

**WEAR Annual Meeting**  
Tuesday December 6, 2022 at 7 PM

**2022 Board Members Present**

Scott Fink, President  
Charlie Parker, at-large  
Bill Farmer, Treasurer  
Suzanne Hoffman, Secretary  
Laura Bicicchi, at-large  
Michael Quinlan: at-large

**Guests:** Alderman Andre Vasquez,  
40<sup>th</sup> Ward Attendees: ~15 in person and ~ 12 via Zoom

**Use this link to view the [Zoom meeting recording](#)**

**Password:** %3tb69dg

**Meeting Minutes**

**Opening and WEAR Update**

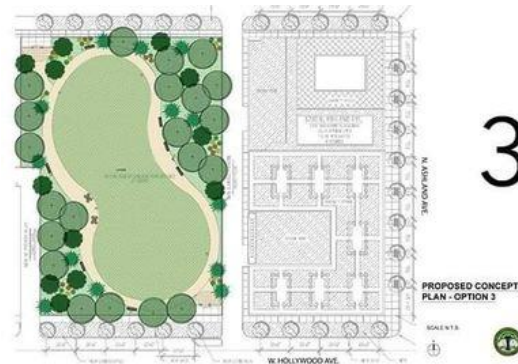
- Scott welcomed residents and WEAR members.
- WEAR Board members were introduced.
- Terms are expiring for two at-large Board members, Becky Radoszewski and Laura Bicicchi. Both agreed to serve another two-year term. Scott asked for unanimous consensus to confirm and members responded in the affirmative.
- Scott announced that next year all Board positions with exception of Becky and Laura will be up for re-election. Officers are limited to serving two consecutive two-year terms by WEAR bylaws. As a result, both Scott and Bill will step down leaving these as open positions
  - Scott Fink: President
  - Bill Farmer: Treasure
- Scott provided an overview of WEAR activities for the past year:
  - WEAR Bear neighborhood happy hours returned. The Board hopes that there will be additional individuals open to hosting in 2023 to expand the happy hour program.
  - WEAR continued to make improvements in the Horst & Anna Wagener WEAR Garden, including expanding the garden by redeveloping the corner of Rosehill & Ravenswood, the abandoned lot that was the site of the former cell phone tower. A full recap of the work done is available on the WEAR website at this [link](#).
  - It was also noted that WEAR stayed in regular contact with Alderperson Vasquez's office to advocate for issues such as the park completion and the painting of the ComEd substation east side. ComEd is currently scheduled to begin work on substation paining in Spring 2023.

- **WEAR Annual Dues.** Residents were encouraged to join WEAR and support the \$20 annual dues per household to support their advocacy, continued expansion of the park and community activities. Use this [link](#) to pay via PayPay or for the address to mail in a check.

#### **EMC Park Update: Alderman Andre Vasquez**

- The Alderman has been in contact with the Chicago Parks District (CPD) and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) regarding the development of the pocket park in the former EMC site.
  - The Alderman indicated that they have a weekly update over email to address status updates and concerns.
- WEAR has continued to advocate for the community's position on the park and voice the neighborhood's interests and concerns to the Alderman.
- He confirmed that the developer and city have made progress toward the punch list required for the hand off to CPD.
  - All the physical elements such as removing the vaults and telephone poles have been completed, but now it's just multiple legal issues that need to be cleared.
  - However, as progress has been made, other previously unknown issues come up.
  - All the physical elements such as removing the vaults and telephone poles have been completed
  - Now it's just multiple legal issues that need to be cleared
  - The developer is now working to provide the city receipts for work that was completed eight years ago.
- The goal is to complete the park next year; but the Alderman stressed that that is not a promise, but rather what they are driving to accomplish.
- Scott reiterated that the completion of the park is of utmost importance to the WEAR community and has been stressing this point with the Alderman and has been in regular communication with him.
- **Constituent Question:**
  - Whose responsibility is it to keep the empty lot that will become the park clean? Frequently trash can be found throughout the lot stemming from the dumpster.
    - **Response:** It's the developer's responsibility. Constituents were directed to notify the Alderman's office when cleanliness issues are present, and he will forward on to the developer to take action.
  - Will the neighborhood have input into what the park will look like?
    - **Response:** The concept of the park being a green space surrounded by plantings was already decided after considerable community input several years ago. However, the exact specifics of what gets planted, where exactly park benches get placed, etc. will not be determined until the Park District takes full legal ownership and puts the development out for bid. At that time there will be additional opportunity for community input. Both WEAR and the Edgewater Environmental Coalition have

already expressed that plantings should focus on IL natives but there will be opportunity to additional input.



### Metra Train Station

- The Metra station is making good progress.
- Scott noted the significant number of construction workers there on a daily basis.
- Andre communicated that one of the biggest challenges to progress is that Metra regularly changes design requirements. Design changes prompt permitting change approvals and then cause subsequent delays in work.
- There is no firm quote date when the community Metra station is expected to be completed. Alderman's best-case scenario is end of 2023.
- It was also noted how slow the new Ravenswood station is taking to open thought it appears to be 99.9% done.
- As the station progresses, Scott noted for the Alderman that there will need to be a plan for maintenance and garbage collection noting as an example how the Ravenswood station is strewn with trash and landscaping is not maintained.
- If community members want more regular updates on station progress, the Alderman's office has an email list you can sign up for on their website.
- **Constituent Question:**
  - There is so much noise with the trains blowing their horns now. Can anything be done about it.
    - **Response:** It's a safety issue, and trains are required to blow their horns to notify construction workers present so they can move off the tracks in time. Due to the safety component, there is probably not much that can be done and is a short-term issue while work is being completed.

### Ravenswood Master Plan:

- **Concern:** Scott raised the multiple issues of Ravenswood:
  - Speed, especially north of Rosehill
  - Need for bump out in front of condos in 5800 block as delivery trucks blocking traffic

- Parking on west side, gridlock south of Rosehill in front of Fireside when snow piles up alongside of the road
- **Response:** Alderperson Vasquez has been trying to get the city to do a full a Ravenswood study done as his office had the understanding that Ravenswood was a feeder street/ulterior street.
  - Vasquez's office only recently learned from the city that Ravenswood is still classified as a residential street. That classification makes possible solutions such as speed humps and bump outs. He looked at adding bike lanes as an option, but the street is too narrow.
  - Parking solutions were suggested, including removing parking on west side of Ravenswood in front of Fireside, and allowing evening parking in front of the cemetery entrance. He did indicate, however, that since the cemetery is nationally-owned, they are less easy to work with.
  - To get funding for the pullover area in front of the condos, neighbors would have to pursue that in next year's ward "People's Budget"

### **People's Budget**

- Alderperson brought up the subject of residents voting for proposed project. Details are on the Ward website.
- Andre also noted a new service to request repairs through the People's budget. This is for more basic items such as sidewalk repairs, street painting, potholes etc. Use this [link](#) to submit requests.

### **Zone 65 Expansion**

- Scott noted the petitioning process is still in progress, but WEAR still needs individual volunteers to gather signatures in these areas:
  - Paulina south of Thorndale.
  - Paulina north of Thorndale on east side and on west side from north of the first two large condo buildings
  - Hermitage north of Thorndale
- If residents are will to help collect signatures, email wearorg@hotmail.com

### **New Bike Lanes:**

- Andre noted that the lanes are being rebuilt north of Peterson to make them protected lanes and returning some street parking.
- Work south of Peterson will occur in Spring 2023 while also returning some parking in front of the Domino's Pizza building and further south.
- Andre also spoke about the possibility of opening daytime parking along Rosehill to assist business on Clark/Ashland but this would need community support and signatures to change the hours of the permit parking.

- Scott also raised the issue of high speed along Ashland from Granville south where it is three lanes wide, suggesting speed cameras or some other speed mitigation be considered?
- Andre noted speed cameras could be considered, and that the city was actually considering lowering the speed limit across the board to address driving concerns.

#### **Trader Joes:**

- Andre noted that it has strong community support but are working through issues of traffic and deliveries, the aesthetics of the building, etc. More details are on the Ward website.

#### **Misc.**

- **Constituent Question:** Any progress on making Paulina north of Thorndale one way northbound?
  - **Andre's response:** Based on new conversations with the City Department of Transportation about traffic in the Ward, they are more responsive to doing a traffic study to convert to one-way
- **Constituent Question:** What is happening with the proposed Dog Park at Winnemac Park?
  - **Andre's response:** While this was the #1 vote on item in last year's People's Budget, there has been very vocal opposition from other interest groups so getting any kind of compromise to take away from one area of the park or another is not very promising. The park district has the data on the number of individuals who have expressed concern vs support for the dog park, and is compiling the data and reports to determine next steps.
- **Constituent Question:** What's up with the increase in crime in the area?
  - **Andre's response:** While our precinct is one of the safest in the City, there are many macro issues on how the policy are managed/overworked and funding.
    - Ward putting in license plate camera readers at major intersections
    - See something/Say something – Call 911 to report before posting on Facebook
    - Encouraged residents to take advantage of the rebate program for doorbell cameras.

Scott closed the meeting by thanking attendees and asking residents to be in touch with a WEAR Board member if they have any additional questions, concerns or ideas.