

Westview Community Organization Special Meeting Minutes January 23, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm by Jacinta Williams

Number of people in attendance: 11

Invocation

There was no invocation

Adoption of Agenda:

Jay motioned to adopt the Special Meeting agenda

Louis seconded that motion

11 ayes

0 nays

0 abstentions

Motion passes

New Business

- Change of Ownership of Liquor License at 787 Cascade Ave.
 - Shaleesh Kumar New owner of the store presented to the community. He shared that he changed the lighting at the store but there have been 2 break-ins in the last month (stealing of ATM, ripping out of alarm and camera system). The owner shared he is trying to be a part of the community. Use to work in West End Food Mart across from McDonalds as the manager. He now owns 4 stores on the Westside (Cascade, Lowery, MLK, and Lakewood) and is not able to be at each store consistently.
 - The owner has a contract with a security company that will start on Wednesday 1/25. Main focus is to prevent loitering and possible drug-dealing in front of the store. Security will be at store from 6pm-12am.
 - Bite-Size Security owned by Victory Tucker
 - Community members asked owner several questions
 - What kind of update did the last owner share with him? Last owner was not as forthcoming as he would have liked. Several issues in the store of which he was unaware and he is working on fixing those
 - Did you purchase the property or business? The business
 - Can you share your plan to address the big issues? Hiring security company and ensuring quality employees.
 - What is the name of the security company? Can't remember the information but will pass along to WCO through Jacinta.
 - Cameras are not working. When will cameras be fixed? Wednesday

- Did Mr. Montai inform you about the aggravated assault that happened on Saturday? Yes, he did. He told me something happened outside the store with some young guys.
- What are your plans to increase safety? Store will be opened so you can see through the store from the front entrance, security, increased lighting.
- Will the store be 24 hours? No, there is too much risk involved.
- What are ways you will partner with the community? Want to partner. I hired a community member at one of my other stores. Looking for good employees. I am looking for a house to buy in this area too.
- Community shared concerns & suggestions
 - Concern: Safety of patron and children visiting the store given the illegal activity that may be happening both inside and in front of the store
 - Concern: Inadequate lighting
 - Concern: Loitering , Suggestion: Have signs that explicitly say no loitering and have employees and security company reinforce
 - Cleanliness of property, Suggestion: Pay neighborhood children a few dollars to pick up trash around store
 - Prior security guard ineffective- would step in cooler before alleged drug deals occurred.
 - Suggestion: It is imperative that you move swiftly and with urgency so that you send a message that you are the new owner and the issues from the old ownership will not be tolerated.
- Community Discussion/Dialogue
 - Patrick shared with community that it is virtually impossible to prevent change of ownership. Faces possible litigation to City Of Atlanta. There is only 1 successful time within the last 10 years that the change of ownership was prevented, at a location near the AUC. The NPU has no legal grounds to prevent change of ownership. It takes a lot of time to see this through to the end if we don't support. Given this context, what has happened in the past is the community voted yes with a community benefits agreement. However, it is up to the owner to honor that agreement and many times those agreements are not honored for whatever reasons.
 - Darrick shared information of incidences at previous store he managed. Reports were from 2014-present. Biggest trends were loitering, drinking, selling of drugs, and battery & assault. There were undercover narcotic sells made in the store.
 - Jay shared idea about putting pressure on the security company if owner does not follow through.
 - Community members weighed the options and the benefits/risks associated with supporting or not supporting.
 - Owner appears before the license review board on Tuesday, 1/31. Sherry and Jay are available to attend. Patrick encouraged them to

get there early. Jacinta will follow-up with owner on time of that meeting.

Motion to Support/Not Support

Jay made a motion for the community to support the change in ownership

Derek seconded the motion.

Patrick amended the motion to supporting a change in ownership with stipulations (security cameras, measures to prevent loitering including security and signage, security from 3pm-12pm, cleanliness of store both inside and outside, improved lighting on exterior, no illegal activities on premises) outlined in the community benefits agreement.

Jay seconded the motion.

9 ayes

0 nays

0 abstentions

Next Steps

- Jacinta will contact owner with tentative decision and get the security information from him as well as time of LRB Review.
- Jacinta will draft a community benefits agreement and share with people in attendance & WCO for comments/feedback before giving to owner
- Owner will be invited to February 6th meeting to update community on progress
- Jay and Sherry will attend the LRB Review Meeting on 1/31 and speak on behalf of community
- Darrick will make introduction of owner to the new Major for Zone 4.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.