



# WEST LAKEVIEW NEIGHBORS

THE VOICE OF WEST LAKEVIEW

## West Lakeview Neighbors Meeting Minutes

**March 12, 2013; 7:00pm; Mystic Celt; 18 people present**

Will DeMille, President, called the meeting to order at 7:04

### **Bridget Gainer, Cook County Commissioner**

Ahben from her office Community Outreach. Foreclosures and abandoned properties are a concern. These high risk lots need to be maintained. An independent agency should be contracted to buy them, hold them, sell them or rent them. The pension problem is also a concern for the county. Beginning Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> tax appeals will be accepted by the county for a month. Representatives will be at Alderman Tunney's office twice in April to accept appeals.

### **Lathrop Homes**

Developers presented the 3 original plans. Cary Dixon, Related Midwest, and Heartland Housing, are part of a 5 member team organized as the Lathrop Community Partners, working on the 32 acre site. They have had many meetings with neighbors and Aldermen. These developers were selected by the CHA for the job. They started with interviews and open houses in November to show the concept plans. The site is a Historic Landmark site.

There is a Lathrop Group Revitalization vision. Mixed use is envisioned with public housing, affordable housing and market rate units. It will be an environmentally sustainable development. Inclusion of all income levels, walkable, with neighborhood amenities are requirements in the project. There were 3 concepts presented in November. One focused on reusing a critical mass of the existing Lathrop Homes. This would concentrate new dwelling units in two tower buildings, one being 28 stories. It would create new streets connecting to Damen. The *Gateways* concept reuses some of the existing homes, but makes extensive additions to many of the buildings. A median would be incorporated into Diversey Parkway. Only one new tower would be built. The *Greenscapes* concept tears down all the buildings, creates a new 5 acre riverside park, adds 5 new streets and retail buildings along Damen. All 3 plans were created with 1,600 units, but they understand the community feels this is way too high. The community has suggested 800-1200 units. CHA wants 400 public housing units, regardless of the final units developed. A new plan is being worked on and will be presented in a few weeks.

Question: Is there a thought to continue the typical city grid of streets, alleys and 25' lots? Answer: It didn't seem to work as well as the concepts presented. Parking and garbage are concerns. One goal is to try to reduce dependency on cars.

Right now it is only 10% occupied, 165 families are still residing there. There is only street parking now. Parking ratios would be different for each group of income level. Comment from group: Current traffic is already extremely congested, and parking is a major concern. A traffic study is now being done. Question: What does this project cost, how is it funded? Currently the property pays no taxes. Financing is complicated.

Those current residents would stay during construction and move into the first finished property. This project will be ongoing at least through 2020, and be built in phases. The management team would own and manage the property.

Will stated that everyone will be kept updated via emails.

### **Target**

The property has been purchased, but no plans have been presented. The Alderman has said the plans will be reviewed first with the neighborhood. The unknowns are height, parking, entrances/exits, loading docks, and curb cuts. Patricia asked that Melrose residents make a list of what they don't want, specifically, and do want.

Question: Can Melrose be blocked off? Answer: Yes, it can be up to the alley.

Target already has stores with floor plans that would work, and some idea of what will work in that space. Alderman Tunney has said he wants our opinion and will consider our feedback before he decides what he will or won't approve.

Question: Can the parking be used for other purposes after the store is closed? Will has discussed this with the Alderman. A new P&D will have to be created by Target from scratch. Target is aware of the prior P&D.

Question: What will the façade look like at that corner? Maybe not allowing any signs on Melrose should be part of the plan. Alderman Tunney will be invited to the May meeting, and WLVN will reach out to the church to involve it in any meetings.

### **School Street Playlot update**

Jason Mundy presented the latest designs. The plan will replicate some of the most recognizable Chicago features, such as the Hancock bldg., and the Cubs logo. Final bids are in process. \$200,000 is the goal for the community's share. The next fund-raising event is May 5th, at Wrigley Field. A rooftop party on 2 of the bldgs. will be another fundraiser. The soil study has been done on the existing park, but not the parking lot that is the old railroad right of way.

### **New Business Introductions**

Jane Roberts Salon, 1404 W. Belmont, Amanda Brostek, owner

Full service hair salon. 312-442-0812

Greg Sheppard, Allstate Insurance Company

1410 W. Belmont, 773-868-1400