

JPNA



Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2016-17

www.jpna.net

*Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!
Happy Holidays to all, from your JPNA.*

JPNA saved 501 residents and 230 businesses \$200,000 this year, and \$2,000,000 over the next 10 years!

by Bob Bank, JPNA President

By stopping the Jefferson Park SSA (Special Service Area #70), the JPNA collectively saved property owners nearly \$200,000 this year, and \$2,000,000 over the next 10 years. The SSA is an extra property tax that Alderman, John Arena wanted to put on 501 residents, many elderly and on fixed incomes, as well as 230 businesses in Jefferson Park. The SSA is basically a slush fund that is controlled by the alderman for various pet projects, with very little accountability. Residents would have been taxed to pay for planters, signs and luncheons for the business district. Oversight of the SSA is by a board, hand-picked by the alderman.

Two of the nine names submitted by Alderman Arena, to be on the board of commissioners that would have overseen the SSA, were Veterans Square owner Jimmy Kozonis' adult children. Not a single residential homeowner within the boundaries of the SSA was considered!

Much of the SSA would overlay another taxing scheme, called the Jefferson Park TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District; So that's three different taxing schemes, the regular property tax, the TIF district tax, and the SSA tax all on the same properties!

The undoing of the SSA, was the overwhelming number of fraudulent signatures of property owners found on the required SSA petition sheets. Before an SSA can be created, the SSA application requires the signatures of the owners, of ONLY 20% of the properties within the proposed SSA boundaries. Investigative work done by JPNA members, Ron Ernst & Tami Goldmann, revealed that not just a few of the signatures were fraudulent, but over half of the 148 signatures were fraudulent! Signatures included those of longtime deceased persons, and one person who was in jail at the time he was to have supposedly answered the door and signed his name. Many other's names were outright forgeries, and many names were of people that did not even exist. In the end, the Jefferson Park SSA was too dirty, even for City Hall officials.

JPNA says, thanks, to our long time Secretary and Board Member, Mike Bezanson. Mike retired at the end of his term this year. Thank you for all your diligent and excellent work, and your dedication over the years; you will be missed.

JPNA Meetings are held the last Wed. of the Month, at the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park basement, 5230 W. Giddings, at 7:00pm (not December)

Sgt. Alvarez SAYS, “LOCK YOUR CAR, HOUSE, GARAGE DOORS AND WINDOWS ALL THE TIME, EVERY TIME!”

Happy Holidays. The time for joy is also the time for crimes of opportunity. When shopping, put all purchases in your trunk, not where they can be seen. Criminals can break a window to get into the car and steal them.

Have mailed packages delivered to an address where someone can receive them. If left at a door where no one is home, criminals can steal them.

This is the time for big box gift items. The empty boxes in the alley can clue burglars as to which house to break into. Take empty boxes elsewhere, like a recycling center. Have a safe holiday.

If you see anything suspicious, CALL 911.

For more information call

the CAPS staff and Sgt. Alvarez, at 312 742 4521

Preserving Jeff Park....

- WANTED:** Concerned Residents of Jefferson Park
- DUTIES:** Coming up with ideas, suggestions to improve daily life in the neighborhood & take an active role.
- QUALIFICATIONS:** Just Caring as to what happens in the community.
- COMPENSATION:** being proud to have participated in any positive changes. Making life more pleasant.
- CONTACT:** Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association.
P.O. Box 30072
Chicago, IL 60630-0072
jpna2003@yahoo.com
www.jpna.net
or call Eva (773) 282-3879

JPNA Meets at 7P.M. the last Wednesday of the month at the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park, 5320 W. Giddings

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Beaubien Book Fair

by Eva Skowronski

Members of our Education Committee volunteered to participate in our 'adopted' School Beaubien's current Book Fair. Gwynne Carlson and I received our training from their volunteer parents. We were to help the primary grade students navigate through hundreds of books, school supplies, posters, etc. Most of the questions we helped answer had to do with "do I have enough money for these?" Or, "how much does this add up to?" These kids were so proud to spend their own earned money from allowances or money given to them from birthday/special occasion gifts. It was wonderful to see these youngsters so enthusiastic about obtaining their favorite books, etc. This was a very well-run and organized event. Kudos to the Beaubien staff to make this such a successful day! And, who knows, there might be a future writer/author in this group, and we helped.

Up-Zoning And The Future Of Jefferson Park

By Colleen Murphy,
TIF and Zoning Committee Chairperson, JPNA

What is up-zoning? Zoning determines what type of building can be built on a piece of land. If a property is up zoned that means that more people or units can be put in the same space. An example of up-zoning would be, if a parcel of land is zoned for single family homes, and the zoning is changed to allow a 10 unit building. The Chicago Zoning Ordinance states some of the purposes of zoning are: promoting the public health, safety and general welfare, preserving the overall quality of life for residents and visitors and protecting the character of established residential neighborhoods. What problems can up-zoning bring? If up-zoning is done it can set a new precedent for larger buildings. Developers make more money when they build more units in a space. If 48 apartments are put on block of single family homes once, then future developers will see this large building and they also want to build a large building. When a large up-zoning is granted, then developers and zoning attorneys will start to show up in that area looking for more up-zonings. What other problems can up-zoning bring? We will get increased amounts of traffic and parking problems on our side streets and busy streets. More residents will mean our schools will become more overcrowded than they already are. Some people are concerned about possible crime increases, lowered property values, higher property taxes, less sunlight, obstructed views and

increased chances of flooding, and a general decline in our quality of life. In the City of Chicago, the alderman is the only person that decides if an up-zoning will occur. The City Council has a long standing policy of giving an alderman complete control of zoning in their ward, it is called Aldermanic Prerogative. Alderman Arena has approved 6 different up-zonings over the objections of the community. Over 200 units will be added to Jefferson Park and there are plans to do even more up-zoning.

A LOT MORE UPZONING/DENSITY IS PLANNED IN THE FUTURE

In 2008 an urban planning company, Skidmore, Merrill and Owings, did a density study in Jefferson Park that proposed adding over 1400 additional apartments within 3 blocks of the Jefferson Park Transit Center. It was presented to the community in 2010. The community did not want it, so it didn't happen. Patrick Levar was the alderman back then, and he listened to his constituents. Alderman Arena is the alderman now, and he does not listen to the community when it comes to up-zoning. Alderman Arena has announced that there is going to be another density study that will be done by the RTA. This time a bigger area will be studied. It extends as far south as Sunnyside, and it extends north of Foster in some places. The City of Chicago even has it on their website. It is necessary to look at the 2008 density study so one understands how much density Alderman Arena and the City of Chicago intend on creating. To see a copy of the 2008 density study go to:

https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/milwaukee_lawrencecorridorstudydraft.html

Join JPNA today!

**Membership: 1 year \$15.00 per person, seniors (age 55+) \$10.00 per person
2 year \$25.00 per person, seniors (age 55+) \$15.00 per person**

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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Make checks payable to:
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You Speak - We Listen

by Eva Skowronski

The JPNA has been very fortunate to have had various interesting speakers come out and tell “their story”. Here are just a few highlights of 2016. **Adam Corona, 45th Ward Superintendent**, Streets & Sanitation: His message to all - please shovel your sidewalks very quickly after snowfall, especially when used by parents and children walking to school; be a good recycler by not mixing any trash into your blue bin; and follow recycling instructions to avoid getting a ‘Contaminated’ sticker. **Irene Flebbe, Naturalist, Cook County Forest Preserve**: Irene always presents a very informative discussion of native plants, the proper caring of perennials and annuals, proper use of mulch; how to get your garden ready for spring and, then, again ready for the winter months; for the winter, don’t cut all plants down as our stay-at-home birds can still make use of them. Irene is a real expert on nature and gardening and can answer many questions. **Osman Cen & Gonul Duzer, representatives from the Kurdish Cultural Center**: at 4803 N. Milwaukee Ave. It is the Kurdish Cultural Center, a non-for profit organization dedicated to bringing people with an interest in the Kurdish culture together; Kurdish language sessions are offered. We learned that the Kurdish people, estimated population of 40 million, are the largest stateless nation in the world. As far back as the 16th century, they lived in Kurdistan, now occupied by Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. Welcome to our neighborhood!

Jim Bachor, artist: Jim makes potholes look attractive. See more of Jim Bachor’s work, at: <http://www.bachor.com/> He fills them with mosaics and creates works of art with different themes like “Pretty Trashed”, using crushed pop cans or other street litter; or “Treats in the Streets”, depicting ice cream and other summer treats. So, Jim is someone who can see beauty where others see an end trip to the auto repair shop.



It was a great night when a pair of greyhounds showed up. **Karel Munao and Liz Jurkacek** brought their handsome greyhounds, Riot and Morrie, as they told us about the world’s oldest breed of dog and many fascinating facts about the greyhound. To learn more about greyhound adoption and rescue, visit: www.greyhoundsonly.com.

We also wish to thank our district legislative leaders who are always willing to come out give us updates on our current political situations. Thank you, **U.S. Representative Mike Quigley, State Senator John Mulroe and State Representative Robert Martwick**. (By the way, congratulations to Dad & Mom Martwick on their newborn son Bob.) Another ‘thank you’ to our **16th District Commander William Looney**. Our group always looks

forward to being informed about issues in our community and to Tom Devaney, representative from the Chicago Fire Department who gave us many insights how to prevent home fires.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPEAKERS!

JPNA Officers: President, Bob Bank; Vice President, Brian Wardman; Secretary, Peter Insley; Treasurer and past President, Ed Irsch

JPNA Board Members: Eva Skowronski, Lotty Blumenthal, Ron Ernst, Colleen Murphy, Liz Jurkacek



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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

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