Resident/ GPI, Paul Giddings – Chicago Dempster Merchants
Association, John Leinweber – Dr. Hill Business Association,
Diane Lupke – ECDC, Gay Riseborough – Resident/ GPI,
Marco Rodriguez – CMYK Media Group, Todd Ruppenthal –
Central Street Business Association, Michael Slater – Resident/ GPI, John Szostek – Main Street Merchants Association, and
various members of the public

I. CALL TO ORDER – Alderman Rainey called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm,
Chair Wynne was delayed at another City of Evanston meeting and would
arrive later.


ACTION TAKEN: Ald. Burrus moved approval, Ald. Grover seconded,
and Committee approved unanimously.
III. CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING REQUESTS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT FUNDS

Johanna Nyden gave a brief overview of the Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program and the applicants of the 2010 program. Ms. Nyden explained that the program has a $50,000 budget and each applicant has historically been capped at receiving $10,000. This year six applications totaled more than $56,000 in requests. As a result, every request was reduced to accommodate every applicant. Ald. Burrus asked what will be done in the future to make sure this program is better serving the business community and that economic development dollars were best utilized. She suggested looking at splitting capacity and programming activities like advertising and marketing from physical improvements and investments. Ald. Rainey said that she and Carolyn Dellutri of Downtown Evanston were in the process of developing a new grant application form that would address these issues. Ald. Rainey moved forward with allowing applicants to speak to the Committee in support of their projects.

Todd Ruppenthal spoke on behalf of Central Street Business Association’s application for funds to support efforts to conduct a marketing and advertising campaign for the “Small Shops” concept. Alderman Wynne joined the meeting during this presentation and assumed Chair duties.

The Committee agreed to wait until all applicants had presented before approving funding.

Paul Giddings spoke on behalf of the Chicago-Dempster Merchants Association’s application for funds to support the annual sidewalk sale, planters, and website development. During his presentation, he pointed out concerns regarding the movement of businesses from west of the CTA/Metra tracks to east of the tracks and the poor condition of the viaducts.

Marco Rodriguez spoke on behalf of CMYK Media Group representing the advertising activities of all business districts in Evanston. Requested funds would develop the Shop Evanston magazine detailing information on retail, business, and entertainment in the area. He requested an additional $2,700 in financial support in addition to the $9,000 staff recommendation to support a direct mail campaign. Several Aldermen suggested that he expand marketing and advertising efforts outside of Evanston to capture neighboring community’s dollars.

John Leinweber spoke on behalf of the Dr. Hill Business Association. He requested funds for planters and expenses incurred in the past two years for the installation of a new sculpture in the business district. Ald. Rainey noted the significant number of sidewalks in disrepair in the neighborhood. Mr. Leinweber explained that this community lacked funds to engage in the 50/50 sidewalk program. Ald. Rainey said she thought the disrepair was significant enough to warrant Suzette Robinson to review and replace. She indicated she was forwarding the pictures of the conditions to Ms. Robinson. Ald.
Grover also noted that the poor condition of the sidewalks was also an issue of access for students walking to Kingsley Elementary School or Haven Middle School.

Diane Lupke spoke on behalf of the application from Church/Dodge Merchants Association and Evanston Community Development Corporation. This group requested funds to support the development of a website for Church/Dodge Merchants, and advertising for the West End Market and businesses. Ald. Burrus recommended extending the marketing and advertising of the West Side businesses to outside of the neighborhood to attract dollars from other parts of Evanston.

John Szostek spoke on behalf of the Main Street Merchants Association. This organization requested funds to support the partial salary of a marketing director, the development of a coupon book, and other marketing and advertising activities. He explained that this small grant amount allowed the Main Street Merchants Association to engage in additional and more expansive activities. He cited the potential to landscape the Main Street Metra Station embankment as an example.

Ald. Grover requested that staff and the business districts provide some kind of check-in or report-back later in the year to share what had worked and what had not worked for business districts in marketing, advertising, and revitalization efforts. Ald. Wynne directed staff to follow-up on this. Staff agreed.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Alderman Jean-Baptiste moved approval of staff recommendations for business district activities and funding. Ald. Burrus seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**IV. GRANDMOTHER PARK INITIATIVE – PROPOSAL TO TURN 1125 DEWEY INTO A TOT LOT**

Marty Lyons explained that the City had reviewed previous months’ discussion of this item and the Grandmother Park Initiative’s proposal. He pointed out that there were some different opinions on cost, commitment, and timing of funds from the City.

Ald. Burrus asked Mr. Lyons and Mr. Gaynor if the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Robert Crown Community Center and Ice Complex Redevelopment had included a plan for a tot lot. She suggested that the City’s investment could go towards the construction of a tot lot today instead of postponing tot lot development until the neighborhood group had arranged for funding.

Ald. Jean-Baptiste stated that a new Robert Crown Complex may not be developed for ten years and that the community had taken the initiative to develop this proposal and that it should be considered at this time. Mr.
Gaynor said that there is space today at Robert Crown to accommodate the development of a tot lot.

Ald. Rainey stated she was concerned about the removal of property from the tax rolls.

Emy Brawley, from Openlands provided the Committee with information on their role in the project. She stated that they would purchase the property, hold it for up to three years while the neighborhood group raised funds, and provide support to the neighborhood group in leveraging funds to develop the site as a park.

Ald. Burrus asked the neighborhood group how they planned to fundraise for the tot lot. Suzanne Clark from the GPI indicated that she had successful experience fundraising in her career and that tot lot fundraising would also be successful.

Mr. Lyons requested clarification from Openlands on what type of commitment the City would have to make to support this project to allow Openlands to move forward with closing on the property. Ms. Brawley indicated that the Openlands’ Board’s approval was contingent on a commitment from Evanston that the funding had been allocated for this project.

Additional discussion and clarification occurred in regards to the requirements of submitting and obtaining funding through an OSLAD grant.

**ACTION TAKEN:** Ald. Jean-Baptiste moved approval of conditional City funds up to $50,000 to support the Grandmother Park Initiative and the tot lot. Ald. Tendam seconded motion. The motion was approved 9 yahs, 1 nay. Ald. Burrus voted nay. The motion was approved.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The remaining items were continued to next month’s meeting. Chair Wynne moved adjournment, Ald. Grover seconded. The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

### NEXT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: June 23, 2010

Respectfully Submitted,

*Johanna Nyden*  
*Economic Development Planner*