**Meeting Notes: Economic Development Committee**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2016 6:30 PM**

**Chicago Public Library, Jefferson Park Branch**

**Attendees:**

Pete Czosnyka

Dennis Davis

Susanna Ernst

Jerry Galvin

Joan Gorrell

Zach Hoffman

Tricia Lombardo (Executive Director Chamber of Commerce)

Ryan Richter

Kate Wertime

**Meeting Overview:**

1. **Introductions:** Round Table introductions, including location, interests, skills, professional development, volunteerism, and overall thoughts about economic development in the neighborhood. This is a diverse motivated group with a broad range of skills and professions, including real estate, engineering, management, urban planning, and architecture. All have a vested interested in the growth of the community.
2. **Mission Statement:** The group decided that overall JP Forward Mission statement is a perfect depiction of what this committee would like to accomplish, so it remains untouched: ***By engaging residents and facilitating participation, the* Jefferson Park Forward Economic Development Committee *will encourage and support activities to benefit the community through economic and neighborhood development, a pedestrian-friendly downtown area with shopping and cafes, and social and civic events.***
3. **Discussion:** Committee engaged in lively discussion, including informative interaction with our partner, **Tricia Lombardo**, Executive Director of the Jefferson Park Chamber of Commerce. Topics included interaction with the Chamber, current business landscape and activities in progress, and ideas on how to encourage appropriate development in the neighborhood. An issue that came to the forefront was that economic development is not simply about retail and rented storefronts (although that is key), but also growth in positive residential development, as well as ongoing investment in educational facilities (our local schools.) Many agreed that we achieve any goals we set for ourselves with optimism but pragmatism.
4. **Goals:** In the course of discussion, 5 key goals emerged as ones for potential (or certain) pursuit, in the short and long term:
	1. **Liaising with the Chamber of Commerce:** The committee desires open lines of communication with the business community. As the Chamber canvasses the current business landscape and helps local business owners invest in their property, the group wants to assist in any way possible. The desire is to be of help and a voice in the community where Tricia and the Chamber find it most appropriate.
	2. **Jefferson Park Master Plan:** A seat at the table in the “master planning” process executed by the City of Chicago. The committee wishes the voices of JPF to be heard in any plans that will affect the quality of life in downtown Jefferson Park. While more long term and needing more investigation, the group also expressed desire in changing the footprint of the CTA and meshing it with the Master Plan.
	3. **Educational:** Everyone in the group has at least rudimentary knowledge (if not full-fledged expertise) of at least 1 or 2 aspects of development, as they pertain to urban development, real estate, small business management, or architecture. Helping to spread the word around the community about these different topics will be crucial in helping neighbors understand what is possible. Not only can the group educate others through public words and behavior, but they can also transfer knowledge through formalized presentations/seminars. If all local constituents are educated on development topics, there are better chances for neighborhood consensus and informed dialogue on community needs.
	4. **PB 45 (Participatory Budgeting in the 45th Ward)** – Several committee members already participate in PB 45 (Pete/Kate.) This should continue and/or more of the group should engage if possible. Having visibility to this process and having a voice in it are necessary to ensuring appropriate development is happening.
	5. **Marketing JP** – This topic was brought up multiple times throughout the meeting, as the group wants to find a way to define the neighborhood beyond “Old White People,” as our area was disparagingly called recently on the “Judgmental map of Chicago North Side Neighborhoods.” The group wants to engage in activities that will improve the image of the community. Preliminary ideas:
		1. **Jeff Fest** – Promoting JP and volunteering at Jeff Fest
		2. **Open House Chicago –** If sites are definitively selected in JP, it will be an opportunity to showcase what is in the neighborhood and throw as much effort to it as possible.
5. **Next Steps:**
	1. Evaluate goals and decide on priorities
	2. Create specific objectives associated with priorities
	3. Break down action plans on objectives
	4. Assign owners to objectives