

DOWNTOWN FREEPORT IN THE LOOP



March 2021



2021 SCHEDULE:

Building & Business Owner Meeting Dates:

Greater Freeport Partnership will be leading future meetings.

- **April 21, 7:30 AM**
@ Flair Boutique
- **June 16, 7:30 AM**
@ Deinger Floral

Business Education Series:

- **March 25**
Hiring in a Digital Age
- **April 22**
SEM/SEO

Upcoming Events:

- **March 15-16**
Spring Line Intro
- **April 24**
Pretzel Fest
- **May 8**
Migratory Bird Day
- **May 8**
1st Day Farmer's Market
- **May 22**
Pretzel City Winefest
- **June 4**
Music on Chicago

Downtown Development News

The demolition of the Abet/Waves (15 W. Stephenson St.) buildings will begin on March 8 and is anticipated to run through the month of March and potentially into the beginning of April. During the demolition, the southern half of this block on Stephenson Street will be blocked off with fencing. For safety, the alleyway will also be blocked off with fencing.

The Historic Preservation Commission will meet on March 16, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., at City Hall to consider Façade Improvement Grant Program applications, and making funding recommendations to the Freeport City Council for the following applicant properties: 10-12 N Chicago Ave, 14-16 N Chicago Ave, 16 S Chicago Ave, 7 E Main St, 20 W Main St, 105 W Main St, 4 W Stephenson St, 20 + 24 E Stephenson St, 110 S Van Buren Ave, 22-24 S Chicago Ave and 114-116 S Van Buren Ave. All interested parties are invited to attend the public hearings and will be given an opportunity to be heard.

Questions can be directed to Kirstin Hinds at 815-235-8221 or cddirector@cityoffreeport.org.



What Curb Appeal Means to Your Business

Your storefront is one of your most valuable marketing tools. It is your shop's first impression and your first opportunity to introduce your business to new customers.

Updating your store's curb appeal can have an amazing impact on your business. Yet, too many small businesses don't use curb appeal to their advantage, either by not maximizing it or by letting it go altogether. The risks of not enhancing your curb appeal are significant. According to a 2011 Omnibus survey of 1,000 consumers by Morpace, a market research and consulting firm, 95 percent said that a store's external appearance influences their decisions on where to shop. The findings also showed that:

- Two-thirds decided not to visit a store based solely on its appearance from the street.
- More than half avoided a store due to a "dirty" appearance from the outside.
- Nearly 40 percent won't enter a store that doesn't "look like a place I would normally shop."

In the coming months, we will have many more ideas you can use to improve your curb appeal, but following are some things you can do right away to spruce up your storefront.

- Sweep the sidewalk
- Straighten signage
- Incorporate stand-alone signage
- Clean out cobwebs
- Edit and refresh window displays.
- Check your greenery

Taken from article at true-vue.com.

Approved Festival District Dates

The City of Freeport Liquor Commission approved festival district dates for 2021 at their regular meeting on February 18. Festival district dates will include April 24 (Pretzel Fest), May 22 (Winefest), June 4 (Music on Chicago), August 28 (Eats & Beats), October 14 (Wine & Witches), November 21 (Mistletoe Walk). Given the nature of COVID-19 event restrictions, these dates could change if the festival district is not needed to proceed with these regular season events.

The Partnership will distribute window signs to all retailers who would like to opt-in to the festival district on the given dates. By placing the sign in the window of your business or store, you are consenting for patrons to bring an open container into your store on festival district dates.



Meeting for Downtown Beautification March 12

The Downtown Beautification Committee will hold its regular monthly meeting on Friday, March 12 at 7:30 am. Individuals can meet at the Partnership office and the meeting will commence with a walk around downtown with City Public Works Director Rob Boyer. This will be the first of the committee's quarterly walks with Boyer. Other updates from the Beautification Committee:

- We are contacting peer communities to learn more about their mural programs, how they work and what are best practices. We intend to take the information to develop our own program for Freeport.
- Kirstin Hinds and Andrea Schultz Winter are working on a pocket park design for the Abet/Waves parcels.
- Partnership staff will begin auditing wayfinding signage in late March/early April.

Main Street Accreditation:

We continue to be committed to achieving the Main Street Accreditation. We will need your support and collaboration as we move forward with this process.

Partnership Contact Information:

Executive Director - Mark Williams
mwilliams@greaterfreeport.com 815-233-1356

Beautification/Economic Development - Andrea Schultz Winter
awinter@greaterfreeport 815-233-1354

Business Engagement/Support - Bill Clow
bclow@greaterfreeport.com 815-233-1353

Events - Katie Gentz
kgentz@greaterfreeport.com 815-233-6301

Marketing/Promotion - Nicole Haas
nhaas@greaterfreeport.com 815-801-3676

