



MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Irshad Khan, Maura Levit, Pete Valavanis, Mohammed Junaid, Sanhita Agnihotri

Commissioners Absent: Jay Shewakramani, Mohammad Rameez,

Others Present: Sandi Price & Cindy Plante, RPBA;
50th Ward Ald. Debra Silverstein;
Megha Ralapati, Nilay Mistry & Asad Ali Jafri, SpaceShift Collective

I. **Call to order**

Meeting was called to order at 2:38pm

II. **Public comment**

Asad Ali Jafri introduced himself and presented slides on the SpaceShift collective and their project for the Chicago Architecture Biennial in September. Their Shamiana proposal on Devon is the only north side site included in this year's Architecture Biennial. Nilay Mistry introduced himself - he's a landscape architect and Devon area resident working on the project. The Shamiana project includes construction of a decorative canopy area and interactive garden planters at the northwest corner of Devon and Artesian that can serve as a community gathering space and venue for events. They've already presented the drawings to CDOT and are working on permitting and fundraising. The Chicago Architecture Biennial goes through 2024 but the hope is that the structure would remain in place beyond that.

Megha Ralapati introduced herself and provided additional background on the project and the Architecture Biennial. The organization has sourced funding from a variety of foundations and individual donors so far and are seeking to raise an additional \$37,000 for the project, which also includes several outdoor pop up events in addition to the installation of the structure.

Pete asked about plans for ongoing maintenance

Nilay says they only expect the structure to need occasional cleaning. The organization has reached out to adjacent building owners regarding water access for maintaining the planters. Chicago Architecture Biennial is providing insurance, which is required for permitting. Because the project's organizers live in the area they expect to be able to conduct regular inspection and maintenance. Construction is being done by professional contractors.

Pete asked if the events are already scheduled.

Nilay says they're planning for 2 events this fall where they're applying for a street closure permit for Artesian. Other events will be smaller and limited to the sidewalk. These events are included in the total project budget presented in the slides.



Irshad asked about the traffic impact.

Nilay says traffic impact should be limited, and they're only applying for street closures for two specific events.

Sandi asked about CDOT permitting

Nilay says they've met with CDOT officials to get feedback on the drawings and learn what additional documentation is needed. Chicago Architecture Biennial is providing insurance and applying for permits for all the projects citywide, including this one. CDOT is aware of this and CAB is working with them on permitting.

Cindy asked about the specific dollar amount of the request.

Megha says they're trying to raise \$37,000 in additional contributions and are requesting \$15,000 from the SSA.

Asad added that they're also looking for letters of support from area businesses and organizations as well as power access from nearby buildings.

Cindy thanked the group for presenting and asked that the commissioners take up agenda items in need of a vote.

III. Approval of meeting minutes from May

Pete moved approval of the minutes; Maura seconded.
APPROVED 5-0

IV. FY2024 SSA budget & service provider

Cindy presented the proposed budget for FY24 for SSA43. There aren't many big changes compared to the current budget, and the requested levy is actually about 3% lower after adjustments to several line items to better reflect actual YTD spending. This budget does include an increase in available funding for public art in response to increased interest after the Croatian Cultural Center mural was completed. The budget also includes funding for a part-time outreach coordinator position, and we're hoping to find a multilingual candidate to assist with language support.

Cindy asked for a motion to approve the proposed budget and retention of RPBA as SSA service provider.

Pete moved approval of the budget and service provider; Maura seconded.
Approved 5-0

V. Special Event Sponsorship Program Guidelines

Cindy presented draft guidelines for special event sponsorship, which was an idea proposed at the May meeting in response to the increase in special event sponsorship

Devon SSA #43 Commission Meeting

Monday, August 7, 2023 2:30pm

zoom



requests that the SSA has received in the last couple years. The proposed guidelines came from similar programs in other Chicago SSA's, most notably Wicker Park-Bucktown. The guidelines cap event sponsorships at no more than 20% of each event's total budget up to a maximum of \$8,000 per event, and requires event organizers to share photos, videos, attendance estimates, and post-event reporting.

Pete thanked Cindy for working on this. Irshad agrees.

Pete moved approval, Junaid seconded.
Approved 5-0.

VI. SpaceShift Chicago Architecture Biennial Funding Request

Pete thinks this is a really exciting project with a lot of potential to bring visitors to Devon and boost the area's visibility, and would like to approve the full amount requested - \$15,000.

Irshad suggested starting with \$8,000 and making it conditional on the permits getting approved by CDOT.

Pete pointed out that it's not just an event but also a public art installation.

Sanhita asked how much money is in this year's budget for special events and public art.

Cindy reported that the current year budget had \$75,000 for special events, and so far we spent about \$12,000 for the tuktuk event and \$9,000 on sponsorship for the Mandala event, and we're looking at possibly a few hundred for outdoor movie nights in September, so there's plenty left. Public art was budgeted at \$22,000 and we spent about \$15,000 on the Croatian Center mural, so there's some money in that category too if we want to split it up.

Irshad moved to approve \$8,000 contingent on CDOT issuing the permits. This motion didn't move forward.

Pete moved to approve the full \$15,000.
Junaid seconded.

Approved 5-0.

VII. Adjournment

Cindy reminded commissioners that this meeting is taking the place of the August meeting, so the next meeting is September 18.

Meeting adjourned at 3:28pm.

Devon SSA #43 Commission Meeting
Monday, August 7, 2023 2:30pm
zoom



Next Meeting: Monday, September 18 at 2:30pm