

Devon SSA #43 Commission Meeting  
Monday, May 24, 2021 2:30 pm  
Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87341468102>  
Dial in: +1 312 626 6799 meeting ID: 873 4146 8102



## MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Pete Valavanis, Maura Levit, Irshad Khan, Sanhita Agnihotri, Rebeca Vasquez, Mohammed Junaid, Jay Shewakramani, Avi Bereliani,  
Others Present: Cindy Plante & Sandi Price - RPBA  
Ald. Debra Silverstein - 50th Ward Alderman  
Ellen Doppelt - Jewish Neighborhood Development Council  
Cassandra Kaczocha, Halle Quezada & Sara Stigberg -  
West Ridge Community Response Team  
Nida Hasan- Indo American Center

### **1. Meeting called to order at 2:36 pm**

Pursuant to the applicable law, this meeting is being held on zoom and is being recorded due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

### **2. Public Comment**

Attendees introduced themselves.

Cassandra Kaczocha, Halle Quezada, Alex Gonzales and Michelle Drucker from the West Ridge Community Response team spoke about their request for funding to purchase goods to stock their newly-established community fridge and pantry with necessary dry items and fresh foods.

### **3. Approval of minutes from April 2021**

Pete moved approval,  
Sanhita seconded.  
Approved unanimously.

### **4. WRCRT Proposal**

Commissioners discussed the proposal but asked to request more information from WRCRT and table it for now. Commissioners will send questions to RPBA by Friday to forward on to WRCRT.

### **5. Lighting replacement**

Commissioners discussed ideas for lighting and requested proposals for a new lighting installation rather than replacement of the previous system. There was

interest in installing lighting between poles over the sidewalk, or integrating it into other public art if possible.

This item will be tabled to the next meeting.

## **6. Murals**

Cindy is still waiting on draft designs from Statik - we'll be getting 3 and can pick one or more depending on commissioner preferences. Draft designs will be sent around when we get them.

## **7. Pigeon Abatement**

Cindy shared an additional quote for pigeon abatement at Devon and Richmond - the new company quoted \$5,000 and offers a 2 year guarantee. Competitive with the prior quote from Smithereen. Asked commissioners to decide whether to establish a pigeon abatement program similar to BIP - rebate at 100% like we do for sign removal or 50% like traditional BIP projects.

Commissioners moved to table this to the next meeting in order to identify additional building owners to contact and see how Pete's experience is using this particular exterminator at his building. This item will be reviewed at the June meeting.

## **8. Social Media**

Cindy shared that the first of the *Only On Devon* video series is still ongoing and there are slots for a few more businesses if there's anybody else interested in participating. Irshad suggested walking around to businesses with Brad in order to get more to sign up.

## **9. 2022 budget discussion**

Cindy provided background on the budget prep timeline for 2022 and asked commissioners to share ideas on priorities for inclusion in next year's budget. We're especially interested in thoughts on snow removal, events, and scope of work for landscaping and cleanup services.

Commissioners were generally in favor of continuing to fund sidewalk snow removal but frustrated with the current vendor's poor performance relative to the cost.

## **10. Additional planters**

Sandi reminded the commission that they had discussed expanding district landscaping by adding some additional planter pots outside of the area that was included in streetscape - Western and the Eastern end of the district.

Commissioners asked about also adding additional plants to ground planters to make them look more full and deter littering. Irshad asked to schedule a time to walk around the area with our landscape contractor to identify spaces in need of additional plants and planters. Cindy will reach out to Brightview to get some dates - they're out this week doing summer plantings in other districts.

### **11. Devon's Got Talent**

Irshad has had people asking him if Devon's Got Talent is happening this year and asked about the possibility of doing it outdoors this time.

Sanhita also spoke in favor of doing more special events to bring people back to Devon. Suggested outdoor music, possibly in the Republic Bank lot.

Cindy added that the West Ridge Chamber just got a grant from the City for a series of outdoor pop-up plaza events on side streets along Devon, might be an opportunity to collaborate.

Others mentioned the weekend trolleys that were included in previous summer events, might be able to be incorporated here.

Cindy will reach out to BigBuzz about the feasibility of an outdoor Devon's Got Talent event and reach out to the WRCC to learn more about their plans.

Commissioners will send any additional event ideas or proposals to RPBA via email.

### **12. Adjournment**

Irshad shared that the owner of Annapurna was having issues with a parkway tree pit near the business.

Cindy thanked him for the update, as RPBA hadn't heard from him about this. Ald. Silverstein will look into this issue since it sounds like a City Service issue rather than an SSA issue.

Pete moved to adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm