

GAZETTE

CHICAGO

May 3, 2019

Vol. 37, No. 1

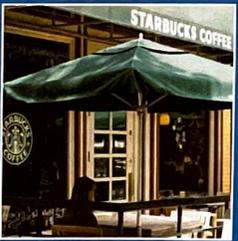
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UI Cancer Center aims to increase survivorships in local communities. See page 8.

Controversial Chicago emergency services training center prepares to break ground

By Igor Studenkov

Within weeks of the run-off mayoral election, despite both candidates urging delay, on March 13 the Chicago City Council voted 38-8 to approve the controversial Chicago public safety training center.

The facility, to be built at 4301 W. Chicago Ave., will replace the current police and fire academies. The chiefs of both departments described it as a much needed, more modern replacement for

what they called cramped, outdated facilities.

Ald. Emma Mitts, whose 37th Ward includes the site, has advocated vocally for it, arguing it will act as a catalyst for economic development on the much neglected West Side. Other West Side aldermen, including Ald. Walter Burnett (27th Ward) and Ald. Jason Ervin (28th Ward), also support it.

The proposal also attracted opposition, however, from community residents, and candidates who ran against Mitts in the Feb.

26 election. They argued the estimated \$95 million cost would be better spent on improving schools, mental health services, and job training because those services actually would address root causes of crime and violence.

Officially known as the Joint Public Safety Training Center, the new facility has been in the works since summer 2017. It will go up on a long vacant industrial site in the West Humboldt Park neighborhood, near West Garfield Park.

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One Central Station plan would link South Loop, lakefront

By Monica M. Walk

A development company soon may truly build castles in the air, complete with unobstructed Chicago lakefront views. Landmark Development announced its vision to create and build a platform infrastructure over the Metra rail yard just north of McCormick Place, which will hold a combination of residential and commercial buildings, public green spaces, parking, and a revitalized transit hub.

Building in the air space over
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One Central Station would have a combination of residential and commercial buildings, public green spaces, parking, and a revitalized transit hub.

Is MeterSave cause of lead in drinking water?

By Peter Winslow

The drinking water supplied to thousands of Chicago residences contains elevated and potentially dangerous levels of lead. Within the past few months, the Chicago Department of Water Management (DWM) sent letters to homeowners affected by possible elevated lead levels; most of those receiving notice live in the city's southwestern portion.

Part of the blame for this hike

in heavy metal goes to DWM's MeterSave Program. This initiative is designed to conserve water and cut water bills for those eligible to participate. Applicants for MeterSave must own a non-metered, single-family or two-flat residence and volunteer to have workers install a new water meter.

In 2016, the DWM launched an explorative study to investigate water quality in Chicago homes equipped with MeterSave Program water meters, along with

the City's infrastructure of lead pipe service lines, to determine whether Chicagoans are at risk from harmful contaminants.

Although the DWM investigation is ongoing, a recently released preliminary data report states investigators found higher concentrations of lead, specifically above the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) action level, in 51 of the 296 single-family homes tested before and after

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Proposed One Central development would join North and South Loop

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the tracks is a unique solution to increase access to current South Loop attractions, including Soldier Field, while creating additional use for the well located but underused area.

Developers shared details for the initial One Central Station concept in mid-March. They include development along a 15-year time frame to create the largest public transit hub in the Chicago area while revitalizing 34 acres adjacent to several downtown cultural institutions to include urban housing; office space; and destination retail, dining, and entertainment at a Lake Shore Drive address.

"There is no single location in the entire country that has the potential this site does," said Robert Dunn, president of Landmark Development. "One Central builds on the Burnham Plan vision by connecting transit, civic and community interests at one lakefront destination."

Dunn partners with Gerald Fogelson in Landmark Development. Both men have significant development experience: Dunn's Hammes Company built the University of Wisconsin Madison Kohl Center and worked on National Football League stadium projects including

MetLife Stadium, Lambeau Field, Ford Field, and the Minnesota Vikings' stadium. Fogelson re-developed Chicago's Central Station residential neighborhood. As master developer at One Central Station, Landmark is collaborating with a team of building professionals who have created projects and infrastructure abroad and in the U.S.

Town hall meeting

Third Ward Alderman Pat Dowell hosted a town hall meeting March 13 for the first public discussion of the development plan, noting that the project remains a proposal at this time. "It's in its infancy, and any development over the tracks must go through many approval stages before it goes to City Council for a vote," Dowell said. "This is not the last time the One Central Station development will be reviewed by the public or the City."

Dowell invited Landmark to bring its ideas to the community and gather feedback before submitting official plans to the City of Chicago. The proposed project would be private property; Landmark owns the air rights over the Metra tracks.

"There are, of course, limitations on what can be built on this

property and legal restrictions and covenants the developers must adhere to," Dowell said. "Specifics on those regulations will be addressed by Landmark Development. Also, please know that I have not signed off on any aspect of this proposal. Development over the tracks must receive my support before moving forward."

Several days after the meeting, Dowell released a follow-up statement, citing five main areas of concern:

"First and foremost, I agree with the residents' assessment that the project as presented at the town hall meeting as being too dense and the height of the buildings too tall. This will be a major point of discussion with the Landmark Development team. Significant revisions to building design and project density must be made.

"Second, designating Mark Twain Park as the main pedestrian access point to One Central must be moved. While pedestrian and traffic access to the property in general will need to be discussed, I will be asking the developer to move pedestrian access out of Mark Twain Park.

"Third, I am interested in the benefits of the proposed transit hub. However, if it includes a CTA

Orange Line extension, there will have to be measures put in place to mitigate the sound and physical impacts to affected residents. Existing residents cannot be impacted by another train line in the area.

"Fourth, security is a major concern for the development. It is important that the character and integrity of the existing neighborhood be maintained. That means that the influx of new residents, office workers, visitors, and commuters to the area must be managed in a way that ensures they can get to their desired destination safely and quickly without disturbing the existing community. Additionally, the physical security around the transit station must be increased and designed in a way to limit any potential conflicts with the neighborhood.

"Fifth, I will be requesting a more complete construction schedule and discussing ways to minimize the impact of construction on the community. Included in this discussion will be the future of the Metra tracks north of McFetridge Drive to Roosevelt Road. This section of tracks is not part of the One Central development area, but its future as possible park land should be part of the development discussion."

Dowell also emphasized that, overall, the One Central plan does create an opportunity to develop an underused area of the city. She cited the transit hub's potential assets, increased retail and park space, and a possible neighborhood high school in the South Loop.

"However, numerous revisions and compromises are needed," Dowell noted. "I will continue to work with the developer and the community to revise the proposal to address needs of the residents of the 3rd Ward. We are at the beginning of a community process."

SLN's watchful eye

South Loop Neighbors President Jim Wales promises his group will keep a watchful eye as plans unfold.

"Representatives of the SLN board attended the public meeting and will continue to monitor the development as it evolves," Wales said. "At the current time, although there may be some concerns with certain aspects of the initial plan as outlined at the public meeting, we really don't have enough information at this point, and we await additional information."

Landmark Development also stated the project is in its early stages and the company will continue to collect feedback from community stakeholders as well as share ongoing design and



Developers hope to revitalize 34 acres adjacent to several downtown cultural institutions to include urban housing; office space; and destination retail, dining, and entertainment.

architecture plans at future public meetings. The organization believes the project would support continued economic growth in the city and has the potential to create tens of thousands of jobs.

To contact Dowell, or for more details on the Third Ward town hall meeting, log on to at www.Ward03Chicago.com.

Ward03Chicago.com.

More information from Landmark Development on current One Central plans, including artist renderings, is available at <https://www.onecentralchicago.com/>.

For more on the South Loop Neighbors, log on to www.south-loopneighbors.org.

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