



Economic Development Commission

**Wednesday, February 24, 2016
Council Chambers Room**

Minutes

Commissioners Present

James Persino, Chair
James Kucienski, Vice Chair
Myles D. Berman
Patrick Kaniff
Paul Levine
Pat McCoy
Terrence Strauch

Commissioners Absent

Nadia Seniuta
James Berger

Staff Present

Tim Wiberg, Village Manager
Doug Petroschius, Assistant Village Manager
Robert Merkel, Finance Director
Ashley Englemann, Public Works Director
Jim Amelio, Village Engineer
Andrew Letson, Assistant to the Public Works Director
Aaron Cook, AICP, Community Development Manager
Caleb Miller, Community Development Intern

Others Present

Bryan L. Luke, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.
Josephine Bellalta, Altamanu Inc.
Larry Elster, Trustee
Jacqueline Boland, Executive Director of the Lincolnwood Chamber of Commerce

1. Call to Order/ Quorum Declaration

Noting that a quorum of 6 members was present, the meeting was called to order at 8:03AM by Vice Chairman Kucienski, followed by a roll call during which Chairman Persino entered the meeting at 8:05AM.

2. Minutes Approval

Vice Chairman Kucienski asked the Commission if they proposed any changes to the January 27, 2016 meeting minutes. Hearing no discussion, Commissioner Kaniff moved to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Strauch. Minutes approved by voice vote 7-0.

3. Devon Avenue Streetscape

Chairman Persino introduced the topic of the Devon Avenue Streetscape, inviting Manager Cook to provide background on the issue. Manager Cook briefly discussed the subject at hand, then introduced Village Engineer James Amelio, as well as Bryan Luke of Christopher B. Burke Engineers Ltd. and Josephine Bellalta of Altamanu Inc.

Mr. Amelio began his presentation by discussing its overview and purpose, which was to solicit the Commission's input on the geometry, access management, streetscape palette, and site furnishings along the Devon Avenue corridor. He then moved on to the timeline of the project, beginning with the initial study done by the Urban Land Institute, followed by the establishment of the Devon-Lincoln TIF District. He then noted the approval of a Surface Transportation Program (STP) grant from the North Shore Council of Mayors. Manager Wiberg asked if the STP grant covered 80% of the costs, to which Mr. Amelio responded that it covered 70% of the costs, and the remaining 30% will be split between the Village and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). Manager Wiberg noted that the Village has to pay a very minimal portion of the actual cost, the funds for which come directly from the TIF District. Discussion then ensued on the actual costs of the project.

Mr. Amelio then moved on to the current status of the project, indicating that the Phase I engineering and design process has commenced as of 2016, with the concept of the plan updated per EDC recommendations from the July 2015 meeting. He also noted that a meeting was held with the Federal Highway Authority on February 9, 2016, and that the current phase of the process involves soliciting stakeholder input. He then moved on to the breakdown of the funding sources, noting that the total project cost would be \$4.5 million. \$3.2 million (or 70%) of the cost would come directly from the aforementioned STP grant, and the remaining \$1.3 million would be split between the Village and CDOT, at \$650,000 each. Finally, he presented the remaining timeline of the project, with Phase I and Phase II design processes occurring through 2016 and 2017, and construction beginning 2018.

Mr. Amelio then passed the presentation to Bryan Luke, who began discussing the geometry and access management of the corridor. Mr. Luke indicated that the current plans as presented were a working start, and that they would be updated pending

stakeholder feedback. Modifications of the plan, he said, would be presented to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for final comments and revisions. He indicated that it would be ideal for Phase I and Phase II design processes to be complete by July 2016 in order for construction to begin in 2018, based off IDOT's scheduling.

Mr. Luke then laid out the components of geometry and access management, which included parking, medians, crosswalks, and streets and driveways changing to right-in-right-out. He indicated that the amount of on-street parking will be unchanged in the design, but some individual properties may see a net gain or loss of parking spaces on the street in front of them due to the addition of bump-outs and crosswalks. He also noted that the current concept does not include additional parking on any side streets. Moving on to medians, Mr. Luke indicated that there will be a landscape median as well as shorter turning lanes for side street access. He then discussed the crosswalks included in the concept plan, with one being located at Kimball Avenue and another located at St. Louis Avenue. He indicated that the crosswalk at Kimball has been agreed upon by most stakeholders because of its location in front of the post office on the Chicago side. Finally, he moved on to the side streets and driveways changing to right-in-right-out due to the addition of a median on Devon Avenue. Discussion ensued regarding traffic on side streets. Cross-sections of the existing conditions and proposed changes were then presented to the Commission.

Mr. Luke turned the presentation to Ms. Bellalta to discuss the streetscape palette and site furnishings along Devon Avenue. She indicated that the proposed cross-section was very similar to the corridor on the Chicago side of the North Shore Channel, which includes several designs meant to slow the flow of traffic and improve pedestrian infrastructure, which she indicated the western corridor of Devon could use. She also noted that the design process requires coordination between two different communities with different established design palettes. For example, Ms. Bellalta said, the streetlights for both communities are different, though similar enough to allow both communities to have their own streetlights.

Chairman Persino inquired whether the streetlights would include "piggybacks" for sidewalk lighting, and expressed his desire for those to be included on the Lincolnwood side in order to better light the sidewalk and businesses along the corridor at night. Mr. Luke and Ms. Bellalta both indicated that these were not included in the plans, but they would be open to adding them. Commissioner Levine then inquired about the distance between streetlights along the corridor. Mr. Luke responded, saying that they would be roughly 160 feet apart, which Ms. Bellalta indicated would be too far apart for pedestrians. She then suggested adding pedestrian-scale poles between each streetlight in order to better light the sidewalk. Discussion ensued on the streetlights in the corridor.

Ms. Bellalta moved on to discuss the continuity of design from the eastern side of the corridor, across the North Shore Channel, into the western side through Lincolnwood. She presented the recently-completed designs of the Chicago corridor, which included black steel benches, bike racks that are bolted (rather than implanted), and concrete pavers of varying shades of brown that match the buildings along the corridor. Chairman Persino inquired whether the furnishings were made from steel due to his concerns about rusting. Ms. Bellalta indicated that they are all steel but powder-coated to prevent rust. Chairman Persino responded by saying that powder-coated furnishings tend to rust anyway, and expressed that he would prefer aluminum or stainless steel furnishings to prevent them from rusting.

Ms. Bellalta moved on to additional furnishings, including a pre-cast concrete pot for plants. She noted that these types of pots require less maintenance because of their self-insulating features, which allow plants to live throughout the winter months. Additionally, they store much more water because of their size, and therefore require much less watering. She also moved on to describe in-ground planters along the corridor, as well as trash receptacles. Finally, she discussed the tree planters along the corridor, including methods for extending the lifespan of the trees, such as root paths underneath the sidewalk. She then compared all of the streetscape furnishings in Chicago to those in Lincolnwood, in particular those found at the corner of Touhy and Crawford.

The presentation then moved on to the suggested pavers along the Devon Avenue corridor. Ms. Bellalta listed eight different options for pavers, most of which containing elements similar to those found throughout Lincolnwood, such as red or terra cotta accents. Chairman Persino indicated that his preferred option was the second one presented, entitled Devon Ave #1, which Vice Chairman Kucienski also noted was his favorite of the options. Vice Chairman Kucienski then asked whether the colors of the pavers would fade over time. Ms. Bellalta indicated that they can fade, but new techniques are being implemented to slow or prevent the fading.

Following the presentation on the palette and site furnishings, Commissioners viewed aerial concept maps of different sections of the corridor. Commissioner Kaniff inquired whether the planters along the sidewalks and in the median would be irrigated. Ms. Bellalta indicated that the median landscapes would be irrigated. Mr. Luke that the planters on the Village side would include irrigation, but not the City of Chicago side. Mr. Luke and Ms. Bellalta then went through the proposed changes to the median and sidewalks. Commissioner McCoy inquired whether the new design around the post office near Kimball Avenue would cause more traffic issues due to the already present problem of double-parking in front of the post office. He asked whether there was a way to discourage this sort of behavior. Additionally, Chairman Persino noted that the restriction

of left turns onto Kimball Avenue would disrupt business at Whistler's restaurant. Discussion ensued, and Trustee Elster indicated that the Traffic Commission would be meeting on the streetscape plan, at which time these particular issues will be discussed.

Chairman Persino inquired whether the crosswalk proposed on Kimball would require traffic to stop. Mr. Luke responded saying that technically traffic is already required to stop for pedestrians, but the addition of markings would make the law more easily enforceable. Additionally, Ms. Bellalta noted that the bump-outs at the crosswalk and at other locations would work to slow the traffic in the corridor, which would make drivers more aware of pedestrians at the crosswalk and make it much easier for them to stop. Chairman Persino then asked whether they are proposing both sides of the corridor have exactly the same designs and furnishings. Ms. Bellalta responded saying that most of the designs will be the same, and any differences will be minor and unnoticeable to the public.

Mr. Luke concluded the presentation, discussing the next steps of the design process. He noted that a public meeting will be required, which Mr. Amelio indicated would be held on April 21st, and will be combined with the Traffic Commission meeting. Mr. Luke continued, saying that CDOT would like stakeholders on the City of Chicago side to be invited. He indicated that this would be beneficial to the project because both stakeholders will be present for comment. Commissioner Levine suggested inviting the Beautification Committee to the public hearing, as well.

Commissioner Berman inquired if there were any empirical studies on the impact on businesses from changes such as those proposed in the streetscape plan, including the reduction in left-turn opportunities. Ms. Bellalta responded, saying that the dynamic of the traffic will change, but not necessarily the business activity, meaning that people will find alternate routes to these businesses if necessary. Commissioner Kaniff also responded, saying that the months of construction will disrupt the usual patterns of traffic, so that by the end of the construction period (roughly eight months), any previous habits of drivers in the area will be forgotten. Discussion ensued regarding businesses that will potentially be impacted due to these changes. Discussion on streetscape concluded shortly thereafter.

4. Reports

A. Development Updates

Manager Cook presented the Development Updates, including the upcoming public hearing on the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to be held on April 13th. Next, he discussed the transfer of Special Use approval at the former Lincolnwood Wines & Spirits site, at which a new owner is interested in operating a liquor store. Commissioner

McCoy inquired whether this new business would operate differently than Binny's. Manager Wiberg responded, saying that the owners were pursuing a business model aimed towards faster in-and-out service.

Finally, Manager Cook discussed the extension of the Pre-Development Agreement for North Capital Group at the Purple Hotel Site, which was approved by the Village Board. The extension is to last through March 4, 2017, but it can be terminated if certain development benchmarks are not met by prior dates. Discussion continued on the process around the Purple Hotel site.

B. New Business Licenses

Commissioners reviewed the list of new business licenses issued during the month of January 2016.

5. Other Business

Commissiner Levine brought up an issue regarding the on-street parking at the BP gas station on Lincoln Avenue. He indicated that cars pulling out of the parking spots going northbound cannot see oncoming traffic. He directed staff to look into the issue. Discussion ensued briefly before moving on.

7. Public Forum

No member of the public desired to address the Commission.

8. Adjournment

By consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caleb Miller
Community Development Intern