

Harmony makes small things grow,
lack of it makes great things decay.
— Sallust

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(L) The Lawrence Avenue station, in the shadows of the iconic Aragon Ballroom, will get a complete facelift during the CTA's modernization project, which is scheduled for completion in late 2124. (R) The Berwyn station is one of four scheduled L stations scheduled for re-construction as part of the CTA's Red and Purple Modernization Project.

RPM project on track, but if they build it, will the riders come?

\$2.1 billion project to be completed in late 2124

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY BOB KITSOS

The Lawrence and Berwyn L stations closed Sunday as work began on the CTA's most ambitious project to date, the \$2.1 billion Red-Purple Line modernization [RPM] that is expected to be completed in about three years. Replacing six miles of century-old track and building a rail bypass to help with congestion near the Belmont Station also is included in the reconstruction plans.

With CTA ridership just a fraction of what it once was pre-pandemic, contractors for the CTA are operating full speed ahead despite the possibility that ridership won't return to normal

anytime soon. CTA officials said Red and Purple Line service will continue throughout construction with train service running on two westernmost tracks while the CTA rebuilds the two easternmost tracks. Red and Purple Line trains will share a track in both directions.

Two bus routes, the #81 Lawrence and the #92 Foster, are being rerouted to provide customers with convenient bus-rail transfers; commuters should allow extra travel time. Ardmore will be closed during construction between the CTA tracks and Winthrop beginning May 24 through the end of the year. Temporary station access will be available at Bryn Mawr and Argyle through-

out construction.

"This is a project that we have been collectively working toward as a community for more than a decade," said Ald. Harry Osterman [48th]. "This is the largest public infrastructure project in our community in a lifetime." When completed, the stations will be larger and will closely reflect the work at the rehabbed Wilson Red Line station, which re-opened in 2017.

Osterman said the project will bring the community four new stations: Bryn Mawr, Berwyn, Argyle and Lawrence. All these stations will be completely ADA-accessible. The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) provides the minimum requirements for

RPM see p. 12

Chicago-area media host joint fundraiser through June 11

Collaboration includes 41 community media, legacy and emerging outlets

Forty-three independent Chicago-area media outlets - including this newspaper - have joined forces to raise funds in a month-long campaign. The for-profit and nonprofit organizations represent a wide cross-section of community media in the city and nearby suburbs.

The public can give at savechicagomedia.org through June 11. The website offers the option to donate one amount to be split evenly among all of the outlets, or donors can select one or more outlets to give a specific amount.

This is the second annual Chicago Independent Media Alliance [CIMA] joint fundraiser. The 2020 campaign, put together in three weeks, raised more than \$160,000 for 43 members, including \$60,000 in matching funds from local foundations. More than 1,000 individuals donated, with two-thirds opting to support all outlets. One of the positive side effects of the effort was new visibility and amplification of a wide range of media voices.

"There are multiple obstacles facing independent media," said

Yazmin Dominguez, CIMA project coordinator. "The impact of COVID-19, decreases in advertising and additional problems have hurt local media. Community media outlets are not getting the resources they need and are thus facing the real possibility of closure. This includes media serving African American, Latinx, Asian American, immigrant, LGBTQ, and other Chicago communities." The campaign was organized and is coordinated by CIMA, a project launched in 2019 by the Chicago Reader. Our 68 partners in the alliance include traditional print newspapers, independently produced podcasts, dynamic video production studios, and nonprofit newsrooms focusing on key issues that affect the fabric of the city. The campaign hashtag is #SaveChicagoMedia.

The CIMA is made up of nearly 70 outlets who believe there is no better way to reach the city's most underserved communities than through community media outlets for and by those communities. We stand for information, accessibility, and equity.

Visit savechicagomedia.org. Questions can be directed to ydominguez@chicagoreader.com.

CIMA Media partners, AirGo Radio, Borderless Magazine, Block Club Chicago, Bronzeville Life, Chicago in Arabic, Chicago Music Guide, Chicago Public Square, Chicago Reader, CHIRP Radio, Cicero Independiente, City Bureau, Current Magazines, The West Side Current Magazine, E3 Radio, Evanston Roundtable, Free Spirit Media, Gazette Chicago, Gozamos, Growing Community Media: Austin Weekly News, Wednesday Journal, Forest Park Review and Riverside Brookfield Landmark; Hyde Park Herald, Injustice Watch, Inside Publications: Skyline, Inside Booster, News Star newspapers; Invisible Institute, La Raza Newspaper, Loop North News, Midway Minute, Mild Sauce, Newcity, North Lawndale Community News, Paseo Podcast, Polish Daily News, Public Narrative, Rebellious Magazine for

FUNDRAISER see p. 12

Twenty questions, no answers

Virtually no public participation allowed at staged meeting insiders hope will result in free real estate

BY PETER VON BUOL

On May 11 about 200 people attended what was described as a community meeting. It turned out to be merely a virtual sales presentation hosted by a Boston-based developer who may be given Lincoln Square's city-owned parking lot at 4715 N. Western to build a five-story mixed-use building contingent upon the developer being granted Low Income Housing Tax Credits to subsidize construction.

The two-hour meeting began with an introduction by Laura Reimers, the 47th Ward chief of staff. "Now, I just want to take a brief moment to talk you through our community-driven zoning process," she said about a plan that was originally hatched in secret, sometime in the summer of 2019, and now, two years later, has still not had a free-flowing open community debate on the very premise of the proposal: turning a critical piece of commercial infrastructure, and other taxpayer assets, over to a private developer so that they may personally profit.

This was the fourth virtual meeting on this proposal, and perhaps the least democratic of them all. Just like the rigged push poll conducted in March by Ald. Matt Martin, this meeting was a set up. It was dominated by The Community Builders [TCB] and their supporters, who kept nearly 90% of the approximately 200 attendees muted and locked out of participating, only allowing them to watch.

This meeting was exhibit "A" on how insufficient virtual meetings are in debating important community issues, when one person literally has the power to deny free speech, and mute debate, with the press of a button.

The show was highlighted by the only unscripted moment of the night, a series of 20 questions posed by Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas. Ald. Martin and TCB did not count on her showing up, had no response to her questions, and so they just ignored her. The meeting hosts, pressed live on air, refused to answer the questions on the record.

Reimers said this meeting was "unique in the sense that currently [TCB is] applying for funding. We'll get more in depth about this throughout the meeting, the point at which our office would be in a position to make a decision here would be if a proposal would re-

ceive funding, then we'd receive an application." The message quickly became clear, TCB and Ald. Martin were selling a narrative that this night's monologue was actually a "community-driven process."

This meeting was exhibit "A" on how insufficient virtual meetings are in debating important community issues, when one person literally has the power to deny free speech, and mute debate, with the press of a button.

"We actually went ahead and in 2019 provided some preliminary materials that we received, about this potential project," she continued. "I just want to say that, one of the things that we really appreciate working in our community is how engaged and informed and involved people are, especially in our various decision-making processes. So, we definitely expect nothing less tonight," Reimers said. Then only four unscripted questions were taken at the end of the meeting. People were blocked entirely from commenting in the chat box which meant more than 90% of the audience was silenced.

"We know people might have strong opinions about this property. That our community is strong and understanding and listening to folks who have different perspectives," said Reimers of a meeting that featured virtually no open debate. "Folks from our team are looking forward to listening and learning tonight," she said.

The meeting was a carefully orchestrated two-hour presentation by officials from TCB, who described why they should be given a city parking lot for free to build a five-story mixed-use apartment building. Described as affordable housing, the majority of these units will be priced at about market rate, similar to others in the neighborhood.

The presentation began with a monologue by TCB's Kirk Albinson, who serves as the site's project manager. Albinson is a veteran of the real estate community meeting process. A resident of Winnetka, Albinson serves as chairman of Winnetka's Design

QUESTIONS see p. 12

Mayor did not create Chicago's problems, she just can't resolve them



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Can you feel it? The slow drip, drip, drip of the big melt. The great warm-up against the bone chill wrought by COVID-19?

The methodical rewind of the past 12 months, as the ground begins to drink up the last frozen evidence of the winter's pandemic that stretches back to Spring 2020.

Is it actually dissolving in the stare of history? Can we really uncover our faces, demystifying ourselves once more? Mingling with loved ones, rejecting our embrace of the Stockholm Syndrome and home confinement?

If you have received your two jobs you are ready to venture out for a burger and a martini.

But I've got to take it slow at first, don't want to rush into things. Like crowds. Grocery shopping. You can't isolate for a year and then get dropped into a shoulder-to-shoulder gathering.

I'll need the open spaces for a while. Free to roam or sit some things out. The pandemic has given me some fresh perspective, and not bad in every case. I feel a little sensitive to noise and commotion.

Maintaining a sense of calm is critical. Even though I've done

my share of pub-crawling in the streets of London over the years, I find nothing appealing observing photos of the thirsty crowds jamming streets in Hammer-smith, Piccadilly, Sloane Square. Or Pimlico. I'm not that desperate for warm beer.

I've got 14 months of pondering under my belt, and among the things I'm distraught over is the city. Our city.

I feel badly at the political chaos Chicago finds itself in at the moment. That's what I'm fretting about as pandemic melts. The shabby quality of life and humor in town. The threadbare ideas and camouflaged good intentions exposing our weaknesses and defenses.

I've been charting the seriousness of the times we live in. Chicago hasn't been this vulnerable since the Great Fire of 1871. Back then, post-fire, many folk, business bosses and politicians alike were out of their minds looking at their charred hometown. But Chicago's highly reasoned and inventive men of business knew that fretting would only squander chances of surviving the fire damage.

Crying about conditions was a waste of time and money. They knew they had but one objective: get the bankers of the East to support the rebuilding of the nation's second city. They knew it would thrive.

Taking a chance on the future was the name of the game. Reconnecting telegraph lines and railway lines would first enable Chicago to engage the nation. Start talking again, seeing the critical people. Larger-than-life men of Chicago business would have to connect personally with family and commercial allies back east to fashion a plan of rescue.

Marshall Field, Potter Palmer,



Dr. Jackie Jackson



Candace Jordan, Maria Pappas and Shelley Rosen.



Bob Wallace

Philip Danforth Armour, the McCormicks, the Swifts all needed to lobby America to develop a strategy for survival. The time has come for Chicago to do this again.

Maybe the melting ice of the pandemic is just what we need to call us to action.

Have we had enough of the Chicago Police Dept. being battered and abused by fringe elements of Chicagoans with questionable loyalties and inaccurate versions of the truth?

Have we watched long enough as the Chicago Police are hamstrung by the mayor to pursue law breakers?

Can we slow the retirements and resignations of long-time skilled police veterans who no longer want to serve the current mayor?

Is anyone fed up with the disunity and factionalism in the City Council between the Mayor (President of the Council) and the 50 seated alderman?

Does anyone find the unusually high number of resignations in the city's executive branch a disturbing daily reality?

How long can the President of the County Board (Tony Preckwinckle) and the Mayor wage silent but deadly warfare before it takes its ultimate toll on the city?

Has the Mayor's suspicious nature and mistrustful persona damaged the ability of City Hall management to grow real municipal leaders?

Is Chicago's reputation for urban responsibility finished? Is its welcome in national dialogues for further strength and stability not vanished in the ineptitude of the current mayoral administration?

Have hopes for rebuilding urban unity in Chicago been eclipsed by the stale mayoral response and the dependence on shallow truth?

What's with the news blackouts and the manipulation of facts in the press? They expand the public's worst fears about the true level of violence and crime in Chicago.

Don't they sandbag the Mayor's real agenda for progress and economic stimulation? Has the Mayor's unwillingness to engage in honest dialogue with business leaders, restaurant owners and academic administrators not created a dystopian reality around her that shows little hope for change?

Have we reached our breaking point yet?

There are no easy answers in the lives of the nation's largest cities in 2021. Mayor Lori Lightfoot did not create Chicago's problems. She just can't resolve them. Her biases and life experiences prevent her from rational and intelligent responses that are healthy and wise.

Just look at the record of mayoral performance. The city is looted, abused, infected, unsafe, unhealthy, without harmony, amity or its traditional sense of neighborhood.

Perhaps pandemic has made some Chicagoans brave, revived, or angry. Maybe we can finally take off our face masks. And find out what we're made of. I hope so. "This isn't a tea party at Rosary College," my mother used to say. "It's a fist fight at a hockey game."

NEWSMAKER: Bob Wallace, the long-time CBS Chanel 2 reporter, died at his Lake Forest home last week at 80 from COVID-19. From 1970 to 1991, Chicagoans watched Wallace carry them along on news stories and intriguing "behind the scenes adventures." He was a good sport and will be missed.

DR. JACKSON: Congratulations to **Jacqueline Brown Jackson (Mrs. Jesse Jackson)** who will receive an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the Jacksons' alma mater, North Carolina A&T State Univ. Mrs. Jackson, who has been married to **Rev. Jackson** for 50 years, has been a tireless leader for human and civil

rights. She remains now a brighter light to all who seek peace and understanding in Chicago and around the world.

FLORAL EXTRAVAGANZA: Cook County Treasurer **Maria Pappas** and columnist **Candace Jordan** gave away 500 roses on the Mag Mile on Mothers' Day. But check out the floral display that will remain all month in the nearby CTA riders' kiosk. All due to the partnership of French Advertising Company, JCDecaux, and Chicago's own Luxe Bloom founder, **Shelley Rosen**. And wasn't that Pappas asking the only tough questions to a scheming developer at a community meeting in Lincoln Square last week? The meeting was a total put up job, and she wasn't buying it.

JUDICIARY: Supporters across Chicago are happy it's official, attorney **Dan Ballanoff** is running for judge of the Circuit Court. Finally some good news.

IDA HAENDEL: My City Hall days found me fortunate to have many interns to assist researching and confecting projects, especially the Chicago's history of which

PROBLEMS see p. 10

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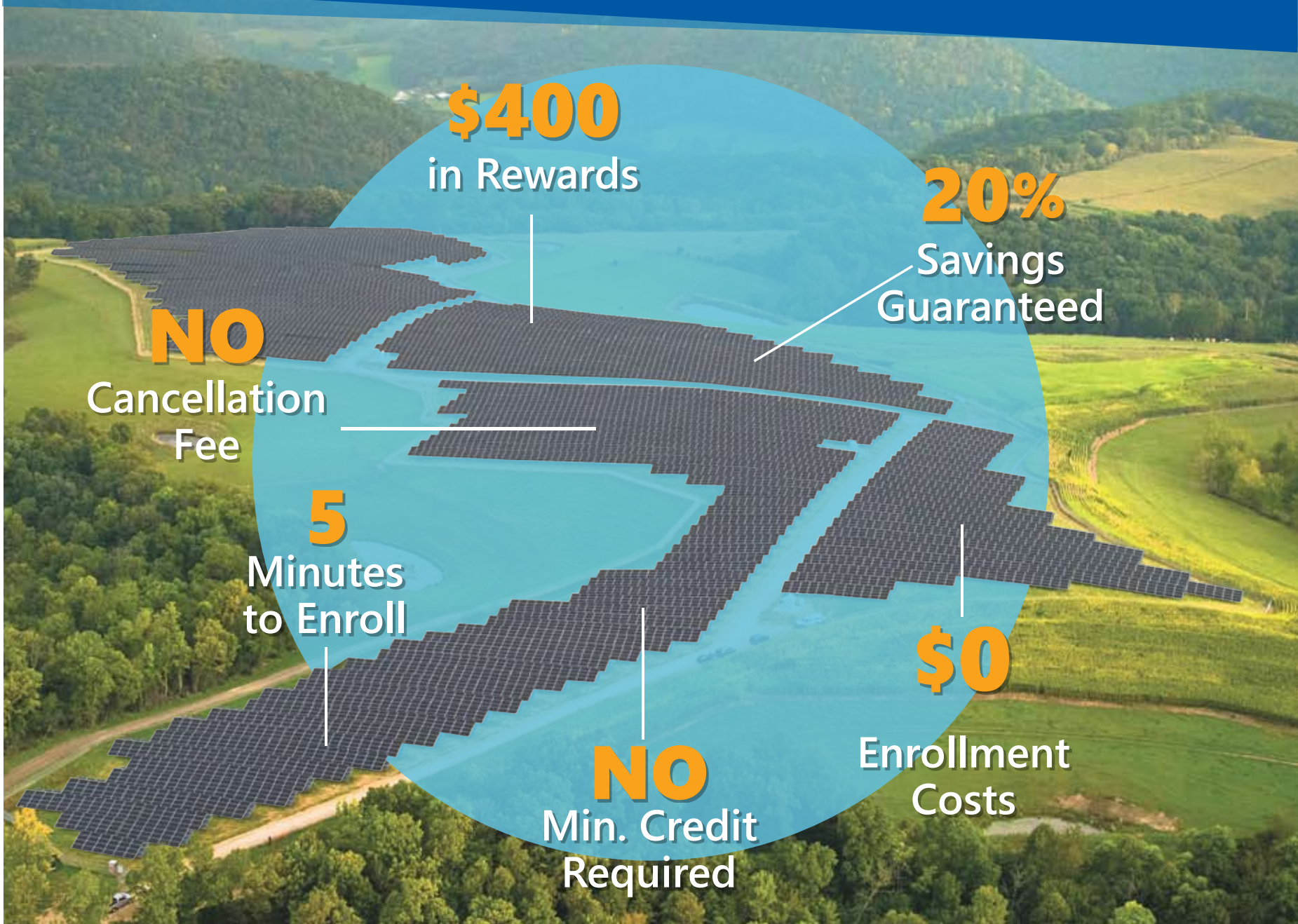
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The Home Front
By Don DeBat

Chicago's spring existing-home market on the city's North Side truly is the wackiest housing observers have seen in decades.

"It's a strong seller's market on the North Side with multiple offers the rule, but buyers should be careful not to overpay because of the low-inventory bubble," advised John Irwin, broker with Baird & Warner.

"On the Near North Side, home sales and units under contract have rebounded nicely, however inventory levels are still growing at alarming rates—up 44.1% in April in the Loop, Streeterville, Gold Coast and River North," noted Irwin, author of the May 2021 Market Analysis for Chicago's North Side.

Apparently, Near North home and condominium sellers are still worried about last year's looting and civil unrest downtown, and the negative impact of the COVID-19 virus on high-rise living.

On the positive side, overall existing home and condo inventory was up 19.2% in April on the entire North Side.

However, prospective buyers seeking a residence in Lincoln Park and North Center will have to shop hard. The inventory level in Lincoln Park declined 7.2% in April, and it plummeted 22.8% in North Center.

The Baird & Warner analysis posted the following median price points in April:

- Near North Side. The median price was \$435,000, up 4.8% from April of 2020.
- Lincoln Park. The median price spiked 10% in April to \$577,750, compared with a year ago.
- Lake View. The median price fell 1.3% to \$440,500 from April of 2020.
- North Center. The median price was \$5,000, up 3.9% from the same month a year ago.

Mortgage rates fall again

Affordable home-loan rates in recent weeks also buoyed the market. Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey reported on May 13 that benchmark 30-year fixed home loans nationwide slipped to 2.94%, down from 2.96% a week earlier. A year ago, the 30-year fixed-loan average was 3.28%.

Fifteen-year fixed mortgages averaged 2.26%, down from 2.30% a week earlier. A year ago, the 15-year fixed loan average was 2.72%.

The Freddie Mac survey is focused on conventional, conforming, fully amortizing home purchase loans for borrowers who put 20% down and have excellent credit.

In Chicago on May 13, Rate Rabbit



The median price for a home in Lincoln Park spiked 10% in April to \$577,750, compared with a year ago.

Home Loans was quoting 2.849% on a 30-year fixed mortgage with a down payment of 20% and a loan fee of \$1,900, reported Rate Seeker.com.

Gateway Capital Mortgage was quoting 2.877% on 30-year loans and 2.125% on 15-year loans with a 5% down payment. The loan fee was \$595.

"Since the most recent peak in April, mortgage rates have declined nearly a quarter of one percentage point and have remained under 3% for the past month," noted Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's Chief Economist.

"Low rates offer homeowners an opportunity to lower their monthly payment by refinancing and our most recent research shows that many borrowers, especially Black and Hispanic borrowers, who could benefit from refinancing still aren't pursuing the option."

While the low mortgage-rate environment has been a boon to the housing market, Khater predicted it may not last long.

"Consumer inflation recently has accelerated at its fastest pace in more than 12 years and may lead to higher mortgage rates in the summer," Khater warned.

Grants for roof and porch repairs

Is your roof or porch in need of repair? You may qualify to receive a grant from the City of Chicago to fix it. Income-eligible Chicago property owners can apply for the City's Roof and Porch Repair Program and be entered in a lottery to receive one-time service on their home.

Applications will be accepted on one day only, tomorrow – Thursday, May 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those who would like to take advantage of this program may visit www.chicago.gov/roofandporch or call 311 to be placed on the list. Applicants will be selected via lottery.

Households earning 80% or below the area median income may be eligible to participate in the program.

A random lottery drawing will take place for registered participants in July, and those selected will be formally notified by mail. For more information call 312-744-3653.

For more housing news, visit www.dondebat.biz. Don DeBat is co-author of "Escaping Condo Jail," the ultimate survival guide for condominium living. Visit www.escapingcondojail.com.





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- Proof of citizenship is not required. Rental assistance is not a “public-charge” benefit.



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Rental Payment Program

- Eligible households may receive up to 15 months of assistance from June 2020 through August 2021.
- Priority will be given to:
 - households with a member who is currently unemployed.
 - households below 50% of the Area Median Income, adjusted for household size.
- The grant is paid directly to housing provider.
- For program information, visit IHDA.org.
- Housing providers and tenants can submit a joint application starting on May 17th at ILRPP.IHDA.org

For questions, application assistance or even a blank paper application, please call, email or visit Northside Community Development Corporation.

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Letters to the Editor

Get out of our students' hair

The “debate” about and policing of black and natural hair in schools began long before March, 2021. This is when four-year-old Jett Hawkins’ mother received a call from Providence St. Mel saying her son’s braids violated a school dress code that also bans dreadlocks and other natural hairstyles. We’ve seen the oppression of black hair all across the country.

In 2017, Black students at a charter school outside Boston were given detention and suspensions – and even removed from sports teams – for wearing braids.

In 2016 Kentucky High Schools also had a Natural Hair Ban which explicitly stated that no “hairstyle that is extreme, distracting, or at-

ention-getting will be permitted. No dreadlocks, cornrows, twists, mohawks, and no jewelry will be worn in hair.”

The policing of students’ hair is unacceptable. At our schools, we prioritize the student, foster a welcoming learning environment, value their experience, and celebrate them and their hair. This is why we are proud to support SB817, written by Sen. Mike Simmons, which bans discrimination in schools against hairstyles traditionally associated with race and ethnicity.

Our schools serve children from all over the world, speaking more than three dozen languages. We want them to live and breathe their story and culture - to know what it means to live in the land

of the free.

At our schools, we know that hair is a birthright and a part of the body, just like a fingernail. If students can paint and cut their nails, they should be able to wear their hair in whatever style, color, or length they choose.

As principals, we believe that all students should feel they belong and can thrive in the classroom as they are. The time for debate is up. It’s time for action. It’s time to pass SB 817.

Mary Beck - Senn High School Principal
Chad Thomas - Sullivan High School
Jennifer Sutton - Von Steuben Metropolitan Science Center

TCB keeps changing their tune

No, Elon Musk is not starting an IPO. Neither is a Chicago sports GM sabotaging his team’s chances. And Ald. Matt Martin is not taking the money.

When an alderman of Chicago does something fatheaded, that is usually the only reason. So many alderman have gone to jail for taking money, it is a running gag. Based on the crime stat number, it can be argued that per capita, City Council may be the most corrupt institution in Chicago.

But every time the topic of saving the Lincoln Square park-

ing lot arises, that phrase comes up: “Why would the alderman do something so dumb? He’s not taking money, is he?”

Well, we hope not. But there sure is a lot of taxpayer money in the balance aimed at only one out-of-state developer.

With two huge recently closed bank buildings near Lawrence and Western, why not put the housing there?

Two reasons come to mind:

One, those property owners will not give away their properties for free to The Community Builders

[TCB]. Only a politician would be that foolish with assets.

Second, it appears the alderman hates Lincoln Square and its founders. He hates the Germans. Hates the Greeks. Hates the Serbians, Bulgarians and Romanians. He hates the Danes, Swiss and Luxembourgers.

He wants to erase all evidence of the European culture that built the neighborhood. And to achieve that end he’s willing to put at risk all the small independent businesses and cultural institutions that made Lincoln Square what it is today.

Imagine if it was the Puerto Rican Day or Bud Billiken parades he was threatening instead of the German-American Festival? He would have never attempted such a brazen thing.

The developer will not replace all the parking spots. They never do. Considering all the secrecy that’s been the one constant of this crooked deal, who would trust them? That is the history of Chicago’s City Council. Promise the stars; Deliver dirt. And in 15 years they’re outta here with millions in profits.

Ald. Martin wants to give the parking lot away for \$1, along with millions of dollars of subsidies, tax credits and management fees every year to his friends. And he is not going to let small business owners stand in his way. That is why his hand-picked, out-of-town developer, TCB, keeps changing their tune. First it was for the poor. Then it was for diversity, density, low-income, now it is for artists. Offer something for everyone to get what you want.

Is this alderman following the great Chicago tradition of Tom Keane, Ed Burke and Rod Blagojevich? Dan Rostenkowski, Bruce Farley, Marty Tuchow, and Eddie Rosewell?

Jean Baptiste Point du Sable was Chicago’s first non-Native American settler. He was cheated out of his land by the second non-Native American settler. And he was cheated by the third. Are we going to let a recent arrival from Arizona and his Boston-based developers cheat us and destroy Lincoln Square?

Michael Sullivan



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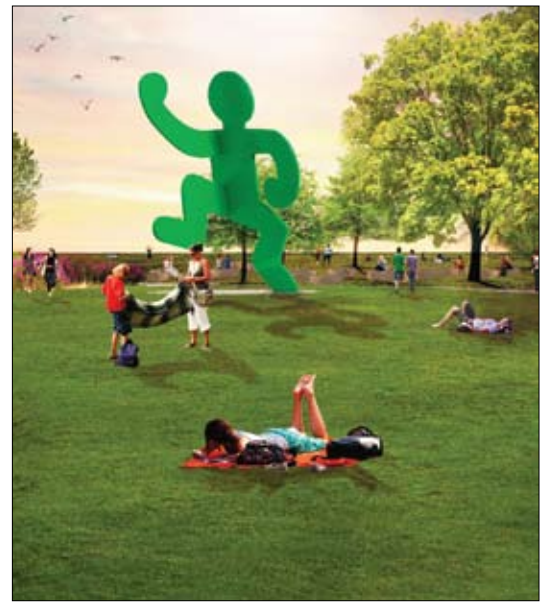
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(Left and center) Chicagoans love their parks! Come help clean up starting June 1. Register now. (Right) Sculpture view from Celebration Lawn of AIDS Garden. Sculpture Credit: Keith Haring Foundation. Photos by Chicago Parks Foundation

Clean up time in the city's parks



Heart of the 'Hood
by Felicia Dechter

Willa Iglitzen Lang is on a mission. As executive director of the Chicago Parks Foundation [CPF], she wants to make sure our parks are beautified and spiffy for throngs of summertime visitors.

That's why the nonprofit CPF has launched the second season of its citywide volunteer effort, Pitch In for the Parks! The family-friendly event kicks off June 1 and will help keep the city's 600-plus public parks clean.

"The Chicago Park District [CPD] is incredibly busy trying to keep the parks clean," said Lang, a River North resident. "Tax dollars just can't do everything that we ask the parks to do for us.

"People want a good way to take ownership and improve their neighborhood," added Lang. "We show them how. With Pitch In, we give them all the tools to make it happen."

CPF launched in 2013 as the nonprofit partner of the CPD. The foundation was founded because the CPD was strapped for funds and couldn't hire seasonal workers to keep the parks clean, said Lang.

"We felt that every great city should have partner parks," said Lang. "We were established as a public/private partnership with the CPD for fundraising and trying to raise money for the parks. We didn't want a handout, but wanted to come in and provide services to the community."

The organization brings community ideas to action, raising funds and awareness for park projects all across our city. It also serves as a fiscal partner to 70-plus local Park Advisory Councils.

One of its other projects is the AIDS Garden being built at the Belmont Rocks, where ground will be broken June 1 and 2 with a scheduled Fall completion. Already up is the Keith Haring Foundation's 30' tall sculpture in the park, and soon to come is the Gingko Grove of Reflection walking path and a Unity Garden tended by community gardeners, Lang said.

"It was created so no one will ever forget," said Lang. "It's an example of who we are. We're fundraisers but we also take on legacy projects."

Pitch In for the Parks!, was created last year in response to COVID-19. It is open to anyone who wants to host a clean-up group or join an existing event from the interactive map on the CPF website. Community groups, corporate teams and individual vol-



(L) Willa Iglitzen Lang, executive director of Chicago Parks Foundation. (R) Gingko Grove view from Unity Garden in the AIDS Garden.



Photo and image by Chicago Parks Foundation

unteers can participate in adopting a park with others in their neighborhood. CPF is providing masks, gloves, garbage bags, all put in a bucket, Lang said. All ages are welcome, she said.

The parks are already great, but CPF

"It has been a hard year and people need something to do," said Willa Iglitzen Lang. "It's positive and it's immediate gratification in a time when we've had so little control over our lives."

wants to help the community connect with them, said Lang. "Every park has a different community and different needs," she said. "But one thing every park could use is extra hands in keeping them clean."

Registration is now open on an ongoing enrollment basis but needed as soon as possible so supplies can be gauged. Park clean-ups start June 1 and last through October. Volunteers can sign up at chicagoparksfoundation.org/volunteer, which includes an interactive map and a list of Chicago parks.

"It has been a hard year and people need something to do," said Lang. "It's positive and it's immediate gratification in a time when we've had so little control over our lives."

The clean-up idea was the brainchild of former park district president Bryan Traubert, a Lakeview resident and former National Park Foundation chairman who currently sits on the CPF board. (He also, according to social media, is married to Penny Pritzker).

Last year's inaugural initiative brought in 2,000 volunteers for 350 park clean-ups.

This year, so far 90 volunteer groups have signed up for the season—many of which are participating in reoccurring sessions—adding up to a total of 300-plus clean-up events citywide. Some unique organizations are on board to help including the Chicago Mustang Club, the British School and Chicago Cares. "So it really

runs the gamut," said Lang.

CPF expects the count to keep growing as the park advisory councils, local businesses and community organizations continue to step up and adopt parks this month and beyond.

This year is different, said Lang, in that last year people signed up for a one time only clean up. But now, some are committing to a specific park for an entire season, she said.

"Everybody can do a little something," said Lang. "Maybe you can't donate but feel like doing something. Parks improve our quality of life. The Chicago Parks Foundation's goal is to encourage park lovers and users to become park givers and stewards."

Lang mentioned that many park district employees are working in areas that they're specifically trained for. For example, perhaps they're an employee working with children and they need to be fingerprinted. A lot of thought goes into things we don't even think about within the park district I

guess.

Pitch In, is a way to get some fresh air and hopefully sunshine, enjoy your park, lead by example, and maybe even get a little peace. Our green spaces are enjoyed by so many and this past year especially, we have experienced the value and impact the parks have on our lives, said Lang.

The initiative brings people together during a time when we've been so isolated, Lang said. It's an opportunity to come together and make our parks better. And Lang really appreciated us spreading the word, she said.

So please, head on down to your local park and lend a helping hand.

"You are welcome, we need you, and this is something you can do today," said Lang.

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Police Beat...

Catalytic converter thieves targeting Prius and pick-ups on Far North Side, cops say

The community alert about catalytic converter thieves from Chicago police follows recent similar alerts for Lakeview and the Northwest Side, Lincoln Park and Old Town.

Thieves were seen sawing parts off cars in Lincoln Park again around 6 a.m. May 11. A witness said two men were under a white convertible with a saw on the 2400 block of N. Cannon around 6 a.m. No arrests were made. Just 10 days ago, we reported on a thief sawing a catalytic converter off a car on Broadway near Belmont as the sun rose. Other thefts were reported nearby the same morning.

According to the new alert from Area Three detectives, police said a theft crew is targeting Toyota Prius and pick-up trucks during overnight hours in Rogers Park, Edgewater, and West Ridge. In one case, a witness saw four men working together to steal the valuable car parts while driving in a Jeep and a sedan, the alert said.

An automotive website reported earlier this year that Toyota Prius is "particularly attractive" to thieves because the cars run cleaner than most vehicles, so the precious metals in their converters are less depleted than standard cars. Pick-up trucks and SUVs have long been popular targets because they are easier for thieves to crawl under.

Police publicly linked six thefts during April to the crew, but more cases are likely involved. CPD said they struck in Edgewater on the 5200 block of N. Kenmore between April 6 and 8 and the 1100 block of W. Balmoral around 5:30 a.m. April 28.

In Rogers Park, thefts occurred in the 7500 block of N. Kenmore at 11:30 p.m. on April 9; the 1600 block of W. Wallen between April 12 and 17; and the 7500 block of N. Western around 6 a.m. on April 30.

One case occurred in West Ridge on the 7400 block of N. Washtenaw between April 7 and April 9, according to the alert.

Anyone with information about the crimes can contact Area Three detectives at 312-744-8263 regarding community alert P21-3-062.

Ravenswood man fatally shot in Rogers Park

Christian Schroeder of Ravenswood was fatally shot May 11 while sitting in a parked car in West Rogers Park.

The 29-year-old victim was sitting in the passenger seat of a vehicle parked on the 6000 block of N. California when someone walked up and fired on him at about 6:50 p.m. said Chicago police.

Schroeder was struck in the neck

and taken to Saint Francis Hospital in Evanston, where he was later pronounced dead.

No one was in custody, police said.

No arrest made after man inappropriately touches women at North-Clybourn CTA station



Two women reported being sexually abused by the same man at a North Side CTA station within an hour on May 10, but neither woman filed a police report, and the man has not been detained.

This writer witnessed one of the assaults as it unfolded on a staircase to the northbound platform at North-Clybourn around 12:52 p.m. As he approached the top of the stairs, a woman began screaming for help from below.

Within a split-second, a man emerged from the staircase, walked swiftly past him, and headed to the southbound platform. The woman, who was standing halfway down the stairs with her property strewn on the steps, yelled, "He touched me!"

As she headed up to the CTA employee booth at street level, our writer went to the southbound platform to take pictures of the offender — who appears to have a mental health condition — so responding officers could quickly share a description via radio.

But the police were never called.

"I have some pix for the police," the writer told the victim and a CTA worker.

"She don't want the police," the transit employee said as the victim cried and nursed an injured finger.

Officers were never called — at least not until the man inappropriately touched another woman on the southbound platform about 45 minutes later.

CPD spokesperson Karie James confirmed that officers were called to the North-Clybourn station at 1:38 p.m. after receiving reports of a "male walking around [the] CTA platform touching females inappropriately." According to dispatch records, a description of the offender matched the man's appearance in the first incident.

Police responded, but they didn't find the man and the call was "coded out" without a report, James said.

A law enforcement source said the man is known to police and has been linked to similar incidents, but many victims don't stick around to file reports. When reports have been filed, police have been unable to locate him.

3-year sentence for Loop mugging of 76-year-old

A suburban man has pleaded guilty to knocking a 76-year-old man to the ground and robbing him at a Loop ATM in Oct. 2019 in exchange for a three-year prison sentence. With credit for time served before pleading and a 50% sentence reduction for good behavior, Michael Zuffa walked out of Stateville Correctional Center on the same day he arrived, records show.

Around 12:30 p.m. Oct. 14, 2019, the senior citizen was withdrawing money from an outdoor ATM at 70 W. Randolph when Zuffa forced his hand away from the machine, knocked him to the ground, and robbed him of \$300 cash, prosecutors said.



Michael Zuffa

But a good Samaritan saw the whole thing and followed Zuffa. The witness told police he saw Zuffa shed a green sweatshirt and board a CTA bus a few blocks away. Cops caught up with the bus, arrested Zuffa, and recovered \$280 in \$20 bills from him, according to a CPD report.

The victim, who lives in Lincoln Park, could not identify Zuffa, but the witness did that for him, prosecutors said. Cops also recovered a green sweatshirt from the bus stop on Madison St. Police gave the \$280 cash that Zuffa was carrying to the alleged robbery victim.

Zuffa pleaded guilty to one count of robbery in exchange for a three-year sentence. According to Illinois Dept. of Corrections records, he arrived at Stateville on April 19 and walked out later the same day. He'll be on parole until April 19, 2023.

Burglar busted while lounging on victim's couch with wallets, property

On May 7 police arrested a burglar as he took time out to lounge on the victim's sofa in Wrigleyville, prosecutors say. It's at least the third time the accused man, Jeff Sarfo, has been charged with committing felonies in Wrigleyville.

He went to prison for robbing a victim at the Addison Red Line CTA station in 2012. And here received another three-year sentence for robbing a couple outside their Wrigleyville home in 2017, although he was only in an actual prison for three days in that case.



Jeff Sarfo

Around 10:45 p.m. May 7, a Wrigleyville resident saw a man climb the stairs of a porch and try to open a third-floor apartment door on the 3700 block of N. Fremont. When it didn't open, the man climbed down and entered a second-floor unit through its unlocked back door. The witness called 911.

Police arrived quickly and found Sarfo, 26, sitting on a couch inside the second-floor unit, prosecutors said. He allegedly had two wallets belonging to the apartment's owner in his pocket and other property from the residence in a bag.

The alleged victim told police he doesn't know Sarfo and never gave him permission to be in his apartment, prosecutors said. Sarfo is charged with two counts of burglary.

Judge Mary Marubio, noting that the burglaries allegedly took place when Sarfo knew people might be home, ordered him held in lieu of \$50,000 bail. He'll need to post \$5,000 and go onto electronic monitoring to get out of jail before trial.

Sarfo has been sentenced to prison four times, according to state records: the 2012 Addison Red Line robbery, a 2012 gun conviction, a 2015 aggravated fleeing case, and a 2017 robbery of a Wrigleyville couple.

Around 5:10 a.m. on Sept. 10, 2017, Sarfo approached a Lakeview couple outside of their home in the 1200 block of W. Waveland, pulled out a handgun, and took their valuables, prosecutors alleged at the time. He eventually received a three-year sentence in the case. After receiving credit for time served awaiting trial and a 50% sentence reduction for good behavior, Sarfo left prison three days after he arrived.

While on bail in the robbery case, Sarfo was accused of having a gun at his feet during a traffic stop and then dropping bullets in the back seat of the arresting officers' patrol car.

Because of his background, Sarfo

faces enhanced Class X felony sentencing in the new burglary case, prosecutors said during his bond court hearing. If he's convicted, he faces a sentence of six- to 30-years.

Shots fired on Loop CTA platform



Police are investigating after someone fired a gun during a fight on the Jackson Blue Line station mezzanine on May 11. No one was shot, but police did find a shell casing at the scene.

Detectives released images of two men that police said are wanted in connection with the incident, which reportedly began as a fight near the station escalators around 2:17 p.m. At some point during the fight, one of the men fired a gun.

One of the photos released by police shows the men fighting on the station's platform, too. Police searched the train tunnel for one of the suspects but came up empty-handed. Exactly where the other man went is not clear.

Cops who reviewed CTA surveillance video told other officers that the man wearing a gray hoodie and ripped jeans in the photos appeared to leave the area with the other man's shoes and backpack.

Anyone who recognizes the men can contact CPD investigators at 312-745-4443. The case number is JE-226793.

Edgewater man planted fake pipe bomb near Bryn Mawr Red Line

An Edgewater man created a fake pipe bomb from a cardboard tube and plastic caps, then placed it near the Bryn Mawr Red Line CTA station last weekend, causing a massive police response and disruptions to CTA train and bus service, prosecutors said Sunday.



James Clark

Assistant State's Attorney Meredith Rudolphi said.

James Clark, 57, is charged with felony false threat of terrorism. Judge Susana Ortiz ordered him held in lieu of \$50,000 and ordered him to go onto electronic monitoring if he can post a \$5,000 deposit bond. Ortiz also told Clark not to possess explosives or materials that could be used to create bombs.

Shortly before 11 a.m. on May 8, a witness flagged down police and directed them to a suspicious object near a bus stop next to the Bryn Mawr station, 1120 W. Bryn Mawr, Rudolphi said. The object, a cylinder wrapped in duct tape with plastic caps on both ends and a wick sticking out of one side, was later determined to be fake — but not before police sealed off the area and CTA passengers were rerouted while a bomb squad investigated.

Three offenders beat, carjack man in Uptown

A 59-year-old suburban man was beaten on an Uptown street May 15 by three hijackers who drove away with his car, police said. No arrests have been made.

The offenders attacked the man near his car in the 600 block of W. Buena around 1:30 p.m., Officer Anthony Spicuzza said. They took his keys and

drove away with his gold 2004 Toyota Avalon, which was last seen westbound on Buena. Paramedics took the victim to Weiss Memorial Hospital for treatment. He was initially reported in good condition, Spicuzza said.

According to a CPD report, the carjacks are three Black males between 16- and 20-years-old. One wore a white shirt or coat with black pants, white shoes, and a green COVID mask. The second suspect, who was shorter, wore a black jacket, black pants, and black shoes. And the third offender is described as tall and skinny with dreadlocks. According to the report, he wore a black jacket, black pants, and a white COVID mask.

At least two other carjackings have been reported on the North and Far North Sides in the past three days.

Armed hijackers took a woman's car in Lakeview May 12, then managed to slip away from police after ditching the car on the city's West Side less than an hour later.

In that case, two men displayed a handgun and demanded the woman's valuables and her car as she stepped out of the 2014 Audi Q5 around 7:30 p.m. on the 3800 block of N. Pine Grove, police said. Some people who saw the incident said accomplices might have followed the offenders in a white Volkswagen.

Then, around 11 p.m. May 13, a 28-year-old man was parking near Arthur and Greenview in Rogers Park when a gunman walked up and demanded his keys at gunpoint, according to police. Police said the victim complied with the hijacker's demands, and the offender drove away with his silver 2015 Honda CX-5. It was last seen heading westbound on Arthur Ave.

Uptown teen shot

A 17-year-old boy is in good condition after being shot in Uptown May 15, police said. The victim told police he was in an alley near the 4500 block of N. Broadway around 11 a.m. when he heard gunfire and realized he had been shot, according to a CPD report and police media statement.

The teen arrived at Thorek Hospital about an hour later to be treated for a gunshot wound to his left thumb, the police report said.

Police did not receive any calls of shots fired in the area around the time of the shooting. Officers searched the area and were seen examining a possible crime scene in the 4400 block of N. Clifton on Saturday afternoon. Area Three detectives are investigating.

He is the third person shot in Uptown this year. On April 27, a 40-year-old man was shot in the arm behind the Uptown Theater. Then, around noon on May 1, a 28-year-old man was shot near Argyle and Kenmore. No charges have been filed in either case.

Shots fired on Thorndale

On May 14, near Thorndale and Broadway, individuals in a car fired a series of shots into the Broadway Armory parking lot, 5917 N. Broadway. At the time of the incident, there were individuals in the armory parking lot who returned fire at the car driving on Thorndale. No one was injured, although several cars were damaged. Police continue to review video footage from the area and interview witnesses. One of the cars involved may have also been involved in another shooting incident later that night in Rogers Park.

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Robbery, burglary investigations sit idle again as CPD puts detectives on “street corner duty”

BY CWBCHICAGO

Detectives made little progress over the weekend in their investigation of a woman who was beaten with a pipe and robbed while walking in Lakeview May 14. That’s because the detectives who should be investigating the attack were in uniform, sitting in a squad car on a street corner to increase police visibility in Lawndale, according to a CPD source.

Most other robbery and burglary detectives from CPD’s five area divisions were also ordered to hang out on street corners rather than investigate crimes from Friday through Sunday.

“Their burglary and robbery cases aren’t being investigated thoroughly because they are posted up on some corner for the entire shift,” an officer told this reporter. It was the second weekend in a row that police leaders ordered legions of detectives to spend weekend shifts sitting in cars rather than investigating crimes. The first instance occurred on May 7.

The union that represents Chi-

cago’s rank-and-file police officers is urging detectives to protect themselves from accusations of non-productivity by filing memos every time they are taken away from investigations to camp out in a car under the new tactic.

“Aspects of this investigation have been delayed due to the involuntary assignment,” a sample memo from the union reads. Among the duties the draft document says will be affected by reassignment are “residential canvasses, video canvasses, interviews, follow-up calls, evidence identification, evidence preservation, evidence submissions, policy review, report writing, [and] warrant writing.”

In fact we’ve learned leaders of the Lakeview-based Town Hall District on Friday night sent patrol officers to search the neighborhood near the pipe attack for evidence because there were no detectives to do it.

Last week, we shared many of the questions our readers raised about the tactic with CPD leadership. After three phone calls over five days, the department on Fri-

day declined to answer the questions:

- The department has already reassigned over 1,000 patrol officers from districts to citywide anti-violence units. Why can’t they sit on street corners instead of taking detectives away from investigations?
- How many of the city’s detectives are assigned to sit on street corners?
- What is the purpose of this tactic?
- What, exactly, do the detectives do when they are assigned to street corner duty?
- How will using detectives in this fashion affect their case clearance rate and prosecution of offenders?

Now, CPD leaders haven’t gone completely bonkers. Detectives who handle homicides are not required to participate in street corner duty. But that doesn’t mean murder investigations aren’t being affected. You see, when street cops make an arrest that requires a detective’s involvement on weekends, a homicide detective has to handle it because the investigators who’d usually do the job

are sitting in a car somewhere, according to multiple sources.

So, how is the strategy of having detectives babysit street corners going?

According to crime stats maintained independently at HeyJack-ass.com, there were 32 people shot, six fatally, when the plan debuted on Mother’s Day weekend. That’s more shooting victims than the same weekend in any year going back to 2014, the first year that HJ began compiling records. This weekend’s totals are 52 shot, seven fatally. Once again, that’s the most for the same weekend since HJ records began in 2014.

Meanwhile, cops across the city are getting ready for long hours and limited time off as summer arrives. Starting Friday, officers will work 12-hour shifts through June 1. They’ll be given one day

off during the 12-day stretch.

On another topic, the president of the union that represents CPD’s sergeants last week said that he never received a response to an April 30 letter he sent to Mayor Lori Lightfoot and CPD Supt. David Brown warning that the department is operating with an “unprecedented shortage of the supervisory ranks,” especially sergeants.

CPD hasn’t promoted any officers to sergeant in over a year, Chicago Police Sergeant’s Association President James Calvino told Lightfoot and Brown in the letter. District sergeants are often supervising more than 20 cops at a time on the street, Calvino said. The federal consent decree that CPD is working to comply with requires a ratio of 10-to-1, according to Calvino.

Eight displaced by suspicious Lincoln Park fire that followed argument, gun arrest

Eight people and two dogs were displaced by a suspicious house fire in Lincoln Park May 14. Investigators are trying to determine if the blaze was intentionally set and, if it was, if the fire is connected to an earlier incident at the same address.

Officers initially responded to the 2400 block of N. Clybourn around 12:40 a.m. after a 30-year-old man reported that an acquaintance put a gun to his head during an argument inside an apartment, CPD spokesperson Sally Bown said. Police arrested a 29-year-old man at the scene.

Then, at 2:51 a.m., a fire broke out at the same address. No injuries were reported, but the damage forced six adults, two children, and two animals from their homes, Bown said. The Red Cross was helping the victims find new housing.

CFD’s Office of Fire Investigation, which believes the blaze started on the rear porch of an apartment building then spread to a neighboring structure, asked CPD’s Bomb and Arson Unit to take over the case, she said. Officially, the cause of the fire remains undetermined.

CPD warn of knock-out scams as locals return to bars, clubs

BY CWBCHICAGO

Bars and restaurants across the North Side may soon be free from COVID operating restrictions with bigger crowds and last call stretching into the early morning hours. And the scammers, thieves, and other criminals who thrive on the city’s nightlife scene will be back, too.

In preparation for that, Chicago police and a major consumer protection group are preparing to launch a campaign to warn bar-goers about organized thieves who drug people in nightlife hotspots and then take their money, jewelry, and other valuables.

Last October Cook County prosecutors accused two Milwaukee women of stealing over \$85,000 and stealing identities of at least 10 men after meeting the alleged victims in downtown bars and drugging them.

Then again in March another woman, also from Milwaukee, was charged with doing the same thing to men she met at bars in River North, Old Town, the Rivers Casino, and elsewhere. Investigators say she has links to the first two women.

And just a couple of weeks ago, Florida prosecutors charged a woman with running an identical enterprise that targeted men at bars across Miami-Dade County. According to a source, the women charged in Chicago frequented South Florida.

While each crime’s specifics vary, the women charged in Chicago typically offered each victim alcohol laced with a knock-out drug that rendered the men unconscious almost immediately,

according to a Cook County prosecutor.

CPD surveillance cameras allegedly recorded footage of the first two women literally carrying an unconscious nightclub employee from a River North bar to their car, where they proceeded to remove his valuables. Chicago police and deputy marshals, who had the women under surveillance for days, arrested them at the scene.

“I was at a bar in the Gold Coast, and I ordered a drink from the bar. It was my first drink of the night, and the next thing I know, I was standing inside a gas station in River North at 10 a.m. the next morning,” one victim wrote.

After the women were taken into custody, police found “many small vials of alcohol opened and filled to the top” in their car, prosecutors said. Investigators found traces of an antipsychotic on the rims of some bottles, according to court records.

Some of their victims regained consciousness while lying on the side of roads. Others awakened inside their own homes, while one was found at the Lake Forest oasis off Interstate 94, prosecutors said. After we wrote about the scams in October, more than a half-dozen men wrote in to say the women also targeted them.

“I was at a bar in the Gold Coast, and I ordered a drink from the bar. It was my first drink of the night, and the next thing I know, I was standing inside a gas station in River North at 10 a.m. the next morning,” one of them wrote.

This man said he also had his phone, cash, watch, credit and

debit cards taken. His shirt was gone, too.

“I looked in my bank account and credit card account, and they drained them.”

In October, the third woman was accused of meeting a man at a bar at Rivers Casino and then rendezvousing with him at his Lincoln Park home.

The alleged victim told police he doesn’t know what happened after he walked Davisha Traylor into his home because he thinks some kind of drug knocked him out. When he woke up, his iPhone and credit cards were missing, and someone had been using his Uber account to ride around.

Surveillance video shows Traylor entering the man’s home, prosecutors said, and no one else went inside between the time he arrived and the time he noticed his things missing.

Police also found surveillance video of Traylor racking up \$1,661 in charges on the man’s credit cards at a Milwaukee-area Walmart and other stores, prosecutors said. The alleged victim identified her in a photo line-up.

At the time of the Rivers Casino incident, Traylor was on bond for another set of identity theft cases that involved men she allegedly met at bars in River North, Old Town, and elsewhere in 2018 and 2020.

She had been jailed awaiting trial until COVID struck. That’s when a judge let her out, fearing she might catch the disease inside Cook County jail. But COVID fears didn’t keep her from bellying up to a casino bar and robbing strangers in their homes, according to prosecutors.

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Your guide through the courts

Authors share stories about mental illness in families May 27

Historically, open discussions of mental illness have been difficult, often taboo. Brave and honest storytelling attempts to break those barriers so that we might learn how lives are affected by diseases of the mind.

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, Friends of the Edgewater Library and the Edgewater Branch are offering a program that reflects this year's theme of "You Are Not Alone." The discussion will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 27.



Florence Reiss Kraut

In the program, "Out of the Darkness: Stories About Mental Health in Families," two authors will shed light on this topic through their writings -- one in fiction, one through memoir. Florence Reiss Kraut, author of "How to Make a Life" (historical fiction), and Marlena Maduro Baraf, author of "At the Narrow Waist of the World," share their stories about how mental illness affects family relationships.



Marlena Maduro Baraf

"How to Make a Life" is a sweeping saga that follows four generations of a family who must learn to accept each other's differences — or risk cutting ties with the very people who anchor their place in the world.

"At the Narrow Waist of the World: a memoir" is a mother-daughter story about mental illness and healing. It's a story about forgiveness and acceptance and about leaving home, looking back, and finding it again.

To register for this free program on the Zoom platform, visit foelchicago.org or chipublib.org. Both books discussed in the program are available at the library.

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Iris Apfel



Kimberly Gleeson, Rhonda J Liesenfelt, Sherrill Bodine, Myra Reilly, Bobbi Panter, Duc Ho and David Nguyen.



Vi and Vince Daley.

PROBLEMS from p. 2

we wrote so much. Ours was a think tank office on the building's mezzanine level. "3M" I used to joke and say it was like the English Dept. at Wellesley.

But I did insist my interns learn not only about writing and history, but also of politics and some dynamics about art. No one helped that happen more than the world's most treasured violinist. A Polish prodigy born in 1928 in Chlem. Jewish. Brilliant like Mozart. A star by four years of age. The great **Ida Haendel**. I hope you know of her. I made sure that my interns listened frequently to Haendel's breathtaking violin performances. None finer than her recording of **Fritz Kreisler's** Praeludium and Allegro, assisted on the piano by **Vladimir Ashkenazey**. Fills my eyes with tears, still.



Ida Haendel

A large portion of her post-World War II life was in Miami, loving the sun. I learned recently that she died last July. Eclipsed by COVID's pandemic. Certainly not mourned properly. So I have been playing her works on YouTube of late, especially the Praeludium. She lifts me out of my chair. What a character she was. Look her up. What an artist. An enormous legacy accompanies her long life of violin works, including the divine **David Garrett**.

MORE MONEY: Last week **Maria Pappas'** office returned \$2.7 million to homeowners who called the "Black and Latino Houses Matter" live phone bank she

hosted with ABC 7 Chicago. In March she and ABC7 Chicago returned \$12.5 million to homeowners, raising the total amount to nearly \$15.2 million. Staff from the Treasurer's Office, fluent in Spanish, Polish, Chinese and English helped homeowners find refunds, apply for property tax exemptions and avoid the annual Tax Sale of delinquent taxes. All houses matter, but she launched the 'Black and Latino Houses Matter' initiative because the Tax Sale disproportionately impacts people of color in the county. "Over 75% of all properties are located in Black and Latino communities," says **Samantha Chatman**, consumer investigative reporter with ABC 7's I-Team.

BASQUIAT: A painting of a skull by American artist **Jean-Michel Basquiat**, "In This Case" (1983), sold for \$93.1 million at Christie's in New York on May 11. It's the artist's second-most expensive work to sell at auction.

COUNTRY DAY NEWS: **Bill and Kathy Bell Bartholomey** delivering needed supplies to the food pantry at North Shore Country Day School.

WHO'S WHERE: Our friend, **Iris Apfel**, New York's most evocative socialite known for her fashion sense and true NYC character, as well as stunning eyewear, is getting set to turn 100. This I don't want to miss... congrats to **Duffy Bowman**, a descendant of Chicago's great literary **Bowmans**, getting set to enroll in the writer's program at the Univ. of Iowa. The apple doesn't fall far... Happy 54th wedding anniversary to a swell couple, former 43rd Ward Alderman **Vi Daley** and her husband, **Vince Daley**, they spread the love ...Chicago Art Community mourns the passing of the innovative Chicago artist, **Karl Wirsum**, 1939-2021... A Happy Orthodox Easter family get-together for **Kristine Farra**, **Leah Farro**, **Jad Farro** and grandma **Jacqueline Tebcherany**, everyone looking so chic... **Mark Olley** and **Jim Ellsworth** munching giant burgers at Kuma's Corner... **B.J. Murray** reminds us that May is Lyme Disease awareness month... Happy Birthday to sweet **Karen Larkin Johnson**, hope there was a Grand Beach bash... **Ken and Dana Librot Doolley** are tres excited for son, **Nathan**, who has committed to the Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, and the Men's Rowing Team... **Paula Fogarty**, in historic Savannah, GA, with the famed American designer **Carlton Varney** for Savannah Antiques and

Architecture Weekend... former FOX32 newsy **Anne Kavanagh** lunching at the Gage and luxuriating in the high-end menu... surrounded by epic beauty **Stephanie Leese Emrich** and **Jeffrey Emrich** reaching for the stars, all five of them, at the stunning Langham Hotel and then Afternoon Tea at the Drake Hotel with lovely mom, the Art Institute's **Georgia Leese**... newspaper boss **David Caldwell** in the Forbidden City of Beijing, but eating well having crispy duck pancakes and spring rolls washed down with a naughty Australian Chardonnay... **Zurich Esposito** entertaining **Courtney Biggert Caverly** in Palm Springs... famed restaurateur **Gordon Sinclair** dining with **Abra** and **Jim Wilkin** and **Leslie "Bunny" Douglas** at BOCA (**Chef Lee Wolen**)**Julie Barrish** and **Frances Renk** enjoying an impromptu lunch... **Kimberly Gleeson**, **Sherrill Bodine**, **Bobbi Panter**, **Myra Reilly** and **Rhonda J. Liesenfelt** with a stop by from the effervescent **Duc Ho** and **David Nguyen**, a great night of friendship, fun, french fries and secrets and Veuve... former **Mayor Rahm Emanuel** nominated as **President Joe Biden's** choice for Ambassador to Japan, "Ganbarou."

AFTERNOON TEA: **Denise Tomasello's** niece, **Alexa Ricci**, has opened Ricci Teas, a fresh and innovative loose leaf tea enterprise. If you're like me, you're always looking for high quality tea in the U.S.A. I'm excited by this new tea. Check out www.riccitea.com.

CHICAGO JAZZ: Sitting in the Sinatra Booth last Saturday night at LePiano Jazz Club, the fabulous gal pals, **Sherrill Bodine**, **Lauren Lein Cavanaugh**, **Bethany Florek** and **Andrew Florek**, soaking up live jazz with host **Chad Willetts**. The food was divine - and the jazz was off the chain. The "Blondettes" will be back.

NOTRE DAME NEWS: **Pope Francis** has asked **Archbishop Charles Brown**, Papal Nuncio to the Philippines, to bestow the Cardinal's Red Hat and ring on Philippine **Cardinal Jose Advincula** who was ill with COVID-19 when others were receiving theirs in Rome. That's a nice little honor for Brown who is an American, a young New Yorker and also a "Domer," a grad of the Univ. of Notre Dame, South Bend.

TOPO TUESDAY: **Shelley Howard** opens the proceedings with **Dr. Glenn**, Chicago's renowned **D.J. Robert Murphy** and **Mary Constable** at Old Town's Topo Gigio, where reports say the food is better than ever. YUM.

COMING SOON: Have they really uncovered a lost **Caravaggio** in Madrid?

MASTERPIECE: Break out your bathing suits and bonnets, "Sanditon" is returning to Masterpiece for two new seasons. **Jane Austen** lives. Total surprise to all. Apparently there will be no more Sydney. Sadly, actor **Theo James** has no plans to return. It is the author's last work and remains unfinished.

Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it. - Mark Twain

tog515@gmail.com

Lakeview Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION WELLS FARGO USA HOLDINGS, INC. Plaintiff,

-v- BARBARA M ANDREWS A/K/A BARBARA ANDREWS, 4515-17 N. ASHLAND CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendants 18 CH 05506 4515 NORTH ASHLAND AVENUE, UNIT #2S CHICAGO, IL 60640 NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 24, 2019, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on June 29, 2021, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker Drive, CHICAGO, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 4515 NORTH ASHLAND AVENUE, UNIT #2S, CHICAGO, IL 60640 Property Index No. 14-17-112-039-1002 The real estate is improved with a brown brick, three story condominium, no garage.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other

Real Estate For Sale

er lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

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MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC

Real Estate For Sale

Plaintiff's Attorneys, One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL, 60602. Tel No. (312) 346-9088.

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You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjpsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

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QUESTIONS from p. 1

Review Board/Sign Board of appeals.

Described as a community meeting, even the question-and-answer segment at the very end of the meeting was carefully orchestrated.

In the three years this deal has been percolating, this newspaper has verified only one public meeting held with community members present in person. That was at the annual meeting of the Heart of Lincoln Square Assoc. [HOLS], held at the Tattler Post, 4355 N. Western Ave., in the Fall of 2019. Ald. Martin claims to also have met with local businesses in the area, but so far he has offered no proof this actually occurred. This newspaper has sought out, but not found any local business who confirm they

attended such a meeting, and no meeting notes were included in the documents released by City Hall after our Freedom of Information Act request.

The majority of those allowed to speak May 11 by TCB were remarkably the same cadre of people who always seem to be given the opportunity to express themselves at meetings hosted by the HOLS, a group founded by Matt Martin. Many of these 12 were over-the-top in their praise of a housing project, which those opposed to the project say bears a passing resemblance to the drab architecture of the former Soviet Union's Eastern Bloc, often associated with cold, grey, anonymous, and poorly constructed buildings.

Three of the others who had been allowed to speak expressed a negative view of the project. A

NEWS-STAR

fourth non-scripted speaker was Pappas, whose comments drew praise from those not affiliated with the alderman or TCB. Pappas offered the questions much of the Lincoln Square community still cannot get answered. "I'm intimately involved in the German community, both as a member of the Niedersachsen Club and involved in the Maifest and Oktoberfest. I have never gotten as many calls as I have gotten over this project. So, I think that the best way for me to handle this is just to say [it] out loud." Which she did.

Pappas said her 20 questions were questions she had heard from her constituents, and which she also submitted to TCB via email. As Treasurer and while serving on the Cook County Board of Commissioners, Pappas earned a reputation as someone who carefully scours every line in a budget, never failing to ask difficult questions of those in power. She used her allotted time to literally ask the developers 20 questions.

Among them, "Has a developer and or affiliates made contributions to anyone in city government?"

"What was the Request For Proposal process? Is there a competitive bid on this project, has anyone other than TCB bid on this project? Are you requesting TIF funds?"

"At what time did you approach the aldermen about this project [and], who was present at that time? How many meetings has TCB had with the aldermanic office, his chief-of-staff, [Reimers], Josh Mark, and others?"

"Are you willing to share under Freedom of Information all the city emails regarding this project, including in city government and the aldermanic office?"

"Please advise the home address for each of the principals on this project, as well as the subcontractors."

"Have you met with the German organizations, both with its leadership and its members? What if any concerns have you heard voiced other than what you

skipped over in your presentation, and how do you attend to address them?"

Pappas requested they forward the answers to these questions to her via email. "I hope that you will help me get the answers out to the various constituents, because they feel they are not getting answers out of the alderman's office," she said.

Maria Pappas said her 20 questions were questions she had heard

from her constituents.

Among them,

"Has a developer and or affiliates made

contributions to anyone in city government?

Is there a competitive bid on this project, has anyone other than TCB bid

on this project? Are you requesting TIF funds?"

Albinson did not answer a single one of those question, merely saying, "Thanks a lot, Maria."

After Pappas, TCB chose yet another person to speak who was supportive of the development. She is among those who also attend the virtual community meetings hosted by Ald. Martin and the HOLS.

"I love and welcome the affordable housing to the community. I don't really care if there's less parking. Less parking is good. I've seen so many signs saying 'save our parking.' I attended this meeting to say, 'Hey, we don't care about the parking that much.' It sounds like we're not really losing any parking," said Jenna Olson, who according to her social media posts is a member of the anti-car/pro-bike lobbying group the Active Transportation Alliance [ATA], a primarily government-funded activist group that lobbies for biking and public transportation projects.

Those chosen to speak also included Carl Beinen, an anti-car activist who also regularly comments at virtual meetings hosted

by Martin and the HOLS. Beinen used his time to advocate for the reduction of available parking spaces.

"When I see a development like this, I think this is the type of thing that could have kept me living near my parents, and in my community, as a young adult who didn't have a lot of money," Beinen said. "My wife and I, we live here without a car. And I'd like to echo the same statement that the inclusion of so much parking here seems like a missed opportunity. I would love to see the amount of parking here reduced. But as others said, this is a stunning, it's a beautiful development."

Throughout the meeting, Albinson and TCB's William Woodley stuck to a familiar theme. That anyone who opposed their plan - which would see them gain immense profits by getting a multi-million-dollar city asset for free - were simply misinformed or worse, they were people against affordable housing in their neighborhood.

Near the meeting's end, Albinson acknowledged there had been many who had "raised their hand" to ask a question.

"Unfortunately, we've got a lot of other folks that raised their hand," but - alas - they had run out of time. "We do want to be respectful of everyone's time this evening... If you did have your hand raised and you weren't able to speak, we encourage you to follow up with us. There [was] an email as a part of your link that was sent out so reach out to us."

This newspaper has sent requests for comments and information on this project to Woodley and TCB and has so far received no response.

"We will be consolidating and responding to the questions that were raised tonight. [Also], thank you to Laura [Reimers] to give her comments at the beginning," Albinson said.

TCB's policy to not answer any independent questions has continued. While the video has been posted in its entirety to YouTube, comments have been disabled.



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RPM from p. 1

designing spaces that are universally accessible. Viaducts will be improved by removing the center pillar where they cross over streets, which will significantly improve sightlines for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

Business owners' concerns

CTA officials have been meeting with local business owners, landlords and residents who will be affected by the construction work. Last year CTA spokesperson Tammy Chase told Block Club that she felt it [was] important that the contractors take questions and feedback from the community on what they want to know about the project and their concerns about construction impacts. And that efforts continued throughout the year, even as CTA ridership dropped.

Business owners in the construction areas have expressed concerns about the effect this herculean project will have on their businesses. Ald. Osterman said,



Riders were reminded of the Berwyn closing with notices posted at the shuttered station.

"My office has been working closely with our local Chambers of Commerce, social services agencies, schools and block clubs and neighbors over the years to prepare for this massive project. We can expect that this investment in transportation infrastructure will result in economic development in our communities as well as increased housing development that will include a healthy mix of affordability and unit size."

But in the short run, nobody really knows how quickly people

may re-adapt to public transportation in a pandemic era. While the CTA never cut back on staffing or any routes as demand waned, in the depth of the economic shutdown ridership dropped by about 90%. Today it sits about a third of its pre-pandemic levels, presently providing only about 500,000 weekday riders system-wide.

For that matter, the real estate industry is also grappling with societal changes in those who may choose to live in all the high density housing popping up near train and bus lines. Or how many people will choose to return to commuting by bus and train downtown into the central business district.

FUNDRAISER from p. 1

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