



FALL 2019

5th WARD REPORT

Alderman Leslie Hairston • 2325 E. 71st Street • Chicago, Illinois 60649 • 773-324-5555



Dear 5th Ward Resident:

Summer 2019 was nonstop. There were activities for every one, regardless of age. Now, we have the festivities of the holiday season to look forward to enjoying with family and friends.

This year will be different, however. Recently, Trader Joe's opened in the Hyde Park shopping center and Local Market by Shop & Save is scheduled to open before Christmas. It's so exciting

to know 5th Ward residents can go grocery shopping in our own neighborhood. Aside from the convenience of having grocery options, these two stores will provide jobs for local residents and allow money to turnover within our ward boundaries.

For years I've been saying for the 5th Ward to thrive and be self-sufficient, we must have diverse businesses, people and housing. During my 20 years as alderman, these are the types of issues I've supported and fought to make available for all residents.

As you know finding a grocery store to replace the shuttered Dominick's in Jeffery Plaza was a six-year odyssey, but it will be well worth it if the owners continue to be as responsive to the community's wishes once it opens as they have been during the planning and build out. By the time the new Local Market by Shop & Save opens, we'll all look forward to celebrating.

Recently, my City Council colleagues and I voted on the city budget for 2020. Budgets are more than numbers, they're also a reflection of our values.

Let's make these last weeks of 2019 memorable for not only what we accomplish, but also the journey we start toward equity for all.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Hairston

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Wait is Over for Grand Opening of Local Market by Shop & Save in 5th Ward

The wait for a grocery store is finally over for 5th Ward South Shore residents after six years. The grand opening of the Local Market by Shop & Save in Jeffery Plaza, 2102 E. 71st St., took place to great fanfare.

For months anticipation around the store's opening had been growing as residents watched more and more activity take place on both the exterior and interior of the former Dominick's that closed in 2013.

Upon entering the store many residents congratulated 5th Ward alderman Leslie Hairston for all of her hard work.



Courtesy Chicago Crusader

"I know what you went through and how hard you worked to get this store," said Mary Suggs, a long time 5th Ward resident with tears in her eyes. "It's beautiful. Absolutely beautiful."

The Local Market by Shop & Save is a new concept for owners Eva and Cezary Jakubowski, who own seven grocery stores throughout the Chicagoland area.

"We listened to the community and tried to incorporate all of the amenities residents said they wanted," says Eva Jakubowski. "This was a very lengthy process, but we've had such an amazing outreach from the community at large and so many people are counting on us."

Continued on page 2



Community News - Cont. from page 1

Finding a full-service grocer to come to the Southeast Side was not easy. At the grand opening Hairston said the long road was fraught with disappointments that magnified the inequity and disparity of how South Side residents are treated. "I cold called grocery chains. I threatened grocery chains. I wrote editorials about the inherent racism," recounted Hairston. "I left no stone unturned and didn't apologize for my "take no prisoners" approach. Yet it all fell on deaf ears until I met the Jakubowskis."

Hairston convinced the Jakubowskis to buy the entire shopping center to ensure their commitment to the community. She also helped to secure \$10 million in Tax Increment Financing funds to offset their \$25 million investment to purchase the Jeffery Plaza shopping center. The grocers have held a number of hiring fairs leading up to the opening. So far, they have hired approximately 180 full and part-time employees with many coming from the community.

Hairston said the community had many meetings and Local Market is the manifestation of the community's wishes.

Trader Joe's Opens

The 11,000 sq. ft. store will occupy only a part of the old Treasure Island footprint, giving it more of a "neighborhood store feel."

"Like other 5th Ward residents, I'm glad to have a Trader Joe's in the community," said Ald. Leslie Hairston. "These last few years have been tough. Not everyone has a car. So, grocery shopping had become a real hardship."

Management says 95 workers were hired for the new store. At least 70 of the Hawaiian shirt-wearing workers are community residents. The store will be open seven days a week from 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.



Despite efforts to project the CTU strike as a fight for more money, the union stood its ground for social justice issues. The gains won include mandatory class size caps and enforcement, language forcing CPS to comply with special education laws and regulations, sanctuary school protections for immigrant and refugee students, and supports for the system's 17,000 homeless students. The contract will provide a nurse and social worker on school days. It also puts a freeze on charter school expansion, provides additional funding for librarians and counselors and increases the pay of teaching assistants, school clerks and other paraprofessionals.

"This contract is a powerful advance for our city and our movement for real equity and educational justice for our school communities and the children we serve," said CTU President Jesse Sharkey, in a news release. We live in one of the richest cities in the wealthiest nation in the world, and finally Chicago must start investing in the future of our city—our children." *Continued on page 3*

Chicago Teacher's Strike is a Lesson in Social Justice

The Chicago Teachers Union's strike was the second longest in the city's history and students are much better off for it. CTU members voted to ratify the new contract that included language that many in the mainstream media said should not be included in negotiations with Chicago Public Schools.

71st Streetscape Continues



Construction on Local Market is finishing just in time for work to restart on 71st Street. The curb-to-curb improvements from South Shore to Jeffrey are expected to begin in the third quarter of 2020. Requests for Proposal are scheduled in the second quarter.

Recently, the 71st St. Streetscape project received Cultural/Historical clearance from the State Historic Preservation Office, which is charged with reviewing federal and state undertakings such as road projects for their impact on cultural resources.

"There are two levels of government involved in this project, the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation, which is why it has taken so long to complete," explains Ald. Hairston.

The first section of the 71st St. Streetscape project was completed in 2015. The second section was put on hold several years ago at approximately 60% complete. The next section will:

Erect a fence along the Metra tracks to provide a physical barrier to deter unsafe midblock crossings.

Create pedestrian refuge areas outside of the signal crossing arms at six crossings without signals.

Decrease the pedestrian crossing distance across 71st Street.

Delineate travel and bike lanes.

Connect the recommended bike route on Jeffery Boulevard to the west and the Lakefront Trail to the east, starting outside the South Shore Cultural Center.

Although, negotiations between CTU and CPS were contentious at times, union leadership believes it was worth the sacrifice made by members, students and families on both sides.

“Our contract fight was about the larger movement to shift values and priorities in Chicago,” said CTU Vice President Stacy Davis Gates. “Working class taxpayers in Chicago have paid for skyscrapers that most will never visit—but a school nurse is someone their child in need can see on any day. In a city with immense wealth, corporations have the ability to pay to support the common good.”

The CTU said it would continue efforts for Chicago to have an elected school board, which every other school district in the state has.

Second Strike Averted



Ald. Hairston stood with the nurses during their one-day strike in September.

After working without a contract since April, negotiations between the University of Chicago Medical Center and the nurses union averted another strike set for before Thanksgiving Day. At issue was disagreement over pay and staffing levels. The 2,200 nurses voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new contract they say is a victory for patients.

“Our one-day strike was critical to achieving this breakthrough contract and we thank everyone who supported nurses as we used our most powerful tool for our patients. This contract is a testament to the importance of nurses taking unified action for our patients and refusing to back down when the stakes are so high. Just like the teachers, nurses have shown all of Chicago that our voices must be heard,” said Pam Valentine, a registered nurse who works in the post anesthesia recovery unit.

Highlights of the new contract include: Increases in nursing staff, pay parity to help retain and recruit experienced nurses and increased nurse participation in professional practice committees.

“What’s In Your Wallet?”

Everyone knows the tagline. Now, Capital One is banking everyone will soon know it is more than just a bank holding company. The credit card company is opening brick and mortar banks that look more like a coffee shop than a financial institution. In an effort to attract millennials, the company is promoting a new concept called Capital One Café. Hyde Park is getting the first South Side branch at 1465 E. 53rd St.

“Our hope is that the café will provide the community with the resources they need and more,” said Ryan Laudenback, Capital One Chicago Market Lead, according to the 53rd Street website.

The more is that Capital One Cafés can be reserved to host community events, networking forums and study groups. It’s semi-private spaces can be used to make phone calls, conduct meetings or do work.

In addition to conducting banking business and receiving financial coaching, customers and visitors can grab a cup of Peet’s Coffee or a pastry. Capital One account holders will receive a 50% discount on café purchases.

Garden of Phoenix

At the Jackson Park Advisory Council’s annual potluck outdoor meeting attendees were treated to a presentation by Karen Szyjka and Michael Diemitroff on the Garden of Phoenix. The pair worked with representatives from Japan to repair and revitalize the Japanese Garden waterfall. This was a fulfillment of a pledge made by the Japanese during the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition to maintain the integrity of the garden.

The Garden of the Phoenix or Osaka Garden symbolized the mutual respect and friendship that began between Japan and the United States more than 120 years ago. The Japanese Government built the Phoenix Temple for the World’s Fair and left it as a gift to the city of Chicago. *Continued on page 4*



Having A Ball!

Ald. Leslie Hairston was so excited over the new soccer field at the Gary Comer Education Campus in Grand Crossing that she kicked off her shoe. Built with help from the U.S. Soccer Foundation and the Medical Home Network, the mini soccer field will be accessible to more than 2,000 children on the South Side.

Also joining the young soccer players were City Treasurer Melissa Conyears-Ervin, officials from the U.S. Soccer Foundation and Stephanie Comer, of the Comer Foundation. Daughter of the late Land’s End founder, Gary Comer, she also is chairwoman of the Medical Home Network.

Gary Comer, who grew up on the South Side made it his mission to revitalize the Grand Crossing community by investing in the primary staples of a good neighborhood—housing and schools. Since Comer’s death his children are following in their father’s footsteps.

“We are excited about what we have built today, it’s great for the children. It’s a place where they can play safely and have fun, too,” said Comer, who also is president of the Comer Foundation.

The project is part of the foundation’s “It’s Everyone’s Game” initiative, which plans to build 1,000 mini soccer fields throughout the U.S. and reach a million students by 2026.



LEGISLATIVE FRONT

Hairston voted on her 20th Chicago budget. The \$11.65 billion budget was Mayor Lori Lightfoot's first major legislative victory, which passed by a vote of 39-11. As always, the 5th Ward alderman attended every budget committee meeting. Although, several progressive proposals she offered were not considered this budget year, Hairston said she plans to continue pushing for them. For now, she believes the 2020 budget is progressive.

"We have no property tax increase. We have the congestion tax, which is a progressive measure. We have the TIF surplus, which is a progressive measure. We have the \$15 an hour wage increase, which is a progressive measure. We have more on mental health, which is a progressive measure. And we have ethics reform, which is also a progressive measure," said the South Side alderman.

During her time in the City Council, Hairston has not hesitated to push back on regressive items under previous mayors. She was in the minority voting against red light cameras, speed cameras, the parking meter deal and the Infrastructure Trust. She also stood with voters against exorbitant façade and sprinkler system ordinances.

Garden of Phoenix - Cont. from page 3

When the Chicago Park District was created in the 1930s, the pavilion was restored and the Japanese Garden expanded. A gravel path, which travels through 2 acres of greenery, is like being in another world.

The Garden of Phoenix sits on the 15-acre Wooden Island in Jackson Park and is considered one of the city's many hidden gems.



Greater Chicago Dragon Boat Club Returns to Jackson Park Harbor

Back by popular demand, the Greater Chicago Dragon Boat Club returned to Jackson Park Outer Harbor to demonstrate the fastest growing water sport in North America for the second year in a row. Members of the GCDBC took interested paddlers out on the water to experience the technique behind dragon boat racing.

"We want to expose more people to dragon boat racing," said Susan Villanosa, the club's former president. "Working with the 5th Ward alderman and Jackson Park Yacht Club is a good way to reach a wider audience."

The sport of Dragon Boat Racing is more than 2,000 years old, with roots in China. Many people may be familiar with it through the annual festival in Chinatown at Ping Tom Memorial Park, which sells out every year.

The GCDBC introduces Chicagoans to the fast-paced, competitive sport by giving spectators who want to go on the boats and paddle a hands-on experience.

"It's a very democratic sport in that we provide the equipment, the coaching, and all everyone needs to do is be prepared to have fun," explained Villanosa.

Hosting the demonstration were 5th Ward Ald. Leslie Hairston and the Jackson Park Yacht Club.

"We are lucky to live so close to the water. Dragon boat racing is just one more thing to add to the list of activities available. I noticed that men and women of all ages were in the boat paddling together," said Hairston on why she wanted the demonstration to come to the 5th Ward.

GCDBC meets every Sunday at 11 a.m. out of the Chicago Rowing Foundation Boat House near Goose Island at 1020 W. Weed St. from May to October. The first two classes are free to everyone interested in the sport.

For more information, go to the Greater Chicago Dragon Boat Club's Facebook page to learn more about classes, practices and events.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Tuesday 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

(Residents can meet privately with the alderman from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.)

Friday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Ward Office Closed:

Thanksgiving

Nov. 27-29

Christmas

Dec. 24-26

New Year's

Dec. 31-Jan. 2, 2020

Upcoming Ward Meetings:

(All meetings begin at 6 p.m.)

January 28, 2020

Hyde Park Academy High School
6220 S. Stony Island Ave.

For further information contact the 5th Ward Service Office 773-324-5555 or visit the website at www.leslieahairston.com

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