

Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees
September 6, 2016

Suzanne Davis, Observer
7:30 Open Session

In attendance: Mayor Abu-Taleb, Trustees Barber, Lueck, Button Ott, Brewer, Salzman, Tucker

Non-Agenda Public Comment:

A resident of the 1200 block of North Euclid called for the construction of a cul-de-sac, due to speeding concerns, when the current moratorium on cul-de-sacs expires. It was determined after a "traffic study" that the block did not qualify for one. However, speed monitoring signs were put up for only one day, and when they were taken down, the speeding resumed. A properly designed traffic study examines samples over time.

First Reading of Ordinance:

ORD 16-099: This proposed ordinance would amend Chapter 23A (Taxes), Article 4 (Hotel/Motel Tax) to impose a 4% user tax on Transient Occupancy Rental Units, in particular, Airbnb units, as is currently imposed on hotel, motel and bed-and-breakfast guests. At any given time, there may be 100 or more Airbnb units available in Oak Park. Local bed-and-breakfast owners expressed concerns to the Village about an uneven playing field; when they list on the Airbnb web site, they must disclose the 4% tax, while other Airbnb hosts do not. The Village decided against limiting the number of days of operation, banning Airbnb altogether (as River Forest has done), or requiring licenses, opting instead for the tax. The proposal is for Airbnb to collect the tax, which guests would pay when booking through Airbnb, and submit the tax payments to the Village in the aggregate. The revenue from the tax would be earmarked for promoting tourism within the Village. The second reading is expected to take place on September 19, 2016.

Several residents, past or current Airbnb hosts, spoke of encouraging Airbnb to continue to operate affordably in Oak Park, citing guests who would otherwise be unable to stay in Oak Park because of high hotel rates.

ORD 16-098: This proposed ordinance would remove the requirement to obtain a permit to place A-Frame signs, such as sidewalk signs advertising specials or sales, on public ways. The current permit requirement is not being enforced because business owners have been cooperative when asked to move the signs in the event they are impeding the public right of way. Ordinance requirements about the size of signs, etc., would remain in effect.

Second Reading:

ORD 16-106: The "Living Wage" ordinance was unanimously approved. The new minimum wage will be \$12 per hour for employees of the Village, as well as certain employees of contractors/grantees of Village service contracts in excess of \$25,000 per year. Phased implementation begins in 2017.

Regular Agenda:

RES 16-262: This resolution, approving the Village of Oak Park's RainReady Grant Program, was unanimously approved. The program would supplement the existing sewer protection grant program. It is aimed at single-family homeowners in need of flood mitigation measures, such as rain gardens or bioswales, to address excess yard flooding and resulting seepage. The Center for Neighborhood Technology would screen

applicants, who could apply for grants of up to \$1,300 per household, and evaluate the program for effectiveness. The public would benefit from a reduction in the storm water burden on sewers.

ORD 16-100: This ordinance was unanimously approved. The ordinance clarifies that in the B1/B2 General Business District, a building that is ancillary to a church, mosque or temple is a permitted use. Reverend Taylor of Unity Temple explained the need to purchase a building for five classrooms to accommodate a religious education program, offices and a community center. The building, .3 miles from the church, was vacant. A concern was voiced about permitting a tax-exempt use in a business district. Mike Quinn of the Zoning Board of Appeals indicated that while the ordinance would permit any church, temple or mosque to add an ancillary building in this business district, to be tax-exempt, it would have to be both church-owned and church-used.

Observer left at 9:10 p.m.