

# James/Kilmer

Condominium Association Newsletter

Lynn Conner, Editor

## OPENING DAY!

**An invitation from Lynn Conner, JK Board Member & Editor, JK Newsletter**

Regardless of the weather, we invite you to a win-win opening of the new Northeast Penthouse Room. On Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 12 Noon, we will open this newly furnished jewel of an amenity. Those of you who have been here long enough will remember that this used to be the Management Office. As of April 26<sup>th</sup>, it will be available to all as a daily place to read, play cards, check your e-mails, or just meditate on the incredible views. It will be open all day every day, and all we ask is that you follow the rules which will be posted.

There will also be the opportunity to reserve the room for book clubs or small parties, and the details will be available from the Management Office. The combination of this lovely room, along with the surreally awesome new sun deck should help to forget the last few months, if you get our drift.

**Hope to see you on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Light refreshments will be served!**

## Update on the Proposed Redevelopment of the North/Clark Property

**Judy Barnes – President, JK Board of Directors**

Since the update on this project in the February issue of our JK Newsletter, there has been a diversity of activities that has occurred. This article will provide some information on a number of events surrounding this project.

First, we have had a group of 'Interested Residents' who have worked to gain support for their position to support downzoning, or if that fails, to only support the current zoning (no **up zoning**) and to support an architectural design compatible with the neighborhood (brick/limestone).

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**The result of that group's effort was to attain over 450 owners and some renters (registered voters) who signed these petitions. These petitions or opinion statements were duplicated and sent to both Aldermen Fioretti and Reilly, along with Commissioner Cabrera (Plan Commission) and Commissioner Solis (Zoning Commission).**

With this activity, it has become loud and clear to the Board that the residents do wish the Board to take a position on this project. Feedback from other neighborhood organizations indicate they expect us to finally take a **position** as well. The majority of the Board (many of whom signed petitions as well) were prepared to adopt this position at the March Board meeting. However other events were shared at the March Board meeting in the Redevelopment Update, which postponed our decision. They are as follows:

- A. In my effort to convene (at the Board's request) the Aldermen and Howard Weiner, CDC after the February Board Meeting, I contacted first Alderman Fioretti in late February/early March. His office indicated he was too busy in the 2-3 weeks to meet, but urged me to come to his Ward Day the following Monday (3-5pm and take a number) to see him at his south side offices. So on Monday, March 10, Barb Mueller (Board VP) and I went down to the offices, took a number and did get in to see him (and his Chief of Staff, Tim Stevens) for about 30 minutes. We discussed a number of things going on with the development but were primarily seeking his current position on it. He said then "Mr. Weiner isn't listening; Mr. Weiner has a long way to go; I told Mr. Weiner to build 4-story town homes with commercial on the first floor". He also said he needed to meet with Mr. Weiner first prior to meeting with our Board. In short, we brought back no new or helpful information.
- B. On March 20, the JK Board had a discussion with a zoning attorney (referred by Draper & Kramer, who met with us at no charge) to gain greater knowledge and insight into the Zoning and Plan Development (PD) processes. She has over 30 years of experience in land-use law and indicated she mostly represents property owners, but has done a range of institutional property owner negotiations as well e.g. Water Tower Place, United Center, etc. She works to 'get the best optimal outcome for all parties'. She had a couple of important comments for us:

- 1) Resident petitions provide appropriate support and influence for Commissioners and Aldermen—so the JK efforts can have an influence;
- 2) Downzoning ordinances are challenging to pass and serve largely as leverage with the developers.

After her presentation, the Board agreed that we felt she was very competent and knows the Aldermen and the folks (and processes) in the Plan and Zoning Commissions very well. Although we agreed to not retain her services right now, we felt, if needed, we would consider engaging her to assist us at an appropriate stage of the Plan Development (PD) process where we wanted assurance that our needs/agreement would be met and included in the final PD. We also need to make sure nothing in this

process 'falls through the cracks'. Hiring a professional to oversee this part of the process seems to be the best option.

C. That same week, Howard Weiner, CDC and developer of the Clark/North property, made a request to meet with the JK Board with a 'new updated redevelopment concept' that was different than the PD concept filed at the end of February. So on March 24, the Board met with Howard Weiner. His revised concept included these 8 points:

**PD Filed: Maximum Units--122 Rental**

**New Proposal on 3/24--Maximum Units-- 42 Condos**

**PD Filed: Parking Provided — 54 spaces (.45/Unit)**

**New Proposal on 3/24-- Parking Provided--50 spaces (1.19/Unit)**

**PD Filed: Vehicle Trips/Day—333 Fully Leased (260 w/vacant theatre)**

**New Proposal on 3/24 - Vehicle Trips/Day--155, a 54% reduction from 338; 155, a 41% reduction from 260 (w/vacant theatre)**

**PD Filed - Vehicle Entrance/Exit — Germania (entrance), Sandburg Terrace (exit)**

**New Proposal on 3/24 - Vehicle Entrance/Exit —North Ave w/CDOT approval (entrance), Sandburg Terrace (exit)**

**PD Filed - Site Improvements—Widen North Ave Sidewalk/Germania Loading dock**

**New Proposal on 3/24 - Site Improvements—Widen North Ave Sidewalk/Germania Loading dock (same as PD)**

**PD Filed - Improvement Allowance (external)--NONE**

**New Proposal on 3/24 - Improvement Allowance—\$400,000 Spending on external projects TBD by J/K Board**

**PD Filed - Design—Brick & Limestone**

**New Proposal on 3/24 - Design— Brick & Limestone**

**PD Filed - Height — 125 feet**

**New Proposal on 3/24 -- Height — 115 feet**

We told him that it will be the Board's sole decision to support or oppose his 'best and final' offer. He has asked that we give him a few days (given our comments at the meeting) to come back with his FINAL offer, which the Board indicated he needs to also present to the residents. We shared with him that we had over 450 owners and residents who signed the opinion letters that have now been duplicated and are in the hands of both Aldermen and both Commissioners (Plan and Zoning) which supports downzoning (if passed), retaining the current zoning at B3-5 (80') and the structure must be compatible architecture (brick and limestone) with the neighborhood. We told him after his full presentation package to the residents, we will base our Board position on owner input (which will be one simple question on a questionnaire): 'YES, I support Mr.Weiner's FINAL' or 'NO, I do not support Mr. Weiner's FINAL'.

Weiner knows his 'goodies' (as he calls them) or area improvements have been controversial with JK Residents, which is why the Board feels Mr. Weiner moved to the \$400K cash stipend with his specific limitation that it be spent on the 'external improvements' to JK (no timing mentioned). We don't know how Mr. Weiner arrived at the \$400K and as we said before--most of his 'proposed improvements' are controlled by or need approval by HOA or the city.

D. In an effort this past week to obtain dates from Mr. Weiner to meet with us and JK residents to hear his 'Final and Best', Mr. Weiner indicated he met last Saturday with Alderman Fioretti and was wanting more time to be sure he included the aldermanic position and other important input into his presentation to us. In addition, other neighborhood groups who have worked on development projects with our various aldermen have indicated or advised that it is very **important** to closely follow any/all ongoing discussion between these parties to be sure we are knowledgeable of all participants' *current* input on the process and the final project design.

Towards that end, I called both Fioretti and Reilly's offices to make an appointment. Both aldermen preferred not to meet with the full board at this time, so Barb Mueller (Board VP) and I will be meeting with both aldermen in their offices this week. Our purpose, again, is to gain insight into their current (as of the date of our meetings this week) positions on the redevelopment and to find out if the downzoning ordinance will ever be placed on the zoning commission agenda. Barb Mueller and I will report back to the Board on each of these meetings this week. As with most political processes, it is a process that is constantly in flux and fluid.

## President's Corner

### Judy Barnes – President, JK Board of Directors

We have begun (finally) to experience some wonderful, warm spring weather. We, along with many other parts of the U.S., have been through a tough, long winter. But we persevere.

That is analogous to our JK residents who have experienced in the past few years, some invasive and costly 'limited common element' improvements to our homes (e.g. windows and HVAC pipes). But again, we persevere.

The outcome, though not necessarily fun going through the process, has left our homes (and Association) in a much improved state in terms of infrastructure, comfort and market value. So again, thank you for your patience and support. I hope you are continuing to appreciate your investment.

This is a year when you (in turn) will be able to enjoy some new amenities that are soon to open and are common element areas/projects, which include:

- 1) The Northeast Penthouse Room, which will be available on April 26 for resident use as a reading room and card/game room.

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