



**Special Service Area #32 | Community Meeting #2 | Date: June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 | Time 10 – 11:30am**

**Location: Sion Temple Church of God, 1754 W 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago**

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Attendees:

Advisory Committee

- Maurice Dishmon, *Sion Temple*
- Cynthia Love, *Block by Block*
- Yolanda Manuel, *Sneed Hardware*

Participants

- Dorothy Davis, *Sion Temple*
- Tim Howard, *SOMETHING Joy Divine Church*
- Jasmine McCalpia, *3rd District CCC*
- Tatiana Williams, *Tatis Floral*

Alderman

- David Moore, Ward 17

Chatham Business Association

- Melinda Kelly, *President*
- Jennifer Adkins, *Interim Executive Director*
- Cliff Borner, *Field Supervisor*
- Gloria Jenkins, *CBA*

City of Chicago

- Eileen Sweeney, *Project Coordinator – SSA Program, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development*

Teska Associates, Inc.

- Scott Goldstein, *Principal*
- Benito Garcia, *Associate*

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Meeting Summary:

Business and property owners attended the second Community Meeting for Special Service Area (SSA) #32 to learn about what an SSA is, how the process works, and what it means to have an SSA along the 79<sup>th</sup> Street commercial corridor between Lafayette and Damen Avenue. Attendees received information about what types of services an SSA can provide, how these services can benefit local businesses and property owners and the costs associated with implementing the program.

Alderman Davide Moore, *17<sup>th</sup> Ward*, opened the meeting, expressing the cultural significance of both Auburn Gresham and neighboring Chatham and the corridor's thriving businesses, adding that an SSA is a great tool to help them grow and support new entrepreneurship. Melinda Kelly, *Chatham Business Association*, stated the SSA begins to address concerns that residents and business owners have raised such as storefront vacancies and trash debris along the corridor. She shared the history of CBA and how it has served the 79<sup>th</sup> Street corridor which connects both communities.



Scott Goldstein, *Teska Associates, Inc.*, explained there was a previous SSA that recently expired at the end of 2023. The program creates a community fund to provide specific services that tackles issues highlighted by residents and business owners. The SSA Commission determines how the funds are allocated to address those issues. The City does not take any portion of the funding and their role is ensuring the funds are managed responsibly and that the SSA Provider, CBA, is following program guidelines.

The SSA #32 boundary includes 79th Street, generally between Lafayette and Damen Avenue, which would be extended from the former western boundary at Ashland Avenue.

Eileen Sweeney, *City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development*, elaborated on the SSA program. An SSA is a community initiated, dedicated property tax which raises funds to provide public services. The program is designed to bring in resources that allows businesses to decide where to direct funds to supplement existing City services. The local community collectively decides what works for them. The goal is to create foster business districts that invite residents and visitors to patronize businesses. SSA services include customer attraction, public way aesthetics, sustainability, public health economic development.

If approved, SSA #32 would begin in January 2025 and continue for 15 years, which can be renewed at that time. Two community meetings are required, which have already been completed, with this being the second. Support is also needed from 20% of taxpayers within the SSA district. Signatures representing 10% of properties (PINs) are due on June 14th and the remaining balance on August 1st. A public hearing will follow in the Fall of 2024.

Benito Garcia, *Teska Associates, Inc.*, presented examples of the services at work from different SSAs in Chicago. Customer Attraction strategies can include street banners, planters, and decorative features for the corridor or seasonal events. This can also include customized informational materials that promote the branding of Chatham. Public Way Aesthetics are physical oriented improvements, such as building façade improvements from rebate programs, sidewalk + street maintenance, and commissioning art murals. Sustainability and Public Space allow bike rack installation and landscaping maintenance. Economic and Business Development helps business owners to network, attend professional events, and connect to resources. Public Health and Safety can assist with graffiti removal and safety programs.

Scott introduced how much services would cost taxpayers within SSA #32. The annual rate sets the tax levy for each year. The maximum rate sets the tax cap for the next fifteen years. Members of the Advisory Committee previously agreed to lower the maximum rate from 2% to 1.75%, which would be the rate that the SSA could not exceed in any given year. The Advisory Committee also recommended an annual rate of 1.75% for the first year in 2025, which generates a budget of approximately \$387,000. The goal is for the SSA to be affordable and provide needed services. Everyone contributes equally and everyone benefits from this communal fund.

To review the full presentation, visit [ssa32works.org](http://ssa32works.org) or by clicking [here](#).



### Needs Assessment Survey

Attendees were asked to click on a link to the Needs Assessment Survey [here](#) to share what services they thought should be prioritized for SSA #32.

### Questions from the Public:

Jasmine McCalpia asked whether a request can be made to review the documentation of the previous SSA #32 that expired. She mentioned that having that information available can help inform and guide the new SSA being proposed. Scott answered that the budget and services from the expired SSA were used to guide the current process and recommendations. However, no funds from the expired SSA, if any, could be rolled over to the new SSA.

Yolanda Manuel inquired about how the additional SSA tax works on properties. In this case, if a taxpayer owned three properties, the SSA tax would apply to each one because they have different PINs (Property Index Number). Melinda also explained that the funds generated from all taxpayers in the SSA act as a community fund and will go directly into the SSA. The City of Chicago will not take any funds.

Melinda added that a database which has all the taxpayers in the SSA will be used to collect signatures from property owners. CBA will be reaching out by having one-on-one interactions with taxpayers and calling individual property owners.

The meeting concluded with Melinda Kelly thanking everyone for attending.