

VILLAGE OF LAKE IN THE HILLS
BUSINESS RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, December 13, 2011

The Business Relations Committee was called to order on December 13, 2011, at the Lake in the Hills Village Hall, 600 Harvest Gate, Lake in the Hills, Illinois, at 6:03 p.m. Those present were Committee Chairperson John Andrea and Committee Members Cindy Heidemann, Mary Siewenie and Jean Murawski. Also present were Assistant Village Administrator Shannon Andrews and Recording Secretary Diane Strzelecki. Committee Member Lauren Tredore was absent. Committee Member Colin Taheny arrived at 6:04 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 15, 2011

Committee Member Heidemann motioned to approve November 15, 2011 meeting minutes. Committee Member Siewenie seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a sign of aye, no nays. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

A) Committee Member Reviews of Site Visits

Committee Member Murawski noted that she had been ill all month and was unable to conduct site visits.

Committee Member Siewenie visited YUMZ and reviewed the Shop Lake in the Hills program with them.

Committee Chairperson Andrea returned to Alfredo's Pizza and the owner seemed very impressed with the coupons. The owner is very encouraged that the business has been growing since he took ownership and he is thinking of a new site for another restaurant or carryout. The owner also wanted Committee Chairperson Andrea to mention that he offered catering services so that Village personnel would think of Alfredo's for Village functions.

Committee Chairperson Andrea also revisited Dino at Dino's Pizza, who mention that he wanted to start getting involved with the Shop Lake in the Hills program and offer a coupon. Committee Chairperson Andrea also "visited" his son Anthony Andrea regarding his home-based business EYS Clothing and noted than Anthony will definitely be getting involved with the Shop Lake in the Hills program. Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that he will provide the EYS Clothing contact information to Ms. Andrews.

Committee Chairperson Andrea also mentioned how JC's Guitars and Music Lessons closed a location in Algonquin (close to Route 25) and moved to a smaller site west on Algonquin Road in the Fountain Square Shopping Development. He noted that the Lake in the Hills location is now the central location (and the main location for lessons) and they also had opened a site in St. Charles recently.

Committee Member Heidemann reported that Leaps & Bounds (a business in the plaza near her business) had moved their autism center to a location near the intersection of 176 and 31 as they needed the room for physical therapy. She reported that she was unable to visit Trinity Gymnastics as they were in the midst of preparations for state finals. Committee Member Heidemann also stopped by MMA and noted the energy and general enthusiasm of the employees there. She noted that they might be interested in doing something with the Summer Sunset Festival. Committee Member Heidemann remarked that getting representatives of these similar businesses together for a presentation might be valuable in order to show them what the Village can do for them. Ms. Andrews asked if Committee Member Heidemann was able to collect email addresses. Committee Member Heidemann said yes.

Committee Member Taheny noted that he followed up on an August site visit with a company called Michael Christopher. The company is a perfume vendor that makes perfumes and ships them around the world. It is a little production niche with four lines, but not a retail business. Committee Member Taheny asked the business owner if he might be interested in sponsoring an event and he seemed interested; however, a Shop Lake in the Hills coupon would not be appropriate since the business is a retail business. He said he would provide Ms. Andrews with the business email address.

Committee Member Taheny reported that the owner of Free Spirit Doggy Day Care is interested in offering a coupon and said he had signed up to participate already. Ms. Andrews reported that the Village never received their logo or information necessary to offer a coupon. Discussion ensued. Committee Member Taheny also reported that he visited the owner of Snelton, who said he'd be interested in donating to the Village and the community. Ms. Andrews asked Committee Member Taheny to clarify his use of the word "donate." Committee Member Taheny noted that his site visit process includes telling a business about the Shop Lake in the Hills program and if the business he's visiting doesn't fit the mold he asks the business contact if they'd like to get involved in another way or if they know another business that fits the mold. Ms. Andrews clarified that when a Committee member approaches a non-retail business, the Committee member should ask if there is something the BRC could do to help them. Ms. Andrews clarified that the mission of the Committee was to help the businesses to be successful, and she just wanted to make sure that BRC is meeting the needs of local business.

Committee Member Siewenie noted that she was concerned about the CFI study done on the intersection of Randall and Algonquin Roads. She remarked that during a recent chamber meeting many business representatives in her zone asked if this issue wasn't a primary issue for BRC to get involved with. Committee Member Siewenie thought that the BRC should be giving some information to those businesses. Ms. Andrews noted that a BRC member with Randall Road in his/her zone could ask those businesses if they had specific concerns that the Committee Member could relay back to the Village. She noted that the CFI is not a Village project, although it is definitely an issue that the Village Board has taken a position on, and the Committee Member should refer the business back to the County.

Committee Member Heidemann noted that another issue that businesses have been speaking to her about is the Public Hearing about the Asphalt Shingle Recycling Plant. Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Heidemann remarked that local residents and businesses assume BRC members have information about these kinds of issues. Ms. Andrews noted that there is value for BRC members to review Board and other Committee agendas and minutes in order to educate themselves regarding what's going on in the Village.

Committee Member Heidemann revisited the issue of how to address those businesses that don't need or want to offer a Shop Lake in the Hills coupon and wondered how the BRC can get them involved. Ms. Andrews reiterated the two levels of involvement for the Shop Lake in the Hills program and encouraged Committee Members to ask the businesses questions; for example, if there was a specific event or service they are seeking.

NEW BUSINESS

Shop Lake in the Hills for the Holidays Inquiries

Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that Ms. Andrews had recently fielded some comments from businesses and/or media asking if there was any holiday-related event or offering for Shop Lake in the Hills. Committee Chairperson Andrea felt it would be a good thing to do, but asked the Committee to consider how the BRC would get businesses involved. Committee Chairperson Andrea remarked that asking the businesses would be the best way to get something going, and then considered the logistics about such inquiries, wondering if an email should be sent out or if this should be brought up during site visits. Discussion ensued. Committee Member Siewenie suggested that a Shop Lake in the Hills for the Holidays program could possibly tie into the annual Festival of Lights program.

Ms. Andrews remarked that a Lake in the Hills business had suggested a coupon program similar to what Algonquin Commons does: sending out a mailer with all participating retail business and coupons for those businesses in a certain time frame. She noted that it was easy for a group of retail businesses in one location to do, but that it may be difficult to come up with something similar that would work for the Village. Discussion ensued. Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that perhaps the brainstorming should focus on idea generation instead of the logistics of specific program types. Ms. Andrews noted that the BRC members could be looking at what programs are out there during the holidays and report back to the next BRC meeting and/or send these observations to her over the course of the month; that way, the Committee would have something in hand to talk about at the next meeting. Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that there is a challenge to host this type of event without a centralized downtown business district, but that he was certain the Committee would think of some good ideas.

Committee Member Heidemann expressed frustration regarding issues and ideas brought up during meetings and those issues and ideas being tabled right away. She also wondered if the BRC had the support of the Village Board. Committee Heidemann also expressed her desire to get something done in 2012 that she could put her name on. Committee Member Siewenie noted that she was proud of the things the BRC has done in 2011. Ms. Andrews noted that with regards to specific accomplishments, the BRC had achieved its goal to push the Shop Lake in the Hills program in 2011. She reiterated the overall goals of the BRC and what to do if coupons or the Shop Lake in the Hills program is not appropriate for a business. Ms. Andrews also noted that

some items need to be tabled depending on the items, the timeframe, the situation, and extenuating circumstances. She also remarked that the Village was trying to keep Committee Members updated about their own responsibilities, assignments, and Village news in general, hence the new weekly “BRC Briefing” emails. Committee Members Siewenie, Taheny, and Heidemann remarked that they appreciated the new communications.

Ms. Andrews reiterated that she is looking to Committee Members to take a conscious role about educating themselves about what’s going on in the Village. Discussion ensued regarding the BRC mission and meeting topics. Committee Member Heidemann asked if sticking to the BRC mission statement meant handing off the Shop Lake in the Hills program and coupon tasks to the Algonquin/Lake in the Hills Chamber of Commerce. Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Taheny remarked that he believes social media is the way to go in communicating with residents and would be a great way to get traction on communication. He questioned the value of the face-to-face communication when he felt that social media rules the day. Discussion ensued. Ms. Andrews presented an overview on the Code established by the Village Board regarding the BRC’s responsibilities, noting that the Committee needed to follow through on established goals and display a certain level of commitment to assignments and develop action items as a follow up to research activities (such as the research on surrounding community EDC activities). Discussion ensued.

Committee Member Taheny remarked that in his experience as a business owner, the vision of the organization at large can be lost and there needs to be guidance. He noted that his goal for the Committee was to step forward, not backward, and that perhaps the Committee needs to compartmentalize certain tasks, adding that some people are good in fostering ideas, some are good at implementing them, and some people are good with face-to-face contact and some people prefer emails. Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that the methodology with regards to making contacts has been left up to the Committee members themselves. Committee Member Taheny noted that there are people in the Village out there every day checking on business and they could be dropping off information. Committee Chairperson Andrea noted that BRC had discussed that type of communication already and determined it was not appropriate.

Committee Chairperson Andrea asked if Committee members were solid on their goals for the rest of the year. Discussion ensued, including some clarification regarding the timing of the Gordon Larsen award and when nominations were due.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Andrews provided a Shop Lake in the Hills update, noting a low increase in email registrations from 664 to 672. She felt that statistic was surprising given the holidays were close and the program was being advertised at www.lith.org and the Resident Insider.

Ms. Andrews reviewed the e-coupon mailing statistics, with 31 click-throughs on last mailing, which she considered very encouraging. She remarked that once of the nice things regarding how you develop the coupon, you can see exactly where the recipient is going, and in the case of the restaurant e-coupon, the statistics showed that click-throughs were directed to both the web site and the restaurant menu. Ms. Andrews noted that she was a little concerned regarding spam

reports and will be checking further regarding what email listed it as spam. She also received a negative response from someone who didn't want information regarding a specific business.

Ms. Andrews highlighted the following items of interest for BRC members:

- The Village Board recently passed a motion regarding the proposed CFI in order to ensure the County had an official record of the Village's position.
- Construction was progressing on the Residences.
- New business Fannie May had recently made arrangements for its final inspection and will open shortly.
- Community Development recently issued a conditional use permit for new business Serene Soul Remedies.
- Noted that a new McDonald's had been proposed to be constructed on Algonquin Road in Algonquin.

Ms. Andrews reminded the Committee about the Chamber ribbon-cutting for LITH Liquor this coming Friday at 9:00am. She noted that Committee Member Snow had submitted a letter of resignation due to conflicts with childcare issues and managing two schedules.

Committee Member Heidemann asked about the Committee openings; specifically if she could mention the opening during site visits. Ms. Andrews said that was fine, although she noted that that President Plaza would have the final say-so in nominating the individual. Ms. Heidemann asked if the new tri-fold brochure could be scanned and attached to an email to the BRC. Ms. Andrews said she would take care of it.

TRUSTEE LIAISON REPORT

None.

DISCUSSION

Committee Chairperson Andrea asked if it were possible to send an email mid-way through the month with action items/capture points from the current meeting. Ms. Andrews said it would be done.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Heidemann to adjourn the meeting. Committee Member Murawski seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a sign of aye, no nays. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Submitted by:

Diane Strzelecki, Recording Secretary