

**CITY OF PALOS HEIGHTS**  
Business/ Economic Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 20, 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 City Hall. Present were: Bob Grossart, Ken Busse, Barb Bergamo, Mike Coogan, Rick Powell, Lori Mazeika, Judi Weber, Alderman Jeff Key, Abby Wieggers, Nolani Schnabel and Recording Secretary Charlotte Moore. Paul Muehlnickel and Dr. Chuck Polcaster were absent.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Grossart hadn't received the minutes, so they were not approved.

Chairman Grossart first referred to the handout titled: Status of Recommendations for City Consideration. There are 16 items that the committee has either worked on, resolved or plan to do. Chairman Grossart's comments on each are summarized below.

1. **Parking Concerns** – This was a project we spoke about over a year ago. According to Chairman Grossart we are waiting for the City's stance going forward.
2. **Holidays in the Heights 2018** - resolved
3. **City Parking Lot** – Waiting on the Comprehensive Plan for further action by the City. One of the issues was lack of sidewalks and the ability to get from the parking lot to the restaurants. It may make sense to put a monument sign in the lot to promote and advertise Olde Palos businesses.
4. **Business Occupancy Report 2017** - resolved
5. **Business Occupancy Goals** – talking about in this meeting
6. **Intern 2108** - resolved
7. **Open Air Pavilion** – hopefully this is in the Comprehensive Plan and then we can move forward.
8. **Regional Start up hub** – pending Fusion 59 engagement
9. **Business Purchases** - pending
10. **Business Directory** - pending
11. **Intern 2019** – new intern hired
12. **Business Occupancy Report 2018** - resolved
13. **Holidays in the Heights 2019** - pending
14. **Spectrum Senior Living** – pending
15. **Trinity Welcome Back 2019** - New
16. **Expand Email contact list** - New

**Comprehensive Plan:**

- **Completion steps/timeframe:** According to Ken Busse, the final plan will be delivered this week, then they will go to the Planning & Zoning Commission for review. The Planning & Zoning Commission will meet on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the plan with the consultant.

We will then schedule a public hearing on June 17<sup>th</sup> and Teska will come in and make a presentation. Then on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup> the plan will go to the Planning & Zoning Committee who will then forward it to the City Council. The earliest that it could be introduced to the City Council will be on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

- **City Parking:**

Mr. Coogan mentioned the March review of the plan and doesn't remember a whole lot of parking discussion included in the plan. Ken Busse agreed that there wasn't a lot of discussion. The sub-area plan does have some verbiage in it. Mr. Coogan brought this up because the Comprehensive plan is a long term approach and we have an ever-present past, present and future parking issue that has been hovering for quite some time. This needs to be managed and addressed on a monthly basis.

Chairman Grossart wants to make sure the parking issue is in the comprehensive plan and then develop a monthly strategy to keep it in the forefront. Barb Bergamo feels like the answers from the questionnaires didn't have parking addressed enough.

Rick Powell is concerned with how do we affect change in parking, especially if we are not satisfied with the parking objectives in the Comprehensive Plan. Who votes to make the change? Mr. Busse suggested the members of this advisory committee should make a point of attending the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. The Plan Commission can make changes to the comprehensive plan.

Alderman Key feels that someone is keeping the parking issue out of the Comprehensive Plan. There is a lack of commitment on the City's part. The Comprehensive Plan document needs to say there is a parking problem. If there is a property for sale, the City needs to purchase it. We have vacancies that can't be filled because there is no parking. Discussion Ensued.

- **Open Air Pavilion:** Chairman Grossart wants to make sure the pavilion is included in the plan. Enough people have talked about it, to include it.

**Holidays in the Heights:** Chairman Grossart passed out the proposed finances for 2019. We have requested \$6,000 from the city. Ken Busse is waiting to speak with Dan Nisavic with a response, but doesn't see an issue.

**Projects for Interns**

- **Business Purchases:** Chairman Grossart mentioned that there were some issues that some Palos Heights businesses felt that if they sell a certain type of product they weren't in the know on how to know if the city was buying that type of stuff. Before Pat Sheppard retired, she was contemplating putting something on the website about certain purchases and how business may be able to submit a quote. Chairman Grossart believes the philosophy has been to purchase local if the price is competitive. He would like to explore what the possibilities are.

- **Business Directory:** Chairman Grossart mentioned that businesses are interested in having their name on a business directory list. The interns are gathering information on local businesses with the goal of having them listed on the City website.
- **Trinity Welcome Back 2019:** The goal is to find 65 – 75 business that want to offer discounts to the students as part of their return to campus.
- **Expand email contact list:** We currently have 3,500 names that are on the list. The challenge is to get up to 5,000. Maybe we can get more people to sign up at the Car Show, Jewel, Lake Katherine and the Library. Mr. Coogan suggested we set-up a table at the Classic Car Show and offer a gift if they sign up for the email list.
- **Marketing of Holiday in the Heights:** We have cut down on the marketing expenses. The goal is to use less of Tom Barcelona and save money.

**Regional Start up Hub:** Chairman Grossart mentioned that the committee is moving along and has had several meetings with John Wightkin from Trinity College. Trinity and Fusion 59 is willing to help the businesses in Palos Heights with marketing, social media, accounting/finance, Strategic development & Management. Our role is the match maker between the business and Trinity.

Ken Busse asked the business owners how they felt about the program. Judi Weber mentioned she could probably use the service. They are old school. Judi feels they are good at merchandising, but have never had a good business plan. Discussion ensued. Michael Coogan is on the flip side. He wants to learn from the people who have bought, sold, made and lost money. Students are still learning and don't have the experience. Mr. Coogan already has a very comprehensive business plan. Discussion ensued.

**Business Occupancy Goals:** Chairman Grossart wants to think through how we proceed. One of things we are struggling with are if there are any goals other than Fusion59. What is the goal of the City? Is the goal just to watch or is the goal to go out and find stuff? How do we get the discussion moving forward? Discussion ensued.

Chairman Grossart feels the directive needs to come from the top. He thinks the City's overall position is that business will eventually get filled. Mr. Coogan mentioned that if the building looks bad, no one will fill the space. Parking plays a role and the attractiveness of the building. There could be an opportunity for another city incentive to encourage buyers.

Mr. Powell feels that Tiffany Square is one of the most important pieces of real estate in Palos Heights. It would be good to talk about what should happen to Tiffany Square. What can we do to move that forward?

### **Adjournment**

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

Respectfully Submitted,

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Charlotte Moore  
Recording Secretary