

Mount Greenwood

Local Redevelopment Corporation

Volume 8 Issue 5

September/October 2006

GREAT PARTY, MOUNT GREENWOOD!

Friends and neighbors spent the day in Mount Greenwood Park celebrating the neighborhood's 99th birthday on Saturday, Sept. 9th.

The day began with the Courageous Pacers Walk through the Heights. A special group of children, refusing to be limited by a variety of physical complications, chose a buddy and took part in raising funds for Mount Greenwood Park's Special Recreation Program. They were thrilled to be led by CFD Engine 92 and accompanied by the World Champion Chicago White Sox mascot, SOUTHPAW. Kudos to organizers Mari Jo Pesavento, Lisa Mulchrone, and Katie Kettering and all the neighbors who lined the way to cheer them on. To purchase a commemorative t-shirt call Lisa at the park 312-747-6564.

Partygoers were treated to a day of free activities, compliments of some very generous sponsors. A trackless train carried children and adults from one end of the park to the other, while a huge John Deere tractor provided hay rides at the Agricultural High School. Kids jumped on inflatables, fished at the 'pond', and rode a giant turtle and ponies. Posh Pets (11104 S. Kedzie) sponsored a hysterical costumed pet parade. Marchers included Elvis, a devil, a couple of angels, Puss in Boots, Sherlock Holmes, and a police officer. Don't miss this next year!

Fat Tommy's Hot Dog Eating Contest was another hit, especially with Ward Super Mike Rourke's comical announcing. The winner ate 8 hot dogs in 11 minutes and managed to keep them down through the 2 minute waiting period. Congratulations to 1st place winner Mike Block. He won – what else? – a \$50 certificate to Fat Tommy's.

Thanks to MG Park Supervisor John Foran and all sponsors, including major sponsors:

Chicago White Sox	State Rep. Kevin Joyce
Mayor's Office of Special Events	Ald. Virginia Rugai & staff
Founders Bank	Saint Xavier University
Chicago Park District	Chicago Agricultural High School
Sheriff Michael Sheahan	Home Instead – Mike Quirk
115 Bourbon Street	ComEd

Mark your calendar for the 100 birthday EXTRAVAGANZA, 9-8-7!



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What's Coming Up?

- 9/4 Labor Day
- 9/9 Party in the Park
Rat Pack and Elvis
- 9/21 CAPS 7:00 p.m.
Mount Greenwood Park
- 10/9 Columbus Day
- 10/19 CAPS 7:00 p.m.
Mount Greenwood Park
- 10/29 Daylight Savings Time
- 10/31 111th St. Halloween Walk

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

The Local Redevelopment Corp., Chamber of Commerce, and SSA Advisory Committee members invite all business/commercial property owners, within proposed boundaries (see map), to attend a informative meeting:

- Friday, Sept. 29, 9:00 a.m., Chicago Public Library, 11010 S. Kedzie

An overview of the SSA program, examples from other city neighborhoods, and criteria for selection/appointment of commissioners will be presented by Gina Caruso, DPD’s SSA Coordinator for the City of Chicago.

A suggested scope of services and mock budget will be presented by the Chamber’s Darlene Myers, for review and discussion. Administration, accountability, and reporting requirements will be discussed by the LRC’s Mary Kiedrow.

Reservations appreciated, please contact 773-881-0622 or e-mail mglrc2000@wowway.com.



19TH WARD RESIDENTIAL STUDY COMPLETED

Specialists from Applied Real Estate Analysis, Inc. and Camiros, Ltd. presented Ald. Rugai and community group leaders with findings of a recent study, commissioned by the Department of Planning & Development.

The purpose of the study was to determine if and where residential would be appropriate on commercial strips in the 19th Ward. Although results are not particularly surprising, the recommendations and suggested policies will be valuable guides for the city, community representatives and developers alike.

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General findings ward-wide:

- 2000 as compared to 1990, there are more households, but less people
- We are older than most - median age 36.4 vs. 31.5 city-wide; 53% of us are over 35 vs. 44.2% city-wide
- We’ve got money to spend – 47% (2005) of household incomes are greater than \$75,000
- 82.7% home ownership, almost double the rate for the city as a whole
- A growing need for age restricted

developments is anticipated

- Weak residential pockets should be a conscientious focus for investment

More specifically:

- Most of the busier 95th Street and Western Avenue are not suited to residential development, although north and south ends of Western may work
- Metra station nodes should be encouraged with retail and housing
- A combination of retail and mixed use may be suitable for several blocks either side of Kedzie on 111th Street.
- Larger sites could provide leverage retail and residential
- The west end of the 111th Street business district may not be suitable to sustain retail. Residential may be a reasonable consideration.

Thanks to Ald. Rugai, the Department of Planning and Development, and particularly our development liaison, Dan Klaiber, for insistence of quality and completeness in this report.

THE CORNERS CORNER

Northwest Corner 111th & Kedzie

Behind the scenes, progress continues to be made toward groundbreaking. What's taking so long, you ask? Here's a partial look into the process.

A developer first introduces plans to the local alderman. Depending on the scope of the project, he may then be required to meet with the 19th Ward's Zoning Advisory Committee and/or Design Review Committee. These entities have local members with expertise, who then advise the alderman if they believe the project has merit as is, or needs revision. The Walgreens corner project required meetings with both committees.

Because this project significantly changes the layout of the corner, Alderman Rugai held community meetings to seek input and asked that developers explain first hand to residents and affected business owners how the project would eventually play out.

The project is what is known as a Planned Development (PD). As such, it requires developers to meet with a number of city departments for plan review. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) oversees the entire process, necessitating continuous dialogue with the developer to keep the project moving. Thereafter, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) must ensure that, as streets and alleys are closed or relocated, satisfactory access remains available to emergency vehicles, garbage trucks, and delivery trucks. In addition, CDOT evaluates placement of driveways in relation to street traffic and pedestrian safety.

The Law Department is involved due to the transfer of ownership of city owned properties, in the project. And, the Fire Department required developers to meet with them to make certain that ingress and egress, turning radius, and hydrant placements were acceptable.

Including three residentially zoned properties in the project and a requisition for drive-thru facilities triggered the Department of Zoning meeting. The Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities (MOPD) reviewed the PD sites to make sure that the facility is compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Then, a meeting with The Bureau of Underground determined where sewer, water, and other utilities are and need to be moved. Overhead utilities will also need to be relocated. Yet to come, meetings with the Community Development Commission (CDC), the City's Design Review Commission, and the Plan Commission.

But have no doubt, progress is being made. A new century is dawning for Mount Greenwood!

Thinking how different it would be to operate your business in a new, energy efficient building? Wondering how your customers would feel about adequate parking right at your doorstep? Wrestling with the idea that you prefer to shovel your own snow, plant your own flowers, water and weed? Hoping that the next bus lumbering down 111th Street doesn't cause another old window to crack? Wondering what a move like this would cost? Worrying how fast you can sell your building? We're here to help you find answers. Call us to explore the possibilities at 773-881-0622.

TRENDS

ICSC reports "Dining doldrums hit casual restaurants." The American casual-dining sector is in a malaise caused by lower-income consumers' reallocations of dining dollars to gasoline and other purchases, restaurant executives say. "We're seeing a lifestyle adjustment as people work around short-term crunch on disposable income," said Douglas Brooks, president and CEO of Brinker International, which operates 1,622 restaurants under the Chili's, Maggiano's and Romano's Macaroni Grill brands. SCT Xtra 8/21/06

Some restaurateurs disagree. "Late August and September always see a slowdown. People have spent their vacation money and are spending on back to school items. It happens every year. Business will be right back up there a month from now," said Papa T's Enterprises Marketing Director Sam Runcio. A spokesman for Taubman Centers (a mall realtor) reported restaurants helped revive certain locations for them. This has caused the firm to focus on restaurants at coming developments.

What do you think? Are readers eating out as much this month? Tell us at mglrc2000@wowway.com. We'll share comments next issue.

FIELD FENCE FUNDRAISER

The cyclone fence surrounding St. Christina's fields (111th & Central Park) is over 50 years old and in need of replacement with your help.

You're invited to the field for a "Fabulous Las Vegas" show on Saturday, September 9th at 6:30 p.m., featuring Dennis Stella as Elvis and The Chicago Rat Pack!

Admission is \$20 per person; food and beverages will be available for purchase. Please, no coolers allowed. Bring your favorite lawn chair for the best seat on the field.

For more info contact, St. Christina's field managers, Jack Ulrich, 773-726-8737, or Rich O'Rourke, 773-640-3895.

COMMERCIAL MAINTENANCE

Unless we can find a better system, (see SSA article), public way maintenance of each property falls on individual owners. Upkeep is time consuming and can be expensive. If you decide to hire someone, rather than getting a price to trim 40 trees, or spray 20 blocks of sidewalks for weeds, or sweep 20 blocks of curbs and gutters, each owner pays for personal service.

Weeds, trash, and a general unkempt look around your building reflect first on your business, then spill over to surrounding businesses and the community as a whole. Please make the effort to maintain a neat and clean appearance around your property. Call us if you need assistance.



3333 West 111th Street, Suite B
Chicago, Illinois 60655

INSIDE

1

99 Years Celebration
19th Ward Residential Study Completed

2

Special Service Area
19th Ward Residential Study Completed

3

Corners Corner Trends
Field Fence Fundraiser
Commercial Maintenance

Smiles & Frowns

Smiles - The owner of White Hen (111th & Kedzie) is currently obtaining bids for landscaping and maintenance of the corner. She (and we) expect that it will be completed by the time you read this.

Smiles - The Swing Into Action Committee reports they're well over halfway to raising the \$800,000 needed to rebuild Mount Greenwood Park's playground with all new equipment. They have many, many opportunities to get involved or donate. Check out their web site at www.mountgreenwoodpark.com

Frowns - Razor wire around the fence at 3307 W. 111th Street.



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COMMENTS
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“Character is not made in a crisis - it is only exhibited.”
— Robert Freeman, author and Oracle expert