

Whittier Alliance Business Association Committee- Draft Minutes
Wednesday, November 10th, 2010 4-5:30, Pay Day America

Present: Tammy Wong & Peg Thomas (Rainbow Chinese), Rachel Lewis (Washburn Center for Children), Erica Christ (Black Forrest), Sharon Lund (Falls Agency), Lisa Vecoli (MIA), Jim Hubal (Edina Reality), Nico Ahmed (Ward 6) **Presenters:** Mike McLaughlin (Urban Works), Morgan Luzier (Balance Fitness) **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Jessica Rosenberg

Call to Order at 4:20 by Erica Christ, WA Board Chair, followed by introductions. Erica recognized the Conflict of Interest & Standard of Conduct policies. Agenda was reviewed, and approved. The BA Committee Minutes of October 2010 were reviewed and approved.

Spotlight on Business- Pay Day America: Chuck Armstrong. Pawn America has 24 locations. Newest location is in Wisconsin, 30 employees, great salaries and benefits. Want to be a family oriented retail experience. They are all about recycling goods. Given the economy, need for people to buy second hand. They are involved in community groups, with the Boys and Girls Club. Pay Day America fills a need, clean well managed brightly lit stores, professional, good customer experience. Corner space at 26th & Nicollet is for lease, market rate.

Nicollet Ave Special Service Dist. – **Mike McLaughlin:** There are 16 special service districts in South Minneapolis, including South Nicollet. Goal is to sustain the competitiveness of Nicollet Ave commercial district and ensure a clean, well maintained and attractive environment conducive to business activity. More services than other areas of the cities. Competitive bid process, all over city get to bid on work. Mike manages all of 16 SSD's, bringing on new person next year. Mike was manager of Downtown special service project (largest in city), when he was vice president of Downtown Council. When there is a streetscape project, business owners have to agree to create a service district as a way to maintain it, so that there are ways to maintain enhanced districts. Enhanced streetscape on Nicollet includes 146,000 sq ft of sidewalks, 1,750 ft of decorative fencing, 40 litter containers, 3,500 plantings across 44 planting beds, 242 boulevard trees and tree grates, 234 decorative streetlight poles, 8 service cabinets. Each fall the Nic Ave SSD Advisory Board meets, makes recommendations. Open hearing for property owners, goes to city council. Work plan and budget for 2011: Decorative Tree lighting (winter), Landscaping maintenance & repair (spring, summer, fall), spring & fall cleanups (sidewalks swept, areas around streetscape cleaned); litter container servicing (twice week); Banner Replacement and Maintenance. Will be getting all new banners this year, incoming weeks. Similar design, slight color change. Service charges for 2011 were prorated based on a property's land area, in a 50 foot strip, abutting the street frontage that is serviced. All districts are a little bit different, great part is that advisory board is made up of property owners in the district, who get to set goals, project, and budget. Nicollet Ave District has been since 1995. For safety and expedience to vendors, much work happens early in the morning (4 or 5am), so you might not see the work, but city is tracking and it is happening.

Questions & Comments Is litter servicing not done at all without SSD? If you go back ten years, city used to provide concrete bins and service them for areas. 5 years ago, budget constraints, this stopped. Options: local business can adopt a bin, city will put out bin and business owner will be responsible for emptying. Or bins can be serviced by a vendor through SSD. One exception: city services bins by bus shelters. How much is each business assessed, and does it include nonprofits? What's the formula for assessing? Mike can't speak to average. Commercial and Industrial are assessed mandatory. Some parcels are exempt. Plymouth CC opts in. On Nicollet, is OR taxed same? City has deemed OR/mixed use as commercial. Is it only the property owner that is taxed? Yes. Is tax passed on to retail tenant? Depends on structure of lease. Gross lease, no. Triple net, probably. Are property owners notified of hearing and board

meeting? Of annual public hearing, yes. Not of advisory board meeting via mail. Some choose to be included, by email. Some property owners want decorative fencing, but aren't in district, city has said no. Can't we include them, if they are willing to pay for fence and installation? City doesn't like to put anything into an area, unless there are ways like a SSD to maintain it. The risk the city runs, if a business owner pays for fencing, but then goes away, and new property owner doesn't want it, falls to city, which there are cases of all over. Our historic district we include other bits in, can we do that with SSD? Harder. There is a petition process of property owners. Tried to it with Nicollet up to convention center, but too many exempt parcels. But there is a way to expand SSD. You can look at it. Or, they could put in matching fencing, on their side of the property line. Could get specs and vendor info, it would match, city wouldn't care. Feel free to contact Mike or the advisory board. Advisory board is on 2 year cycle, appointed by City Council. There are open slots, if people are interested in getting involved, get in touch.

Balance Fitness Studio: 2902-08 Garfield - Morgan Luzier & Craig Helmer
Zoning change from I -1 (parcels 2902-04-06) to C3A consistent with 2908 Garfield

Balance Fitness Studio has been located at 33rd and Lyndale since 2002, focusing on small group and personal training, yoga, Pilates, fitness travel. They lease their space to other healers, do classes, consulting and referrals to help people meet specific fitness goals (weight loss, marathon training, pregnancy). They have been looking to move, and found this perfect space on Garfield. Only issue is zoning: 2908 Garfield is zoned commercial, 2902-04-06 are zoned industrial. Feeling is that city waited to see what would develop at this site. Lisa suggests that Morgan contact Tim Springer at the Midtown Greenway Coalition, as they like to know about development along the Greenway, and things will be smoother if they find out from Morgan. Morgan agrees to contact Tim.

BA Motion 1: The Whittier Business Assn moves to support the request by Balance Fitness Studio to rezone 2902-04-06 Garfield Ave from I1 to C3A contingent on the applicant contacting, informing and getting feedback from the Midtown Greenway Coalition. **Motion Passes 6-0-0.**

Tasty Eat Street Thursday Nov. 18th, 8-10. Friday Nov. 19th 5-10pm. Waiting for individual offers from Nic. businesses has made it slow. Website will be up tonight, and we'll get a banner. Paper materials will be out one week before; we had wanted them out earlier, not enough time. MIA has 3rd Thursday, this month is fashion focused. MCAD is having art sale event. This is the 4th Tasty Eat Street Event, we've gotten new people each time. We're still trying to figure out how to promote it, cast a wide net. Could look at facebook ads, Thrifty Hipster, City Pages, the Onion. The concept is good but we need to revise, move earlier, the timeline. Tell your friends!

Old & New Business:

BA-For Profit and Non-Profit Board Reps & BA Chair. Board meets at 4th Thursday. We have open seats on the board, and this is an exciting time, because we are doing strategic planning. It does require a time commitment; ask board members to come to one of the 2 community meetings (CI & BA) and one board meeting a month. And board member take up something else: task force, fundraising. We have several open seats on business association: for profit & non profit. We also have 1 at large seat on the board. All positions are until March, so it would be good for a trial run. Lisa nominated Rachel Lewis (Washburn Center for Children) to WA Board. **Rachel accepts, is confirmed unanimously.**

Be Neighborly—pick up litter

Meeting adjourned at 5:30. Minutes submitted by Jessica Rosenberg

Next meeting: December 8th, 2010