

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS™ OAK PARK / RIVER FOREST



Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees June 15, 2009

Jean Lotus, Observer

The Observer arrived at 7:33 pm.

The board had already read the Annual Public Health Award recipients who were honored in April during Public Health Week.

The 2009 Fitzsimmons Awards for Excellence in Public Health went to:

- * David Pope, President of the Village of Oak Park
- * Drs. Rebecca Barbato, Rebecca Turk and Karen Walker of the physician's network of the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education
- * Jamie Lapke, Jason Cardenas, Mandy Garcia, Katie Kijawa and Patrick Murphy of the Oak Park Gymnastics Center
- * Susan Abbott of the Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association
- * The Oak Park-River Forest Newcomers Club

The board had also acknowledged the 2009 Johnson Restaurant Award recipients for excellence in sanitation in Oak Park food service establishments:

- *Cucina Paradiso
- *Java Oasis
- *Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwich Shop
- *19th Century Club
- *Oberweis Dairy
- *Seattle's Best coffee
- *Starbucks Coffee #13342
- *Subway Sandwiches and Salads
- *Velvet Rope

Village Manager report: Tom Barwin, Village Manager, reported that the demolition was complete at Westgate and that the area was being used as a parking lot. He said the former Colt building demolition was almost complete. He said that work would begin shortly on the Oak Park Avenue viaduct enhancement project to improve the viaduct at Oak Park Ave. and South Blvd.

Board business:

An amended ordinance for building permit fee increases was given a first read-through by the board. Steve Witt told board members that some fees had not been increased since 2004. Trustee Ray Johnson suggested showing the first draft to the Building Codes Advisory Commission because as tradespeople, commissioners would be able to flag any fees that were too high or too low.

On a second reading, an amended ordinance to charge a fee for Real Estate Transfer Tax Exemptions was changed. The fee was lowered from \$100 to \$30.

The board then moved on to securing lines of credit to pay debt service on the Colt building loan and the Barrie Park housing buyback program. To pay interest on the parking lot that was formerly the Colt building, the village acquired an extended line of credit from Park National Bank for \$5.5 million. For the buyback of contaminated homes during Barrie Park cleanup, the village got a line of credit for \$917,365.03. Trustee John Hedges asked if the Barrie homes currently owned by the village were worth \$917,000 and was told no. Chief Financial Officer, Craig Lesner said that the homes could be sold at depressed prices or that the village could hold on to the parcels and sell them when the housing market improved. President David Pope mentioned that during the buyback planning, two board members had worried that the village might lose money on buying Barrie Park real estate. Ray Johnson added, "Those two of us are still here [on the board]."

To fix sewer and water main lines on the Oak Park side of Roosevelt Rd., the board agreed to contract with Cerniglia Company for up to \$1,138,681.20. A spokesman from Public Works said that the contract was a good one and that construction companies are, "hungry to get some work." Tom Barwin mentioned that the villages of Oak Park, Berwyn and Cicero are all coordinating work so that a streetscape facelift can take place when the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) resurfaces Roosevelt Rd. in fall of 2010.

The board then unanimously approved the following items:

Architect John Scheiss was given approval to develop a four-story 18 unit condominium complex with 27 parking places on the vacant lot at 6603-6609 North Ave. (between East and Columbian Aves.)

The zoning commission allowed the following variances on the project:

- * Increased number of units (up to 18 from 12 allowed)
- * Increased height (49'5" from 45' allowed)
- * Zero setback in the front yard (20' setback is standard)
- * Zero setback on the side yards (10' is standard)
- * Reduced setback in the back yard (deficient by 5 feet 3 inches)
- * Lot coverage of the building 69% (45% is standard)
- * No landscaping on the front yard (1 shrub per 40' is standard)

As compensating factors for these variances, Scheiss's design for the building included LEED certification and a green roof.

The board asked the Plan Commission to hold a public hearing in July about the Roosevelt Rd. Corridor facelift.

The board hired consultants S.B Friedman and Company to create financial models to review projected revenues and expenditures for upcoming village redevelopment projects. They'll be paid up to \$30,000.

The board expanded the permitted hours of sale for packaged liquor to 9 am to 10 pm. Previously, local shops could start selling liquor at 10 am. Neighboring towns have been selling liquor as early as 8 am.

The board approved a class C-2 (beer and wine) liquor license for Jewel Food Store, 438 Madison St.

Parking at Harlem and North Blvd. was determined to be “high demand” and meters were authorized to charge \$1 per hour between 8 am and 6 pm Monday through Saturday.

More PeopleSoft consultants were hired by the village. Spear MC Management Consultants were contracted on an “as needed” basis to help the village deal with PeopleSoft computer issues. This time the amount paid cannot exceed \$10,000.

The board agreed to enter into a collective bargaining agreement with local union No. 130 representing employees of the Public works Department /Water and Sewer Division. The contract would cover employment between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2011.

The board approved the July 4th fireworks display.

In final comments, David Pope told the board that his attendance at the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in Providence, RI was “sobering” because economic hardship is rampant throughout the United States. It is important to partner with state and federal agencies to weather these hard times, he said. On an uplifting note, he was pleasantly surprised after interviewing with a reporter for a regional magazine who praised the positive aspects of Oak Park “from the perspective of an outsider.” He also said the “branding study” of Oak Park was proceeding well.

Tom Barwin congratulated the village in not backing down in the face of the NRA’s Supreme Court challenge to the Oak Park handgun ban. The Supreme Court upheld the ban for Oak Park and the City of Chicago.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

(online minutes: www.oak-park.us/about_our_village/board_minutes_2008.htm)