

JPNA

Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association

Newsletter for Winter 2017–2018

PO. Box 30072
Chicago, Illinois 60630-0072
773-282-3879
EMAIL: jpna@jpna.net



jpna.net



JPNA Facebook



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General Meetings:

Last Wednesday of Month @ 7pm, Congregational Church of Jefferson Park, 5320 West Giddings.
All are welcome. Anyone can attend.

Board Meetings:

Second Monday of Month @ 7:15pm, 16th District Police District, 5151 N. Milwaukee Ave. All members are welcome.

Lawsuit Opposing 16 Floor Building

By Colleen Murphy

Over 1,000 residents filed a petition opposing the building due to height and density and out of character with the neighborhood. It was originally listed as a 12-story building which was increased to 16 floors.

Ron Ernst, JPNA board member, has decided to file a lawsuit at HIS OWN EXPENSE against the City and the developer to stop the proposed 16-story, 114 unit building on the northeast corner of Lipps & Ainslie. Ron is very well versed on zoning issues. For 15 years, he has been fighting against the construction of tall buildings in Jefferson Park, especially when they are out of character with the existing neighborhood. If you share some of Ron's feelings, and this subject is of importance to you, please donate now as Ron needs your support. We thank Ron for his continued, watchful eye against extreme upzoning and increase in unwanted density in Jefferson Park. To assist with the opposition of the 16 floor building you can contribute to the fund at <https://www.gofundme.com/2017ch12986-lawsuit-fund>

JPNA Board Members

Colleen Murphy (President); William "Brian" Wardman (Vice-President); Ed Irsch (Treasurer).

Lotty Blumenthal, Ron Ernst, Tania Guzman, Peter Insley, Steve Neidenbach, Eva Skowronski, Siufofoga Tufele

Jefferson Park Revitalization

By William "Brian" Wardman

As the Christmas buying time comes and goes, many of us in Jefferson Park ask why our business district consists of 50% vacant store fronts and what can be done about it. The history of these vacant store fronts in our area is "water under the bridge." So, how can we get the business district back into a thriving situation? The following three points should help our business district to grow:

- Limit the time frame for commercial property owners to benefit from tax breaks for vacancies.
- Provide a 2-year tax break for new small businesses.
- Become involved.

Alderman Arena, in several meetings, has mentioned that "his hands are tied" due to current loopholes in the tax laws. An article by DNAINFO (see link below), "Vacancy Fraud Allowing Tax Breaks for Empty Storefronts Under Fire", discusses how business property owners use existing loopholes as tax write-offs. These same commercial property owners take advantage of this by either not listing the property for rent or asking for too much money so that an interested business owner has to go elsewhere. This "tax break" law may have made sense when there was a downturn in the market. That is NOT the case in the US and Jefferson Park, due to unprecedented growth in the last 8 years. If State officials cannot act, then it is up to local government to take action. It is time for our Alderman to get more involved instead of making excuses that this is beyond his control.

Thirty percent of businesses fail within the first two years. We should entice new business owners through tax incentives. These incentives should be regulated and limited to two years. The money can be obtained either from the existing Jefferson Park TIF or from the new increase received in property tax payments by closing the loophole. This change needs to be enacted by our Alderman to bring new businesses to Jefferson Park.

The last point is for both neighborhood associations, the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce, and other Jefferson Park residents to work together and push for the two points above by advertising Jefferson Park as a go-to-place for businesses and visitors. Advertisement would be done through the creation of videos and social media. If you are interested, now is the time to get involved. Come to one of our meetings (last Wednesday of the month) or call (773 282-3879) on how you can become involved. It is time to make Jefferson Park a thriving business district again.

William Brian Wardman is Vice President of the Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association and member of the Jefferson Park Chamber of Commerce.

<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20161006/jefferson-park/vacancy-fraud-allowing-tax-breaks-for-empty-storefronts-under-fire>

Sgt. Alvarez SAYS, Make Your Holidays Safer

Make your holidays safer this year by taking extra precautions. Remember criminals are always looking for easy targets. Please do not leave your keys in your car when you are pumping gas or while you are warming your vehicle. It only takes a few seconds for a thief to enter your running vehicle and drive away.

Also, it's that time of the year in which package thefts increase. Closely track your deliveries through text and e-mail notifications from your carrier. Consider enlisting your neighbor to sign, if they are available, for your package. Another option, that provides added protection against package thefts is to select in-store pickup from your vendor rather than shipping. Still, others are encouraged to consider whether packages can be delivered to their workplaces.

Have a safe holiday! If you see any suspicious activity, CALL 911. For more information, call the 16th District Community Relations Office at 312-742-4521.



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Property Tax Bill For Seniors

By Lotty Blumenthal

Attention All Homeowners! Please check the second installment of your real estate tax bill to verify that all your entitled exemptions are listed. These could be: Homeowners, Senior Citizen and Senior Freeze. And, these can save you a few thousand dollars.

A few years ago, the State legislators passed a law stating that all seniors must apply every year in order to obtain the 'Senior Citizen Exemption'. If you did not receive, or return the 'Senior Citizen Exemption', you automatically also lost your 'Homeowners' exemption. (One year, this application was not sent out to all seniors).

In order to make the necessary correction, you must obtain a 'Certificate of Error' from the Assessors office. You can go back 3 years for this. Your tax savings will be sent to you in 2 installments, 3 months apart.

So, please, be on the look-out for this form in February, to be returned in March. If you don't get this form by the end of February, call the Assessors office at [1-312 443-7550](tel:1-312-443-7550).

DON'T LOSE YOUR HARD EARNED CASH!

Membership is Important

The Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association has been in existence since 2001. We have been a positive influence in the community. As different issues arise, the JPNA takes a stance which, we hope, is always in the best interests of its Neighbors. We NEED YOUR INPUT, thoughts and concerns. We would like you to be a part of our decision making process. We encourage your ideas which would improve the lifestyle in and around our neighborhood. We would love to be able to count you as our member. Joining is easy and, hopefully within your budget. We have both a 1- year and 2-year membership with discount for those over 50. "WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?" you may ask. The next time the JPNA takes a stance on important an issue, sponsors a worthwhile event, YOUR voice was being presented and, I hope, that feels great.

—Eva Skowronski, Board Member

Join JPNA Today

Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association has been in existence since the year 2001. The JPNA is made up of neighbors, like yourself.

Membership: 1 year \$15.00 per person, seniors (age 50+) \$10.00 per person.
2 year \$25.00 per person, seniors (age 50+) \$15.00 per person.

Name: _____

Address: _____

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WINTER SUNDAY MARKET
JEFFERSON PARK
Copernicus Center Annex
5214 W. Lawrence Ave.
www.JeffersonParkSundayMarket.com

December 17, 2017
January 28, 2018
March 18, 2018
April 29, 2018
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Produce, Canned Goods,
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