



Village of Arlington Heights
Arlington Economic Alliance
Commissions Room, 2nd Floor
Arlington Heights Village Hall
33 S. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
June 19, 2019
7:30 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes 5/15/19

IV. REPORTS

- A. Development Update

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Downtown Construction Update
- B. Downtown Signage Update
- C. Update on Items Discussed at May Economic Alliance Meeting

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Experience Arlington Heights Challenge

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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Arlington Economic Alliance
6/19/2019

Item: Minutes 5/15/19

Department: Planning & Community Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Minutes

Type

Minutes

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON MAY 15, 2019 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Scott Whisler – Chairman
Rich Casey
Matt Fink
Tony Guido
Rex Paisley
Dave Parulo
Jon Ridler
Brian Roginski
Andi Ruhl
Andrew Stengren

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jackie Lewis

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Mertes – Business Development Coordinator

ALSO PRESENT:

Mike Driskell, Arlington Heights Memorial Library
Scott Rowader, Special Events Commission
Melissa Cayer, Resident

Call to Order

Chairman Whisler called the meeting to order at 7:31 AM.

Approval of Minutes – April 17, 2019

The meeting minutes of the April 17, 2019 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

JON RIDLER MOVED AND DAVE PARULO SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT APRIL 17, 2019 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Development Update

The Village Board approved the Arlington 425 project by an 8-0 vote on Monday evening. This includes 18 affordable housing units at 60% of the average median income for the Chicago area, and a \$225,000 fee-in-lieu. Adjacent to this project, at the corner of Sigwalt and Highland, is *Sigwalt 16*, a proposed 16-unit rowhome development. All 16 for-sale units would have three bedrooms. The project would need to go through the Plan Commission process to re-zone the property from R-3 to R-7, and a few setback variations are being requested. A Design Commission meeting is scheduled for May 28.

Proposed for the Hickory-Kensington development area is 4 N. Douglas Avenue. This would be a five-story, 64-unit apartment building with 32 one-bedroom units and 32 two-bedroom units, immediately west of the approved 4 N. Hickory mixed-use building. As proposed, this development would offer 97 parking spaces to residents and there would be no commercial space component. This project went to the Design Commission on May 14 and will go to the Plan Commission in the near future. Chairman Whisler inquired if this site is in a TIF district, and Mr. Mertes confirmed this.

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Along the South Arlington Heights corridor, a zoning overlay district is proposed for properties at the southeast corner of Algonquin and Arlington Heights Roads. This proposal is slated to go before the Plan Commission on May 22. Approval would enable potential mixed-use development on the properties. Additional commercial development could help benefit the nearby hotels, while the addition of residential could help lure more businesses to the area.

Regarding Downtown Parking Phase I implementation, RFPs for a Vail Garage parking guidance system have been received. The Downtown Parking Committee will be meeting to discuss the proposals and make a recommendation to the Village Board. Additionally, a proposal for Downtown parking signage is due shortly. This encompasses six pole signs, directing traffic to surface lots and the underground garage off Evergreen, as well as two blade signs: one on the Vail Garage and one on the North Garage. The bid package is anticipated to go to the Village Board for approval in June, and the signs are expected to be installed this year. Also, Public Works has requested quotes for the painting of each level of the Vail Garage.

Chairman Whisler asked if Mr. Mertes could share the proposals before going to the Village Board. Mr. Mertes noted that the Village Board might vote on the proposals before the next Alliance meeting, but that he is willing to share the information with the Commission once it becomes public. Mr. Roginski suggested that the Village put the temporary banner, used as a mock-up of the new blade sign planned for the Vail Garage, back on the garage's façade until the permanent sign is complete. (Note: Mr. Mertes has since inquired about this. A Public Works truck raised the temporary banner, but there are no brackets to affix a banner onto the façade).

At last month's Alliance meeting, Chairman Whisler had asked about economic impact of new jobs in Arlington Heights in 2018. Mr. Mertes found this information and noted that it is estimated that the 700 new workers in the Village last year would contribute approximately \$2.6 in economic impact this year. This does not represent tax revenue generated, but is a summary of anticipated dollars to be spent in the community by new employees in 2019.

Chairman Whisler also inquired about development on Rand Road, and work being done at a medical center west of Arlington Heights Road. Mr. Mertes explained that the site at 1051 W. Rand Road is being expanded. Mr. Casey noted that Northwest Community Healthcare does not own the property, but is leasing space there. In regards to Southpoint, Mr. Mertes mentioned that he is meeting with one of the property owners at the ICSC RECon trade show next week. At 44 S. Vail, the former AT&T site, Mr. Mertes said that Village Staff remains in contact with the site's broker, but that he is unaware of any finalized purchase of the site.

New tax assessments for Wheeling Township are anticipated soon by Chairman Whisler. He mentioned that multiple nearby townships have already seen an increase in their property tax assessment. Mr. Ridler said that the new County Assessor, Fritz Kaegi, has been conducting speaking engagements in order to explain the updated assessments. The Alliance will consider this topic for a possible business forum this year.

Plans and Goals for 2019

In taking feedback from previous Economic Alliance meetings, Mr. Mertes worked with Chairman Whisler to craft a letter to the Village Board presenting a list of economic development items for the Village Board to consider at their upcoming annual strategic planning retreat. This was direction given by the Board to the Alliance at the February 11, 2019 Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

ANDY STENGREN MOVED AND MATT FINK SECONDED A MOTION TO SUBMIT THE DRAFT LETTER FROM THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE, AS ATTACHED TO THIS MONTH'S ALLIANCE AGENDA, TO THE VILLAGE BOARD REGARDING AREAS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS FOR THE MAYOR AND TRUSTEES' ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT.

ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

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Annual Arlington Economic Alliance Newsletter

Mr. Mertes gave an overview of the annual Economic Alliance newsletter and requested feedback from the Commissioners regarding the piece. Mr. Stengren complimented the look, while Mr. Guido feels that the information provided is valuable. Chairman Whisler suggested that Village Staff look to place available sites on the website as many brokers might look to the site as a starting point. Mr. Mertes noted that previous experience in maintaining a Staff-managed available property database is difficult. However, he can post a short report from the online CoStar real estate database if he credits them. Chairman Whisler feels that a quarterly update to this would be adequate.

Mr. Stengren asked if the cost, or a lack of publishable content, was the reason that the Alliance newsletter went from being done twice a year instead of once. Depending on the information conveyed, it may not be valuable to publish and send out the Alliance newsletter only once a year. Mr. Mertes responded that both aspects played a role in switching to once a year. Ms. Ruhl brought up a previous consideration of disseminating the newsletter electronically instead of a print version. This would help save on cost. Mr. Mertes responded that a reason it is still printed and mailed is that that Staff does not have a complete list of email contacts of Village businesses. She inquired if the Commissioners should be working to try to capture more email addresses from the business community. Mr. Driskell responded that the Library Business Center could produce physical address lists of businesses, but not email lists. Mr. Ridler noted that purchasing email lists is a possibility, but is unsure the accuracy of such information.

If the information is pertinent, Mr. Stengren could see the newsletter being published more than once a year. That being said, if many business owners are not even reading the newsletter, it may not be worthwhile to publish one at all. Mr. Paisley referenced the Village calendar of events in the most recent newsletter, asking if there are enough events later in the year to produce a similar calendar for a hypothetical fall newsletter. Mr. Mertes confirmed that this was the case. Chairman Whisler also feels that much of the data from Staff's economic development statistics report, which is presented to the Alliance a couple times a year, could also be useful information in the newsletter.

Mr. Paisley sees it important to determine what business owners are looking for. For example, are any of them claiming their Google business page? Mr. Fink sees emphasis on the value of doing business in Arlington Heights as a beneficial message to convey. Business owners should feel good about being located in Arlington Heights. Mr. Parulo wants to make sure that the Alliance is not positioning itself in a way that gets away from the Commission's charge. Perhaps the Alliance could work towards producing an economic data page on the Village's website. Mr. Stengren agreed, and stressed the importance of a greater social media presence. Mr. Ridler agreed with the idea of having a good landing page, but suggested that the Alliance wait for Village Board feedback from their strategic planning retreat before taking any such action. However, an Alliance webpage could be useful to the business community, and could be a place to find helpful data and past meeting minutes.

Downtown Construction Update

Village Staff sent out two e-blasts to Downtown businesses in April informing them of impending Nicor work. Another update is anticipated shortly. In conferring with Public Works prior to this Alliance meeting, Mr. Mertes noted that gas mains along Sigwalt, Vail, and Evergreen have been installed. Next will be work on a gas main line on Campbell between Evergreen and Highland. If there are no issues, the work could be done by the weekend. Back filling on excavations south of the tracks will occur over the next week, followed by similar work along Eastman. Planned work along the Memorial Day parade route will not be done until after Memorial Day weekend. Meanwhile, IDOT has begun working on Northwest Highway, and Public Works is looking into a possible timeline.

Water and sewer work will begin with saw cutting, which should start sometime next week. The goal over the next month is to have all gas mains installed. Mr. Mertes also provided a comprehensive map of the all the work being down Downtown this year, as well as a flyer for SeeClickFix, an app where residents and business owners can take images of issues during the construction on their phones and send them to Public Works. Per Chairman Whisler's inquiry, Staff is undertaking numerous efforts to communicate with residents that Downtown businesses are open. This involves social media and signage, as well as previously-held meetings regarding the construction for businesses and residents. Mr. Ridler noted that the Chamber has been getting the word out about SeeClickFix. Ms. Ruhl recommended using social media to get the word out regarding this tool.

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Overview of Village Websites

Mr. Mertes gave an overview of the Village websites. He explained that the previous iteration of VAH.com was organized by Department, which could be confusing for visitors who did not know which Department handled the service about which they were inquiring. An RFP was conducted in 2017. CivicLive, a consultant that had worked with numerous other communities, was selected to update VAH.com and DiscoverArlington.com. Stakeholder engagement was conducted throughout 2017, including of survey of approximately 180 people including those representing community organizations. The Economic Alliance was represented via a subcommittee as this survey was being conducted. Questions covered several topics, notably target audiences, unused/unnecessary pages, and useful pages found on other community websites. The new sites finally went live in fall 2017.

Regarding VAH.com, the homepage was most-visited page in 2018 in terms of sessions. The headers were chosen to represent for most the commonly used categories in terms of site visits. Further down the homepage includes: event information, social media links, buttons for most commonly-searched items or other items of particular interest, recent community news, a meetings and events calendar, and an area to request Village service and feedback.

In a summary of the headers at the top of the site, Mr. Mertes explained them individually:

- **Village Services** are what people typically come to Village Hall for. It was the fourth most-visited page in 2018, representing 24.2% of sessions. This page involves items of common outreach by site users.
- **Our Community** provides background information on the community. It was the third most-visited page in 2018 with 26.5% of sessions. The page includes new resident information, parking information, and background on projects around the community.
- **Your Government** covers the organizational breakdown and often-requested documentation. It was the second most-visited page in 2018 with 30.7% of sessions. The page covers departments and elected officials, meetings agendas, budget and financials, and the municipal code among other items.
- **Get Connected** has municipal contacts, channels for citizen engagement, and social media. It was the sixth most-visited page in 2018 at 6.0% of sessions. Content includes a Village Staff directory, social media links, and a general contact form.
- **Shop.Dine.Play** links to the new DiscoverArlington.com.
- **How Do I** is a catch-all page that enables visitors to see a broad range of commonly searched-for pages in case they are unsure where to look for them.

Regarding DiscoverArlington.com, Mr. Mertes also went over the homepage in terms of content from top of page to bottom. The homepage was the site's most-visited page in 2018, representing 33.7% of all sessions. As with VAH.com, the headers emphasize the most commonly sought pages. Scrolling downward is a section that covers activities, notable spots such as Arlington Park and the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, and the Visitor Guide that was composed in partnership between Village Staff and Meet Chicago Northwest. Further downward is information on recent business news, upcoming community events, and a section highlighting new businesses.

In a summary of the headers of this site, Mr. Mertes also explained them individually:

- **Things To Do** promotes events, shopping, and exploring the community. The "Fests and Events" section was the second most-visited page in 2018 at 7.6% of all sessions.
- **Places To Go** covers dining, parking, and aforementioned notable locations (Arlington Park, Metropolis, etc.) Meanwhile, the "Food Scene" section was the fourth most-visited page on the site in 2018 with 4.0% of sessions.
- **The Business Directory** also includes wedding directory page with the goal to show people that they can plan a wedding, from start to finish, in Arlington Heights. It was the third most-visited page in 2018 with 5.1% of all sessions.
- **Places to Stay** provides general information on hotels in Arlington Heights. Staff has plans to include links to all hotels in the Village.
- **What's New** also covers upcoming community-wide events.

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Mr. Rowader recommended placing the annual Alliance newsletter on VAH.com. Ms. Ruhl suggested adding the ClickFix flyer to the homepage as well. Mr. Mertes invited the Alliance to provide feedback on either site at any time moving forward.

Other Business

Scott Rowader mentioned that the annual Spring Sweep electronics-recycling program was held in late April. Approximately 1,000 vehicles dropped off electronics despite the snow. Also, August 2-3 is the Mane Event/Taste of Arlington Heights. Mr. Ridler said that there are about eight booths still available. Participating restaurants must be located in Arlington Heights, but other business types from other communities are allowed to rent a booth.

Adjournment

JON RIDLER MOVED AND DAVE PARULO SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 AM.

Scott Whisler, Chairman
Arlington Economic Alliance

Prepared by Department of Planning & Community Development



Arlington Economic Alliance
6/19/2019

Item: Experience Arlington Heights Challenge

Department: Planning & Community Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
Experience Arlington Heights Challenge - Proposal (June 2019)	Exhibits

Experience Arlington Heights Challenge – Proposal

June 2019

Summary

Downtown Arlington Heights businesses are currently being faced with three significant challenges:

1. Construction may have a significant impact on Downtown accessibility this year.
2. Not only maintaining, but also growing Downtown shopping/dining habits.
3. Especially for retail, pressure from the continued growth of online shopping.

The “Experience Arlington Heights Challenge” will be focused on the Downtown for this year in order to help support these businesses during the construction.

How it Works

1. Entries will be received throughout the year by any interested party who is not a Village Staff member, elected or appointed official, or direct relative of any such person. The person will fill out their full name, address, phone number, and email address.
2. One name will be drawn each week. The selected person will then have 15 days to visit three different businesses in Downtown, and spend at least \$50 total. The number of businesses and dollar amount are based upon the not-for-profit 3/50 Project, created in 2009, which challenges people to spend at least \$50 per month on three independent local stores.
3. Planning & Community Development Staff will provide a list of eligible businesses. The person selected must choose one business from each of the following categories:
 - a. Retail Store
 - b. Service Provider
 - c. Restaurant/Entertainment Business

Once a business is selected for the program, it cannot be chosen again in the next 365 days.

4. The selected person must:
 - a. Sign a waiver agreeing to the terms of the program.
 - b. Provide pictures of each of the businesses visited.
 - c. Provide receipts from all three business showing at least \$50 total had been spent, and at least \$15 at each individual business.
 - d. Provide a 4-6 sentence article for each business explaining why they chose that particular business and what they enjoyed about it (negative comments will be excluded).
5. The Village will award the selected person with a \$100 gift card to a Downtown business of their choice. In order to be awarded the gift certificate, the selected person must abide by the program rules.
6. Village Staff will, once a week, post the pictures and summaries provided by the selected person on social media and on DiscoverArlington.com. This will be done in the order that pictures and summaries are received.
7. A selected person cannot be chosen more than once.

Financing the Program

If the program is implemented beginning on July 1, 2019, and the rules are followed, this will cover 27 weeks for the rest of the year. At \$100/week, the total cost of the program would be a mere \$2,700, which is less than the cost of a full-page ad in a trade publication. The program would be funded through the Planning & Community Development Department budget code for Economic Development projects.

Managing the Program

The program will be managed by the Business Development Coordinator with assistance, where and when needed, by other Planning & Community Development Staff. Social media and website posts will be submitted to Cityworks for the Manager's office for review and implementation.