

# CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved August 8, 2016

## MINUTES

### DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

July 11, 2016, 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, Melissa Ferguson, Laura Grodoski, Jayme Sheahan, John Smith and Chairman Rebecca Stout, present. Alderman Beifuss arrived just after roll call was concluded.

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

2. **Approval of Minutes.**

A. **May 9, 2016**

Alderman Banas made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Alderman Smith. While Alderman Ferguson abstained, the remaining members agreed and the motion carried.

3. **Public Participation.** None.

4. **Items for Consent.**

A. **Norris-Segert Funeral Home - 132 Fremont Street, Façade Grant.**

Alderman Banas motioned to approve Item A for consent. Alderman Ferguson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The motion carried.

5. **Items for Discussion.**

A. **Municipal Code – Review and Recommendations – Retail Gun Sales.**

John Said provided a summary of this item, stating that staff was directed by elected officials to review the City's existing municipal regulations, and to evaluate potential new regulations, regarding retail gun sales. He reviewed the zoning for retail sales in the City of West Chicago where the retail sale of guns is currently allowed in Districts B-1, B-2 and B-3. He then reviewed the results of staff's research in having surveyed 41 other communities in regards to their existing municipal regulations for retail gun sales, and 16 communities responded. Based on those findings, recommendations were made to provide a level of regulatory control via the Zoning Code and direction was sought from the Committee about how to best craft the language for a text amendment.

Discussion of the matter ensued with clarification of where the B Districts are located within the City. Alderman Grodoski voiced her support for licensing and a text amendment. Alderman Beifuss supported the idea of a text amendment, preferring a special use for sales and ancillary use for sales in sporting goods stores in B-3 only, along with separation requirements from such areas as churches, libraries, schools, parks, etc. He did not support sales in B-1 or B-2.

Alderman Banas expressed his opinion that a text amendment to disallow retail gun sales in any of the B Districts was discriminatory and that it would send the message that the City is not a favorable place to do business. Alderman Smith concurred with Alderman Beifuss as to which zoning districts should allow for sales. Alderman Grodoski indicated her desire to see the downtown as a place supporting family centered activities and also agreed with the specifications made by Alderman Beifuss. Alderman Banas disagreed with the positions of his fellow aldermen and stated that government should not decide where gun purchases should occur. He added that the City should not lose out on this as possible tax revenue and he concluded that he would never support a text amendment of this sort.

Alderman Beifuss reminded the Committee that their discussion was about zoning. He noted that the City already zones such entities as churches, financial institutions, sporting goods stores, liquor stores, hardware stores, etc., and that these are reasonable regulations to be handled through the Zoning Code. Alderman Ferguson agreed with Alderman Beifuss and expressed her support of staff recommendation for special use in B-3. Alderman Stout suggested consideration of sales also being allowed in B-2 with proper separations. Alderman Sheahan stated that she agreed with sales not being allowed in the downtown area. Alderman Banas reiterated his disagreement.

More discussion followed about what is most suitable for West Chicago and the perception of what retail activity the downtown area should or should not have. Two aldermen shared that they have heard from residents who are not in support of allowing for sales in the downtown. Alderman Beifuss stated that the issue is not about being pro or anti guns. He noted the direction of some nearby communities—citing staff's research—that require retail gun sales as a special use and others that have already identified which zoning districts allow for sales. He thought this to be a reasonable accommodation for people who want to purchase and for others who may not. Alderman Banas again voiced his disagreement with his fellow aldermen.



A question was raised about which businesses are zoned for in each of the three retail sales districts, and John Said provided for the Committee by reading some examples aloud. Alderman Stout expressed that she would personally feel comfortable allowing for sales in B-2, with stipulations about distance requirements. Alderman Smith agreed with Alderman Stout as did Aldermen Grodoski and Ferguson.

Mane Segarra, business owner of West Chicago, expressed his views about the City both as a youth and as a current businessman. He suggested that the City not zone against any type of business.

Andrew Camamo, owner of Liberty Guns, shared his thoughts in regards to allowing for retail gun sales in the downtown. He stated that he closely follows all requirements for gun sales and that many families are in support of his business.

Holly Hayward, employee of Liberty Guns, also spoke to the Committee. She stated that many families enter the business and knows of no one who feels unsafe to pass in front of this store. She felt that the issue is that of perspective.

Alderman Stout asked the Committee for direction and after additional discussion a consensus was reached. Staff was directed to craft language that would allow for retail sales as a special use in B-2 and B-3 with distance separations.

**6. Unfinished Business.**

Alderman Beifuss inquired about the status of sale of the General Mills facilities and Mr. Said replied that he had requested to meet with their real estate department.

**7. New Business. None.**

**8. Reports from Staff.**

John Said reported that staff is finalizing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to send out to planning, development and real estate consultants to provide a review and update of the former Central Main Street Redevelopment Plan for the downtown, which was first completed in 2007. He anticipated sending out the RFP before the end of the month.

**9. Adjournment.**

**Alderman Banas made a motion, seconded by Alderman Smith, to adjourn the Development Committee meeting at 8:02 P.M. The Committee members unanimously agreed and the motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Burke  
Executive Secretary