



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 25, 2017 – 7:00pm

Lorraine Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

Members Present: Ald. Fiske, Ald. Braithwaite, Ald. Wynne, Ald. Wilson, Ald. Tendam, Ald. Holmes, Ald. Rainey, J. Sierant, T. Dubin, M.B. Berns

Members Absent: H. Powell

Staff Present: M. Lyons, J. Leonard, P. Zalmezak, C. Plante, P. Martínez

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Ald. Tendam called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF November 16, 2016

Ald. Tendam moved approval of the minutes from November.

Ald. Rainey seconded.

Ald. Holmes asked to make sure that they were updated to reflect that she attended the November meeting.

Approved 10-0.

3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Financial Assistance for Tour de Noir

Ms. Paulina Martínez introduced the project. The Black Business Consortium is seeking \$2,100 in financial support for their 2nd annual bus tour and business expo on February 25th. Staff has also assisted with creation of a website and logos for the organization.

Ms. Jean Murphy, PhD from the Black Business Consortium spoke about last year's event and the reasons behind the expansion of the event this year to include a business expo in addition to the bus tour, and thanked the committee for the staff support to date.

Ald. Rainey asked if anything had been done to reach out to the Black-owned businesses on Howard Street that weren't included on the list. Dr. Murphy responded that she and her husband were going door to door in the area to reach out to them and ensure that they have the opportunity to be included.

Ald. Holmes moved to recommend funding for Le Tour de Noir and Business Expo

Ald. Tendam seconded

Approved 10-0

B. Financial Assistance for Evanston Explorers

Ms. Cindy Plante explained the basis of this project is to look beyond food establishments to activate and diversify Evanston's storefronts with experiential businesses; specifically businesses focused on children activities.

The Evanston Explorers group of experiential businesses aims to create a collaboration of marketing and programming, including a website, push notifications, emails, and progressive playdates.

The first event will be held at Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center, which will be free to the public. All participating businesses will sponsor an activity and/or bring food samples. The group plans to host 2-3 events per year.

Ald. Tendam move to recommend funding for Evanston Explorers

Ald. Wynne seconded

Approved 10-0

C. Lease Negotiations with Pascal Berthoumieux for 633 Howard Street

Ms. Cindy Plante introduced Mr. Pascal Berthoumieux, owner of Bistro Bordeaux, Patisserie Coralie, and Creperie St. Germain in Evanston. Ms. Plante summarized staff's recommendation to proceed with further due diligence and real estate negotiations with Mr. Berthoumieux for the space at 633 Howard Street. Mr. Berthoumieux would like to open a café and commercial bakery in the space. Mr. Berthoumieux will proceed with leasing the property, upon the sale of Bistro Bordeaux and/or Patisserie Coralie.

Ms. Mary Beth Berns asked which business will be sold to finance the new business venture. Mr. Berthoumieux responded that was yet to be determined.

Ald. Rainey commented the proposed concept would not be competition to other restaurants in Howard Street, because it would bring 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. daytime traffic. Additionally, the bakery will have a commercial/wholesale component, and it will finally be in the tax rolls.

Ald. Tendam move to recommend further due diligence and real estate negotiations

Ald. Rainey seconded

Approved 10-0

D. Financial Assistance for Kabul House, 2424 Dempster Street

Mr. Akmal Qazi, owner of Kabul house, asked for consideration of financial support through the Storefront Modernization Program to assist with the cost of renovating the building he purchased for his business at 2424 Dempster.

Ald. Holmes asked if the building really needs renovations considering the investment made by the previous owner Chicago's Home of Chicken and Waffles. Mr. Qazi replied he had a consultant look at the site and was advised the main issue with the property was visibility and signage. He also mentioned he believed there were a number of shortcuts

taken on the buildout by previous owner and he would like to improve them including HVAC, energy efficiency upgrades, and roof repairs.

Ms. Berns commented that the Storefront Modernization Grant is primarily for exterior, which this property has benefitted from in the last three years, therefore, making it ineligible to receive this grant again.

Ald. Braithwaite explained the Storefront Modernization Program also allows for interior improvements and the request from Kabul House will allow them to improve the space to be a more profitable / successful restaurant. The property is a gateway to the city and he would prefer to see it occupied.

Alderman Rainey recommended the Committee consider approval despite the property having received façade improvement funding within the last ten years because it is vital that City help a reliable/successful business open on good footing. Alderman Rainey suggested it wasn't necessarily fair for Kabul House to be held responsible for the errors of the previous owner.

Ald. Wilson moved recommend funding under the Storefront Modernization Grant
Ald. Rainey seconded
Failed 2-8, (Ald. Braithwaite and Ald. Rainey voting in support of the motion.)

Ald. Rainey instructed staff to keep working with Kabul House to find alternative solutions.

E. Update to Great Merchant Grant Program

Mr. Zalmezak explained that in addition to the changes presented at the last meeting, he added "affinity groups," such as the Black Business Consortium of Evanston/North Shore and Evanston Explorers, which are not tied to a geographic area, but instead focus on particular interest. These groups would be eligible to receive up to \$2,500.

Additionally, staff recommends funding for technical assistance workshops and consultant services. Evanston-based merchants would be eligible to attend. Staff will survey merchants to determine what type of technical assistance is in demand. Early ideas include merchandizing, google advertising, and storefront displays.

Ald. Wynne move to recommend approval to the updates to the Great Merchant Grant
Ald. Fiske seconded
Approved 10-0

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Howard Street Theatre Update
Ms. Plante reported the MOU with Theo Ubique was executed. The theater also delivered the first installment of the fundraising milestones.
- B. Quarterly Report
- C. Monthly Economic Development Communication
- D. Real Estate Transfer Tax Report
- E. Announcements/Updates from EDC Members

5. ADJOURNMENT

Ald. Tendam moved to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.

Ald. Fiske seconded.

Approved 10-0

**Respectfully Submitted,
Paulina Martínez**