

**MINUTES
COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE PARK
August 18, 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 7:12 p.m. on Thursday, August 18, 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 (arrived at 7:17pm)

Also Present: Village Manager Julia Cedillo, Village Clerk Amanda Seidel,
Sheri Sauer- President, La Grange Park Business Association

Interim Village Manager Cedillo stated that a quorum was present. Chairman Topps said the first item was the approval of the minutes from the July 21, 2011 meeting. Committee Member Rocco said "I move to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2011 Commercial Revitalization Committee Meeting." Trustee Topps 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 CRC Mission and Vision Statements.

Trustee Rocco provided the committee with a draft Vision and Mission Statements, Notes from the Village Website and Website Samples.

Chairman Topps commented on the large amount of vacancies you see when you look at the different business districts in La Grange Park.

At the last meeting a handout of businesses was provided by Dan Ungerleider at CMAP. Village Manager Cedillo clarified that occupancy rate is calculated from brick and mortar businesses, the handout included internet and home based businesses. Her suggestion is to do a survey of brick and mortar businesses to get better numbers and an occupancy rate. There are a lot of factors to take into consideration. When you look at the Village Market, they have a high occupancy rate close to 90% but that is calculated by square footage and Jewel takes up a large part of village market.

Ms. Sheri Sauer President of the La Grange Park Business Association was then introduced to the committee. Sheri Sauer said she is looking forward to working with the CRC. The Business association can work together. She said she will be going to all businesses for the banner program and will get a good idea of what business we have

and which ones are no longer here. She also commented that a large percent of home based businesses are members of the business association.

Village Manager Cedillo suggested soliciting home based businesses through e-briefs, Rose Clippings and flyers.

She then provided the committee with a list of all businesses in La Grange Park that have a business license. One great tool she thinks the village should have is a business database with where they are located, square footage/dimensions and a contact. She said a few databases would be useful as well as collecting data to integrate into a business map and put that on the website.

Sheri Sauer suggested we contact some local real estate people, leasing agents and property managers. She also mentioned that Alpha Graphics has a nice list of businesses.

Trustee Storcel commented that it would be a nice way to collaborate with the Business Association; to hit businesses door to door with banner info, highlights and a possible form for them to fill out.

Village Manager Cedillo will draft a letter or flyer since the committee would like to see a letter of introduction to businesses to let them know about the CRC.

Village Manager Cedillo informed the committee they have an intern ready to start who could research, make phone calls and start gathering data. Another project for the intern would be populating a database with business emails.

Trustee Topps would like to see the intern call businesses for emails and secondly send a letter regarding the e-briefs program.

Discussion occurred on what information they would like collected including emails and which businesses are corporate owned.

Next the discussion turned to discussing mission and vision statements.

Trustee Topps would like to see the statements short, simple and to the point with bullet points.

Village Manager Cedillo presented two options. Option 1: create a CRC mission and vision statement and present it to the Board of Trustees or Option 2: create a mission and vision statement for the committee

It was by consensus of the committee to go with option 2.

Next Trustee Storcel's *Vision and Mission Statement Draft* were discussed.

Three concepts of retention, expansion, attraction were liked by the committee.

Discussion and clarification began about the differences of mission and vision statements. A mission statement is where you are going now, describing purpose and a vivid idea of a desired outcome. A vision statement is where you want to be.

Village Manager Cedillo started discussion by asking the committee “What is your purpose in helping this community?” and “how are you helping?” She said it is also important to use exciting words like “vibrant”

Discussion continued of the importance to shop local, promote businesses through e-briefs and the banner program and development of new businesses.

Sheri Sauer commented on the importance of asking the business community what they would like to see. She said business owners look at a community to see who will be shopping at their business.

Discussion continued on what the committee would like to see go into the CRC Mission and Vision Statement. Village Manager Cedillo wrote key concepts on the board.

Mission:

Key Concepts:

Retention

Expansion

Attraction

Vision:

Where we want to be in the future

A clear understanding of the business environment and needs of residents

Able to set and achieve goals

Enhance quality of life to residents and business owners

Benefits:

Encouraging shopping local

Promote the business (village outlets)

Working with local businesses and commercial property owners

Seek input as to what residents want. Business and Services (needs and amenities)

Be a resource for potential business owners

Work with the community partners to support businesses

Sheri Sauer pointed out that state of the art fire alarms are a big attraction to businesses. Village Manager Cedillo commented that wireless alarms are in the 5 year plan.

Village Manager Cedillo asked for thoughts from the committee on How to sell La Grange Park and why business owners should locate or do business here.

A resident asked to address the committee. Mr. Herb Mason of 535 N. Catherine commented that the benefits of the committee are to research and make recommendations to the board to assist in accomplishing overall goals.

Discussion turned back to the vision statement and where the committee wants to be in the future. Village Manager Cedillo commented that the committee needs a clear understanding to set objectives, add idealistic goals, and an understanding of the business community.

Village Manager Cedillo commented that she will put key concepts together and put a draft together for the next meeting.

Sheri Sauer had to leave at 8:27pm and informed the committee that the next La Grange Park Business Association meeting is Thursday August 25th at 8am.

With no further discussion Chairman Topps then turned the focus of discussion to Agenda Item #4 the Draft Action Plan.

Discussion continued on Business Retention. Trustee Storcel commented that #10 of the Draft Action Plan "Identify ways to encourage business expansion in the community" should be moved to a separate paragraph of Business Expansion.

Village Manager Cedillo commented the importance of Code Enforcement. The better a business looks the more attractive to others

Trustee Rocco would like to see Property Managers and Commercial Realtors added to the *Draft Action Plan*

With no further discussion Chairman Topps then turned the focus of discussion to Agenda Item #5 Forbes.com Marketing.

Village Manager Cedillo said she has the ability to pay the \$1000 fee for licensing of the Forbes logo in her spending authority. This one time fee would allow the village to use the Forbes Logo on all signage, banners and the website.

Chairman Topps would like to see Forbes on all signs entering into La Grange Park since it a great achievement and also see it on the e-briefs

There was unanimous support to allow Village Manager Cedillo to pay the \$1000 to Forbes for licensing.

With no further discussion Chairman Topps turned the meeting to Village Manager Cedillo.

Village Manager Cedillo had an update to inform the committee that the ICSC Chicago Deal Making event was coming up October 5th and 6th at Navy Pier. Information was provided to the committee.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Committee agreed to meet again on Thursday, September 29, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Storcel brought a motion to adjourn, Trustee Rocco seconded the motion. With no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Topps declared the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Amanda G. Seidel
Village Clerk