

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved with changes October 8, 2018

MINUTES

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

September 10, 2018, 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 James Beifuss, Melissa Birch Ferguson, Michael Ferguson, Bonnie Gagliardi, Jayme Sheahan and Rebecca Stout present. Matt Garling arrived just after roll had been called.

Also in attendance was Community Development Director, Tom Dabareiner.

2. **Approval of Minutes.**

A. **August 13, 2018.**

Alderman Ferguson moved and Alderman Sheahan seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Voting Aye: Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Gagliardi, Garling, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

3. **Public Participation. None.**

4. **Items for Consent.**

Items B was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion at the request of the Alderman Beifuss.

A. **Ball Horticultural – 811 W. Brown Street - Rezoning.**

C. **Laramie Residence – 29W235 Blair Street – Pre-Annexation Agreement.**

Development Committee Minutes
September 10, 2018

Alderman Birch Ferguson moved and Alderman Beifuss seconded the motion to approve Items A and C for Consent. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Gagliardi, Garling, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

B. DMCS LLC – 220 Kress Road – Special Use & Concept Plan

Mr. Dabareiner provided an item summary. The petitioner is requesting approval of a special use to install a solar power facility on a 16-acre property. The facility will consist of multiple rows of solar panels, which will be pole mounted several feet above the ground and will automatically pivot during the day in sequence with the angle of the sun. The entire property will be enclosed with fencing. While the special use is straight forward from staff's perspective, the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the DuPage Airport Authority (DAA) requires the conceptual site plan meet the approval of the City Council with regards to: 1) zoning and 2) minimum design standards. City staff acknowledges it is compliant. The PC/ZBA approved unanimously the special use at their last meeting.

Alderman Beifuss indicated it is a good idea and he agrees with the analysis of a special use and supports the concept plan. He asked if the power generated from here would be potentially sufficient for the residences of West Chicago. Mr. Dabareiner replied that it would not be sufficient and added that the applicant is looking for three major users to start for financing purposes. One of those potential users could be the City.

Alderman Beifuss moved and Alderman Gagliardi seconded the motion to approve Item B for Consent. Voting Aye: Aldermen Beifuss, Birch Ferguson, Ferguson, Gagliardi, Garling, Sheahan and Stout. Voting Nay: 0.

5. Items for Discussion.

A. McAuley School – 1820 W. Roosevelt Road.

Diane Ferguson addressed the Committee members. She stated she had recently met with West Chicago Elementary School District 33 to discuss saving the McAuley School. While no decision was made at that meeting, she felt she was warmly received and she expressed a desire to get the interested parties together to continue discussions near the end of the month. She also mentioned hearing support and encouragement from members of the Historical Museum at a recent event. Going forward, it is her understanding that the ultimate decision will be left to the District 33 School Board and the City Council.

Ms. Ferguson encouraged the members to get involved and take a look at the blog for old, one room schools. She stated she told School District 33 she does not want to be part of the generation that lets this school die. She said the contract from 1991 to maintain the school was not honored by the District because they were inadequately funded by the State and were only able to provide for the students. The contract states they need to

maintain and keep the school open for historical education purposes, but they cannot move it or sell it, and nor can it be used for commercial purposes.

She mentioned a funding option like a GoFundMe page, and stated one donation was already received to remove a tree which could damage the roof if it were to fall. She commented they have an offer from a landscaper to clear the property and from a structural engineer who would be willing to waive his assessment fee. She also talked about the idea of creating a living history museum to be visited on school field trips. School trips would pay \$200 or \$300 for a visit, and if two visits were held each day, it would be self-sustaining. They also have a grant writer on board to help.

She expressed needing to have access to remove the tree, and then going forward with an assessment from a structural engineer to see if it is still possible to save the school. She asked for a meeting with anyone who is interested to meet to discuss. She stated that while she was unclear about the legal issues, she believes School District 33 could give it or sell it to the City for one dollar and the City could then donate it to the Historical Museum. She thanked the members for their time.

Alderman Beifuss stated that the important point is to get the conversation started. He mentioned attending an event there held about 10 years ago where he spoke with former students who wanted to see it saved, and he would like to see it saved, too. He also recalled some past discussions about where it could be moved to. He shared the names of several local organizations as well as ideas with Ms. Ferguson about where she might look for support and/or donations. He asked her if District 33 had reacted positively to the idea, and she replied they had. Alderman Beifuss also pointed out that consulting services may be available with the State of Illinois's National Register. In terms of the City's role, they would need a better understanding of costs and what would be involved. A brief discussion followed between Ms. Ferguson and Alderman Beifuss about a possible, structural engineering analysis, TIF District funding options, and additional resources.

Alderman Garling stated he likes the idea, but expressed caution about having the City funding this project. He stated the school district needs to provide *some of* the funding necessary as the building has been neglected. Ms. Ferguson said School District 33 had informed her they would not be able to provide any funding. She added that her premise is that the West Chicago taxpayers would not have to pay a dime as it would all be one by donations and fundraising.

Alderman Stout indicated that given the need to wait until the school year progresses further, this was as far as this discussion with the Development Committee could go for now until all of the right people can meet to discuss. Ms. Ferguson asked if a future discussion would be brought back to this Committee or the full Council and Alderman Stout responded it would be with the Development Committee.

6. Unfinished Business. None.

Development Committee Minutes
September 10, 2018

7. **New Business.** None.

8. **Reports from Staff.**

A. Project and Economic Development Updates.

Tom Dabareiner informed the members about some of the topics to be discussed at their next meeting, which include RAI Concrete wishing to expand their outdoor storage at their location at 1827 Blackhawk, DuPage Airport Authority rezoning the Hoffman property, and an auto repair facility pursuing a special use at 1850 W Roosevelt Road.

9. **Adjournment.**

Alderman Ferguson moved and Alderman Gagliardi seconded the motion to adjourn the Development Committee meeting at 7:30 P.M. The Committee members unanimously agreed and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Burke