

**Old Town Triangle Association
Monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors
February 11, 2009, 7:00 p.m.
1763 N. North Park Avenue**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Call to Order *Fern Bomchill Davis*

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President, Fern Bomchill Davis.

Attendance

Present: Chris Beer, Matt Beer, Martha Connolly, Fern Bomchill Davis, Debbie Day, Alice Huff, Jeff Pines, Emily Rose, Michael Warnick. **Administrators** Shirley Baugher and Leslie Wolfe

Absent: Phil Graff, Dirk Vos

Guests: Beth Burk, Elizabeth Heurtefeu, Nancy Joyce, Dana Levenson, Shannon Waterfield, Bob Weil

Approval of Minutes

Jeff Pines suggested an amendment to the Minutes regarding commemorative plaques. The amendment reads: **Jeff mentioned the possibility of installing commemorative plaques in the neighborhood to recognize preservation and restoration work done by members of the community. The program would honor the efforts of those who have provided valuable service to the community.**

A motion to amend was seconded and approved. The Minutes were then unanimously approved as amended.

LaSalle School Development Update *Dana Levinson, Bob Weil*

Mr. Levenson reviewed the history of the project, an addition on the southeast side of the existing school building on Orleans, designed to improve the educational program. The addition, which is approximately 60' by 50' and contains 3000 square feet, consists of a large, multi-purpose room with dividers. The divided space would be used as classrooms during the day and would contain state-of-the-art computer equipment. It would serve as a meeting/performance space after school hours available for use by both the school and the community. No trees would be removed during the construction process, and the space will be environmentally sound. The new design will blend in with the existing building. As yet, no drawings have been rendered.

The school is now at the stage of raising money for the project. They will need approximately one million dollars; and have generated \$125,000 to date. They are hoping to secure funding from parents, neighbors, and foundations. They need to have \$375,000 pledged before they can take the project to the Board of Education.

The purpose of the visit to the Board meeting is to seek direction from the neighborhood regarding their plan and to secure a letter of support which they can present to the Chicago Public Schools administration.

Proposed LaSalle School Parking Plan *Elizabeth Heurtefeu, Principal*

A second presentation regarding LaSalle School was made by Principal Elizabeth Heurtefeu. She proposed enhancing teaching parking at the school with the addition of 20 to 22 slots on the southwest portion of the existing playground, just off Sedgwick and Eugenie. The space would be fenced off from the sidewalk, and would be used for staff parking during school hours. In the evening, it would be used as valet parking for Twin Anchors. The lot would be accessed by a new curb cut off Sedgwick. Ms. Heurtefeu maintained that there is currently insufficient parking for teachers at the school and the added space would serve the dual purpose of providing teacher parking during the day and income-generating parking in the evening. The existing teachers lot, now used as valet parking for Twin Anchors at night, would be freed up for use by another restaurant, probably Marge's. Ms. Heurtefeu asked for input from the Board for the proposed plan. Preliminary responses showed that Board members were opposed to taking space from the playground to accommodate additional parking.

Treasurer's Report *Martha Connolly*

Martha reported that Triangle expenses and income for the month of January were normal. She distributed a "Conflict of Interest" statement to Board members and requested that they sign and return it to her.

She then read the Article in the By-Laws regarding signatures on checks, drafts, or other orders for payment of money (Article VIII, Section 2). She requested a resolution confirming the practice. The President asked that she compose such a resolution and present it at the next meeting.

Appointment of Committee Chairs *Fern Bomchill Davis*

The President appointed the following chairs to OTTA committees:

Gallery Committee	<i>Emily Rose</i>
Membership Committee	<i>Michael Warnick</i>
Contributions Committee	<i>Alice Huff, Chairman; Matt Beer, Representative</i>
Historic District/Planning & Zoning	<i>Jeff Pines</i>
43rd Ward Program Committee	<i>Debbie Day</i>

The President further suggested that, with the exception of the Contributions Committee, committee chairs should look for additional members outside the existing committee membership.

Art Fair Report *Chris Beer, General Chair*

Chris reported that the poster art is ready, and that the post card for the fair is available in the office. She noted that the Exhibitors Committee, consisting of 16 jurors, had met over the week-end of February 7-8 and had reviewed 707 applications. The applicants were vying for 60 available spots.

The food court is filling up, and the chair is in the process of selecting a beer vendor for the fair. The official web site for the fair will fully functioning by the beginning of April. All committee chairs will meet to report on their progress on the 26th of February.

Chris named two sponsors who have already committed to the fair: Rose, which will be contributing to the Thank You Party; and Luna, which will contribute to the Artist Aid Committee. She also mentioned that she is reaching out to new sponsors this year. These include media sponsors in three areas: radio, newspapers, and magazines. The sponsors would have booths on site, close to the food court. The Tribune is interested in sponsorship and would print two large ads publicizing the event during the week of the art fair. She noted that the advertisements would enhance attendance at the fair and provide additional exposure for the artists.

There is a new volunteer who is working with art fair committee chairs to help the art fair go green. Areas under consideration for greening are: refilling water bottles of artists and volunteers to cut down on use of plastic bottles and setting up recycling bins in the fair confines.

Historic District/Planning & Zoning Committee *Jeff Pines, Chair*

Jeff reported that, in the renovation process of the property at 1809 N. Sedgwick, the rear and internal structural supports of the building were removed. Subsequently, the front buckled and two sides partially fell over. The city stopped work on the building. Parts of the second floor side walls, as well as the remaining portion of the roof, have been removed at the direction of the Department of Buildings. The city will reevaluate to determine if the entire structure must come down for safety reasons. In the meantime, the permits for renovation have been revoked.

The property at 1637 N. Hudson has been cited with building violations and is in Building Court. The alderman's office is working with the owner to get work on the property going again.

There is a potential landmarks problem with foreclosed houses that are being sold through banks. The buyers may not be apprised of regulations for renovating houses in landmarks areas. The HD/PZ Committee may appoint a member to be on the lookout for such properties and let potential buyers know about the guidelines for renovating houses in designated areas.

Membership *Michael Warnick, Chair*

The next newsletter will have a notice to members asking if they would like to receive the newsletter exclusively online. Those who indicate that they would be willing to do this can opt out of receiving a hard copy. All members will be notified when the publication is up online.

The jointly sponsored spring activity proposed between the OTTA and the Old Town Merchants and Residents' Association has been postponed until fall. In the meantime, the respective Boards of both groups will be invited to attend the planned April activity of the other.

Contributions *Alice Huff, Co-Chair*

Two contributions requests were received in the past month, one from an organization out of the Old Town area, and a second from the Franklin Fine Arts Center. This is a

magnet school that draws students citywide, including the Old Town area. They asked for assistance in purchasing a copying machine that would ease teachers' workload and, ultimately benefit students. The Board agreed to the suggested donation of \$1,000 to assist the school

A suggestion was made that the focus of the Board's contributions be re-examined to determine if there are other appropriate areas for our consideration. Directors were encouraged to offer their input to Alice and Matt if they have ideas about the scope of our contributions.

President's Report

Fern reported on two issues that were discussed at a recent meeting of organization presidents held in the alderman's office. One had to do with support for a public art project in Chicago that is known as tricolage. The program involves creation of art work in underpasses throughout the city. The design of the work is supposed to reflect the community in which it is placed. The program will begin in the summer of 2010. One site under consideration is the Fullerton underpass. Artists interested in participating must be 16 or older. Each project must have the support of the community organization and would require a contribution of \$5,000 to \$10,000 from each group. Debbie Day, who now chairs the 43rd Ward Program Committee will contact a representative from the Mid North Association to make a presentation on the program.

A second issue had to do with infrastructure. Directors who have recommendations regarding repairs to infrastructure in the community are asked to call the alderman's office immediately or give their suggestions to Fern.

Other items considered by the presidents were: sidewalk café requests, installation of speed bumps, community group meetings on the use of the Children's Memorial hospital space, and blue bin recycling.

Administrators' Reports

Shirley Baugher reported that she will be offering a Readers' Theater production of the play *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder in April. The event will take place at the Triangle Center on April 18 at 3:30 p.m. A cast of professional and amateur actors has been selected and rehearsals will begin in early March.

Leslie Wolfe advised Directors of water damage that had been sustained due to frozen pipes in the condominium above the Triangle Center. One work in the gallery exhibit had been totally destroyed; several others sustained minor damage. The exhibiting artist was insured and is having the paintings repaired.

A new exercise program will be offered at the Triangle along with the existing yoga and pilates classes. The program, called Nia Dance, is an energetic class that incorporates jazz, modern dance, martial arts, and yoga-like movements. The class will be taught by Emily Moore on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 in the south room of the Triangle Center.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

