CITY OF
WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved September 14, 2020

MINUTES

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

July 13, 2020 7:00 P.M.

The Development Committee meeting of June 8, 2020 was held part remotely and partly in person due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, and Establishment of a Quorum.**

   Alderman Stout called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

   All Aldermen in attendance were present remotely. Roll call found Aldermen James Beifuss, Melissa Birch Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Matthew Garling (in person) John Jakabscin, Jayme Sheahan and Rebecca Stout (in person) present.

   Also in attendance was Community Development Director, Tom Dabareiner (in person).

2. **Approval of Minutes.**

   A. **June 8, 2020.**

   Alderman Ferguson moved and Alderman Sheahan seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Garling, Jakabscin, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

3. **Public Participation.** None.

4. **Items for Consent.**

   A. **28W541 Roosevelt and 28W700 Purnell Road** – Pulte Homes requests approval of a Final Plat of Subdivision for Phase One of a proposed 84-unit single family residential development in unincorporated DuPage County. Phase One would consist of 19 single family dwellings.

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B. **Bishop Place PUD (NWC Roosevelt/Bishop)** – D&G Property Development LLC seeks an amendment to the Bishop Place PUD to remove the condition that requires construction of a second commercial building before any new residential can be constructed.

Alderman Ferguson asked that Item 4.A. be pulled for discussion.

Alderman Jakabscin moved and Alderman Sheahan seconded a motion to approve Item for Consent 4.B. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Garling, Jakabscin, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

Discussion of 4.A. ensued with Tom Dabareiner providing a staff update. The full Final Plat was approved by the full Council on June 15, 2020. Since that time, staff was informed that the project would be completed in three phases. The first phase would consist of building 19 homes. Staff supports the Phase One Final Plat, and the Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals (PC/ZBA) voted unanimously in favor of it at their July 7, 2020 meeting.

Alderman Ferguson expressed concern about the density of the development and the resulting traffic to the area. He asked if the responsibility of the traffic would be up to the County, and Mr. Dabareiner replied that it is. He then asked if they vote in favor, would the first phase of the development continue. Mr. Dabareiner responded they do not have the engineering plans yet, but the County has approved the entire project, so they could move ahead with Phase One. Other approvals are needed.

Alderman Beifuss asked Mr. Dabareiner to clarify if Pulte would have to come back for an amendment to the Pre-Annexation Agreement. Mr. Dabareiner answered not necessarily as the Agreement has no other substantive changes that would require Council approval.

Alderman Garling asked how the traffic would be evaluated if this project were within the City limits. Mr. Dabareiner replied that the traffic study for this project is already a few months old. If this were a City project, however, they would take a close look at the study's recommendations for enhancing traffic on the roadway and for safety. Alderman Garling stated the traffic study seems to suggest some problems and he asked when the members would have a chance to evaluate that. When they approved the Pre-Annexation last year, they did not have the study. Mr. Dabareiner stated that because the project is being developed in DuPage County, they have the say about what work needs to be done and to provide a response to the traffic study. Alderman Garling asked why this is coming before them now when they have no say. Mr. Dabareiner stated that this is a Phase One Plat of a Final Plat, which was already approved by the Council. Because this area is within the City's planning area—one and ½ miles away from their border—the County has asked the City to comment.

Alderman Beifuss asked if the Phase One Plat is the same as the Final Plat, and Mr.

Dabareiner replied that it is the same. Alderman Beifuss stated he believes the Pre-Annexation Agreement will have to come back to the Council members again.

Alderman Jakabscin moved and Alderman Sheahan seconded a motion to approve Items for Consent 4.A. and 4.B. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Garling, Jakabscin, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

5. Items for Discussion

A. Museum of Mexican Art – Presentation and discussion.

Mr. Dabareiner introduced the two guest speakers, Sara Phalen and Fernando Ramirez. Sara Phalen addressed the Committee, stating she was presenting on behalf of the Mexican Cultural Center DuPage, along with their president, Fernando Ramirez, and on behalf of the West Chicago City Museum. She also introduced their partner for the project, the National Museum of Mexican Art, located in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago, the leading Mexican art museum in the United States. She explained they are looking at the potential to transform the train depot at 119 W Washington St. into a museum for Mexican art. They hope to create a dynamic destination that people will not only want to visit but to live near. In 2017, she worked with City staff to secure a grant for this building. They believe that arts can be utilized as an economic engine, and by further tapping into historic tourism, it could serve as a core anchor in the Downtown redevelopment. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the City's cultural heritage. Ms. Phalen then provided data to support the notion of arts an economic engine. She stated they hope to undertake this idea now to take advantage of the postponed Frida Kahlo art exhibit at the College of DuPage, which is expected to generate a lot of additional income for the area next year. She shared renderings of what the museum and green space might look like and mentioned another project they are working on called the Box Car Market whereby train cars could set up to function like a farmer's market. They are considering a phased plan that would begin with outdoor programming and eventually end with a full build out and permanent outdoor stage. In terms of fundraising and sustainability, Mr. Carlos Tortolero, Director and Founder of the National Museum of Mexican Art, will lead their Advisory Board, which is their fundraising arm. She mentioned several grants they hope to apply for and other sources of revenue they can tap into. They are not looking to ask for any money from the City, but rather, they are asking the City to enter a discussion about pursuing this project and putting together a formal plan and timeline. She thanked the members for their time and offered to answer any questions.

Alderman Beifuss thanked the presenters, stated the idea is intriguing, and agreed that arts can serve as an important economic catalyst. He would like to see the depot renovated as it would be an attractive building and would be an anchor for the planned open space nearby. He likes the idea that the National Museum has taken an interest in West Chicago and in investing in their City. He would like to see this explored further, especially given that the Council has had the long-term goal of renovating that space. He stated that non-profits might be in a better position to obtain grants and raise funds. He wants to see staff continue to work with them in developing a formal plan.

Alderman Birch Ferguson agreed with Alderman Beifuss. Since they last met to discuss potential ideas for this space, she never imagined an idea for a museum coming forward so quickly. She is impressed and in favor of this subject. She believes this would be an excellent addition to downtown West Chicago.

Alderman Garling asked who the other members of the Advisory Board are and how the history of the West Chicago train ties into this museum. Ms. Phalen replied that the train history would be represented by the restoration of the 1860's depot. It would be restored to its original character. That renovation alone would attract train enthusiasts. There are City Museum narratives depicting many of the first Mexican families that came to West Chicago in the 1920's came to work on the railroads, and that is really the foundation of the immigration to the City. The Advisory Board is still in its formation, as they want to make sure the City is on board with this project. Alderman Garling expressed concern about having another cultural center. They have Gallery 200 already. He said he is hesitant about whether this is the right project for that space, which would be right in front of City Hall and with limited tie-in to their train history.

Ms. Phalen mentioned there have been discussions about placing a replica of a steam engine near the depot and there have been other discussions about how this building could be engaged. She added that there are over 100 years of Mexican immigration to West Chicago that tie into the larger immigration story of all our ancestors.

Alderman Stout said she feels this is exciting as it would be a nice draw to West Chicago. They are just in the beginning stages so a lot can still be incorporated into it. As Alderman Birch Ferguson pointed out, they thought any project would be several years out, and so it is exciting to be going forward with this.

6. **Unfinished Business.** None.

7. **New Business.** None.

8. **Reports from Staff.** None.

9. **Adjournment.**

Alderman Birch Ferguson moved and Alderman Ferguson seconded the motion to adjourn the Development Committee meeting at 7:37 P.M. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Garling, Jakabscin, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Burke