

Observer: Julianne Dieterich (watching live stream, could not attend due to illness)

Meeting began: 7:10 pm

Meeting Ended: 9:50 pm

Aldermen Present: Rainey (chair), Wilson, Wynne, Rue Simmons, Braithwaite, Mary Beth Berns (Zoning Board of Appeals), Terry Dubin (Plan Commission), Hecky Powell (at large)

Staff Present: Paul Zalmezak, Cindy Plante, Wally Bobkiewicz

Media Present: Evanston Now and one other

Citizen comment: Much larger crowd than typical for economic development, focused on the downtown performing arts center. Citizen comment taken during discussion of item 3D.

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF October 25, 2017

3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Entrepreneurship Support Grant for Alicia Skipworth - Lashing Out . Recommended approval of \$3,500 to new eyelash studio, graduate of Sunshine Enterprise program (Rue Simmons recuses herself for funding requests from Sunshine, but not their graduates.)

B. Storefront Modernization Program Application for Linmay Studio at 525 Kedzie. Approved approx.. \$700 for sign.

C. Code Evanston / Blue 1647. Paul Zalmezak reported on ongoing discussion of workforce development initiative that was initially presented to the committee conceptually in July 2017. Presented \$75,000 request for funding under Economic Development Fund to support 4 cohorts, roughly 100 students, delivering coding and web development training to primarily Evanston residents. There's also an online web-based platform that supports their program, and they're willing to offer ETHS three licenses that would let the program extend to 400 students total. Hecky Powell pushed a bit on evaluation model, and Zalmezak promised to flesh that out further, it was somewhat addressed in packet. Approved. (Powell tried to abstain, but chair said that he could not unless stating a conflict of interest or pecuniary interest. He voted in favor, but had concerns about evaluation.)

D. Downtown Performing Arts Center. Staff seeks a recommendation from Economic Development Committee to the City Council approval of resolution 8-R-18 authorizing the City Manager to work with Northlight Theater and Farpoint Development, LLC to pursue a single purpose unit of local government and pursue potential financing for public parking.

Chair said that she would limit citizen comment to 45 minutes, encouraged to keep to 3 minutes. In practice, ran longer. About 24 residents and business owners, as well as Alderman Fiske, spoke in opposition to this item. Comments were split between objections to concept of a 37-story building, objections to displacing several businesses on Sherman (Bookman's Alley), and concerns about idea of new unit of government. Many comments were favorable toward return of

Northlight, however. One person spoke in favor of the project. Some disruptions from audience during committee discussion, but generally contained.

Bobkewicz explained that the purpose of the resolution was not to advance a proposal for the project or for the unit of government, but to authorize him to investigate what such a unit of government would look like. This was the vehicle used to create the performing arts center in Skokie. Wilson, Wynne, and Simmons generally spoke about their concerns about the project concept, and as such were very hesitant to pass the resolution. Wynne expected staff to have collected at least some basic information that the committee could use to better assess whether they wanted him to investigate. Wilson generally appreciated Bobkewicz bringing this issue early to committee, particularly in consideration of the time and money that the developers put into the recently rejected proposal on Davis; he favored getting the possibilities into community discussion early, for transparency, but remained opposed to the resolution. Braithwaite, Berns, and Rainey all favored getting more information, although only Rainey seemed to favor the specific project proposal.

After some discussion, Wilson moved to amend the resolution to make it more general (removing a reference to communicating with the Governor and General Assembly and removing the property description). The amendment passed unanimously. After some additional discussion, and interjections from the audience, the motion passed 4-3 (Wynne, Wilson, and Simmons voting no).

E. Approval of 2018 Meeting Schedule . Approved

4. DISCUSSION

A. Evanston Explorers 2018 . Held to next meeting

5. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Monthly Economic Development Communication

B. RETT Report

C. Announcements/Updates from EDC Members

6. ADJOURNMENT