

**MINUTES
COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE PARK
November 3, 2011
Village Hall
447 N. Catherine Avenue
La Grange Park, Illinois
7:00 P.M.**

Chairman LaVelle Topps called the Commercial Revitalization Committee (CRC) meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. on Thursday, November 3, 2011, in the Board Room of the Village Hall, 447 N. Catherine Avenue, La Grange Park, Illinois.

Present: Chairman LaVelle Topps
Trustee Patricia Rocco,
Trustee Susan Storcel

Also Present: Village Manager Julia Cedillo
Village Clerk Amanda Seidel,
Village Fire Chief Dean Maggos
Ann Wiegand- Resident 820 N. Kensington

Village Clerk Seidel stated that a quorum was present. Chairman Topps said the first item was the approval of the minutes from the September 29, 2011 meeting. Committee Member Rocco said "I move to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2011 Commercial Revitalization Committee Meeting." Trustee Storcel seconded the motion. The motion to approve passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Chairman Topps began the meeting by leading discussion of Agenda Item #3 and passed the meeting over to Village Manager Cedillo for an update.

Forbes.com Marketing/ Follow-up

Village Manager Cedillo passed out an updated sample of what the 5 wooden signs would look like. They would be placed under the Village Entry signs and say "Named by Forbes Among America's 20 Most Stable Housing Markets!-2010" with the Forbes logo underneath. The sample was designed by Signs by Slack who also created the Village Entry signs.

Trustee Topps raised concern if the signs will be large enough to read as cars drive by traveling 35mph; he also raised concern about the dilapidated condition of the entrance sign near 31st and Brainard.

Discussion began about the condition of the entrance signs and possible ways to improve their condition like landscaping and painting.

Village Manager Cedillo informed the Committee that Traci has some pictures of the current signs and she will see what information Traci has collected and we can go from there.

Trustee Rocco then updated the committee on the progress of phone calls she had made to local realtors regarding financial assistance/sponsorship for the Forbes signs. She said she had contacted realtors including L. Lonzo, Nancy Miller, Kathy Kazpa, Melody Whip of Coldwell Banker and Dean Russo. Realtors seemed to be agreeable to nominal contributions like \$25.00. It was suggested that Coldwell Banker could send an email blast. It was her recommendation to send an email or letter blast to La Grange Park Realtors.

Trustee Rocco passed out a sample letter she created to send to realtors which introduces the CRC and would have the sample page of the sign attached and would realtors to make a contribution to defray the costs of the Forbes signs.

Discussion began over the effectiveness of sending an email versus a letter and what lists we could utilize. Discussion continued with the possibility of sending a request on e-briefs or directly solicit businesses.

Trustee Storcel liked the idea of a letter adding "we appreciate our business" to the opening paragraph.

Resident Wiegand had a sample of a mailing the Village Market did with special offers for businesses who would be interested in locating there. Resident Wiegand also expressed the importance and concern for residents not to confuse the La Grange Park Business Association with the CRC.

Discussion started about ways to publicize contributors including e- briefs, rose clippings, website and press releases.

Village Manager Cedillo informed the committee she would work with Traci on a better plan and look further into emailing businesses.

Trustee Rocco informed the Committee she would update her letter and hold off with Coldwell Banker at this point. It was suggested by Village Manager Cedillo that the letter be signed by the CRC Village of La Grange Park.

Resident Anne Wiegand mentioned the possibility of a beatification fund and reaching out to residents for contributions.

Village Manager Cedillo said she will talk to Attorney Keating regarding the legalities of asking residents to assist in sponsorship for the Forbes signs.

Village Manager Cedillo said she will meet with Traci and they will work on a good working plan for the next meeting.

Chairman Topps moved on to the next agenda item.

ICSC Chicago Deal Making- Feedback and Commentary

Chairman Topps asked the Committee Members for an update and input from the ICSC Deal Making conference.

Trustee Storcel said she attended the second day of the conference and a problem she found was people were taking down their displays. She was pleased that everyone was willing to share ideas and information. She said it was a good networking event and we should sit down with these people over coffee, we have to keep in mind that we are different than many of these communities since we are largely residential.

Resident Wiegand informed the committee that she has made phone calls to many people and businesses and would provide the committee with her notes if they are interested.

Trustee Storcel used Elmhurst as an example with Bleeding Heart Bakery. She also had a copy of SCT- Shopping Centers Today that had some interesting articles, which she showed to the committee. Village Manager Cedillo commented that Elmhurst takes the approach of bringing in hot trendy businesses which seem to work for there community.

A brief discussion started over Village Market and how they have many internal vacant spots. There signage seemed to be an issue. Digital signs were discussed and there benefits compared to a static sign. Village Manager Cedillo commented that she attended a learning session which included the importance of signage and they used the catch phrase "let them have there pepper".

Resident Wiegand reminded the Committee of the upcoming Holiday Activities at Village Market.

Village Manager Cedillo brought back many samples from other communities of their Village and Economic Development publications to share with the committee. Village Manager Cedillo said that the communities all have a specific message, it is important to know your message in 60 seconds and make sure you have a paper with key information on your community. She talked to developers and learned the importance to compliment your neighboring communities. She used an example from Oak Park. She mentioned that Day 1 of the conference is primarily for retail businesses and commercial developers making deals, Day2 in the morning is the best time to talk to people. She said the conference had a very invaluable and massive Expo Center.

Village Manager Cedillo said the cost would be between \$2,000 and \$3,000 for a display and booth for the Village of La Grange Park to participate in the ICSC Expo.

Trustee Rocco also attended the conference. She said economic developers look at communities website first then schools, retirement areas, hospitals, etc. They are looking for reasons why businesses would want to locate here. She said we should look at upcoming places and businesses. She also said she would love to see Village Market as a mini mall again. She mentioned the Retail 123 publication.

Village Manager Cedillo said she will make a copy of the Retail 123 publication for the next meeting.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the cost for the conference and membership costs to ICSC.

After no further discussion Chairman Topps moved on to the next agenda item.

Community Websites & Economic Development

Village Manager Cedillo presented the committee with a packet that Traci had put together from researching communities websites.

Discussion occurred about likes and dislike of information on community websites in the packet.

Trustee Storcel asked we could get interns from NIU for projects. Village Manager Cedillo will reach out to UIC for more interns.

Discussion of La Grange Park's current website occurred and how we build with what we have.

Trustee Topps moved on to the next item.

Action Plan Discussion

Village Manager Cedillo asked what three things does the committee want to include on an information sheet for LGP.

Chairman Topps would like to solicit a burger joint for the Village Market. A brief discussion of a possible outreach letter to upcoming businesses occurred.

Chief Maggos commented that businesses will go to our website and we need more information on our website.

A brief discussion over parameters to include on a map for the website including expressways 294, 55, Eisenhower and close neighboring communities.

Village Manager Cedillo said we can create another webpage with economic development, demographics and a map.

Trustee Rocco asked Village Manager Cedillo if a letter could be resend to businesses about the CRC.

Discussion occurred on what 3 important things the Committee would like to focus on:

1. Website with map and demographics

2. Outreach letter sent to 25 companies, Village Manager Cedillo asked each committee member to email her 5 businesses they would like on the list. Chairman Topps and Village Manager Cedillo will work on a draft letter.
3. Forbes Sign letter

Trustee Rocco asked that on the CRC Mission and Vision Statement that 31street needs to be changed to 31st Street Corridor. Concern was raised on how many letters went out with this error.

There was no further business to bring to the CRC.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Committee agreed to meet again on January 12, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Storcel brought a motion to adjourn, Trustee Rocco seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously on a voice vote. With no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Topps declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Amanda G. Seidel
Village Clerk