

SHERIDAN ROAD



SSA #54 Renewal

April 30, 2020 at 8:30am | Google Hangouts Virtual Meeting | Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Attendees:

SSA #54 Renewal Advisory Committee

Nick Andersen, Hampton Inn

Siraj Asfahani, Resident

Chris Bell, Flatts & Sharpe*

Tony Fox, Property Owner, New 400 Theater*

Torrence Gardener, 49th Ward Director of Community & Economic Development

Heather Hill, Resident*

Keith Lord, Lord Companies

Sara Lukens, ChiTown Magpie*

Summur Roberts, Loyola University

Cecilia Rodriguez, Loyola University

*Current SSA 54 Commissioners

RPBA Staff

Cindy Plante, Economic Development Manager, RPBA

Sandi Price, Executive Director, RPBA

Teska Associates

Erin Cigliano, Principal

Scott Goldstein, Principal

Francie Sallinger, Associate

Introduction + Commissioner Action Items

On Thursday, April 30th, 2020 an SSA #54 Commission and SSA #54 Renewal Advisory Committee was held over Google Hangouts. A quorum of the SSA Commission was present online, consistent with Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 2020-07 which suspends the requirement of the Open Meetings Act that members of a public body be physically present at meetings of the public body, and the limitations of the Open Meetings Act as to when members of a public body may participate in meetings of the public body remotely. The meeting was noticed on the RPBA web site and open to the public through a Google Hangout meeting. This was the third meeting of the SSA Renewal Advisory Committee.

The meeting began with a welcome from Cindy Plante of RPBA and SSA #54. Cindy shared objectives for the meeting and provided an opportunity for public comment. As there were no public comments, Cindy moved to the next agenda item in which SSA Commissioners voted on the following action items:

1. Approval of minutes from April 16 meeting:
 - Tony Fox moved approval. Chris Bell seconded. Approved 4-0.
2. Approval of 2019 Audit Report:
 - Tony Fox moved approval. Chris Bell seconded. Approved 4-0.

SSA #54 Renewal

Stay Connected + Learn More about the SSA #54 Renewal Process: rpba.org/ssa-54-renewal

Scott Goldstein, Principal at Teska Associates, introduced the next portion of the meeting focused on renewal of SSA #54. He reiterated the main discussion points covered in the previous meeting:

- The SSA will expire at the end of 2021 if no action is taken. If approved to renew, services will continue seamlessly and existing funds will be carried over into the following year's budget.
- The decision on the maximum rate is important because this will be set for the next 15 years and determines the extent to which the SSA's budget can grow.
 - SSA #54's budget is one of the smaller in the city; having a larger budget can allow it to respond better to immediate needs of businesses
 - Consider planning for the future, room to grow in the next 15 years when the economic climate has improved
 - The Commission can always set the rate lower than the maximum on an annual basis
- SSA #54 does a great job of stretching its limited budget to provide programs and services
- The SSA is responding to the COVID-19 crisis with new services and programs:
 - Business assistance in applying for government relief funds
 - SSA Rebate Programs: 50% rebate up to \$400 for expenses relating to a shift to e-commerce and 50% rebate up to \$400 for health and sanitation related expenses

Needs Assessment Survey

All Advisory Committee members are encouraged to complete and widely share the [Needs Assessment Survey](#), which will remain open through May 8th. A critical piece in the renewal process, this survey will help determine needs, budget, and areas for improvement for the renewed SSA #54. RPBA will be sharing the below graphic on social media to elicit more feedback and participants will be entered to win a \$50 gift card to a local business.

Budget and Rate Options

At the last Advisory Committee meeting, the group discussed but did not take a vote on a maximum tax rate for the renewed SSA. While this one-time decision sets the maximum rate for the next 15 years, the actual tax rate can change annually. Each year, the SSA Commission must determine a budget and recommended tax levy (the amount that would be raised through a tax rate that does not exceed the maximum rate). The County Clerk then determines the tax rate, which must be below the maximum rate set for the SSA.

The current established maximum tax rate for SSA #54 is 0.415%, though the SSA currently only taxes at a rate of 0.3798% and has been lower than the maximum rate over several years.

Scott presented a chart showing different rate options and the estimated revenue each rate would yield for the total SSA budget (below). The Committee agreed that the SSA would not be increasing the annual rate in the short term, given challenges businesses are facing as a result of COVID-19. The Commission and Advisory Committee also recognized that the decision on a maximum rate is for the long term over the next 15 years. Committee members thought that they may want the flexibility in budget in the future when the economy for activities such as increasing rebates to respond to future urgent needs, expanding the landscaping program, conducting engagement and planning activities for larger projects, and increasing promotion and marketing efforts.

**Hey Sheridan Area
Businesses + Residents!**

Take our Neighborhood Needs Survey!
What services + programs are most important?
Chance to Win \$50 Local Gift Card - Closes May 8th

WWW.RPBA.ORG/SSA-54-RENEWAL
Survey closes May 8th, winner selected at random and notified via email.

RATE	COST/\$100K EAV	SSA REVENUE
.38%	\$380	\$91,000
.50%	\$500	\$117,000
.55%	\$550	\$127,000
.60%	\$600	\$137,000
.65%	\$650	\$148,000
.70%	\$700	\$158,000
.75%	\$750	\$169,000

There was also discussion that the SSA should be careful to not set a rate that could limit actions in the future. Sandi Price explained that this rate is a long-term cap and will not go into effect until 2022. Also, if the Commission were to propose any budget increase over 5% in any given year that would trigger a public meeting.

Tony Fox moved to approve raising the maximum rate to 0.75% and was seconded by Siraj Asfahani. The motion to increase the SSA #54 maximum tax rate to 0.75% was approved seven in favor, zero opposed and two abstentions.

Outreach + Signatures

Erin Cigliano, Principal at Teska Associates explained the remaining outreach activities and timeline for next steps. The goal is to gather as much support as possible for SSA renewal leading up to the two community meetings, scheduled to take place in summer. These will ideally be in-person events to maximize equitable engagement and attendance from the Sheridan Road community. Prior to these meetings, Teska is also available to host smaller virtual conversations to address questions or concerns from any property owners.

DPD will accept the required Support Signature Forms via email of signed forms or via regular mail of signed forms. To gather signatures, the forms will be posted to the website and emailed to taxpayers and owners. There are 125 total PINs (parcels) in the SSA boundary, so 25 PINs will constitute the total 20% of signatures needed. These are all due in August, as the City has waived the first June 12th deadline for 10% of signatures. Note: if a property owner has multiple PINs, each PIN counts for one signature.

A cover letter will discuss key messages such as the achievements of SSA #54, why it is important to renew and what services would be lost without renewal, and the commitment to not raise the annual rate through 2021. The purpose of these signatures is to show that property owners support the renewal and recognize the cost and benefit to them (the new maximum rate will be included on the support form). Signatures must come from the taxpayer of record, property owner, or a certified agent of the property. Advisory Committee members will be asked to help gather these signatures of support through conversations with landlords, neighbors, and other community members.

Next Steps

- Complete and promote Needs Assessment
- Develop plan to gather support signatures
- Prepare SSA Renewal Application
- Plan for Community Meetings in summer
- Submit application and signatures
- Next Commission meeting: May 21st at 8:30am