

River North Residents Association
Minutes of the May 17, 2007 Special Community Meeting

The Special Meeting of the River North Residents Association was called to order at 7:10 p.m. on May 17, 2007 at Reza's Restaurant, at 435 W. Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Brian Israel, President, opened the meeting. Membership Officer Rene Reinglass Treasurer Frank Krug and Secretary Thom Willis were present; Vice President Andrew Swedenborg was not present. Brian introduced the other members of the executive committee.

Brian thanked the annual sponsors for their support.

Several new member associations were recognized and welcomed:

1. Anchor Lofts
2. Contemporaine
3. 630 Franklin

Special Guests for this meeting:

1. Alderman elect Brandon Reilly was introduced. He said that he would be in his office Noon on Monday the 21st of May. He commented that the 42nd Ward constitutes the 2nd largest economy in the state and has the highest concentration of condos in state. He talked about his goals and priorities, which included the following:
 - a. The need for responsible growth
 - b. Establishing community advisor committees
 - c. Establishing a constituent services office in the Near North area
 - d. Hosting quarterly meetings
 - e. Contacting condo associations relating to utility rate hikes
 - f. Requesting a "Top-5" list of issues from all Ward associations (RNRA's list is attached as exhibit A).
2. Presentation from Developers regarding new proposed projects:
 - a. Brian discussed RNRA Development Guidelines
 - b. JDL Development, Jim Letchinger spoke about the plan to construct a 23-story residential rental building on the northeast corner of Franklin and Illinois
 - i. Showed "as-of-right" option compared to proposed project
 - ii. Adjacent former firehouse to be preserved for commercial use
 - iii. Site will include surface parking for restaurant across the street
 - iv. The specifications of the proposed building were presented (see PPT presentation posted in the development section of the RNRA website)
 - v. Q & A period
 - c. The John Buck Co's Greg Merdinger reviewed plans for a proposed "mixed use" building containing 121 high end condos, 4 star hotel and commercial space at 505 N State.
 - vi. TJBC's long-term involvement in the ownership of this site was reviewed.

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- vii. A comparison of the approved building under current PD and the new 36% smaller building being proposed was presented.
 - viii. Project timelines and potential impacts were discussed
 - ix. The specifications of the proposed building were presented (see PPT presentation posted in the development section of the RNRA website)
 - x. Q & A period
- d. Brian explained that RNRA would be creating and distributing a community survey to obtain broader input about these proposals.

Brian announced that there is to be a Reality TV show to be filmed in the neighborhood

- b. The Manager of the project outlined the content and the network's past history
- c. Verbal and written assurances were given by the production company that local impact would be minimal.
- d. After a Q & A period, the attendees expressed support for the proposal subject to the assurances described above and in the Network's letter, which is posted on the RNRA website.

River North HRP/ Cleanslate program initiated

- c. Team will be present in area cleaning streets on Saturday and Sunday mornings
- d. Cost funded by the restaurants and bars in area
- e. Launched 5/5/07

Erie Park Advisory Council

1. Playground location has been identified to be along the Erie St side of the south section of the park.
2. The RNDOA would like the Larrabee dog area to include 40% on-leash, 40% all-dog off-leash and 20% small dog off-leash sections.
3. Construction schedule TBD. Next step is for the Park District to engage a design firm for both the playground and dog area projects.
4. Movies in the Park
 - a. First movie will be The Wizard of Oz at dusk on June 19th

A review of the proposed 2007 River North Summerfest was given by Mr. Israel. It will be a joint venture again between RNRA and RNA.

1. Outline of features this year include live music, food and beverages, children's activities, prize drawings, etc.
2. A site plan identifying vendors, food stations, seating and entertainment locations in the park and along Erie Street was reviewed.

A brief update on other developments was delivered by Brian

1. Brian announced that the "Ronsley" site would be reconfigured to replace the condo

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tower with a rehab of the existing masonry building into 50 loft residences.

Brian discussed the CERT program, which seeks to recruit 40 civilians in each of the 1st and 18th Police Districts for emergency response duties. Volunteers will receive 20 hours of specialized FEMA training. Contact Officer Chris Schenk at 312-742-5778 for information.

An outline of the upcoming events and meetings was presented.

For reference purposes and for those who were unable to attend the meeting, the PowerPoint slide presentation from this (and previous) Community Meetings can be found in the Archives section of the RNRA website along with Minutes and Update Messages.

Brian Israel reminded attendees that the RNRA is their organization and that its mission, scope and agenda are dependent on the input and engagement of local residents. He invited members to get in touch with the Executive Committee to discuss any of their ideas, questions or concerns about the neighborhood and the issues we face. Residents were encouraged to contact Association Leaders via email: info@rivernorthresidents.com and to visit the RNRA online at: www.rivernorthresidents.com

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

Respectfully submitted,

Thom Willis, RNRA Secretary

Exhibit A: RNRA Top-5 List submitted to Alderman Reilly

1. Responsible Development that Adequately Considers:

- Neighborhood and architectural character
- Open space
- Traffic
- Parking
- Sightlines
- Onsite pet resources
- Affordable housing
- Retail commerce
- Pedestrian experience and streetscaping
- Support for community amenities
- Construction protocol (staging, parking, work hours, lights, etc.)

2. The Need for Resources for Two Important Constituencies:

- Parents of young children
 - Playgrounds
 - Traffic control and crosswalks
 - Lighting, benches and trash receptacles
- Dog owners

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- Partnership with local dog owners' organizations to create and maintain safe, clean dog-friendly areas where appropriate.
- Consistent and respectful enforcement of the city's pet-related ordinances for the safety, health and comfort of both humans and animals.

3. The Need for Appropriate Traffic and Parking Policies:

- Thoughtful designation of permitted, metered and temporary street parking that reasonably considers the needs of both residents and local businesses.
- Encouragement to developers to build and reserve a portion of spaces in large projects for public use.
- Creative use of traffic lights, automated cameras, signage, speed bumps, lane usage and other means to improve traffic flow and maximize pedestrian safety.

4. The Need for Appropriate Hospitality Business Policies:

- A comprehensive approach to planning, managing and policing hospitality and entertainment areas based on mutual respect and accountability.
- Partnerships between hospitality establishments, licensed beverage suppliers, regulators, public safety officials, residents and other businesses to proactively address issues in mixed use areas.
- Increased public engagement regarding licensing, compliance and enforcement.

5. The Future of our Community:

- More openness and opportunities for community input with respect to the planning of residential and commercial development, infrastructure, public amenities and transportation in Chicago neighborhoods.