

# CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved May 9, 2022

## MINUTES

### DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

April 11, 2022 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 Melissa Birch Ferguson, Christine Dettmann, John Jakabcsin, Jayme Sheahan, and Rebecca Stout present.

Also in attendance was Community Development Director, Tom Dabareiner.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes.

##### A. March 14, 2022.

Alderman Dettman moved and Alderman Jakabcsin seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Voting Aye: Aldermen Birch Ferguson, Dettmann, Jakabcsin, Sheahan and Stout.

Alderman Stout announced a change in the Agenda order whereby Item for Discussion 5. A., The Preserve at West Branch, would come next.

#### 5. Items for Discussion.

A. **The Preserve at West Branch** – Last month, the Plan Commission voted unanimously to recommend a proposed 226-unit single-family Pulte development known as the Preserve at West Branch, located north of the St. Andrews Golf Course property. Staff has received a request for continuance from a Homeowners' Association (letter included). Upcoming available meeting dates include a special meeting date of either Wednesday, April 27 or May 4, or the next regularly scheduled Development Committee meeting on Monday, May 9.

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Tom Dabareiner indicated that a request was received to continue this discussion to another meeting. Staff selected some possible options to schedule a special meeting or the Committee may proceed with the discussion.

**Alderman Birch Ferguson moved to table this discussion until the next regularly scheduled Development Committee meeting on May 9, 2022, and Alderman Dettman seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Aldermen Birch Ferguson, Dettmann, Jakabcsin, Sheahan and Stout.**

**3. Public Participation.** None.

**4. Items for Consent.** None.

**6. Unfinished Business.** None.

**7. New Business.**

**A. Outdoor Dining** – Discussion is requested on whether the Development Committee wishes to see Outdoor Dining in the Public Right of Way continued, at all, or either seasonally or year-round, as a Special Use (recommended) or Permitted Use, and have Staff develop formal regulations for consideration at the next available Plan Commission Meeting.

Alderman Stout stated they are always looking for ways to help their small businesses. The COVID Pandemic affected many businesses, but some adaptations were made in order to help them keep functioning. Tonight's discussion is to explore the potential for making permanent some of the allowances given during the Pandemic and to have staff look into corresponding language for text amendments.

Alderman Birch Ferguson said she is in favor of allowing businesses to continue doing this.

Alderman Stout recognized Alan Gilbert, owner of The Bunker Bar & Grille, 216 Main St., to speak. He thanked the Members for the opportunity to speak and that it means a lot to the owners and patrons of his business to explore this option. He relayed the City provided for the purchase of and allowed them to put tables and chairs in front of this business. Eventually, they found a way to make the setup work while still allowing for proper sidewalk clearance. The surrounding businesses also benefitted from the increased foot traffic. It made the downtown look lively. Now he has to store the outdoor tables and chairs, however, as he has no other place to put them.

Alderman Dettman asked if there were ever any problems with accessibility. Mr. Gilbert said they did once, but they made some adjustments to make it work. He stated he has heard that some cities have businesses sign agreements regarding outdoor seating in the Public Right of Way.

Alderman Sheahan said she thinks it is a good idea, but she believes more structure needs to be put in place. Alderman Dettman stated the Pandemic is not really over as businesses are still playing catch up. The tables, chairs and tents purchased should not go to waste. Outdoor dining makes the City look vibrant, and as long as it is safe she is all for it.

Alderman Jakabcsin stated he is all for it as long as there is a walking path for strollers and passersby. He mentioned other cities allow for this and it seems to work quite well. Even the outdoor tents in winter seem to work well. Mr. Gilbert mentioned smoking and hat he has had to work with smokers to ensure they are a proper distance away. Mr. Dabareiner indicated that smokers would need to be at least 15 feet away from any outdoor patrons. Mr. Gilbert said he is happy to comply with whatever rules he needs to follow. Mr. Jakabcsin stated that he would like to see this change come about as quickly as possible as he has heard case counts are rising in some areas of the country. Mr. Gilbert indicated he also would like to have the two parking spots in front of his establishment for table use.

Alderman Stout indicated the members seem to have unanimous support. Mr. Dabareiner said that more direction is looked-for regarding the serving of alcohol on public property. Alderman Birch Ferguson said she is in favor of allowing it seasonally with their liquor license. She supports a Special Use, but does not want the businesses to pay an additional fee. Mr. Dabareiner stated that a Special Use is proposed by to ensure that other requirements, such as ADA regulations, are met. Alderman Stout asked how to put limits in place to not allow alcohol to be served on public property everywhere. Mr. Dabareiner suggested making allowances for the Downtown TIF area, but indicated these types of restrictions are difficult to put in place. Alderman Dettman asked if liquor licenses could be limited. Mr. Dabareiner said yes, but they could not control in which areas they would apply. Alderman Sheahan said she does not feel it would be fair to only allow for this in the TIF area. Alderman Stout asked if it would be possible to add stipulations within a Special Use to define the allowable areas.

Alan Gilbert mentioned he is one of the few establishments looking for use in the Public Right of Way. Alderman Dettman asked about limiting the number of current licenses, and then allowing for more if needed. Further discussion ensued among the Alderman, Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Dabareiner about special use options and changing the liquor license requirements for outdoor dining with seasonal restrictions. Mr. Dabareiner said this Item would come back to the Committee for discussion and he asked about timing. Alderman Stout suggested it be the first Item on the Agenda in May to address this matter promptly.

**8. Reports from Staff. None.**

**8. Adjournment.**

**Alderman Birch Ferguson moved, and Alderman Dettman seconded the motion to adjourn the Development Committee meeting at 7:23 p.m. Voting Aye: Aldermen Birch Ferguson, Dettman, Jakabcsin, Sheahan and Stout.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Burke

