



Economic Development Commission

**Wednesday, October 28, 2015
Council Chambers Room**

Minutes

Commissioners Present

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

Commissioners Absent

None

Staff Present

Timothy M. Clarke, AICP, Community Development Director
Caleb Miller, Community Development Intern

Others Present

Jesal Patel, Trustee
Larry Elster, Trustee

1. Call to Order/ Quorum Declaration

Noting that a quorum of 6 members was present, the meeting was called to order at 8:02AM by Vice Chairman Kucienski.

2. Minutes Approval

Commissioner Strauch moved to approve, as proposed, the September 16, 2015 meeting minutes of the Commission. Commissioner Berger seconded the motion. Motion approved by voice vote 5-0-1 with Commissioner McCoy abstaining. (Commissioners Persino, Levine and Berman arriving to the meeting after minute approval).

3. 2016 Meeting Schedule

Director Clarke summarized the proposed 2016 Commission meeting calendar, noting that it followed the Commission's general practice of meeting on the fourth Wednesday

of the month at 8AM, except for November and December, when they are generally held on the third Wednesday of the month due to major holidays. He noted that none of the proposed meetings for 2016 appeared to fall on any major religious or federal holiday, but invited Commissioner review. It was also noted that there was a typing error included in the proposed meeting date for July, which was indicated as the 22nd of the month, while the meeting is intended to be scheduled for July 27, the fourth Wednesday of July. On review, Commissioner Berman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McCoy to approve the 2016 meeting schedule as amended. Motion approved by voice vote, 7-0.

4. Binny's Beverage Depot

Discussion began with Vice Chairman Kucienski inquiring as to why the Economic Development Commission was deliberating on the matter of Binny's Beverage Depot. Director Clarke indicated that Chairman Persino, had requested that the Commission consider this matter and whether a statement should be made by the Commission. Director Clarke noted that Binny's is seeking a Special Use and various sign variations which will be considered at a public hearing before the Plan Commission meeting on November 3rd.

Director Clarke then summarized the specific requests of Binny's. Along with a special use request for a packaged goods/liquor store use at the former Lincolnwood Produce site, Binny's is also pursuing sign variations for the number and size of wall and monument signs. Commissioner McCoy inquired about the specific size of the monument signs. Director Clarke responded and noted that mock-ups of the proposed monument signs were installed on the property for the public hearing. Commissioner Strauch added that he has seen the mock-ups and did not believe these were obtrusive from a driver's perspective.

Vice Chairman Kucienski expressed his concern regarding the proposed Binny's location, saying that he did not find a liquor store appropriate at a gateway to the community, despite its revenue-producing capabilities. Commissioner Strauch replied, saying most drivers on Touhy or Lincoln Avenues may be unaware that they are in Lincolnwood, or may mistake the site for Skokie, so did not feel it would harm the community's attractiveness. Further, he added, he did not believe it was under the purview of the Commission to discuss the aesthetics of the development, but rather whether the proposal would produce an economic benefit to the Village, which he believed it would.

Chairman Persino added that the corner of Lincoln and Touhy Avenues was not necessarily a gateway to the community, but rather it could be considered a town center.

Vice Chairman Kucienski agreed with the Chairman, but maintained a liquor store was inappropriate for such a location. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Berman asked what exactly was desired at this location, whether Binny's was a good fit and if the Village was choosing some development activity because it was better than no development activity. Chairman Persino responded by saying he believed some residents compare the Village to Glencoe or Wilmette, noting that Lincolnwood is much more diverse in terms of ethnicity and income than such north shore communities and such comparison is not appropriate. Discussion ensued on what Lincolnwood should aspire to be.

Commissioner Strauch noted that past Village administrations had frequently denied new developments, and that the Village should move away from such a policy of denial. He stated his support for Binny's, indicating his belief that it would be an effective anchor for a property needing a good anchor. He stated he believed Binny's is a quality retail establishment.

In responding to whether the Village may be accepting any development over no development, Chairman Persino noted that the Village must acknowledge the reality of the market place and that many retailers already have locations in this market. Trustee Patel noted that the Village has very limited sites for larger retailers and many of the available sites in the Village are challenged due to either size or configuration. Chairman Persino agreed, noting for instance that Costco had expressed specific desire in the Village but a site large enough and meeting their requirements was simply not available. Discussion continued.

Commissioner Kaniff noted that a Binny's would provide essential activity on the site, which is important to spur further economic development near the intersection. Commissioner Seniuta agreed, contending that increased activity at the site could help spur development at the former Purple Hotel site. Commissioner Strauch added that Binny's would increase sales tax revenue, which he said was important. Chairman Persino indicated that he understood that Binny's would generate roughly \$20 million in sales per year at this location.

Discussion then moved back to the signs, with Commissioner McCoy indicating his support for Binny's, but discomfort with the proposed additional monument signs. Discussion continued on whether it was appropriate for the Commission to weigh-in on variation requests. Discussion ensued after which Chairman Persino suggested that the draft Commission statement remove reference to sign variations. Discussion continued

with Commissioners concurring that they should not weigh-in on sign variations or any site issues as these were not under the purview of the Commission

Hearing no further discussion, Commissioner Strauch made a motion to approve the proposed Commission statement regarding Binny's as amended with the reference to sign variations removed. Motion seconded by Commissioner Seniuta. Roll Call vote, in support of the motion: Persino, Levine; Strauch; Berger; Seniuta; and McCoy. Against the motion: Berman and Kucienski. Motion approved 6-2 (Commissioner Kaniff leaving the meeting before the vote was taken). Director Clarke indicated the Commission's adopted statement will be presented to the Plan Commission for the public hearing on November 4th, 2015. The adopted statement can be viewed as an attachment to the meeting minutes.

5. Reports

A. Development Updates

Director Clarke summarized the written development update report. Discussion also occurred regarding pending developments on the former Purple Hotel site.

B. New Business Licenses

Commissioners reviewed the list of new business licenses issued during the month of September 2015.

6. Other Business

Commissioner Berman inquired about the possibility of holding Commission meetings in the evenings. He expressed concern that morning meetings were at a time that prohibited public participation, and that evening meetings may encourage more citizen attendance.

Commissioner discussion ensued regarding the possibility of convening evening meetings and also the possibility of televising the meetings. Discussion topics included whether it was wise to convene only some meetings in the evening, whether specific topics should be identified for such meetings and whether any public would attend. Also discussed was whether televising would limit Commission discussion of sensitive material provided by developers or limit frank discussions.

Chairman Persino ask Commissioners to consider these matters, ask staff to seek input from the Village President and Manager and that this will be further discussed at the next Commission meeting.

7. Public Forum

No member of the public desired to address the Commission.

8. Adjournment

On motion by Vice Chairman Kucienski, and seconded by Commissioner Berman, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:22 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caleb Miller
Community Development Intern



Economic Development Commission
Statement on
Proposed Binny's Beverage Mart

Village plans for the Lincoln/Touhy area envision this area to become the downtown center for the community. These planning documents call for strong or unique retailers to become part of this area. Currently Binny's Beverage Mart is seeking zoning relief to renovate and occupy 7175 Lincoln Avenue, in vacant space formerly occupied by Lincolnwood Produce and New Century Bank.

The Economic Development Commission has reviewed these plans by Binny's. We believe that not only is Binny's an excellent and attractive fit for the former Lincoln Produce site, but that Binny's promises to provide a solid and significant sales tax revenue source for the community. Further, Binny's is known in the marketplace to have extensive product lines that will attract shoppers to this key location in the Village.

We believe Binny's at the proposed location will be an asset for the Village and we support and recommend approval of the Special Use sought by Binny's in their proposal to occupy 7175 Lincoln Avenue.

***This statement was approved by the Economic Development Commission
on October 28, 2015 by a 6-2 vote***