



## Mount Greenwood SSA#55 Renewal

February 17, 2021 | Virtual Meeting via Zoom | Advisory Committee Meeting #1

---

### Attendees:

#### SSA #55 Renewal Advisory Committee

**Joe Essleman**, property owner  
**William (Bill) Faber**, property owner  
**Mike Grant**, La Fiesta/Wonderburger, business/property owner  
**Mary Gill**, SSA 55 Executive Director, MGCBA  
**Marty Joyce**, 19<sup>th</sup> Ward  
*\*Current SSA Commissioner*

**Laura Killen**, F45 Training, owner  
**Patty Lyman**, Mount Greenwood Resident  
**Margie Olsen**, 19<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman's Office Representative  
**\*Toni Quinn**, Face to Face Salon and Spa, business/property owner

#### City of Chicago and Consultants

**Carol Brobeck**, Teska Associates, Inc.  
**Karen Forte**, DPD, Chicago of Chicago  
**Scott Goldstein**, Teska Associates, Inc.  
**Mike Roschen**, DPD, City of Chicago

---

On February 17, 2021, the first Advisory Committee Meeting for the Mount Greenwood SSA #55 Renewal was held from 10:00 am - 11:00 am via Zoom:

Zoom Meeting ID: 921 3855 4786  
Call-In: 312 626 6799 (Chicago)

### Introduction

Scott Goldstein of Teska Associates, Inc. opened the meeting by introducing the Teska Associates team and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Scott then gave a brief overview of the vision of the SSA and the benefits of renewal. While the SSA would not end until December 31, 2022, beginning the renewal process now allows the SSA to avoid interruption to service with a seamless financial transition starting January 1, 2022.



## **City of Chicago SSA Program, DPD**

Mark Roschen, the Assistant Commissioner at the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development gave an overview of the SSA program, the role of the advisory committee, the renewal timeline and how SSA funds are collected and distributed. The main takeaways included:

- The SSA program is a self-initiated program, meaning that SSAs are only established at the request of property owners.
- There are 52 active SSAs in City of Chicago and 450+ volunteer commissioners
- SSAs range in Budget:
  - Small - \$11,000
  - Medium - \$466,000
  - Large - \$3.3 million
- Most Popular Services provided by SSAs:
  - 1- Landscaping
  - 2- Special events
  - 3- Holiday décor
  - 4- Banners
  - 5- Façade rebates
- Role of SSA Commission
  - Recommend tax rate, services, budget and service provider
  - Authorize budget modifications, review and approve vendors/subcontractors, and monitor SSA expense reports
  - Approve agendas and minutes
  - Authorize payments from the SSA account
- Role of Service Provider Staff
  - Day to day management of vendors and services, including vendor selection and RFP process
  - Preparation of regular reports to DPD and SSA Commission
  - Ensure legal and contractual requirements are fulfilled
  - Recruit commissioners and manage nominations and renewals



- SSAs are regulated by Illinois Tax Code
  - Funds are transferred to the SSAs on a weekly basis
  - Subject to City Ordinances, Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act and Ethics Ordinances
  - SSA is established by City Ordinance which governs the boundaries, tax rate cap, expiration and renewal term allowances, and defines the commission number, terms qualifications, appointment process and powers.
  - Annual Levy must be approved every year
  - Levy determined by Budget, which determines tax rate for upcoming year
  - Service Provider Agreement approved each year
  
- SSA Renewal Requirements and Timeline
  - Two community meetings are required
  - Signatures of support from at least 20% of the PINs within the SSA boundaries required by August 1<sup>st</sup> (10% required by June 11<sup>th</sup>)
  - Formal public hearing held in the fall at City Hall
  - Upon approval, SSA must submit all paperwork by the last Tuesday in December
  - New SSA begins officially on January 1, 2022
  - Tax levy collected and distributed starting in March 2022

### **SSA #55 Renewal Process, Teska**

Scott Goldstein underscored the many improvements that have occurred since the SSA began in 2013 and emphasized that the focus of this first meeting is to describe the SSA Renewal process and discuss SSA #55 services and needs.

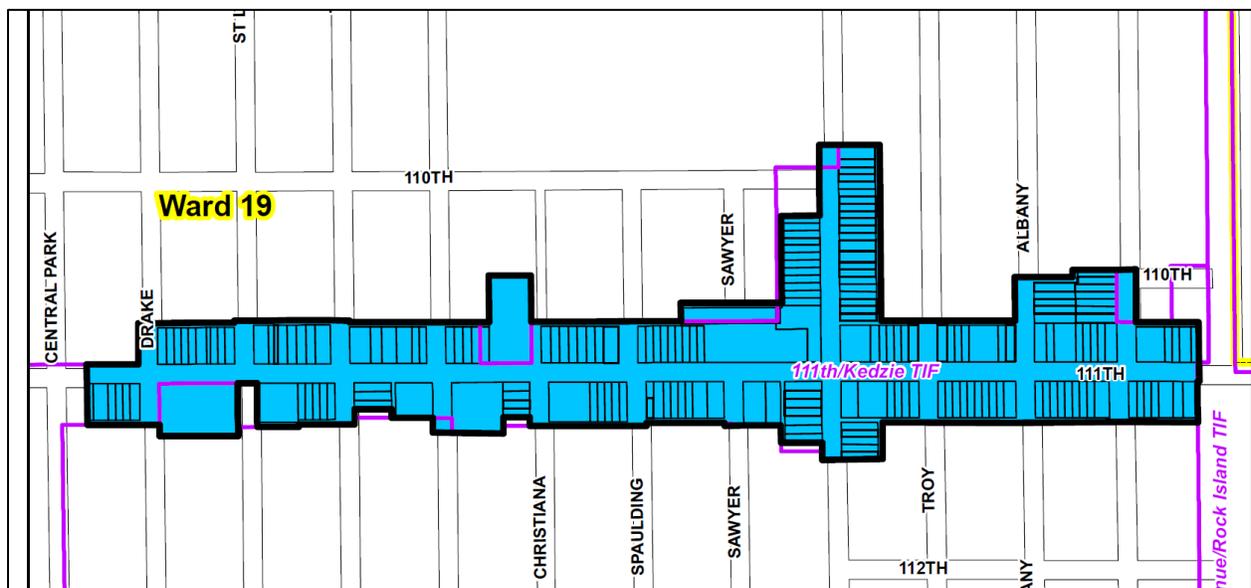
Mount Greenwood SSA #55 provides a range of services:

- **Landscaping** (11 planters, 28 hanging baskets, water contracts, mulching/mowing)
- **Décor + Gateway Signage** (light pole banners, holiday lighting, seasonal landscaping)
- **Maintenance + Safety** (streetscape, sidewalk snow removal, sidewalk cleaning, weeding)
- **Events** (Holiday Stroll, Monthly business breakfasts, fundraisers, 'The Bucks Stay Here' shop local campaign)
- **Local Business Support** (assistance with permits, grants and resources, filling vacancies, liaison with City of Chicago)

- **Marketing** (active promotion of businesses, events and local promotions via website, social media and local partners; poster/flyer distribution)

SSA #55 serves properties between 111<sup>th</sup> Street from Sacramento (3000 West) to Central Park (3600 West) and South Kedzie Avenue from 10953 to 11125 (both sides) (see map below for SSA boundaries). There are no plans to modify the boundaries of the SSA.

SSA #55 Boundary Map



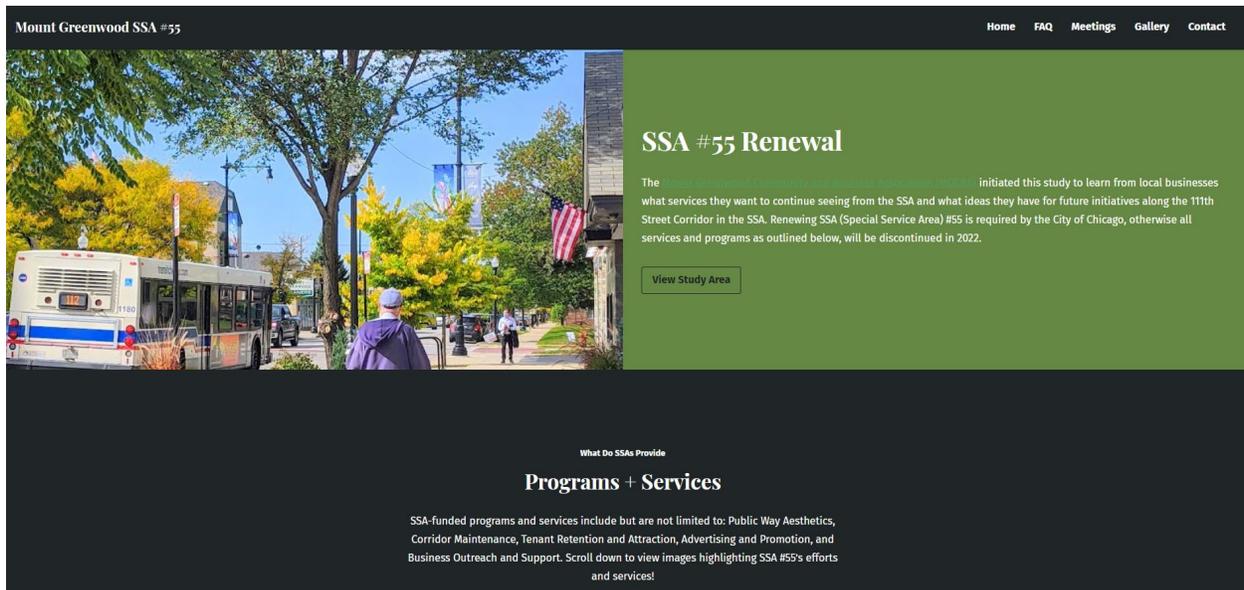
The SSA #55 budget for 2021 is \$58,259. The 2020 levy rate was 0.2751% and the SSA's authorized tax rate cap is 0.85%. At the current tax rate, the cost is \$275 per year for each \$100,000 Equalized Assessed Value (EAV). Discussion about the SSA levy and cap rate will take place at the next Advisory Committee meeting.

The SSA Renewal process for SSA #55 began in October 2020 with a field inventory and the submission of the Feasibility Study to DPD. Teska is now collecting data, preparing a levy assessment and actively engaging with SSA stakeholders, commissioners, property and business owners.



The project website [www.MountGreenwoodSSA55.org](http://www.MountGreenwoodSSA55.org) is a one-stop shop for information about the benefits of the SSA, current services and the renewal process. Additional outreach includes a forthcoming Service Needs Assessment survey and two community meetings (dates to be determined).

### SSA #55 Renewal Website



The next step in the process will be to gather signatures of support from property owners. Teska will work with Mary Gill to provide taxpayer information to seek support and prepare a PDF fillable form. DPD will accept forms that area filled and signed electronically. DPD requires 20% of property owners sign in support of the SSA, which is approximately 45-55 PINs in SSA #55 (The final number of PINs will be determined by the next advisory committee meeting). A single PIN accounts for one signature of support. Signatures must come from the taxpayer of record. If a single entity owners more than one property (PIN), they can sign in support of the SSA for each PIN.

Teska will also be completing a Retail Trade Analysis for SSA #55. This will look at the current strengths of the business district and opportunities to fill gaps to reduce the need for people to travel outside the area for goods. We will provide this information at the next advisory committee meeting.



## **Discussion**

### **Questions about Special Service Areas or SSA #55?**

Q: If someone owns multiple properties within the SSA, do they get one vote or multiple votes?

A: *Each property is able to sign in support of the reconstitution of the SSA. If the same person or entity owns multiple properties, they can sign in support of the SSA for each property. A total of 20% of taxpayer PIN signatures are required in order to renew the SSA.*

Q: How many PINs total are there in the area?

A: *We continue to monitor our database to ensure we catch any changes, but at present we are looking at just over 200 PINs. To meet the minimum number of signatures, the SSA will need around 45-50 individual properties to sign in support of the SSA.*

### **What services and programs do you value most?**

Mike Grant: "Planters, streetscaping, shoveling....has been really nice."

Laura Killen: "We appreciate all the events."

Mary Gill: "We have the coolest neighborhood and I will try as hard as I can to keep it that way."

### **What challenges need to be addressed?**

Mary Gill: "We are surrounded by the suburbs which is difficult because people can go 2 blocks in either direction on our outskirts and spend their money there... It's one of the biggest challenges for our businesses."

Kelly Esselman: "The support from the neighborhood is phenomenal. How do we bring people from outside of the neighborhood? How do we get people to come to Mount Greenwood to spend? That's something we want to look at."



### **What is your vision for the future?**

Mary Gill: "The neighborhood is beautiful. As a resident, what I'd like to see in the future – I want to see the SSA continue because the new streetscape section looks beautiful and would like to see it continue down to Sacramento. It uplifts the beauty of the neighborhood, that old town feel within the City. Lots of businesses have been here for 50 years. I truly want to see it continue that way."

Margie Olsen: "Family oriented [area]."

### **What works to keep spending local?**

Mary Gill: "Word of mouth. People come together and support any local event, any neighbor that needs help. They rally. Our events -- we hope to add as many as we can. We have ideas for new events. That's one of the best things here. They [events] will be support by the residents."

### **Next Steps**

#### **Advisory Committee Meeting #2: March 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am via Zoom**

The next advisory committee meeting will focus on the tax levy rates. Teska will provide information regarding the tax base, proposed 2022 budget, maximum rate and annual rate options at the next meeting. Contact Mt. Greenwood SSA via email at [mgcba2013@gmail.com](mailto:mgcba2013@gmail.com) for the login information to the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting via Zoom.

---