

WPB SSA #33  
Guide Development Committee Report  
November 2009

The Guide Development committee met on November 20, 2009. Present: Larry Griffin (Chair), Suzanne Keers, Daniel Deans, Eleanor Mayer.

1. Review of old business from October meeting.
2. Eleanor provided materials regarding the Greenbelt Alliance, which runs a compact development endorsement program in the Bay Area, California. *See* <http://www.greenbelt.org>.
  - A. Committee members to review detailed descriptions of program on Web site before next meeting to assess whether it is a model for WPB to emulate. Input from other commissioners is highly welcomed.
3. Committee discussed proposed development at 1611 N. Damen Ave. Key issue revolves around developer's plans for second/third story parking, with access via an alley off Damen.
  - A. Committee has concerns about whether off-street parking is the best use given the proximity to mass transit, and whether access via the alley behind Café Absinthe (which is a high traffic area at night due to the entrance of a restaurant and night club in the alley). Query who the parking is for (e.g., business owners, business customers, or general public?)
  - B. Committee also discussed whether it would be possible to obtain a commitment from the developer to lease a certain percentage of the commercial square-footage to a locally owned business. *See, e.g., Block 37 project.*
  - C. FOLLOW-UP ITEM: Larry to reach out to BCO and WPC to find out more about this project, including whether the variance has or is likely to be granted, and more information about the purpose of parking spots and access thereto.
4. Façade improvement program.
  - A. Discussed status of Pint project; Eleanor has been unable to obtain an update. Per the motion, prior submission of updated plans and final bids are required for owner of Pint to receive reimbursement.
  - B. Committee plans to launch a publicity effort in March 2009. Components will include email mailing lists, updated Web site with before-and-after photos and information about past rebates, door-hangers and pamphlets

(being coordinated by CGS Committee), and canvassing (Relationship Coordinator).

- C. Discussed possibility of revising application packet and promotional materials to emphasize use of sustainable and energy-efficient materials in façade improvement projects. Will consider a ‘bonus’ reimbursement if project excels in this area.
  - D. FOLLOW-UP ITEM: Eleanor to contact Freed and owner of 1440 N. Ashland re: (1) before and after photos and (2) posting WPB placard.
5. CoStar.
- A. Eleanor to report on any use of CoStar at next committee meeting in January.
  - B. FOLLOW-UP ITEM: Eleanor to pull information about Miller Lumber property (1815 W Division St.)
6. Tenant attraction program.
- A. Discussed development of a Web site/service to connect prospective tenants (in particular, small locally and independently owned businesses) to vacant properties in WPB.
  - B. Committee noted that Logan Square’s listings of dozens of vacant properties in that neighborhood could be counterproductive; creates an impression that the neighborhood has an overwhelming number of vacancies/is dilapidated. Committee concluded this is not a model to emulate.
  - C. Stage 1: Eleanor will work to create a simple “concierge” form for Web site, where interested parties can submit their information and requirements and work with WPB to use CoStar and other services to identify viable locations. Will ask Chamber to link to our form.
  - D. Stage 2: Development of a fully featured Web site, with descriptive listings and photos of strategic or unique development sites. E.g., could include a page full of potential bookstore or supermarket locations.
  - E. Later stages to be planned and carried out in accordance with Master Plan, including efforts to target particular categories of business owners and fill needed niches in WPB’s commercial districts.
  - F. FOLLOW-UP ITEM: Eleanor/Larry to work to develop form for inquiries. Committee will review form and offer suggestions before it goes “live.” Goal is to have the form up and running by the end of January.

7. Zoning.
  - A. Eleanor reported regarding her discussions with Jamie and Claudia regarding zoning initiatives based on the Master Plan.
  - B. Plan is to develop a brief (2 pages maximum) summary memo of the key zoning policy areas identified by Master Plan – consistency in zoning overlays, density near transit nodes, live/work spaces, development of underdeveloped corridors, and enhanced/expanded pedestrian zones. The memo will be used as the starting point for conversations with both aldermen’s offices to see which initiatives have political support.
  - C. FOLLOW-UP ITEM: Eleanor to draft memo based on Master Plan and circulate prior to next committee meeting in January.
8. Committee will not meet on its usual December date due to the Christmas holiday. Next meeting will be on the third Friday of January, unless there is an application for façade improvements before next WPB commission meeting (in which case we will set up a meeting to discuss).