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## STREETSCAPE & ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee Date: Monday, March 6, 2023  
Present: Chairperson Ald. Peter Jakab, Vice-Chair Ald. Michael Curiale, Shashwat Baxi, Mike Melone, Steve Mikos  
Absent: Paula Masilotti  
Also Present: Staci Springer, Director of Community Development, Gosia Pociecha, Senior Planner, Andy Koterak, Planner, Hailey Nicholas, CD Intern  
Meeting Convened at: 6:30 PM

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Ald. Jakab called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

At the beginning of the meeting Director Springer gave introductions of the planning team including CD intern – Hailey Nicholas, Senior Planner – Gosia Pociecha, and the new Planner – Andy Koterak.

#### A. Approval Of the Minutes

Ald. Curiale motioned to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2022 meeting, seconded by Mr. Malone. The minutes were unanimously approved via voice vote.

#### B. Code Enforcement Update (Collection Boxes + Illegal Signs)

Planner Koterak presented that City Staff has recently initiated code enforcement efforts related to collection boxes and proliferation of illegal signs. A visual survey was performed and photos of the collection boxes and a few examples of illegal signs were presented. Staff explained that letters are being drafted and will be sent out to business and/or property owners in the next few weeks. These are not new regulations, but compliance has not been strongly enforced during COVID. This item is being presented to Streetscape and Economic Enhancement Committee (SEEC) as an informational piece on efforts related to streetscape appearance.

SEEC Members expressed that they do not have strong objections to the collection boxes, unless they are overflowing and left unattended. Staff explained that a permit is

required to ensure that boxes are placed in the permitted areas and are not impacting the parking. There was also discussion on how the business owners will be notified about illegal signs, to which Staff responded that an informational letter will be sent out, followed by code enforcement efforts by Property Maintenance Staff. In addition, an informational brochure will be created by Staff to provide a summary of regulations. It was also suggested that new businesses receive this information when they apply for the new Commercial Occupancy Certificate (COC).

### C. Metra Directory Sign

A proposal for Metra Directory Sign was presented by Planner Koteras including examples from other communities. Such signs often include landmarks and other major businesses or service providers. This project, intended to promote economic development and placemaking, was previously suggested by Ald. Jakab. The original idea was to install a directory sign outside of the Metra Station. Based on the Staff's research the approximate cost would be between \$12,000-14,000 and a permit/agreement from Metra would be required. A digital option would be much more expensive. It was also noted that businesses could not pay to advertise on this sign, as off-premises signs are not permitted by Code. Metra ridership was also discussed, which still has not gone back up to the pre-COVID levels.

While the SEEC Members liked the idea of a directory sign, it was suggested that this topic should be reconsidered once a better location is identified. It was suggested that the placement of the sign inside of the Metra station should be examined. Staff will look into options for signage inside the train station for the next meeting.

### D. Future Projects Discussion

Senior Planner Pociecha presented the powers and duties of the SEEC as listed in the Municipal Code, including the review and recommendations on landscape and hardscape programs, economic development, Façade Improvement Program and other special projects as assigned by the Major and City Council. A highlight of prior SEEC initiatives was also presented including completed, ongoing and future projects. The intent was to provide an overview of projects previously discussed by the Committee, to gather feedback from the Members on potential future projects that they would like to discuss. Specific projects discussed included holiday decorations for additional holidays (not just Christmas), Medallions at the Veteran's Park – although it was clarified that 5 are installed for the 5 branches of military, the wayfinding signs - which

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are underway, and the Community Park which will be brought back to discussion once the apartment complex to the south of City Hall is constructed. SEEC Members were asked to email Staff their top 5 projects or priorities that they would like to discuss at future meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Chairperson Ald. Jakab and seconded by Ald. Curiale; it carried unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

*Minutes taken by Gosia Pociecha*