

Mount Greenwood

Local Redevelopment Corporation

Volume 8 Issue 4

July/August 2006

DOES 111TH ST. NEED A SPECIAL SERVICE AREA?

Earlier this year, the Local Redevelopment Corp. and Chamber of Commerce proposed creation of a Special Service Area (SSA) in response to business and property owners' requests for services beyond those typically provided by the City of Chicago.

An Advisory Committee formed, including Mike Grant (La Fiesta), Mike Pulliam (Pulliam Financial), Tom Bugielski (Founders Bank), Richard Copeland (Chicago True Value Hardware & Just Ask Rental), Toni Quinn (Face To Face Salon & Spa), JR Centeno (MG Auto Body), Pat Gentzen (Founders Bank), and Tom Gregor (Fernwood Printers). Suggested boundaries were similar to those of the Tax Increment Finance District – contiguous, commercially zoned properties on 111th Street from 3000 to 4000 West and on Kedzie from 11000 to 11200 South. Committee members debated the merits and scope of a variety of services and programs, focusing on determining how to get the most benefit at the least cost.

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SPECIAL SERVICE AREA

19TH WARD TRAFFIC STUDY

The City of Chicago is funding a traffic study. Consultants are evaluating volume, parking, speed, and predominant problems.

Ald. Rugai hosted a series of meetings recently throughout the ward to give residents the opportunity to voice concerns and make suggestions for improving traffic related situations. Over 300 attended the Mount Greenwood meeting at the Ag High School on 6/27. General congestion at 111th & Kedzie during rush hour and a lack of regard for speed limits and stop signs were common themes expressed by residents. Each attendee was asked to cite the three most critical locations in need of attention.

Many of the suggestions voiced by residents at the meeting were consistent with those in the Business District Improvement Plan for 111th & Kedzie. They included traffic signals at Spaulding and Albany to allow both pedestrians and vehicles to safely cross 111th St., restricting on-street parking-particularly during rush hour, and creating additional off-street parking lots-perhaps in cul de sac streets.

Meetings will be scheduled in September to share the final report and suggestions from the consulting group for implementing improvements. For more information, contact Fran Hurley at the Ward office, 238-8776.

What's Coming Up?

- 7/20 CAPS – Mt. Greenwood Park 7 p.m.
- 8/1 Board Application Deadline
- 8/17 CAPS – Mt. Greenwood Park 7 p.m.

Our mission

is to direct the course of *future growth* and *redevelopment* in our business districts in order to *maintain* and *improve* the economic vitality necessary to provide the community with a *stable social* and *business environment*.

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SPECIAL SERVICE AREA

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Primary services identified, that committee members believed would help keep the district competitive with surrounding areas, were routine maintenance, beautification, walkway snow plowing, tree trimming, advertising, and special events to attract the community to 111th Street. Security was also discussed.

Joining us for a public meeting held June 6th at the MG Branch Library were the city's SSA coordinator Gina Caruso, Alderman Rugai, and New Chicago Fund's SSA consultant Brad Leibov. Each spoke to the benefits and drawbacks of the program and timeframe for creation. Alderman Rugai shared some of the programs and improvements that occurred on 95th Street and on Western Avenue with SSA funds.

A SSA collects a fee from every single PIN (property identification number), therefore services provided should be beneficial district-wide. The beauty is that it spreads the expense over many properties, making it more affordable for everyone. Once a budget is determined, individual contributions can be calculated. It works like this:

DIVIDE	Annual cost of all services desired in district, but not provided by city
\$85,000	
BY	Total Equalized Assessed Value of all properties in district
\$17,000,000	
TO GET	SSA taxing percentage rate
.5% (or .005)	
MULTIPLY	.005 times YOUR Equalized Assessed Value (EAV)
TO GET	Individual Contribution

The county collects the fee. It appears as a line item on 2nd installment tax bills. The county forwards the money to the city for distribution to local SSA managing agents. Neither the county nor the city receives any part of the fees. All money collected goes directly back into the taxing district. There are 31 active SSA districts in Chicago alone. Two are located in Beverly and Morgan Park. It is comparable to the common area maintenance (CAM) fees present in mall management.

The SSA is overseen by a committee of local business and commercial property owners. An annual audit is required for accountability.

The Local Redevelopment and Chamber of Commerce are committed to providing complete and accurate information on this program to the business community. We believe knowledge will ensure that stakeholders have the ability to compare and make educated decisions. Boundaries, as proposed, DO NOT include residential property, other than those already in the commercial district.

Advisory Committee meetings will be ongoing to explore need, cost, and support. Please contact Mary Kiedrow mglrc2000@wowway.com or 881-0622 if you would like to attend the committee meetings, with questions about any aspect of the program, or to express views.



THE CORNERS CORNER

Twenty (20) percent of respondents to our Spring survey took it upon themselves to comment on the (mostly) outdated and unattractive look of 111th Street's business district. One particular site that was repeatedly mentioned was the northeast corner at Pulaski. As a result of the concerns expressed, discussions have been renewed with several property owners here. Look for improvement before year's end.

No word on a groundbreaking date at the Signature Development yet (northwest corner at Kedzie).

OPENINGS

A number of directors will complete terms of office in August. If you are interested in improving Mount Greenwood through commercial redevelopment, please contact Pat to obtain an application.

PLAN TO PARTY!

Mount Greenwood's 99th Birthday will be celebrated on 9/9 at Mount Greenwood Park. Plans are in the works for a full day of music, food, craft booths, special guests, and an array of family activities. There will be something for everyone. Booth space and sponsorship opportunities are still available. Watch for flyers & signs with more information.

CLEAN & GREEN (& YELLOW & PURPLE & RED...)

The City parking lot at 111th & Sawyer looks fantastic this summer thanks to the physical efforts of Mount Greenwood Garden Club's Nancy & Mike Block and funding from Party in the Park 2005 and MGLRC.

The first Party in the Park was held in 1997, celebrating 90 years of community. Annual proceeds are modest, as most dollars raised directly fund activities at the event. Since its inception, Party proceeds have also funded a number of neighborhood beautification projects. First year proceeds were used to acquire and engrave a commemorative rock, which rests in the garden in front of the Mount Greenwood Park fieldhouse. Six patriotic banners were purchased to kickoff the Avenue Banner Program. Decorations were purchased for the outdoor community Christmas tree near the ice rink. Flower pots were planted throughout our commercial areas several years ago.

SXU MASTER PLAN MEETING



Saint Xavier University invited neighboring residents to attend a meeting on April 24 highlighting the university's ongoing and proposed long-range campus master plan. Improvements to the athletic field include installation of artificial field turf, a drainage system, construction of a 400-meter track, lighting and additional seating. The renovated outdoor stadium will be available to the community for appropriate special events. Ground has been broken for a new \$9 million residence hall and conceptual future plans call for a parking garage, new library, art buildings and a mixed use development on 103rd Street. Maureen Connor Kelly, Director of Community Relations at SXU, stated it is the university's goal to keep the lines of communication open with its neighbors. SXU has a positive economic impact on our community while improving the tax base and spurring economic development.

Thanks, also, to Fran Hurley at Ald. Rugai's MG office for prompt attention to pothole concerns in the lot. Hopefully, this will be our last summer maintaining the property and by next summer (finally!) it will be a construction site, buzzing with the promise of more improvements to come.

To volunteer for Party in the Park 2006, contact Nancy Pepper at 779-6011.





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Smiles & Frowns

Smiles - The Business Directory will print this month. 2006 MONOPOLY sponsors will be denoted. This is the LAST CALL to add your email or website address to your listing. Contact the office by 7/15.

White Hen removed all the dead bushes and weeds surrounding this highly visible corner property. Let's hope there are plans for replanting so we don't see their name in the FROWNS next issue.

Local postal workers have done a great job planting and maintaining landscape improvements at the building entrance and parking lot. That's it! Lead by example.

Frowns - The City is also in the process of funding another study focusing on whether further residential uses in commercially zoned areas are appropriate in the 19th Ward and, if so, suggestions on how much and where? Results were anticipated in Spring.



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COMMENTS
ENCOURAGED

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