



**Economic Development Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, February 6th, 2019 at 9:00 AM  
Minutes**

- 1. Called to Order:** At 9:00 A.M. by Chairman Harold Barry
  
- 2. Present:** Mayor Ron Gunter, Village Clerk Virginia Szynski, Chairman Harold Barry, Village Manager Steve May, Business/Resident Representative Bill Kalafut, Business/Resident Representative Gregg Pill, Citizen Representative Frank Brady, Citizen Representative Nancy Martens, Finance Director Spencer Parker, Building Commissioner Jason Vitell, Community Development Director Bruce Sylvester, Economic Development Partnership Director Larry Forssberg, Trustee Jim Addington, Trustee Linda Liddle, Fire Chief David Weiss, Deputy Liquor Commissioner Tom Mulhearn, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Doug Carmichael, Administrative Assistant Jaime Hofmann
  
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance**
  
- 4. Public Comment - None**
  
- 5. Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made to approve the minutes from the January 2nd, 2019 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote.
  
- 6. New Business**
  - A. Outdoor Dining in B-1 Business District -** The committee discussed the opportunities, challenges, and concerns associated with outdoor dining in the downtown B-1 district.

**Committee Discussion:**

Business/Resident Representative Gregg Pill was favorable of the outdoor dining however felt that there were definite challenges that would come to head given the limited space and narrow sidewalks. Pill recommended fencing off two parking spaces seasonally. Pill felt that outdoor seating and incentives would bring more people and businesses to the downtown.

Trustee Liddle expressed concerns with the idea of parking space dining, stating that it would interfere with Westmont's car shows and special events. Liddle also mentioned the pollution from downtown traffic could affect the diners. Liddle encouraged rooftop dining.

Chairman Barry felt that outdoor seating was potentially a great idea but did not feel the downtown was ready for that accommodation. Barry stated that once the parking garage was in place, the idea could be revisited. In the meantime, Barry felt that open air seating would be a better alternative and to encourage new developments to prepare and design for outdoor seating moving forward.

Deputy Liquor Commissioner Mulhearn stated several concerns with sidewalk dining including sidewalk obstruction, multiple hazards, and traffic dangers.

Business/Resident Representative Bill Kalafut was favorable of the general idea, but did not think the downtown was logistically set up for outdoor seating.

Village Manager Steve May stated that Westmont sidewalks do not have the same width and space as other communities and ADA compliance would not be attainable. Manager May stated that with upcoming construction and streetscape projects on Cass Avenue, this may not be the best time to consider outdoor seating.

Trustee Addington felt like it would be a positive image for Westmont to allow businesses to have the option.

Mayor Gunter was most concerned with sidewalk ADA compliance issues.

Building Commissioner Jason Vitell stated that the downtown buildings were built with a different intent than what people are trying to use them for today. Vitell felt that it's important to encourage new developments and businesses to design and modify their own properties to accommodate. Vitell touched on other various obstacles related to building codes, regulations and safety.

- B. Pole Sign Incentive Programs for Non-Conforming Signage** - Sylvester asked the committee if they would support providing businesses with incentives for eliminating pole signs that do not conform to the sign code, and replacing them with monument signs. Sylvester spoke with Finance Department staff and received confirmation that this type of incentive would be TIF eligible. Manager May stated that the question is whether or not we want to incentivise and encourage compliance with our sign ordinances.

### **Committee Discussion :**

Trustee Addington was supportive of the incentive program so long as it's mutually agreeable on both sides. Addington stated he would like to see the changes carried out.

Kalafut was not favorable of the monument signage because it isn't applicable to every commercial property. Kalafut and Barry both agreed that if an incentive program was going to be put together, it should be Village wide. Kalafut felt that for signs that are not up to code, it would be great to give an incentive to help fund the new sign.

Finance Director Spencer Parker commented that in terms of aesthetics, facade grants are specific to the downtown district. There are state laws that prohibit spending certain funds like TIF for areas in town that are not necessarily blighted.

Manager May stated that participation wouldn't be mandatory but the incentive would be available if the businesses wanted to pursue it.

Pill was favorable of the idea and thought monument signs were stylish.

Barry was not favorable of the new sign code and did not feel that there was anything unappealing about the current pole signs. Barry shared concerns related to visibility with monument signage. He did not feel the Village was in a position to provide incentives at this time.

Vitell felt the new sign code isn't as functional as it was thought to be initially. Vitell stated Monument signs can hinder visibility for traffic and although progressive, they are not useful for the entire community.

Sylvester brought before the committee the immediate issue being whether an incentive could currently be offered to Burger King since they are going to be making improvements to the site. Sylvester stated the Village has already accommodated their other needs such as approving a parking variance request.. They have generally accepted that a monument sign will need to be installed but will be looking for answers in relation to the incentive. Burger King has also discussed more signage on their building which would require another variance. Other incentives aside from money, could include approving more square footage for wall signage.

Manager May asked the committee if they would like to see more time and effort put into developing what that program might look like.

The committee did not think it was a good time for a Village wide incentive policy for signage.

**C. 2018 Projects Year-In-Review**

- a. Pasquinelli Drive Office Park Corridor - Forssberg gave updates regarding 700 Oakmont Lane; Oakmont Point.
- b. Chicago Prostate Center - Forssberg stated that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Westmonts Sister City, Hsinchu County to partner on bringing their treatment protocol to Taiwan.
- c. Ogden Avenue Corridor - Forssberg updated the committee on various dealerships in town including BMW and Porsche. Pill had questions about the former Dunkin' Donuts site and the preschool next to it as well as the Royal Bank in terms of putting a smaller dealership there. Forssberg stated that the Economic Development Partnership has looked at assemblage opportunities for that area however that bank does not want to sell.
- d. TY Warner Park/North Westmont Corridor - Forssberg gave updates regarding FMC Natatorium on Plaza.
- e. Downtown Westmont Corridor - Forssberg gave updates related to space availability and the strong demand for quality restaurant space in the B-1 District. Forssberg also discussed two large TOD projects underway on Cass and Quincy and Cass and Burlington.
- f. South Westmont Business District Corridor - Forssberg discussed the demolition Ceremony for Market Centre and Dotty's relocation status.
- g. Infrastructure - Forssberg gave updates related to Westmonts Stormwater Improvement Project, and Stormwater Detention.
- h. Alley Reconstruction - Forssberg gave status updates related to the CBD Alley Reconstruction.
- i. Public Works Facility - Manager May discussed various approvals in place in order to move forward and that the Park District has been relocated.
- j. Involuntary Annexation - Forssberg mentioned Westmonts efforts to clean up areas on the South and Southeast side of town.

**7. Old Business - None**

**8. Miscellaneous - None**

**9. Adjourn:** Kalafut motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:33, Addington seconded the motion - All in favor