1505 West Oakdale Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657

Web Site: www.slneighbors.org
General email: info@slneighbors.org
President email: president@slneighbors.org

BOUNDARIES: DIVERSEY TO BELMONT - RAVENSWOOD TO RACINE
Membership Dues (per person) \$10.00 September 1 through May 31
Meetings held at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport on the second Tuesday of every
Month (except January, June, July and August) at 7:00 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.)

MARCH 2019

FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT ...

Late Night Musings from Barry Ave.

Last month's Feb 12th membership meeting was one of the most consequential, interesting, informative and raucous in memory. We had two important voting issues — St. Al's convent conversion to house migrant girls and expansion of the Bel–Ray Apts at Belmont & Racine to increase SRO type affordable housing. In addition, we were visited throughout the evening by 5 candidates for Chicago's next mayor — Gary McCarthy, Bob Fioretti, Paul Vallas, Jerry Joyce and Lori Lightfoot. As you all have heard by now Ms. Lightfoot received the most votes on election night with 17.5% and is in an April runoff election with Toni Preckwinkle who received 16% of the vote.

For those who missed that packed evening my very brief personal synopsis is as follows: all of the visiting candidates came across as decent, sincere and honorable people unlike many quintessential politicians. McCarthy had a singular focus on crime and corruption, Fioretti had aldermanic experience but little in compelling plans, Vallas had substantive details and solutions but did not communicate them quickly and well, Joyce was personable but did not take time to communicate any depth and Lightfoot was very general with platitudes but came across as smart and thoughtful. Additional reviews are elsewhere in the newsletter.

What is important now is that we all have a binary choice in this next very important mayoral April run off election – Lightfoot or Preckwinkle. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. I am undecided and am sure most others are as well. Remember,

MEETING AT A GLANCE TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2019

ATHENAEUM THEATRE 2936 N. SOUTHPORT

6:30pm - Member socializing 7:00pm - Meeting begins

Agenda:

- 1) Newly elected Cook County
 Commissioner Bridget Degnen
- 2) State Rep Ann Williams update on new Springfield legislation
- 3) Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Expansion Ordinance to include Ashland Ave.
- 4) SLN Voting By-law 60 day waiting period for new members. Preliminary discussions

about 4/5ths of the Chicago citizens who voted that day cast their ballots against each of these candidates rather than for them. In the coming weeks I suggest you listen closely with some skepticism but not cynicism, do some analysis and make an informative vote. We will be inundated from both camps, talking heads and political operatives with words and accusations including "insider/outsider", "reformer/political machine", independent, accountability, "city hall accountable to citizens", "lifetime of service", "investments in neighborhoods", job growth, etc. The city and its' troubles have to get this election right.

Both candidates have been invited to stop by at our March meeting. I have been receiving text messages and emails with questions from their respective campaigns. Hopefully if their schedules permit, confirmations may be arriving.

Now the local SLN issues: The St Al's Convent "Special Use Permit" for housing young Central American migrant girls was all encompassing and at times heated. The discussion ranged from concerns with enabling Trump administration policies, fear of local kidnappings, possible child trafficking and neighborhood presence of armed ICE agents etc. Sister Cathy Ryan of the managing Merryville Academy gave a sincere presentation and very effectively answered all questions. The final vote was 47 in favor and 16 opposed.

The Bel-Ray Apartments at 3150 N Racine is best described as "affordable efficiency apartment housing for low income and homeless and or disabled individuals" owned and managed by not-for-profit Mercy Homes. Think of it as a clean well-run SRO. Their proposal was to build an annex on to their adjoining 20 car parking lot and expanding from the current 70 units to 106 units without any parking since it is viewed as not seriously needed. There were some controversies and discussions

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www.slneighbors.org email = info@slneighbors.org

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regarding staff parking, precedent setting high density zoning, TOD requirements, history of police calls, etc. SLN's neighborhood development review committee, NDRC, did not recommend approval of this initial plan in December 2018 and suggested the need for at least 6 parking spaces for staff parking resulting in lower density zoning and fewer newer units. A late-night ballot vote was taken resulting in 25 in favor and 18 against the initial 106-unit proposal as presented. Additional meetings will soon be held between the Mercy Housing team and our alderman's team to see how this 106-unit project can move ahead with new zoning and TOD considerations. The path forward is not real clear.

Our March 12 meeting will be interesting and informative from an electoral perspective. Our new Cook County Commissioner, Bridget Degnen, replacing John Fritchy, will introduce herself and review relevant issues facing the Cook County Board. Also, with the new state administration, our state rep Ann Williams will brief us on the new directions, issues and proposals going on in Springfield.

In addition, Paul Sajovec, Chief of Staff to Alderman Waguspack, will review the latest city council approved expansion modifications to the Transit Oriented Development [TOD] ordinance. Briefly, the SLN implication is that [1] Ashland Ave is considered a high frequency bus transit corridor, [2] TOD incentives - higher density/less or zero parking zoning is now allowed within 1/4 mile of Ashland Ave or ½ mile on Pedestrian Designated streets and [3] applicable zoning is now B, C, D, M and RM5 and above opening up many parcels in Also, the related required Affordable the SLN. Ordinance requirements Housing new developments have been greatly increased. bottom line is that there is a great deal of implications to our immediate neighborhood - you need to hear and understand this to get an idea as to the potential future SLN changes.

As I mentioned earlier, candidates Preckwinkle and Lightfoot just may be able to briefly stop by, talk and take questions. I would suggest that you think about and prepare questions and comments for them and the rest of our speakers. They just may be on a "listening tour".

As always, let me know what you are thinking at president@SLneighbors.org Take care, Sam

M. J. O. C. I. I. C. O. C. A. T. O. T. O.

Member Socializing - 6:30 to 7:00 in the Athenaeum Lobby.

The Athenaeum opens its bar for members to purchase some beer, wine or pop before the start of the monthly meeting. Come a little earlier to the meeting for some member socializing. Your purchase helps support the operations of The Athenaeum Theatre

MARCH 2019 MEETING - PREVIEW

Newly-elected Cook County Commissioner Bridget Degnen

In keeping with SLN's commitment to have ongoing, interactive meaningful relationships with our elected officials, the Board has invited our new County Commissioner Bridget Degnen to introduce herself to the membership and give her insight to the upcoming year. It is possible that after the mayoral election, there will be a different President on the Cook County Board.

State Rep Ann Williams – legislative update

Our State Rep. Ann Williams is scheduled to appear and discuss newly passed and pending legislation under recently inaugurated Governor J.B. Pritzker. Had to look it up but the Governor's legal name is Jay Robert.

Ashland Ave. Development Changes relating to the TOD Expansion Ordinance

32nd Ward's Chief of Staff Paul Sajovec will provide information relating to the expansion of the TOD Ordinance that was recently passed by Chicago City Council and how it may affect future development along Ashland Ave. and the nearby neighboring streets. This is a major change to the existing TOD.

SLN By-Laws Voting Issue - 60 day waiting period

In recent general elections, citizens can register and vote on the day of election at their Polling Place. However, SLN still withholds the right to vote on an SLN issue until a newly joined person is a member for 60 days. Article III-Membership, 3rd paragraph.

This by-law was put into effect in March 1993. At time, all votes were done by a hand vote. It was

hard to control who was actually a member on voting issues. It was not unusual that a Developer would bring their entourage or friends to a meeting and have them participate in the hand vote. At that time, it was felt the that 60-day waiting period would help prevent inaccurate votes.

In recent years, SLN has adopted a private paper ballot. All members are checked in before receiving a ballot. Those non-members within the flyering area (generally one block) of a zoning issue are required to prove their residence before receiving a ballot. The result of this change is that a non-member, non-neighborhood person cannot vote.

So, the SLN Board has agreed to have a brief discussion on this voting restriction and determine if there should be an announcement and vote to change the By-law at the April or May meeting. FYI – A By-law may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3).

AT THE FEBRUARY 2019 MEETING

Mayoral Candidate Drop-In

For those in attendance, February's meeting was one of the most raucous in memory. SLN invited the Chicago Mayoral candidates to appear at the Meeting. Though some candidates did have the manners to at least respond, it was possible that no candidates would show at the SLN February meeting as a large forum that was scheduled when the polar vortex hit, was rescheduled for the night of SLN's meeting. Arriving before the meeting started and put on as the first speakers of the night were former Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy and Jerry Joyce. After the St. Alphonsus Convent issue, candidates Lori Lightfoot and Bob Fioretti spoke. Showing up in the nick of time was Paul Vallas, who also went on before the BelRay SRO issue. The meeting was held in Athenaeum's small studio, so there were no microphone issues and talks were intimate. President Sam Samatas kept all the candidates to a fair 10 minutes of talking followed by 2-3 minutes of questions. He did have to cut-off all five candidates with his standard "thank you for your time, but we have agenda items to take care" comment.

Aldermanic Election Note: Since the early 2000's, SLN has sponsored an Aldermanic Forum for the

Aldermanic election candidates. However, incumbent Alderman Scott Waguespack ran unopposed. Congratulations on his reelection.

Debra's Place (St. Alphonsus Convent) Special Use Permit for Temporary Housing of 30 Teenage Immigrant Girls from Central America The former St. Alphonsus Convent at the corner of Oakdale and Greenview has been vacant since Debra's Place did not renew its' lease in 2018.

Introducing the Program was Maryville Academy's attorney Jack George and Sister Catherine Ryan. Attorney George stated that the Program required a Special Use Permit from the City. Sister Catherine gave the presentation to membership. She started with a short history of The Maryville Academy. Maryville was started in 1883 by Archbishop Feehan as a response to a street-living, orphaned boy problem in Chicago at that time. A Training Center was built in Des Plaines for the orphaned boys to live, learn a trade and get an education. Maryville has expanded since then with programs for boys, girls and families.

Maryville's Casa Esperanza Program provides residential care and education for immigrant girls who have arrived at a U.S. border unaccompanied by an adult. Sister Catherine noted that Maryville has been involved with programs like this for over 40 years. In the past, the children in the program might be from Europe or Asia. At this time, the children are coming from Central America. Sister Catherine made a specific point in her presentation that these children were sent to the border by their parents to try to connect with relatives already living in the U.S. The parents stayed behind in Central America. This is a family unification program. These children have not been separated from their parents at the border. That is a totally different issue or program. Nevertheless, these children are housed in detention centers at the border. According to Sister Catherine, a Federal Court order required the U.S. to provide shelter for these children while looking for their U.S. relatives.

The Program proposed for the St..Alphonsus Convent is as follows:

-The purpose of the Program is to provide safe, short-term care for the girls while connecting them to their U.S. families.

- 25 to 30 girls only, from ages 12 to 17 will be housed.
- the Convent will be staffed 24/7. There will be awake staff 24 hours per day. The girls will never be by themselves.
- the girls will get 6 hours of schooling per day.
- the girls are not allowed to leave the Convent. The neighborhood will hardly see the girls.
- the Convent is ideal for this Program as each girl will have her own private bedroom.

Sister Catherine then answered questions from the meeting attendees.

There was concern that when word got out that 30 young girls were to be housed in the Convent that the girls would be apprehended by sex traffickers or that sex traffickers heading to area would approach neighborhood girls. Sister Catherine noted that there would be 24/7 staffing and that the girls would not be allowed out and visitors would not be welcome.

A question came about whether the Convent is considered a "detention center." Sister Catherine stated that is not the case. There will not be bars on the windows or anything like that. She stated the girls will be grateful to be in a Program like this, able to stay in a safe place while being connected with their U.S. families. A question was raised what would happen if a girl ran away from the Program? Sister Catherine commented that in the two years Maryville has been involved in this type of Program, not one girl has left the Program

A final comment from the audience mentioned that similar issues were raised when Debra's Place moved in some 20+ years ago. The person commended the neighborhood for taking on this historic opportunity to support this Program.

A secret paper ballot vote was taken. All SLN members and residents who live within one block of the Convent could vote.

Voting results -

YES for the Special Permit: 47

NO against: 16.

An email summarizing the meeting and the vote results has been sent to Alderman Scott Waquespack.

BelRay Apartments (Belmont & Racine) – Expansion for Building 45 Additional Apartments in Vacant Parking

The BelRay Apartments is a Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) located at 3150 N. Racine. The building currently has 70 SRO units. The property is owned and operated by Mercy Housing Lakefront. Mercy Housing is looking to expand the current property to the adjacent parking lot to the West.

Mercy Housing had a team of presenters for the Expansion Project. The background on Mercy Housing is that they are the largest non-profit Affordable Housing owner in the U.S. with over 22,000 apartment units nationwide and about 6,000 units in the Midwest. They have owned and operated the BelRay SRO since 1996. They are a service enriching owner, offering on-site tenant support for at-risk or the homeless, health wellness and addiction support. All the current residents of the BelRay SRO must have been homeless or have a disability to qualify for housing in the building.

Mercy Housing Lakefront already owns the adjacent parking lot to the west, which is utilized by staff members and visitors. Mercy is proposing to build a new addition on that parking lot and rehab the current SRO building. The new building will be approximately the same height as the current building and go lot line to lot line. It will have 45 SRO units. The existing BelRay SRO building has 70 units. That will be reduced to 61 units. There will be a major reconfiguration of the first floor expanding the community and resident lounge spaces and adding a fitness room, group instruction space, a computer facility and additional resident service offices. The total SRO units would be 106. There will be no on-site parking for staff or visitors. Mercy has indicated the SRO residents do normally not own cars and the 19-space parking lot is largely empty on a daily basis. Mercy noted that the SRO parking requirement is 10 to 1. The BelRay SRO Units will be rehabbed with new bathrooms and kitchens and adding A/C to the units. The units in the new building will be about 50% larger than the old units. The garbage cans will be kept inside the building in the utility room. The operations of the building will include 3-6 onsite Mercy Housing program staff, 24/7 security and a dedicated maintenance manager and janitor staff. The Mercy Housing presenters finished their formal presentation with the thought that if people

are concerned about the plight of the homeless, this Expansion Project will have a positive impact on the homeless situation.

The floor was opened for questions and comments. The overall concern revolved around the parking issue and the number of total units. Mercy Housing commented that on-street parking is adequate during the day, when most of the Mercy staff is present. This info was confirmed by nearby residents. The developer of the next-door Murphy Hot Dog project objected to the number of units and wondered why the addition couldn't only have 12 units as allowed under the current zoning. Mercy Housing's attorney stepped in to answer that question noting that the parking lot is under a Deed Restriction on Land Use (for an SRO) and that State Tax Credits financing the Project require a minimum number of Units.

The property is currently zoned M1-2 (Manufacturing) left over from when the area had manufacturing businesses on the major streets. Mercy Housing would like to rezone the parking lot through a Planned Development (PD) with the new underlying zoning of B2-5 in order to support the new construction and rehab of the existing building.

Sam Samatas, NDRC chair, gave the findings of the committee. The NDRC requested that at least six outdoor staff parking spaces be incorporated, the number of Units be reduced and the zoning request be reduced to B2-2 to maintain neighborhood consistency of recent zoning issues. As the Expansion Project did not include any of these items, the NDRC did not support the Expansion Project.

A secret paper ballot vote was taken. All SLN members and residents who live within one block of the Expansion Project could vote.

Voting results -

YES for the Expansion Project: 25

NO against: 17.

An email summarizing the meeting and the vote results has been sent to Alderman Scott Waguespack.

FROM OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS & CAPS

Alderman Waguespack 32nd Ward News Office located 2657 N. Clybourn, 773-248-1330 www.ward32.org, email = info@ward32.org

Senior Citizen Exemption

If you have your own water meter and receive a water bill solely addressed to you, you may apply for the Water Department Senior Citizen Exemption. This will exempt you from all future sewer charges on your water bill. Only buildings zoned as single-family homes (and townhomes with individual meters) qualify for the senior citizen exemption; buildings with 2 units, even if used as a single family home, do not qualify.

To be eligible for the sewer service charge exemption you must meet the following criteria:

- You must be 65 years of age or older
- You must be the owner of the residential unit
- You must occupy the residential unit as your principal place of residence
- The residential unit must have a separate water meter or assessed account

Please provide our office with:

- Proof of Age (Driver's License, ID or birth certificate)
- Proof of Ownership (mortgage statement, tax bill, deed, or homestead exemption certificate)
- Proof of Residence (gas, electric or phone bill)
- Complete application which can be found at <u>www.chicago.gov</u>. Application is titled Senior Citizen Sewer Service Charge Exemption.

Community Relations Strategy (previously called CAPS)

Beat 1933 - east of Lincoln Ave and west of Racine, Belmont to Diversey

Next meeting is Tuesday, March 12th at 6:30 pm at Illinois Masonic Hospital, 836 W. Wellington, 7th floor auditorium at 6:30pm.

Beat 1932 - east of Ashland and west of Lincoln, from Belmont to Fullerton

Next meeting is Monday, March 11th at 7:00 pm at the New Life Church, 1110 W. Lill at 7:00pm.

Beat 1931 - west of Ashland, between Belmont and Fullerton, to the Chicago River.

Next meeting is Wednesday, March 20th at 7:00 pm at the 2452 W. Belmont Police Auditorium.

Dates/times may change and you can call the office at 312-744-0064 with questions.

Twitter = ChicagoCAPS19

Email = caps019district@chicagopolice.org

Contact information:

Community Policing Office

Sgt Mary Hein

Email: mary.hein@chicagopolice.org

SLN is looking for members to attend CAPS meetings and report to the membership either through the newsletter or at the membership meetings. Contact Bill Haderlein, editor at email=chicagolanddeck@rcn.com if you think you will be a regular CAPS meeting attendee

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS/INFORMATION

Lakeview Chamber of Commerce (SSA 27) 1409 W. Addison www.lakeviewchamber.com 773-472-7171

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<u>Line!</u> The Lakeview Low-Line re-envisions the half-mile space beneath the CTA elevated tracks between the Southport and Paulina stations as an exciting Chicago art destination and a fun and dynamic path connecting Lakeview. Phase 1 has been completed, including plazas at Southport and Paulina, new public art and seating, as well as expanded space for the Low-Line Farmers Market. Now planning is underway to start on Phase 2: a pathway connecting Paulina to Ashland,

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including more art, creative lighting, and a new park on the west side of Marshfield that will immerse Low-Line visitors in an urban forest!

The non-profit Friends of Lakeview has raised more than \$53,000 to date, but needs your help to meet our next goal! Learn more and donate today at http://www.LakeviewLowLine.com.

Good-bye SmallCakes - CupCakery

No announcement, but shortly after the Holidays, SmallCakes located on Greenview at Lincoln quietly closed down and their sign has been removed. Football fans were inundated with commercials during the NFL Playoffs and the Super Bowl (can I legally say that?) for an IPad used by two former NFL football players that started a cupcake business. How many cupcakes do you need to sell to stay in business? More than you think, I guess.

OTHER SLN INFORMATION

Membership Renewal Now

Members: please renew your membership using the enclosed MEMBERSHIP FORM or go to SLN's website at www.slneighbors.org and renew and renew on-line. You must be a PAID MEMBER in ORDER to VOTE on the NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

SLN on Facebook - Get on It!

If you are on Facebook, consider joining our Facebook group. The URL to access the group is https://www.facebook.com/groups/southlakeviewneighbors/

Block Captain Program - members needed for the 2017-18 season. Volunteer now.

Still looking for block captains to flyer their blocks for the monthly membership meetings. Seven membership meetings per year (Sept, Oct, Nov, Feb. Mar, April & May).

We currently have 14 block captains covering about 50% of the SLN territory.

Contact Bill Haderlein at the SLN email address = info@slneighbors.org if you are interested in becoming a block captain

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Please help reduce costs of hard copy newsletter production and assembly time. In addition, if you are on the email list, you can receive e-mail blasts from our Tech Dept. regarding area meetings, community alerts from the police and other timely information. Go to www.slneighbors.org to sign up for the email version.

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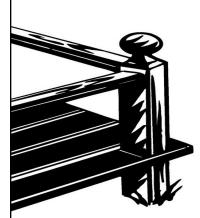
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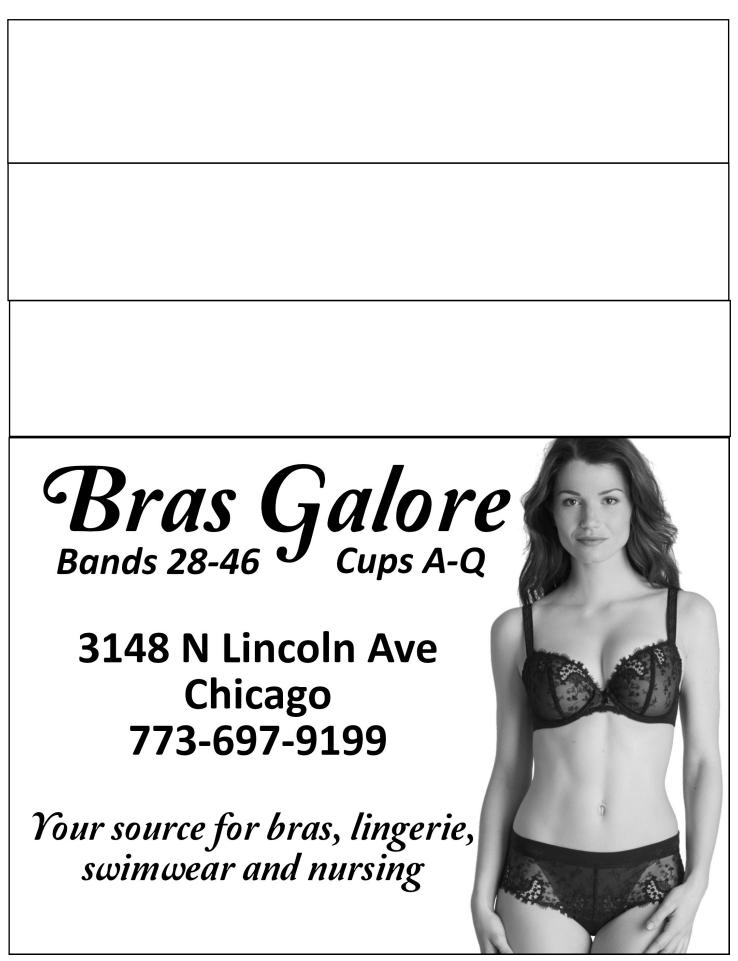
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Thanks to the **South Lakeview Neighbors** for your strong commitment to the neighborhood throughout the year.

Visit **ward32.org** to find out more about available services. While you're there, sign up for the 32nd Ward email newsletter to receive up-to-date information about news and events in the Ward and City.

We look forward to working with you!

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