

Observer: Betty Hayford

Council members present: Eight. Harris was remote (with a cold) and Reid was absent.

Meeting began: 8:25

Meeting ended: 9:50

Announcements. Neither the Mayor nor the City Manager had any announcements. The City Clerk read several communications from residents related to the agenda.

Public comment. 12 comments. 8 opposed to the proposed development at Church and Darrow; 1 of these accused 2 council members of being “paid off” to buy their support. There were many in attendance opposed to the project and the Mayor reminded them to be less disruptive several times. 2 expressed appreciation for the funds from the Human Services Fund for support services; 1 said Council should listen to residents and 1 said Northwestern should be a better neighbor.

Special orders of business. (SP1) Prioritizing the use of Unallocated ARPA Funds. Sarah Flax led a substantial discussion with broad participation from council members. Probably the broadest support was for support for small businesses and business districts. Also broad support for the Living Room and health equity programs. Support for affordable housing, crosswalks, parade barricades which could be rented out to other communities. Flax explained that funds could be used for climate action projects, but would have to be carefully crafted to fit the guidelines. There are several projects that have been approved but circumstances have changed and they are now pending.

Consent agenda. Several items were removed from the Consent Agenda – A2, A9, A17, A18, P2, P3. A7 was held in committee. A7 is a contract for Virtual Executive Service for Council Members.

The consent agenda was moved and passed 8-0.

A2. BMO Harris Amazon Credit Card Activity. Passed 7 -0-1. Suffredin abstained.

A9. Contract to build a Skate Park in Twiggs Park. Geracaris said the Skate Park would be a great addition to Evanston and a great resource for community building. He worked on the project before joining Council. The motion passed 8-0.

A17. Increase the number of Class D liquor licenses from 69 to 70 for Soul & Smoke, 1601 Payne Street.

A18. Increase the number of Class F-3 liquor licenses from 0 to 1 for Bookends and Beginnings, 1620 Sherman Avenue. These two items were handled together. It was moved and seconded to suspend the Rules to allow Introduction and Action at this meeting. The motion to suspend the Rules passed 8-0. It was moved and seconded to approve the items. The motion passed 8-0.

P2. Approving a Special Use and Variations for a religious institution at 1801-1805 Church Street. Council Member Kelly said she opposed P2 and P3 and would like to hold them to get more information, especially about the amended version of P3. She moved to hold but there was no second. Suffredin said he would support her motion, but he wanted to know more about what information she was seeking. He suggested voting tonight for Introduction, and holding the vote next meeting if more information is needed. Eventually a vote was held to Introduce P2. The motion passed 6-2. Kelly and Suffredin voted no.

P3. Approving Variations of the Building Code for the construction of a mixed-use building at 1811-1815 Church Street with ground floor retail and dwelling units above. The item had been amended in committee to reduce the height of the building and the number of units. The developer had agreed to include a manager in the building. Burns proposed an addition amendment to include various protections. The Burns amendment passed 6-1. Kelly voted no, and Suffredin was temporarily away from the dais. The amended motion passed 6-2. Kelly and Suffredin voted no.

Call of the wards. Several meetings were announced.

At 9:50, Nieuwsma moved to go into Executive Session to discuss negotiations and litigation. The motion was approved and the meeting ended.