

Downtown Evanston Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 11, 4:00 to 5:30pm
820 Davis St., Ste. 106

Attendees

Chris Mailing, Acting Chairperson
Paul Kogol
Tony Marco
Hank Goldman
Chris Mailing

Guest

Scott Bernstein, Teska Associates
Lee Brown, Teska Associates
Jodi Mariano, Teska Associates
Gina Caruso, PLACE Consulting
Jeremy Barn, PLACE Consulting
Paul Zalmazek, City of Evanston

Staff

Annie Coakley
Laura Brown

Chris Mailing commenced meeting at 4:00pm with a quorum present.

Meeting Minutes

Chris Mailing asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from December 14, 2017. Tony noted to change his name. Hank motioned to approve meeting minutes as amended. Paul seconded. Meeting minutes approved.

Annie received three proposals for the SSA Reconstitution. At the December 14 meeting the Board narrowed down the selection to Teska Associates and PLACE Consulting and invited each firm to present their proposal for 20 minutes at the January 11 meeting. Below are some notes from each presentation. Proposals are available upon request.

Teska Associates Presentation

- Building consensus through informal activities
- Chris asked about tax rate on commercial properties but not residential. One way to generate more income would be by adding a rate to residential properties. How would that change the approach?
 - o Residents should be involved either way so point out that they are choosing to live here because it's so great.
 - o Attend homeowner association meetings, conduct outreach to condo presidents, etc.
- Hank commented it will be considered "just another tax" so not necessarily an easy sell
- Jodi commented that it is a great opportunity to help brand Downtown Evanston as an organization
- Annie commented on the City of Chicago process (20% of buy-in)
- Scott built on that with extra time can host more listening sessions
- Paul Kogol asked what the outreach would look like
 - o Jodi: provide a variety of events to meet all types of learners, ways to engage
 - o Lee: want people to leave saying that they were at an event, not a meeting
- Tony: What do you anticipate that will be a challenging aspect of the full reconstitution?
 - o Scott: we've done all the pieces just not all of them together for one project, but commented that Teska has a fresh approach to the SSA reconstitution whereas some of the other firms have done so many but have a certain approach
 - o Lee: Teska wants to add SSA to their toolbox for their future clients

PLACE Consulting

- SSA Creation and Renewal is the core of their business
- Paul: Any reason why we shouldn't complete the project early?
 - o Annie: City Council meeting and State-led meeting are at set date so everything is backed into that time frame but no reason not to complete early
- Annie: Can you discuss the community engagement process?
 - o Recommend starting with an advisory committee (people plugged into the community) to help guide the outreach
 - o Myriad of techniques to host more fun events to just the facts (PIN, land uses, etc.)
 - o Advisory Committee to take ownership of parts of the meeting
 - o Engage youth, residents

- Chris asked about tax rate on commercial properties but not residential. One way to generate more income would be by adding a rate to residential properties. How would that change the approach?
 - o Lincoln Park example – 40% residential and wanted an SSA → property owners with a stake
 - o Maintain competitiveness of downtown
 - o Frame as a special assessment – working with condo boards, resident groups, etc.
 - o Prepare scenarios for residents to better understand the tax
- Hank: biggest sell is the residents

Discussion

- Paul: Teska focused on community outreach in a variety of formats; PLACE has done this whole process
 - o Annie noted that PLACE based the number of community meetings on the RFP which stated at least 2 meetings
- Paul Z. commented that it is a very technical process
- Prior to a final decision it is important for the Executive Committee to determine what we want to accomplish in addition to the reconstitution.
 - o Add residents to the SSA
 - o Increase the tax rate
- Reconvene at February meeting to finalize the decision to go with Teska, PLACE or both firms working together on different aspects of the project.

Treasurers Report: Chris Mailing

- December YTD Budget
- Finished the year with a \$3K profit instead of a \$41K deficit
- Additional \$44K at the end of the year so we can go into 2018 with a bolder forecasting

Staff Reports: Annie Coakley

Due to time, Annie provided a very brief update.

Special Events

- INsidewalk Sale & Pop Up Market – Feb. 9-11
- Restaurant Month – CVB
- CoE Business Love initiative

Meeting Adjourned

Chris adjourned meeting at 5:46pm

Upcoming Meetings

- Next Executive Committee meeting is Thursday, February 8, 4:00-5:00pm at 820 Davis St. 106
- Paul Kogol will call-in next meeting