

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved May 11, 2015

MINUTES

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

April 13, 2015, 7:00 P.M.

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

Alderman Stout called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call found Aldermen John Banas, James Beifuss, Laura Grodoski, Melissa Birch, Jim Smith, John Smith and Becky Stout, present.

Also in attendance was Director of Community Development, John Said.

Alderman Stout recognized Jim Smith at his last meeting for the Development Committee and thanked him for his time, effort and dedication. Jim Smith expressed his thanks to his fellow Aldermen for their service and his respect for the administrative and legal teams.

2. Approval of Minutes.

A. March 9, 2015

Alderman Beifuss made a motion to approve the minutes with changes. The motion was seconded by Alderman Banas and all remaining members agreed and the motion was carried.

3. Public Participation.

None.

4. Items for Consent.

A. Wild Ginger Trail Right-of-Way Vacation & Conveyance

Alderman John Smith made a motion, seconded by Alderman Birch, to place the Item for Consent for Wild Ginger Trail on the April 20, 2015 City Council Agenda. The Committee members unanimously agreed and the motion carried.

5. Items for Discussion.

A. USAgain Donation Collection Bin Code Amendment – Conceptual Review

John Said summarized that, USAgain, LLC, a local for-profit business that collects used clothing for resale, is requesting the City Council consider adopting regulations to allow placement of donation bins for collection of items donated by the public. Mr. Said stated that after having reviewed the issue, staff does not support an ordinance to allow for clothing collection bins. He pointed out potential problems such as visual clutter and a licensing program, which would be needed to regulate donation bins of this type.

Alderman Stout invited the Committee members to hear from the applicants in attendance.

Representing USAgain, was Mr. Osvaldo Cedillo, Division Manager. Mr. Cedillo stated that many communities have reservations about allowing for the collection bins. However, USAgain has drafted an ordinance to address communities' concerns and to allow for companies like his to do business. They have an agreement with each of their site hosts and provide 24-hour service for the collection bins. They are currently working with the city of Joliet, where they will have about 30 sites for collection bins. He expressed that his company is one of the best at what they do and that furthermore, their company headquarters are located in West Chicago.

Alderman Banas asked the representative from USAgain how many sites would be used for the collection bins and where they would be placed. Mr. Cedillo estimated that around 8 bins would be used in a city with the population size of West Chicago and that they would be placed in locations visible to the public. Site hosts range from gas stations to storage areas, to restaurants. Alderman Banas asked what the ordinance is as it relates to private property. John Said clarified that the ordinance does not allow for the placement of collection bins on any private or public property.

Mr. Cedillo described the bin materials and stated that they are insured for every site host. He also said that their service is what they do best.

Alderman Banas asked for clarification about the company's for-profit structure. Mr. Cedillo replied that his company gives clothing a second chance and tries to keep it out of landfills. Eleven percent of landfills are composed of textiles and by making it more convenient for people to discard their unwanted clothing, that percentage can be decreased.

Alderman Grodoski asked about the type of clothing donations the company receives and Mr. Cedillo stated that they accept used clothing and act as a middle man in reselling it. He stated that about 30% remains in the US, while another portion of it is sold to developing countries for resale purposes in secondary markets there. Alderman Grodoski asked about the unwearable clothing and if it is recycled into pulp. Mr. Cedillo

responded that they do not sort the clothing and that it is sold as is. Alderman Grodoski then inquired if they have a schedule for regular pickups at the collection bins. Mr. Cedillo answered that they have a transportation manager for each of their 13 divisions across the country who manages the pickups. Alderman Grodoski asked how their company educates the public. Mr. Cedillo replied that they have a website that provides donation guidelines. They also work with communities to help with their recycling drives in order to not only collect clothing, but to raise awareness of textile recycling.

John Said commented that USAgain is the model for how collection of this nature should be handled. He noted further that while Mr. Cedillo's company might not be problematic, the difficulty in dealing with the licensing regulations for other clothing collection companies/organizations, would indeed pose a significant problem for staff. He also added that there are plenty of organizations that do home pickup of donated items.

Alderman Beifuss stated that he recalls having these types of collection bins in the community in the past and the problem of their being over-filled and visual clutter resulting. As such, the City has moved to eliminate this and other contributors of visual clutter. He indicated that not all companies are as responsible as USAgain and the City would need to deal with the problem of visual clutter. He also expressed concern about creating City ordinances limited to a particular company because all companies need to be treated fairly.

Alderman Beifuss also asked about the financial arrangement between the parties and Mr. Cedillo replied that there is payment to some of the site hosts based on cents per pound. Alderman Beifuss commented that other companies would see the opportunity and would also want to compete and add their bins. This could, in turn, cause a proliferation of bins. He acknowledged the benefit of recycling, but he does not support the idea of collection bins given the difficulty in ameliorating their potential clutter.

Alderman Banas asked if their company would be open to changing their business model in order to address the Committee's concerns, such as at-home pickup. Mr. Osvaldo replied that they are testing out the ideas of creating drop spots—brick and mortar locations—and going house to house. Collection bins have been around for a while, but that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to continue collections. Their company has developed an ordinance to allow for USAgain to be the sole company pursuing collections in communities.

Alderman Birch echoed Alderman Beifuss's concerns about enforcement and appearance. She knows firsthand that due to the nature of collections, they can be difficult to sort through. Accordingly, the collection bins in questions could present an opportunity for additional garbage accumulation.

Alderman Grodoski asked if residents of the City are able to drop off their donations at the company's location and Mr. Cedillo said yes. Alderman Grodoski pointed out the

importance of USAgain being an outlet for unwearable/unusable textiles, which might not be fitting donations for other organizations that accept used clothing. People need to be made more aware of the option their company presents.

John Said commented on the difficulty of after-hours monitoring of these collection bins and that while USAgain may be very responsible about maintenance, it would be challenging for the site hosts to monitor the donations after business hours.

Alderman Stout expressed her agreement with Aldermen Beifuss and Birch about the visual clutter and the additional staff time that would be needed for permitting and code enforcement. She furthered that while USAgain might be a model company in this matter, it would not be fair to allow for one company to pursue collections, but not another company. She also commented on the difficulty of after-hours monitoring. In addition, Alderman Stout advocated that it would be a great idea to better educate the public about the potential for drop-offs of used clothing at USAgain's facility, despite expressing some concern about the company's sorting process of the donations.

Alderman Banas suggested a community-wide "USAgain Day." Alderman Stout pointed out that there are days where paper shredding and recycling is offered and the public could also be made aware about the options that USAgain offers and from which their company would benefit.

Alderman Stout asked for the consensus of the Committee.

Alderman Beifuss stated his preference to not allow for the collection bins at this time, but that he hopes it will be a conversation to continue having in the future, especially as it relates to textile recycling.

Alderman Stout affirmed that the consensus of the Committee is to not allow for the collection bins at this time.

6. Unfinished Business.

None.

7. New Business.

None.

8. Reports from Staff.

John Said reported that City staff are working with a group looking to construct a new 300,000 square foot warehouse facility in the DuPage Business Center. He also informed the Committee that some West Chicago community representatives met last week with the consultants who are working on the Homes for a Changing Region study. Mr. Said

also stated that he had recently met with the Regional Transit Authority about the developer panel being planned. The meeting will most likely take place in June.

9. Adjournment.

Alderman Banas made a motion, seconded by Alderman John Smith, to adjourn the April 13, 2015 Development Committee meeting at 7:34 p.m. The Committee members unanimously agreed and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Burke
Executive Secretary