**Meeting Notes: Economic Development Committee**

**Wednesday, March 9, 2016 6:30 PM**

**Chicago Public Library, Mayfair Branch**

**Attendees:**

Pete Czosnyka

Dennis Davis

Susanna Ernst

Zach Hoffman

**Meeting Overview:**

1. **PB-45 Committee Update (Czosnkya/Wertime):**
   1. Kate is championing a project for downtown JP maintenance (“beautification.”) For the section of land between Lawrence, Milwaukee, and the highway, she is projecting the costs (using PB menu money, but also looking at the possibility of teaming up with the TIF) for: sidewalk and curb repair for the worst locations (rated 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5), replacing missing tree gates, adding garbage cans as needed, potentially swapping out the light poles with more attractive ones and in particular, giving attention to the section of Avondale behind the Copernicus center which is actually a street, but looks like an alley.  
      Another committee member is looking to do the same for the area that surrounds the actual park, including benches and a possible walking path for commuters.
   2. Pete is part of a proposal that will help to establish a greenway in the NW section of the Ward, where it is desperately needed. He presented a map that reflects the areas that will be affected.
   3. Last year’s elected projects should be coming to fruition soon: median pedestrian islands and mid-block pedestrian crossings north of Foster.
   4. The most important activities for JPF to engage in will be continuing awareness, and ultimately, voting. Pete will provide a specific date for the voting, and we’ll promote through social media. We’ll all need to be educated about the projects on the table, and this is a big opportunity to let our voices be heard with Ward spending.

1. **Top Priorities:** Feedback from the first meeting indicated that the top priorities for the group should be 1) Continuing involvement/understanding of PB-45 and 2) Education. Marketing of JPF was a more distant third, but still important. Our initial meeting (February) indicated that promotion of and participation in activities such as Jeff Fest and Open House Chicago will serve the neighborhood well, as we work as ambassadors of our area. There was a request for continued discussion on this topic, so we can brainstorm ideas.
2. **Education:** Discussed how we can educate the community about planning and development topics, as well as placemaking and tactical urbanism. Group suggested that additional meetings/seminars/discussions outside of current meeting framework would be taxing on people.
   1. Suggestion: Utilize JPF website as a communication/education vehicle. This could be a vehicle for ALL committees – so it would require buy in from the broader JPF organization. Educational elements of the Economic Development Committee would include:
      1. Videos (TED Talks)
      2. Pertinent Articles
      3. Places for commentary / discussion
      4. Book Library – Books currently available through JPF members, to be exchanged at general meetings or ED Committee meetings. Latest recommendations include:
         1. The Economics of Place – Michigan Municipal League, 2011
         2. Tactical Urbanism—Lydon & Garcia, 2015
         3. Streetfight—Sadik-Khan & Solomonow, 2016

We’ll have to work with our friendly webmaster on this initiative

* 1. Suggestion: Request a workshop for “On to 2050.” For further discussion among the committee: <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/about/involvement>
  2. Suggestion: “Snow Photos” -- take pictures after a recent snowfall to gauge pedestrian activity in busy places – share with membership and community leaders
  3. Suggestion: Book Club – Once library is up and running, gather for book club events at local venues / businesses

We will need volunteers to spearhead all these activities. We may need to judge interest for the “On to 2050” workshop, as it will require interest.

1. **Placemaking Discussion:** Pete brought the idea of “placemaking” to the forefront, by providing us anecdotal information in the book “The Economics of Place,” published by the Michigan Municipal League. Many cities / regions in Michigan that had deteriorating and vacant urban centers were able to recreate themselves through themes, festivals, food & drink, biking, and the arts, to name a few. They needed to find a new identity, which drew locals and tourists downtown. This created thriving, busy business districts, with room for expansion. This is recommended reading for the entire committee and any JPF members who have interest. We need to ask ourselves: Who are we? Why are we here? JP’s branding will require creative thinking, collaboration and extensive planning. It must be viable and executable. We want to use one of our general meeting forums this year for “open mic” night to collect some ideas. Who do we want to be? We don’t want people to move here only because it’s “easy to get somewhere else quickly.**”**
2. **Next Steps:** 
   1. PB-45 – Continued involvement/communication – Pete and Kate to execute. Education and voting date to be published
   2. Yelp Drive – Reviewing local businesses (to take place after fundraising/services survey is complete.) – Susanna to execute
   3. Education on the web – *need to speak to webmaster, need volunteer to execute* (Susanna to collect names of books available at next meeting)
   4. “On to 2050” – *need to gauge interest, need volunteer to execute*
   5. ”Snow Photos” – tabled until next year
   6. Calendar of JP “Marketing” events – Susanna to assemble
3. **Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 12th 6:30 PM, Jefferson Park Library**
   1. PB-45 Update
   2. Website execution / collection of book titles
   3. Other executable activities: Yelp, On to 2050, others
   4. Chamber update (including discussions with other Chambers, e.g. Lincoln Square area.)
   5. Placemaking next steps discussion
   6. Marketing discussion – Master Plan, Fringe, Jeff Fest, Open House Chicago, other?

***“Cities have the capability of providing something for everyone, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody." - JJ***