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**Jefferson Park
Neighborhood Association**

P.O. Box 30072
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Additional editing provided by: Derrick Colon

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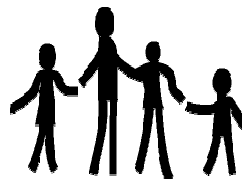
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**Jefferson Park Neighborhood
Association** Newsletter for **July &
August 2008**

Contact Us:

Jefferson Park Neighborhood
Association

P.O. Box 30072
Chicago, Illinois 60630-0072
773.282.3879

jpna@earthlink.net www.jpna.net

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Upcoming Events

General meetings:

July 30th Citizens Utility Board (CUB) Representative Sarah Moskowitz will speak on Telephone, Natural Gas & electric utility Issues. Bring your phone bills for review.

August 27th Open Forum: T.I.F. letter writing campaign & ice cream social. Come out at write your local rep to restructure the Tax Increment Financing program with us, while you spend a little time to get to know your neighbors over some ice cream.

September 24 A representative will be out to talk about the Guaranteed Home Equity Assurance Program and answer any questions. This Chicago program helps stabilize neighborhoods by ensuring that participating homeowners get back the original investment in their home.

October 29 Open Forum: Publication & Communication of Zoning Changes. How to find out about what changes affect you.

All general meetings Open to the public and are held at:

Jefferson Park Congregational Church 5320 W. Giddings
7 pm -- the last Wednesday of each month.

Refreshments will be provided & chance to win a door prize

Other:

CAPS Meetings for beat 1623 are the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, at the Jefferson Park Police Station, 5151 N. Milwaukee Ave. upcoming: 7/16/07, 8/20/08, 9/17/08

Current Officers:

Merril Miller, *President*
Ed Irsch, *Treasurer*
Lotty Blumenthal
Secretary

Board Members:

Ron Ernst
Eva Skowronski

The mission of JPNA is to strive:

- To enhance the safety, beauty, character and prosperity of the Jefferson Park Neighborhood
- To be an informational and organization forum
- To maintain awareness of public accountability for public officials
- To advance effective relationships with other organizations and public officials

A Letter to JPNA....

All "Letters to..." topics are letters to JPNA by individuals, who do not speak for it

Why Should I Care ?!

Over the past several months the media has been reporting on the Chicago Children's Museum (CCM) plan to move from Navy Pier to Grant Park. On June 5, 2008 the Chicago Zoning Committee approved the measure by a vote of 6 to 3 and on June 11, 2008 the city council voted 33-16 to build the CCM in Grant Park. This may seem like a landslide vote but according to information reported by the Chicago Tribune, (June 12, 2008, Kids' museum site approved) "three aldermen told the Tribune on condition of anonymity that top administration officials had promised amenities for their wards."

The CCM was founded in 1982 in response to cutbacks by Chicago Public Schools. The growing demand for services and for space has prompted the CCM to move three times since it was founded. Since August 1995 the CCM is located in the 57,000 square foot facility at Navy Pier. The current Navy Pier facility is unable to support the expanding needs of the CCM. The new proposed facility at Grant Park will provide 100,000 square feet of space.

Two plats of land were deeded to the citizens in 1835 and 1836. The 1835 track of land was designated as "all time to come for a public square, accessible at all times to the people." The 1836 plat of land was designated as "Public Ground — Common to Remain Forever Open, Clear, and Free of Any Buildings, or Other Obstruction Whatever." The current boundaries of East of Michigan Avenue to the Lake, south of Randolph Street and north of 12th (Roosevelt Road) street were worked out in 1839. In 1844 the City of Chicago designated the land as Lake Park with dedication in 1847. Over the next four decades, Lake Park (Grant Park) became an area for refuse dumping and squatters. In 1880 Montgomery Ward, a department store magnet and civic leader, demanded the City of Chicago to clean up Lake Park and remove all existing structures. In the 1880's the City of Chicago was planning to build several civic buildings (Field Museum, Planetarium, etc) on the site that is now called Grant Park. In 1897 the Illinois Supreme Court ruled on the first of 4 "Ward" decisions that prohibited the construction of buildings, banned events that charged admission, and prevented the land to be transferred to private ownership. Over the next 20 years starting in 1990, Montgomery Ward waged legal battles with the City of Chicago to keep Lake Park (Grant Park) open, prevent building structures, and remove existing structures. This resulted in civic buildings being placed on new landfills south of Roosevelt Road. There was one exception during this period of time and that is the Art Institute. It is because the Art Institute was not named in the original lawsuit. In 1901 the Lake Park was renamed to Grant Park after Ulysses S. Grant, 18th President of the United States.

The CCM states on their web site that they are taking current space that is currently being used by "Daily Bicentennial Plaza field house and the adjoining concrete plaza." The opposition to the move of the CCM to Grant Park is neighborhood resident and 42nd Ward Alderman Brenden Reilly. His contention is the CCM violates the forever open clause stated in the original agreement of park land. The CCM has moved 3 times since its inception in 1982. If this facility is built, when will they ask for further extensions into Grant Park?

History provides a clear resolution to the issue of building the Children's Museum in Grant Park. The Field Museum and Planetarium were scheduled to be constructed in Grant Park at the turn of the 20th century. The result after court battles was to build on land-fill south Grant Park. The Children's Museum can be built on either Museum Campus or Northerly Island (Meigs Field). This solution will provide space to grow, parking, and public transportation. Another solution is the expansion of the CCM's current site at Navy Pier.

Why should residents of Jefferson Park and the 45th Ward be concerned with what happens to Grant Park along the lakefront miles away? Key reasons are tax dollars, neighborhood parks, and the will of the people. As the zoning commission approved the CCM to build on Grant Park, a lawsuit was filed to prevent the CCM's approval and construction. It is us, the tax payers that will be fitting the bill on behalf of the City of Chicago and CCM. As stated earlier in this article, there was over 20 year legal battles to prevent building structure within Grant Park in 1890's and 1900's. This will cost the city millions of dollars in legal fees for something the citizens of the 42nd Ward and Alderman Brenden Reilly are against. It is the CCM that should be picking up the legal expenses and not the citizens of Chicago on building in Grant Park.

The CCM and the City of Chicago are pushing what they want on the 42nd Ward citizens. The same can happen to the neighborhood parks within the 45th Ward. If CCM is allowed to build in Grant Park, what will prevent similar situations for parks in our area? The argument for neighborhood park development would be that a precedent has been set.

A third concern is it appears the will and wishes of the People of Chicago are being ignored. There has been overwhelming support of not moving the CCM to Grant Park, yet the city council voted 33-16 for the move. (cont ->)

What will prevent the will of the 45th Ward citizens not being heeded?

If is very important that all citizens of Chicago look at what is going in Grant Park. This can happen to our neighborhood too.

If you want to support either side of the debate you can go to one of the links listed below:

<http://www.chicagochildrensmuseum.org>

<http://www.savegrantpark.com>

or call: (312) 527-1000

or come to a JPNA meeting, to sign the petition (see front cover)

References: Historical information regarding CCM and Grant Park was obtained from the following links:

<http://www.chicagochildrensmuseum.org>

<http://www.savegrantpark.com>

<http://foreverfreeandclear.org/LSDHistory>

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/538.html>

<http://www.fotp.org/pr/childrensmuseumrelease.html>

http://www.preservationchicago.org/chicago7/2008/4_grant_park.html

It should be noted that Pat Levar (45th Ward) voted in favor of the CCM being constructed in Grant Park.

William Brian Wardman

From our April Meeting – Programs at Northwestern Business College

Our speaker this past April was Sonya Diorio, from Northwestern Business College. Her speech was limited to adult and continuing education in the field of Real Estate. New in this area is that requirements for licensing and knowledge in the field can now be obtained "on-line" through Northwestern. No one has to be enrolled in a program or be accepted into any long range plans. People can take these courses one at a time or only take one course in their area of interest. If one is really interested, one can satisfy State of Illinois requirements for State Certification. The State of Illinois requires completion of a prescribed 45 hours of instruction for a sales certificate, but 120 hours for a brokers license.

Some of the topics covered in these courses are zoning, taxation, and laws for buying and selling property. Some of the major areas of interest are various types of loans and mortgages. She explained how interest only loans caused problems in the real estate market and the "snow ball" effect created in the economy as a result. She spoke about the advantages of home owners in terms of taxation and deductions for various types of expenses for homeowners that are not available to renters. She spoke of depreciation for multiple dwellings as a hedge against inflation. She explained building auctions and that they are cash only.

Courses may be taken for credit or non-credit, and credit courses are transferable. All courses qualify for the State requirements. Courses are valuable both for personal knowledge to know what to expect in buying or selling property or for State certificates. Sonya can be reached at sdiorio@nwbcc.edu or 708 237 5055.

Notes by Lotty Blumenthal

On the Horizon

16th District Scam Alert

Fall city budget hearings will be scheduled during August and will likely be at Falconer Elementary School. This is your chance to speak your mind about how the city spends our money. For more info on time and location, call 311

from the Jeff Park Chamber of Commerce newsletter
A man found his license plate missing and so he called the police to file a report. They told him people were stealing plates to get free gas. Given the rise in gas prices, people have taken to stealing license plates, putting them on their car, then getting gas and running. The gas station will have 'your license plate #' and you could be in trouble for 'pump and run'. Check your car periodically to be sure you still have plates. If you should find them missing, file a report immediately!

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