

River North Residents Association

Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of 2007

1. The 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of the River North Residents Association was called to order at 7:07 p.m. on September 25, 2007 at Reza's Restaurant, 435 W. Ontario Street, Chicago.
 - a. Brian Israel, President, opened the meeting, welcomed attendees and introduced the Executive Committee members and guests, who included Alderman Brendan Reilly and Kathy Caisley of the Department of Planning and Development.
 - b. The minutes were presented from the last quarterly meeting. Brian made a motion the minutes be accepted. Thom Willis seconded the motion. All Ayes to accept the minutes.
 - c. Thank you to Annual sponsors, now numbering 20.
 - d. RNRA Leadership Opportunities.
 - i. Brian stated that the RNRA has accomplished a lot, but that the increasing number and scope of initiatives was beginning to exceed the capacity of the Executive Committee and that more leadership team members were needed. He reviewed the following opportunities and encouraged interested parties to contact him:
 1. Development Liaison – Open
 2. Public Safety Liaison – Open
 3. Health and Wellness Liaison – Open
 4. Member Liaison (multiple) – Open
 5. I/T Coordinator – Open
 6. Sponsor Liaison – Open
 7. Event Coordinator – Open
2. Office Benny Wong of the 18th District CAPS Office
 - a. 6th version of the "Promoters" Licensing Ordinance under review and expected to be enacted later this year or next.
 - b. Noise Ordinance Violations
 - i. Residents must call 911, identify themselves as the complainant and ask to see an officer. If noise is excessive, citations will be issued.
 - c. State Smoking Ordinance
 - i. To go into effect @ 12:01 AM Jan. 2008. City is looking into strategies to manage the potential issues associated with this unfortunate timing.
 - d. Two arrests were made in connection with an attempted robbery near Erie Park on Saturday September 22. Two more suspects are being sought.
3. Adopted Services Organization Check Presentations
 - a. Philanthropy Liaison and ECML Heather Vendel reviewed RNRA's support program and introduced representatives of each of the three organizations:

River North Residents Association

Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of 2007

- i. Jacquelyn Hayes/ President of Help Ease Local Poverty (HELP)
 - ii. Erin Frisby/ Program Director of Rock for Kids
 - iii. John Quail/ Director of Friends of the Chicago River
 - b. Each accepted a gift of \$750 and spoke about their group's agenda, accomplishments, upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.
4. Chicago Hospitality Resource partnership (HRP) Street Cleaning Program
 - a. Brian debuted a video segment featuring the Cleanslate program on NBC5's Crimewatch Chicago TV show.
 - b. John Rush, Managing Director of Cleanslate Chicago reviewed the program mentioned the following statistics:
 - i. Removed 130 bags of recyclable materials and 175 bags of litter and debris from the main River North corridors.
 - ii. Provided over 40 individuals with transitional jobs.
 - iii. Enabled 8 individuals thus far to secure quality, permanent jobs in the private sector – at companies such as Océ Business Services and ABM Lakeside, Inc.
 - c. John previewed the organization's upcoming annual fundraising event, Celebration of Hope, to be held at the Chicago Cultural Center on October 12.
 - i. Brian thanked the local Bars and restaurants that provide funding and made motion to have RNRA purchase advertising space in the event publication for \$500.00. Frank 2nd. All Ayes
5. Park Advisory Council
 - a. Frank Krug & Brian Israel reviewed Erie Park timeline from inception of present.
 - b. Original and revised plans were compared, illustrating the evolution of size, design and locations for the playground and DFA.
 - c. The following preliminary DFA Survey Results were announced
 - i. Number of respondents so far: 240
 - ii. Number of buildings represented: 30+
 - iii. % of dog owners responding: 52.1
 - iv. % of non-dog owners responding: 47.9
 - v. % of favorable responses: 72.1
 - d. The Larrabee sidewalk is now in and the temporary DFA will be constructed this year including, suitable drainage, paved walkways, landscaping, pea gravel and a double-gated cyclone fence around the off-leash area.
 - e. Required State playground approval has been requested but is not expected until the first quarter of 2008, at which point public design meetings will commence.

River North Residents Association

Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of 2007

- f. Park Programming was reviewed.
 - i. The successful outdoor film program, RNDOA Social-in-the-Park and Summerfest events will be repeated in 2008 and Alderman Reilly said there is a good chance he has secured a group to hold a Farmers Market in the RN area next year. More to come on this topic.
6. Local Development
- a. Brian reviewed the final survey results concerning the JDL project at Franklin and Illinois, which are accessible via the RNRA website. He welcomed Jim Letchinger of JDL Development, who reviewed the project's history and latest design. These renderings will also be available online.
 - b. The original opposition to the project was generally concentrated in the two closest neighbors, Contemporaine and Anchor Lofts. The former's issues have been satisfactorily addressed by interim design changes, so to soften the impact of the development on the remaining party, Brian Israel suggested that consideration be given to assisting Anchor lofts with infrastructure improvements related to their sewer and disused vaulted sidewalk, which would enable the installation of in-ground planters along the front of their property. Alderman Reilly pledged to obtain cost estimates for the work and Mr. Letchinger agreed to consider ways to assist with the implementation of these improvements.
7. Other Developments
- a. Kingsbury Plaza: close to completion
 - b. Opus 110: under construction
 - c. Chicago & Kingsbury: PD approved but no plans in place.
 - d. Ronsley (Park Kingsbury): pre-sale, will be loft conversion.
 - e. 469 W Huron: pre-sale
 - f. Coyote Ugly proposal not approved.
 - g. Flair Tower at 214 W Erie: interior plans being revised
 - h. Silver Tower on Ohio: under construction
 - i. 757 Orleans: under construction
 - j. Kingsbury & Illinois: PD approved for 46 story tower with 450 units. No plans have yet been unveiled.
8. Retail Development
- a. Café Ruhlman at The Montgomery: about to open
 - b. Jewel Foods at DesPlaines & Kinzie: under construction
 - c. Whole Foods on N Larrabee: under construction
 - d. Retail on SE corner of Chicago & Larrabee: pre-construction
9. Misc. community Updates

River North Residents Association

Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of 2007

- a. OTB was approved in 2005 for LaSalle & Ohio location
 - i. To be a high end facility with restaurant, sports bar and wagering. Alderman Reilly looking into details.
 - b. Some Grand Ave Bridge repairs have been made, with more to come.
 - c. Ai Sushi Lounge on Ontario to open next week with only an incidental liquor license, no PPA.
 - d. Alley security between 600 N Kingsbury and the Ontario feeder ramp to be addressed with the installation of fencing at east and west ends.
 - e. Ohio Dog Park needs improvements including higher fencing, double gates, lighting, hydration, thinned foliage, rules signs and non-porous ground cover. Resources are being sought, more info to come.
 - f. CDOT will completely renovate of the Grand/State Red Line station.
 - i. The project will expand the existing station and rebuild the mezzanine and platform levels, the first major renovation since the station opened in the late 1940s. New elevators, a new escalator, granite floors and stairs, and glazed tile walls are among many amenities planned. The station will remain open throughout the project.
 - ii. Work is tentatively set to begin the second or third week of October. CTA is finalizing traffic issues, construction staging and devising a plan that has the smallest possible impact.
 - iii. CTA will distribute a flier describing the project and provide an electronic copy to share with RNRA members via email and the web.
 - iv. In the interim, crews will be at the intersection surveying the location of underground utilities. This work will entail daytime closures (approximately 9 a.m.-4 p.m.) of small sections of Grand and State but does not constitute the official start of the project.
 - v. CTA realizes that construction at one of River North*s busiest intersections will pose some inconveniences and pledges to keep the inconvenience to an absolute minimum.
10. Upcoming events
- a. Beat 1831 CAPS Meeting
 - i. Thu Oct 4 – 7:00 pm – Reza’s Restaurant
 - b. RNRA Executive Committee Meeting
 - i. Tue Oct 9 – 7:00 pm – Reza’s Restaurant
 - c. 6th Annual Cara Program Celebration of Hope
 - i. Fri Oct 12 – Time TBD - Chicago Cultural Center
 - d. FOCR Teacher’s River Canoe Workshop
 - i. Sun Oct 27 – 9:00 am – Noon - 5100 N. Francisco

River North Residents Association

Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Community Meeting of 2007

- e. RFK 19th Annual Rock & Roll Charity Auction
 - i. Fri Nov 30 – Time TBD – Park West
 - f. 2007 RNA-RNRA Holiday Extravaganza!!!
 - i. Wed Dec 12 - North Lobby, Merchandise Mart
11. Alderman Reilly briefly addressed the meeting on various 42nd Ward issues and thanked RNRA for efforts on behalf of the community

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thom Willis, RNRA Secretary