

CITY OF PALOS HEIGHTS
Business/ Economic Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2019

Call to Order

Chairman Grossart called the meeting of the Business/Economic Advisory Committee to order at 12:00 Noon at the Palos Heights Recreation Center, 6601 W. 127th Street. Present were: Bob Grossart, Ken Busse, Barb Bergamo, Mike Coogan Lori Mazeika, Rick Powell, Dr. Chuck Polcaster, Judi Weber, and Alderman Jeff Key. Paul Muehlnickel and Recording Secretary Charlotte Moore were absent. Ken Busse served as the recorder for the minutes.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Grossart requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 25, 2019, and March 18, 2019. On a unanimous voice vote, the motion carried.

Separately, the date on the Agenda of the April 15, 2019 meeting was noted as needing to be corrected from March 18, 2019 to April 15, 2019.

Regional Start up Hub: Bob Grossart introduced guest John Wightkin who gave an overview and update of the Fusion59 program, which acts as a business incubator hub, or outreach to area local businesses. Fusion59 has selected Simple Taste to provide marketing and social media assistance. Simple Taste is in the process of providing its current customer base number to Mr. Wightkin. This number will be used as a benchmark to measure the future success of the deployment on Simple Taste. Discussion ensued.

Comprehensive Plan Updates, City and Parks and Recreational: Two representatives of the Teska & Associates, Pete Iosue and Mike Hoffman, were present and gave an overview of the current draft of the City Comprehensive Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Following their presentation, Bob Grossart opened the floor for discussion and Q&A with Mike and Pete. Discussion ensued.

Ken Busse informed the Committee that immediately before the Committee meeting, Mike and Pete had presented the draft documents to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPS Committee), and that the CPS Committee had provided various comments and edits for revision.

Committee members inquired with Messrs Iosue and Hoffman about whether and to what extent the Comp Plan addresses various matters including, and not limited to, the need for more parking in the Olde Palos Shopping District, the desire expressed by survey respondents for an Open Air Pavilion and Splash Pad, pedestrian connections and walkways in the Olde Palos Shopping District, way-finding signage throughout Palos Heights, and bike path connections to the Olde Palos Shopping District. Mike Coogan emphasized the importance of properly located parking in and around the Olde Palos Shopping District, especially given that the area is a destination for unique dining, which places a demand on parking during breakfast, lunch and dinner times. Additionally, Committee members believe special events are great to boost commercial foot traffic in the downtown, and should continue. However, the City and commercial districts must ensure that there is sufficient room for overflow parking. The combination of restaurants and special events help make Palos Heights a vibrant and strong commercial area, and parking must be available at times and places to meet the vibrant demand.

Committee members urged the City and consultant to include various items in the Comp Plan documents, and that their inclusion does not commit the City to investing in those items. They are simply included to reflect a vision residents and survey respondents have for the future of the City of Palos Heights.

Bob Grossart and Jeff Key specifically expressed concern that both the City Comp Plan and Park Master Plan contain references to and recommendations for an Open Air Pavilion and Splash Pad. Jeff Key commented that the splash pad was the number one thing, out of 5 or 6 things, that the community said they would like to see. Mr. Busse mentioned that in the current draft those items appear in a couple of areas in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, and are referenced in the City Comp Plan. Mr. Busse explained that Dan Nisavic believes those items are best addressed in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, and if undertaken would likely be located within an existing Park.

Ken Busse informed the Committee that the matter the Olde Palos Shopping District parking is being addresses in the Sub-Area Plan. Mr. Busse explained the next steps are to revise the Comp Plan documents with comments from the Steering Committee, followed by a final proofing by staff, and then delivery to the Planning & Zoning Commission for review, comment and discussion sometime in late May or June.

Committee members inquired whether they could review the final draft plan. Mr. Busse believed that would be possible at the time when the Planning & Zoning Commission first receives copies of the documents.

Staffing-Intern: Bob Grossart inquired about the status of interns. Mr. Busse mentioned that Abby will be resume her role as intern in early May, and a second intern has been identified and will likely begin in May, as well.

Holidays in the Heights 2019: Bob Grossart mentioned there are 17 or 18 people on the Holiday in the Heights Committee this year. The proposed budget includes reducing the request for City funding from \$7,000 to \$6,000. The committee's intent is to try to keep stepping this down and eventually receiving no money from the City, other than police and public works assistance in kind. The next HH Committee meeting is on Wednesday, June 12th at 7:00 p.m. at the Library.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Busse
Recorder