Planning & Development Committee Meeting
Minutes of March 24, 2014 – 7:15 p.m.
Council Chambers - Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center


MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Tendam

STAFF PRESENT: M. Masoncup, M. Muenzer, B. Newman, C. Plante

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Wynne

I. DECLARATION OF QUORUM
A quorum being present, Chair Wynne called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2014


The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to approve the February 10, 2014 minutes.

III. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(P1) Ordinance 36-O-14, Granting a Special Use for Commercial Indoor Recreation and a Drive Through Facility, Little Beans Cafe, at 430 Asbury Avenue

The Zoning Board of Appeals and City staff recommend the adoption of Ordinance 36-O-14 granting a special use permit for Commercial Indoor Recreation and a Drive Through Facility, Little Beans Cafe, at 430 Asbury Avenue. The applicant has complied with all zoning requirements, and meets all of the standards for a special use in the B2 Business District. The applicant requests suspension of the Rules for Introduction and Action on March 24, 2014.

For Introduction and Action

Ald. Rainey moved to recommend suspension of the rules to introduce and approval of Ordinance 36-O-14, seconded by Ald. Grover.

Ald. Rainey noted that this is the “infamous” corner of Asbury and Oakton which has been vacant for years, since CVS purchased Osco and she, Ald. Burrus and City staff have worked tirelessly to have it filled by the right use. Little Beans called the City unexpectedly about the site. She said the applicant is asking for suspension of the rules and she hopes the Committee
will be in support. She said the application has been through ZBA and met all the criteria.

**Chair Wynne called the public who wished to speak to the podium.**

Betty Ester of 2031 Church St., Evanston said she is asking for her granddaughter what kind of indoor recreation facility they are putting near Oakton School that they couldn’t have before.

Ald. Rainey explained that it is a café with a children’s recreation space. There will be no recreation for adults. You do not have to have children to utilize the café. There will be drive-through coffee service and the food will be mostly cold sandwiches and pastries. The recreation will be segmented for different types of play: quiet, reading, large motor and small motor skills, etc. There will be a charge for the children to use the recreation area and unlike the Little Beans in Chicago; this one will have an additional recreation area for “Big Beans” or children up to age 12. Ald. Rainey believes there will be a half court basketball court (not a full court).

Ms. Ester said since it is for up to age 12, she will tell her teenage granddaughter it is not for her. Ald. Rainey said the City is working on something for teens.

**The Committee voted by unanimously 6-0 to recommend introduction and suspension of the rules and approval of Ordinance 36-O-14.**

Ald. Rainey added that while the City had nothing to do with attracting this user, the place was empty when this great use came along because the City managed to not lease to less feasible uses.

**(P2) Ordinance 32-O-14, Granting Special Use for a Planned Development at 835 Chicago Avenue (Chicago and Main)**

The Plan Commission and City staff recommend the adoption of Ordinance 32-O-14, granting Planned Development approval to construct a nine-story mixed use commercial, office, and residential building at the southeast corner of Chicago Avenue and Main Street, commonly known as 835 Chicago Avenue.

**For Introduction**


**Chair Wynne called the developer to the podium for a presentation.**

Patrick Thompson, attorney representing applicant of Burke, Warren, MacKay & Serritella, P.C., introduced:

John O’Donnell and Jeff Clark - O’Donnell Investment
Don Copper and Ryan von Drehle - GREC Architects
Luay Aboona – KLOA Traffic Consultants
Scott Bernstein - The Center for Neighborhood Technology
Richard Aaronson - Atlantic Realty Partners, who will be the property manager

Mr. Thompson said they have been in community meetings with Alderman Wynne and SPAARC meetings in December and January, as well as a Plan Commission hearing February 12th, which was continued to February 26th, at which time the Plan Commission approved the project. He asked that the transcript from the Plan Commission hearing of February 12th and 26th be incorporated into record of the current proceeding. Chair Wynne assured him that it is in the packet. Mr. Thompson thanked the City of Evanston, Mark Muenzer and Melissa Klotz for working closely with the City officials, the traffic engineer and members of the Plan Commission to help them to present what they believe is a fabulous project. He asked Mr. Copper, the architect to give a description of the project.

Mr. Copper thanked the Committee and explained that the site is in close proximity to the Metra and CTA stops, making it a prime location for transit oriented development (TOD). He presented PowerPoint presentation:

- Photos of the existing context
- The currently vacant site of the proposal
- 35,000 sq. ft.
- Showed views from all directions
- Rendering of the 9 story project
- Illustration of the “contemporary design with high quality materials that relate to the existing buildings in the neighborhood”
- Materials:
  - Brick masonry
  - Stone and terra cotta base
  - Great deal of glass for residents’ visibility
  - Glass on 2nd floor incubator office space and tenant amenities
- Grade level to be primarily retail
- Parking: majority is 1 level below grade with a number of ground floor spaces as well as the opportunity to expand with tandem and mechanical lift parking on west side
- Area & site plan illustrating compliance with the Chicago Avenue Streetscape setback requirement, which widens the sidewalk, allowing them to provide new landscaping, enhancing the pedestrian experience
- Main Street existing sidewalk is 14’ wide; they will be adding considerable landscaping to the Main Street side
- Worked very closely with City agencies on vehicular circulation to minimize impact on local auto and pedestrian circulation
- Grade level along Main and most of Chicago: retail
- Corner is the building’s lease office
- Residential entry lobby on Main St.
- Multi-use parking on south half of building, ground floor
- Loading: 2 berths off alley
- Right turn only egress from parking lot onto Chicago Ave.
• Widening alley by setting building back 10’ on alley side
• Moving existing power lines and poles underground at developer’s expense
• Landscaping to include shade trees and low perennial plantings in planters along sidewalk
• 2nd level plan: offices and indoor amenities directly adjacent to outdoor amenity deck, created by setting back east side of building from Main Street, to reduce the street wall effect along Main St.
• Landscaping on amenity deck will be visible from the Chicago Ave. as well as Main St. when it is mature
• Levels 3-9 residential; 16 units each with studios, 1-bedrooms, 2-bedrooms and one 3-bedroom unit on each floor
• Elevations indicating height of proposed development in relation to surrounding buildings:
  o West from Chicago: proposed maximum height is 97’; existing 105’ 9-story building directly north, across Main St.
  o East, fronting alley: continue quality of materials that are along the retail side in order to eliminate “service” look
  o South: will not be visible because there is an existing building directly south
  o North: glassy retail storefronts with canopies and lighting
  o North: 2nd level deck, 20’+ above grade level
• Rendering of the block looking north with the building stitched into the photograph, illustrating the building relating to the existing neighborhood
• Illustration of the setback on Chicago Ave.
• Illustration of the Main St. view with the mature trees on the 2nd floor outdoor amenity area
• East side of building is set back significantly in order to not impose on Main St.
• Creating enhanced landscaping on street level of Main St. as well

Chair Wynne asked for detail about the alley corner
• Per suggestions made at community meetings, they have created a 5’ – 7’ setback at alley with a glassy corner to mitigate any alley vehicular conflicts with pedestrians on Main St.

At Ald. Fiske’s inquiry, Mr. Copper said the trees on the amenity deck will be in pre-cast planters, which are usually 3’ deep; the species have not yet been specified. Mr. Copper will get back to Ald. Fiske regarding the species.

Mr. Copper presented a rendering of the building at night with lighting showing how the grade level will light the sidewalk from within, but also supplementing the façade with lighting that will be inviting and secure.

C1A Planned Development allowances applied for:
• 112 dwelling units vs. allowable 122
• F.A.R. 4.86 vs. PD allowable of 5.5
• Maximum allowable height of 97’; proposing 97’
• 15' allowance for setback for enclosed parking, which will not be visible from the local sidewalks; 15' allowed
• Loading: 2 loading berths (which they think more than adequate because none of the uses are very large) plus a dedicated berth for waste pickup, 25' deep within the building (plus the 10' setback, which accommodates the 35' setback) vs. the 5 loading berths, 10' X 35' deep, required by the zoning ordinance because of the number uses in the building, regardless of the size of the uses

Mr. Aboona, traffic consultant with KLOA reported that he worked very closely with the City’s traffic engineering staff to develop an access plan that is workable for the project as well as minimizing impact on the street system. He presented a slide that illustrated right turn only egress on Chicago Avenue to minimize impact on traffic and pedestrians, given the proximity to the signal at Chicago and Main Streets. There will be stop sign control and signage designating “No Left Turn Out” and a sign facing Chicago Avenue stating “Do Not Enter” and striping to force people to make a right hand turn onto the street. The rest of the access will be off the alley for the garage access and loading docks. The building will be set back an additional 10' to provide additional area for truck maneuvers as well as vehicular maneuvers. The corner of the building will also be set back to improve the sight lines as vehicles are exiting the alley onto Main Street. As part of the traffic study, they reviewed area traffic at the intersections of Chicago and Main and Chicago and Kedzie and they took a count of alley traffic. They concluded:
• As this is a transit oriented development (TOD) in close proximity to major train stations and bus lines and downtown Evanston, much of the traffic will be reduced during peak hours as more people will be seeking alternative modes of transportation, so they concluded that the development will not have significant impact on the roadway system
• The intersections will continue to operate at acceptable service levels; they are eliminating the first 4 parking spaces south of Main, on the east side of Chicago Avenue in order to provide a northbound right turn lane mirroring the one that exists on the north side of Main Street, southbound, to improve the flow of traffic
• Alley will be able to accommodate the limited amount of new traffic generated by the development, both vehicular and truck; considering the count they took, they believe alley traffic is not significant, averaging one car every two minutes
• Alley access will reduce traffic on Chicago Avenue and pedestrian conflict

Scott Bernstein, President of the Center for Neighborhood Technology in Chicago and a resident of 917 Elmwood, a couple blocks west of the development, said his organization has some expertise in measuring the effectiveness of TOD, around not only the region, but the country. He said, for the record, that they were not paid for this testimony. He said:
• The national trend in TOD is being driven by the national trend in driving, which in turn are being driven by the changing demographics of the population.
They are seeing a slow shrinking in the number of people per household and a drop in the demand for home ownership and an increase in the demand for rental housing, resulting in fewer people per household, fewer cars per household and fewer vehicle miles traveled per household per year.

Hundreds of jurisdictions across the country have responded by in effect down zoning their minimum parking requirements, typically by 25-50%, although in San Francisco you can now build a building without parking, by right and apply to put some spaces back in, if desired.

In Portland 13 buildings have been built without parking and in Chicago at Division, Ashland and Milwaukee a 99 unit building was successfully built and leased up without parking, which they believe was further enhanced by the presence of both the CTA and car-sharing, similar to the development proposed at Chicago and Main.

Chicago and Main is one of the very few locations where both the CTA and Metra come together. Evanston is fortunate in having its own train line and 2 Evanston stops have those shared commuter and rapid transit service plus the associated Pace bus routes and the Northwestern University shuttle and the bike lane.

They measured current car ownership around the Main St. station and found:

- Within a half mile of the 2 stations, households own an average of 1.28 vehicles within a quarter of a mile, the number drops to 1.17
- Within that quarter of a mile, there are 861 renters and 25% have no car at all
- 70% of the half mile radius households have only 0 or 1 vehicle
- Within a quarter mile, owners have 1.8 cars per household and renters have less than 1 or 0.93 vehicles per household

From 2000 to 2009, the percentage of commuters who walk, bike or take transit to work increased from 30-33% or 10%

City-wide, Evanston is unique among suburbs in that over half of all commuters do not drive to work alone. He said the number who carpool, take transit, walk or bike illustrates the effects of the trend.

At Chair Wynne’s inquiry, Mr. Bernstein provided the source of his data: car ownership and commuting were measured in the Annual American Community Survey of the census. The most recent release covered the 2008 -2012 level down to the census block group, and these numbers come very close to vehicle registration data, when they are allowed to sample it from time to time, from the State of Illinois, of course considering that not everyone registers a car.

Mr. Bernstein continued:

- From 2000 to 2012, the number of zero car households in Evanston jumped from 946 to 3400 even though total households declined by 2,000
- This trend is anticipated to continue, both for the younger generation and for people in their 60's and people who are older are driving less as well
- They expect these trends to be reinforced due to the rising cost of driving
Mr. Bernstein said his company operated the I-Go car service for 10 years and sold it last year to Enterprise Holdings. They found that:

- Every car they put out there was used, on average, by 37 households
- Surveys taken every year over a 4 year period revealed that roughly half of their members sold a car within a year of joining I-Go; every I-Go car put out there was taking 17 cars off the road.
- These statistics were irrespective of the income of the community
- ZipCar did a similar survey that showed they are taking 15 cars off the road
- They also found associated with car sharing, was a change in behavior: people would make a rational decision to use the CTA or Metra or carpooling for their journey to work, which is 1 trip out of 5 taken in Evanston, and the other 4 trips out of 5 are for going to school, shopping, eating, medical services, visiting friends, or going to or from a house of worship
- They use the car for the short-distance trips and save 10-15% on their cost of living as a result, which is an important reinforcement
- They increase their walking, biking and increase their sharing of shared cars
- There are fewer cars out there because of car sharing services and fewer cars out there for the longer distance journey to work because of commuting, this is what results in a lower demand for parking overall, and the data shows it is even better for renters than for owners.

Mr. Bernstein concluded that Evanston is very fortunate to have a legacy transit system, to have an urban design that supports walking, to allow for mixed use development and all these factors reinforce each other. So if the opportunity arises to reduce an inefficient use of land in favor of an efficient one and to provide more transportation options for the surrounding neighbor every time one of the parking down-zoning decisions are made, we see that as providing a net community benefit. He said they would be happy to offer the perspectives to the City on a continuing basis. Mr. Bernstein offered to answer any questions.

Ald. Grover asked Mr. Bernstein, regarding his comment that the development is responding to the TOD trends, which dictate a lower demand for cars, whether the building itself could contribute to its own success as a TOD by promoting and supporting TOD besides through car-sharing and providing bicycle infrastructure, because it is taking the public a little longer to get used to the idea of down-zoning for parking. She said she is looking for this building to ramp up amenities that would serve residents so that they do indeed, self select this building because they are not looking to acquire a car or are perhaps looking to downsize their car acquisition. Mr. Bernstein replied that there are examples here and around the country that reinforce the message; they can give local traffic reports within the building, which are easy to get on demand currently; offices in Wicker Park have utilized the CTA’s closed channel to share in train tracking and bus tracking. One coffee shop has an oversized LCD screen for public use showing when the next couple of buses are coming in each direction, a very low cost way of increasing access to real
time information that reinforces public transit use. He said he has found buildings that have services that counsel tenants on how to schedule their time to use the trains effectively, how to share a car and how to set up a carpool but unfortunately, government cannot do everything. He said it should encourage building owners to provide these services, but where the services exist and they are very low cost, they can help. The shared cars are a community amenity wherever they are and the more of them that the developer provides, the more actual transportation choice will be available to the community. Ald. Grover confirmed with him that the shared cars will be a community amenity, not just a building amenity and that the car shares are serving more than just the residents. Mr. Bernstein said there are new apps, Spot Hero and Park Circa that allow people to let others know that their leased spaces are available for a relatively moderate price – $2-$4 for 12 hours of parking. He said he believes it would be a smart move of the City to encourage those sorts of applications. The more reinforcements you can provide similar to these, the more likely it is that they will use them.

Mr. Bernstein said they are experimenting with home economics at the high school level, which was created originally to counsel people on how to lower their cost of living. Driver’s Ed teaches people how to buy a car responsibly, but it doesn’t teach people how to avoid the unnecessary expense of driving; they need to be cognizant of that. He said these are things that could reasonably be expected of a responsible building owner. They’ll find the demand for those extra services such as car sharing, increases their willingness to support those services.

Richard Aaronson, co-founder and principal of Atlantic Realty Partners, who will be the operating partner for the project, said they have over 10 years of experience in Evanston, developing and managing multi-family projects such as The Reserve and the Sienna condo final phases. They are delighted that the O’Donnell Company has selected them to participate in this project. He addressed Ald. Grover saying he appreciated her comment, which is relevant their experience in Evanston as it relates to the specific marketing, demographics and parking related to the proposal. He thanked Mr. Bernstein for his comments, most importantly, as they relate to building a resident profile that is oriented towards utilization of transit. They are marketing to that consumer on the modes of transportation and on various websites that are associated with commuting, in addition to using conventional marketing channels for housing. Their business is indirectly a retail business as they are constantly marketing and selling their product, which is different from a condo building where it is a one-time sale process. He said it will be a key differentiator that this site is one of the few that benefits from both a Metra and a CTA stop. Based on their experience, their demographic will continue to be the primary demographic of most new multi-family projects in the Chicago area: younger singles, younger couples and roommates. They have found that 50% of singles have a car, couples and roommates typically have 1 car and they have found Evanston to be a great market for dual income households such as roommates or couples where one is commuting without a
car, one with. They have a number of smaller families, in many cases single parent families with one car; empty nesters, a growing type of resident of their developments who typically have 1 car and typically it would be graduate students at this distance from NWU, of which 20% have cars. They will be offering incentives to attract and encourage transit utilization such as bike storage, the provision of transit passes and free membership in their car-sharing program.

Regarding parking, they have collected data reflecting the number of parking spaces being used in their buildings that are reasonably close to transit, which shows that .85 parking spaces are being used at The Reserve and 1.01 spaces are being used at AMLI (based on the 145 occupied units of the 195 leased).

Regarding parking, Mr. Aaronson said:
- The lower level has approximately 76 single stalls which will be available on a permit/open parking basis
- Assigned parking in the dual spaces
- The open/permit parking will allow them the benefit of using the spaces as swing spaces for office users
- They expect to offset 15-25 spaces with office parking while residents are at work, so it is a perfect co-activity, addressing the residence and office parking needs
- On the main level, there will be 13 dedicated retail spaces, 2 car-share spaces and 15 additional retail/residential spaces, similar to the office/swing spaces, vacated during the day by people that are working
- They have a 50-bike room with the ability to expand it, depending on use
- Because of the size of the property and the multiple uses, and because they have an ongoing marketing and leasing function, they will keep full time staff, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, comprehensively managing the parking
- They will use an access control key system that will allow management to control access to the lower level
- Appropriate signage and other markings will indicate the other retail and shared parking areas
- An available lift could be installed at one end of the lower level of the parking garage. He said they have had a lot of interest in it and there is a building being proposed in the west loop that is 100% hydraulic, actuated parking on 3 levels, so he believes there is a trend toward it
- They are confident and comfortable with the lift product.

John O'Donnell, of the sponsorship group, said they are very pleased for the opportunity to work on this extraordinary site and opportunity. He said Evanston is unique as a North Shore community in that it blends the feeling of a Wrigleyville neighborhood with the benefits of the North Shore and the transportation characteristic is the best in terms of developing a TOD. They have had the good fortune of working with the City and staff for almost 4 years to plan the very best building for the site, and that is their goal. The mixed use
provides a number of opportunities: not only can it minimize parking but there is a shared parking element that allows counter-cyclical parking uses to minimize traffic congestion as well as parking needs. They believe the design is very contemporary using classical materials in context with the neighborhood. He said they used a design they saw in Manhattan condos in New York. He noted that the below grade parking they are putting in is much more expensive, but much more aesthetically appealing and works well with this site. They are hoping to enhance the pedestrian experience with landscaping, tying into the Chicago Avenue Streetscape Plan. The building will be LEED silver, over and above the transportation attempt to minimize a carbon footprint. He said, regarding the demographic, that they are trying to create a building marketed to a person with motivations congruent with theirs: predominantly young professional couples who may currently live in the Chicago and may be giving up their cars, which they want to enable them to do, and to empty nesters. Their plan will subsidize the use of public transportation. They did add 23 parking spaces in response to the Plan Commission’s concerns for parking and elaborated on their shared parking concept. They have minimized the curb cut on Chicago Avenue in response to staff’s traffic concerns. They applied with the City for a state grant for ultra high speed internet, which will benefit their property, the City and Northwestern University, with whom they are co-applicants, plus a minimum of 1,000 households in the vicinity.

They have discussed with staff several public benefits:
- Setback, hardscape and landscape improvements
- Hiring Evanston residents to make sure they are well-represented
- Paying the City a perpetual payment upfront for the replacement of 4 parking revenue meters;
- Will pay for the use of some parking spaces during construction, as necessary
- Relocating utilities below grade, eliminating utility poles, which will enhance alley traffic
- Discussed contributing up to $50,000 to enhance the park that is intended to go across the street
- Will comply with the affordable housing fund in the event that the project ever goes to condominium

He thanked the Committee for their consideration.

Ald. Fiske asked whether the retail parking in the building would be metered and how they will keep tenants from parking in the retail parking area, and whether the entrance to the retail parking is where the four meters are. Mr. Aaronson replied that the turn lane is what will replace the area of the four parking meters. He said through signage, 30 or 60 minute parking monitored by staff marking cars or placing notes on cars, they will prevent people from parking. He said typically they do not like to boot or tow, but sometimes they must. Typically it is a process of making sure everyone understands that the
policy is going to be enforced and once they start enforcing it, people are forced to comply if it is managed well, and it will be.

At Ald. Fiske’s inquiry, Mr. Muenzer said the payment for the removal of the spaces is being negotiated but it currently stands at a one time payment of $72,000. Ald. Fiske asked Mr. O’Donnell whether he considered allowing the City to put parking meters in the retail spots, to which he replied that they have not considered it because they try to have a signage program, but that they will. Ald. Fiske said she suggested it because it would be a way to keep the spaces clear to benefit the retail tenants.

Ald. Rainey commented that of the entire project, parking is the weakest piece. She said you can’t control it if you’re not law enforcement unless you call for towing or have a private towing or booting service. She said she believes Ald. Fiske’s idea is great because it would save the project $72,000 if they would just trade the spaces on Chicago Avenue for meters. She suggested they think about it. The issue with the 4 meters is that anyone could use them but that is what is going to happen with the other spaces that have no meters.

Mr. O’Donnell said he had not thought of that and he would like to consider it.

Chair Wynne called the public who wished to speak, to the podium.

Niki Hiltwein of 820 Hinman said she is down the alley about half a block from 835 Chicago. She said the developer’s presentation has changed since the Plan Commission meeting and she would like to reconsider and address her new issues at a future time. Chair Wynne said she would have another opportunity to present.

Ms. Hiltwein explained that the corner of Main & Chicago is an established neighborhood with businesses and residents: the alley is where they co-exist and this is where C1A meets residential. She showed slides and illustrated:

- The northeast corner of the alley where their stairwell enclosure will be, adjacent to the lot line, 40’ long by 20’ high
- Directly across the alley are 5 dumpsters, 4’ X 6’ each equaling 30’, plus one rollaway cart adding a couple of feet, serving the entire Evanshire Building; not all Lucky Platter Restaurant dumpsters
- Garbage is picked up 6 days a week
- A slide showed the alley with a garbage truck, illustrating the amount of clearance on the side of the garbage truck. Ms. Hiltwein said the utility poles are adjacent to the lot line
- Ms. Hiltwein noted that the 10’ setback they have said they are giving the City is required by zoning law because they are across from residential
- Lucky Platter at the end is still C1A, so there is no mandatory 10’ setback
- Ms. Hiltwein showed slides illustrating the uses generated by Lucky Platter and others in that building, which houses 2 very successful restaurants that use that alley, including a big Sisco Foods semi that will be parked there and deliveries of beverages, wine, restaurant supplies and linens
• Ms. Hiltwein said all of the photos were taken in the week before the February 26th Plan Commission meeting. She did not stand outside looking for photo opportunities as it was bitterly cold and there was a great deal of snow. She said she just had a camera in her pocket when she went outside. She did not stage any of the photos - it is just a week’s worth of traffic.

• Slides illustrated that it is not just trucks and cars, but there are pedestrians, bicycle riders, dogs and cars all going through the very busy alley at once

• A slide further south in the alley, illustrated cars trying to pass each other in the alley with more pedestrians and FedEx, UPS delivery trucks and workmen’s vehicles

• A slide of a garbage truck on the south end of the alley blocking a garbage truck on the north end of the alley and 2 cars trying to exit the alley, in which case one of the garbage trucks backed up to allow passage.

Ald. Rainey said she could see where there can be conflict. She is on an all residential single family street and they have conflicts in their alley. But, she said, this is why we have alleys – so we can have deliveries and garbage pickup and garages off the residential and main street. She said she is seeing some conflict and garbage pickup in the alley, but patience is a virtue and her main concern is why the dumpsters are so full. She said if they are emptied 6 days a week she thinks the Community Development Dept. should probably look into that. Ald. Rainey said the snow in the photos is not there year round and she does not see the presentation as a real negative.

Chair Wynne said she has asked staff to do a sources and uses analysis of the alley to find out whether some of these dumpsters are supposed to be elsewhere, and maybe the ones near the Evanshire have come onto the west side because the lot has been vacant. She has asked staff to find out ways that, through enforcement, the City can improve how this alley works. She said it may be that there are issues that have gradually encroached on the alley and made it more difficult, but there is no question that this alley functions as everything: street, loading berth, alley and delivery area.

Ald. Holmes suggested that the garbage was very full because of weather problems, to which Ms. Hiltwein replied that unfortunately the garbage is that full most of the time. Ald. Rainey said it shouldn’t be and it is very objectionable and she is more concerned about the garbage than the traffic. Chair Wynne said the City Manager and staff are doing this analysis to figure out what the City should do to make this alley work better and will be reporting back at the next meeting.

Ms. Hiltwein concluded that she was illustrating that there is no room, because the wall sits at the lot line, for anyone to pass a truck, or anything else. This end of the alley is the only entrance and loading dock area for the Presidential, with 120 units. Chair Wynne thanked her.
Michael McElwee of 515 Main Street thanked the Committee for the process and he said he liked the developer’s presentation, which he has seen several times. He said he believes the main issue is parking because it seems that some assumptions are being made regarding the proximity to transportation. He said any apartment in that location, if they just did a couple of extra things, would achieve Silver LEED. He said he understands there are 99 spots and the code says normally 146-150 would be required, so they are asking for a shortfall of about 50 spots and on top of that, in the credit for the 100 spots they are providing, they make an assumption that some of the retail spots will be offered up as residential in off hours. He asked, if they go to the meters, whether it will prevent that from happening and whether if some of the retail spots on the first floor are restaurants, which are open fairly late, the people who work at the restaurants will need to park there all day. He said he was happy to hear that more parking was added as a result of the last town hall meeting but he found “the opportunity for hydraulic spots to be provided, as needed”, confusing. He asked whether it means they will be installed if people need an extra spot, because once the project is permitted, what is going to enforce them to add the extra hydraulic spots “as needed.” He saw in the slide a list of other things that are under consideration for adding to the building, but again, once all the permitting is given for the building and he understands that people are trying to make money and he does not begrudge them the opportunity to make it, but, he asked, if there are things they are just considering that will cost them money, why would they do them? Chair Wynne explained that the current process is to determine what will be required to be done.

Carl Bova of 1322 Rosalie Street, said he lives very close to a building that does not have any appreciable amount of parking, however they do have off-street parking available to them across the street, which the residents choose not to use. He had distributed a photo of the street to the Committee members. He said it is a quality of life issue whenever there is spillover. He said he would like to open the discussion by indicating to the public that he has a 4-page series of notes related to the subject. Chair Wynne asked that he limit the time of his presentation, to which Mr. Bova replied that others have been given the same opportunities to speak and he would like to continue but will take that into consideration. Mr. Bova pointed out that Portland and San Francisco are widely different from Evanston and cannot be compared to Evanston with respect to anything related to the use of automobiles. In addition, Evanston has about 45,000 cars and has had 45,000 cars for about the last 8 years. There has been no reduction in the number of cars in Evanston. No one is selling their cars; at most, people are going possibly from 2 cars to 1, but not to zero, and he said he heard a great deal of zeros in the presentation. Mr. Bova continued saying the single greatest difference between Evanston and Portland is that Portland sits, since 1973, in what is called an urban growth boundary. No development is allowed beyond the boundary of the county, centralizing all the development and employment and makes actual use of transit real. That is not the case in Evanston; people continue to use their cars to get to work and at best, if not using them, they
need to be stored somewhere. Mr. Bova said an advocate and City staff made the assertion that 12% of Evanstonians own zero cars and 66% own zero or one car, and tonight he heard that figure jumped up to 70%. He said when asked, the advocate did not know how many people owned one or two cars, nor is staff revealing that. Mr. Bova said, based on the U.S. census, 78% of Evanston households own 1 or 2 cars. He asked whether the Committee thought there would be one car per unit and said he does not think so.

Mr. Bova said tandem and lifts are simply not effective and used only the densest areas under adverse economic conditions, such as in downtown Chicago and Manhattan, and not Evanston. In addition, the one that is included in the plans does not even work because it isn't high enough to work: SUV’s and ordinary sedans cannot fit in a 2-stall arrangement the way it is shown on the plans. He added that tandem spaces don’t work either.

Mr. Bova said the number of cars per unit is not the measure of acceptance. He said at the Plan Commission meeting, staff prepared a document that identified the number of bedrooms and the parking stalls provided. This document did not make it into the Committee’s packet, nor has it ever been seen by the public. The problem is that the number of stalls per unit is not accurate with respect to how the development is or is not meeting code. Code determines the required parking stalls by assessing the number of stalls per bedroom, not the number of units, so it is logical that the 2 or 3 bedroom units, which are fairly significant in number, are very likely to have 1 or more cars, which is recognized by the code. Since this development does have a very high percentage of 2 or 3 bedroom units, it is even more likely that this development will be dreadfully insufficient with respect to onsite parking. Further, he said, also not included in the packet is the fact that City owned parking lots in this area are over capacity and have waiting lists, so spillover, as the photo may indicate, will occur, and there will be definite adverse effects caused by that spillover, to the neighboring community.

Mr. Bova continued: Staff's memo also includes 8 comparative developments that seemingly support a finding of fewer stalls, as the applicant proposes, versus the need for more stalls, as Mr. Bova contends. The table contains 5 examples where the developments are close to public garages, and therefore that consideration was made when those lesser numbers of parking stalls were permitted by the City. A 6th example, Central Station, has an agreement to use, Mr. Bova believes, 30 stalls at Ryan Field. When you add those 30 stalls, that development does not have a 1 to 1 parking ratio, but a 1.39 parking ratio. So 6 out of 8 do not meet that criteria, yet they are purported to be all great examples of where you would have a lesser need for parking.

Mr. Bova agrees that lesser need for parking is something that the City should be looking at and he is sure they are all tired of looking at the code, which definitely over estimates the number of stalls that should be required, but not to this drastically reduced effect. Mr. Bova said this is a dangerous situation. Staff itself identifies congestion as an issue but it dismisses it as minor in light
of I-Go cars and a TOD, which is not effective in Evanston because even though there have been 5,000 extra residents in the downtown area, use of public transit in the downtown station has not increased appreciably. It may work elsewhere, under different circumstances, but it is not the same here. People do have cars and they use them and store them on their property. He thanked the Committee. Chair Wynne thanked him.

Ester Hargitai of 515 Main Street thanked the Committee for the opportunity to comment and for the presentation and asked that the Committee consider her comments. She noted that the annual board meeting of 515 Main is occurring at the same time as this meeting and that is why there are few of its residents present, but she believes they represent the voice of more than those present. She said there was some cherry picking as to the information the developer shared, for example, the slides did not include data about 515 Main and their parking allocation, which would not make the development’s proposed parking ratio look good. She also asked the Committee to note that there were factual errors. For example, the AMLI building is directly across from an EL station, not 2 blocks from transit. She said she found it interesting that the developers contracted with a company for a traffic study, but the slide presented contained no data, so they were told lots of comments about how “this is not a problem” and “it is minimal” and “it is not going to affect anything,” but not shown any numbers of that study and the person presenting the information also made judgment calls about how it is not going to be a problem but didn’t share what those judgment calls were based upon. Clearly these are subjective issues. Chair Wynne said that City staff can provide Ms. Hargitai with the data that was used. Ms. Hargitai said she is glad that the data exists, but it wasn’t shown in the presentation. Ms. Hargitai said the developers say that they’ve added more parking spots since the last meeting but reminded the Committee that they are also removing four. Regarding the Northwestern shuttle, Ms. Hargitai said as an employee of NWU and someone who uses the shuttle on occasion, she knows that NWU is very specific on how those shuttles are not meant for commuters. They already run at capacity and she recently wrote to the office to request an increase in the number of shuttles because they are so full, when she was told they are not meant for commuters. She said they heard helpful data about national statistics but this is a very specific local issue and she does not believe there were results from a study done of actual local residents. For example, if they surveyed the residents of 515 Main, they would probably find that while many of them do take the EL and the Metra and some take the shuttle and walk, they nonetheless own cars and use their parking spots, which are very important. She added that, out of respect to residents who’d like to comment, if the Committee is going to ask that they limit their time, she thinks that in future meetings they should limit the development presenters’ time. Chair Wynne thanked her.

Heekyung Sung, an architect living at 1121 Church Street, distributed his presentation to the Committee and said since the building was proposed in February he has done some research after he attended the Plan Commission meeting. He found that 835 Chicago Avenue is in a C1A Zoning District, which
is the only C1A district in Evanston, extending along Chicago Avenue from Lee St. to South Blvd. He said the transportation consultant mentioned a ¼ mile as a TOD area and Mr. Sung measured a ¼ mile from the purple line station, which includes 900 Chicago Avenue, 515 Main Street and 835 Chicago Avenue, and the AMLI development, south of Kedzie Avenue. He said Main Street is only 21' wide, a narrow, one lane street, and the alley is only 20'. He said there is a 7-story building at 900 Chicago Avenue completed in 2005 and that 515 Main Street, at 9-stories is 97' high, not 105'. He showed a slide of AMLI, south of Kedzie, completed in 2013 which has an 18’ sidewalk along Chicago Avenue and an approximately 3,500 sq. ft. open space building plaza on the corner. Mr. Sung said he did a zoning analysis for a C1A Planned Development (PD):

- Maximum units allowed: 87; Proposing 112 units, 29% over allowed, which is allowed for a planned development
- F.A.R. gross inhabitable area divided by lot line allowed: 4.0; requesting 4.8 with a height of 97' (the maximum allowable for a PD)
- Residential Parking: 223 required including 156 residential; with 49 1-bedroom, 49 2-bedroom and 7 3-bedroom; propose to provide 74 underground and 15 ground level; they could increase by tandem and hydraulic lift, which are not legal parking spaces; they are proposing only 104 legal parking spaces
- Parking for retail: minimum required: 35 spaces; proposing to provide 13
- Parking for office: minimum required: 32 spaces but proposing 0
- Parking total: proposing only 47% of the total parking required
- Alley setback: no setback from Main St. alley entry for 50'; after that 10’ required setback
- South side setback to abutting 2-story building: 5’ required; proposing 0’

Mr. Sung said December 8, 2008 meeting minutes of the P&D Committee state that it is a great transit oriented rental development and here there are 214 units and about 4,008 sq. ft. retail with no office, 312 parking spaces. Originally it was proposed as a 280 unit but it was reduced to 214 units due to feedback from neighbors. He presented a chart comparing 1717 Ridge, which is only residential and it is in a different zoning district, so it is not a good comparison. He only compared buildings within the C1A zoning district for his zoning analysis:

AMLI: 80,000 sq. ft., 5 stories, 3.8 F.A.R., according to the meeting minutes, proposing 8,000 sq. ft. retail, 18 parking spaces for retail and 294 parking spaces for 214 residential units (approximately 1.3 ratio)

515 Main St.: approximately the same size as 835 Chicago Ave.: 30,000 sq. ft. and 97’, 3.6 F.A.R., 36 units and 7,300 sq. ft. of retail, no office; providing 70 parking spaces for residents and 20 parking spaces for retail (provided more than the number of required parking spaces)

900 Chicago Ave. (built 2005): 7 stories, 76 units and 140 parking spaces
Mr. Sung concluded that the problem is the high F.A.R. There are so many units in a small lot area that it is causing the parking and setback problems. He believes they should lower the number of units to solve the problems. He is currently working with a developer in Chicago that proposed an 11 story building but in response to neighbors’ comments is lowering it to 10 stories. He asked why they cannot do it here.

Jin Ko of 515 Main Street said she attended the last two Plan Commission meetings and from the presentation made by the developers she understands that the property will be rental for now, but will turn into condos eventually, which will add more serious problems because it will change the demographics and car ownership is significantly higher among home owners compared to renters. She said they already have a parking problem but it will add more problems. Most of the developers don’t live in the area, but the residents are the ones who have to live with the negative permanent consequences.

Charlie Portis of 1212 Lake Shore Blvd. said regarding the proposed office space, that he has been in the commercial real estate field for over 25 years and lived in Evanston for about 4 years, and he is a senior Vice President at J. F. McKinney and Associates, where he has been involved in approximately a half million square feet of new, speculative office development in the last 15 years in the north and northwest suburbs. He thinks the office portion is a welcome addition, especially with the transit. There is not a great deal of office space being proposed currently – he believes it is 13,000 or 14,000 sq. ft. and he thinks it will do very well with both the El and the Metra, which are very attractive in terms of getting people to the space. He said that many times when people are looking to move to the suburbs, one of the big challenges is how they can attract that work force that lives near the red line or wants to take the Metra and it is very difficult in the suburbs. He explained that most of the downtowns, like Highland Park’s and Glencoe’s do not have office space, and if you go to where the office space is, there is no Metra stop. So he believes from a transit standpoint it checks the box. It also checks the box in terms of area amenities, with Starbucks, Brothers K, Hoosier Mama, Lucky Platter and the Alcove nearby. It is a vibrant environment with a place to get food and again, it will attract people that want to bring their business whether they live in Evanston or they like Evanston and they can bring their needed workforce in. Mr. Portis said the amenity center on the 2nd floor is what all the top downtown buildings are doing now and even though Evanston is a suburb, it has a lot of urban characteristics and he believes the amenity center will be very appealing. He said an incubator space is a great use but he said he could also see your regular vanilla office user gravitating to this space. He said the Evanston office market is very vibrant relative to other communities. Office has struggled, but he thinks this space will get a great reception and it opens the possibility for more office space in this area. He does not have any in mind, but he thinks this can prove the viability of this use, which creates a lot of economic development, and he hopes that it goes forward and he thinks
everyone will be pleasantly surprised at how quickly this office space leases up.

Chair Wynne asked for discussion from the Committee.

Chair Wynne said there are a number of issues that have been raised that she believes will require a second meeting, and given the time, she suggested holding it in Committee. Ald. Holmes agreed.

Chair Wynne said it would be held in committee and noted that the next P&D meeting is during the Spring break of the 2 Evanston school districts and she will not be present and she said she believes other Committee members would not be present, so she suggested having it come forward at the April 28th meeting because they will have a full complement of the City Council members.

Ald. Rainey said then it will take a month and a half versus two meetings.

Ald. Rainey moved introduction and she would hope that the Committee would approve moving introduction and referring it back to Committee, seconded by Ald. Grover.

The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend introduction of Ordinance 32-O-14, and for it to be referred back to the Planning & Development Committee for the April 28, 2014 meeting.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
There were no items for discussion.

V. COMMUNICATIONS
There were no communications.

VI. ADJOURNMENT


The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbie Newman