

## Measuring accountability in coverage

During the June 1 press conference, organizers made a series of specific claims and demands. Not all of them were addressed in the coverage by the three outlets that were present. Interestingly, there's no indication that any of the outlets pushed Amazon to respond to most of these specific claims and demands.

For instance, what does Amazon's spokesperson have to say to Edie Jacobs' demand that the company hire through her Austin job placement business, Get to Work? Amazon has said it will hire local workers, but hasn't indicated whether it will conduct the hiring process locally by using local job placement companies like Jacobs'. Will workers have to commute to Skokie to be processed or not?

Another example is that the Block Club story points out Mitts' reason for not being at her office, but it doesn't delve into the organizers' claims about being given the runaround by the alderperson's office since they learned about pending development in 2021. Are Amazon and Mitts avoiding the organizers and if so why?

But unlike the Tribune story, the Block Club story contacts Mayor Brandon Johnson's office to gauge the mayor's commitment to a cause for which he marched when he was a county commissioner. Arline said the mayor's office did not respond to questions about the warehouse when he contacted them Thursday.

I created the following table to map most of the specific demands and claims that were made by the organizers and which ones were addressed in the media coverage. As the table suggests, the gaps were rather large.

Aside from addressing specific claims and demands, the coverage should also give the reader an idea of how things work. For instance, the organizers were demanding that, if Amazon doesn't move into the new facility, it be reoriented to a different use, namely a community recreational center. Arline's article has this demand in the lede.

“Neighbors are calling on Ald. Emma Mitts (37th) to turn Amazon's massive – but vacant and long-delayed – warehouse in West Humboldt Park into a spot for the community if it's not going to open.”

But what's the feasibility of that? Does a lone alderperson actually have the authority to do that? Perhaps a sentence or two explaining how that might work (by quoting a city official or someone in real estate) would lead to a real-world, practical understanding of the issue. What do we learn from these articles? That has to be a guiding question for reporters.

	Block Club Chicago	Chicago Tribune	CBS 2 Chicago
<b>Claim:</b> The city waited to outlaw a 'By Right' ordinance until Amazon deal was done			
<b>Claim:</b> Howard Ray Jr. went to Ald. Mitts to find out what was being built at Division and Kostner and "for months and months and months we were given the run-around about what was happening over there and then we found out an Amazon facility was coming. We begged her to have town hall meetings to get community input ... were rejected every step of the way." They then held their own town hall meetings three times, one of which Amazon attended. They still claim that Mitts is not responsive about the status of the Amazon facility.	<p>This is addressed, with Mitts saying in a statement that she (quoting Arline's reporting) "has never intentionally steered away constituents or ignored their questions, citing 'health complications' as the reason she was unable to talk with protestors."</p> <p>But this seems to let the alderwoman off the hook. The organizers claim that the alderwoman has evaded them <i>for two years, since 2021; that's she ignored their requests for Amazon town halls. Has she?</i></p> <p>An Amazon spokesperson is quoted as saying that "as we prepare for this facility to launch this fall, we will continue to work with Alderman Mitts and community organizations regarding employment opportunities and community initiatives."</p> <p>But the organizers are explicitly saying that Amazon is not working with them. Which community organizations are Amazon working with? Which community initiatives have been proposed? Has Mitts failed to update the community on Amazon's plans and, if so, will she agree to do so?</p>		
<b>Claim:</b> "Amazon promised us 500 jobs. They promised some organizations 50 jobs." Said they'd hire 60% from the community. And that they would be open by late 2022.	These claims are addressed, with an Amazon spokesperson saying that the facility will open in late 2023. But the spokesperson doesn't address the promised jobs.		The report mentions these demands but vaguely: "They say Amazon is backing away from its goal to hire workers from the West Side through community-based jobs programs and they're tired of broken promises."
<b>Demand:</b> A community benefits agreement that included a series of asks, including: hiring a local workforce that's 60% from the community, paying workers \$28.50 an hour, allowing community	The article mentions the community benefits agreement and ledes with the organizers' demand that the Amazon facility be turned into a community spot if it doesn't open.	The article mentions aspects of the community benefits agreement	

investment in community projects, that Amazon would house a hiring center there where people could come to get work, that Amazon build a state-of-the-art recreational center at the facility, and that the facility houses mental health treatment services that “would probably help” address the situation at 4140 Chicago Ave.			
<b>Claim:</b> At 4140 W. Chicago Ave., there’s a homeless person squatting who built scaffolding on top of the building, has erected a sign bearing a swastika, and was on the roof aiming his laser at police helicopters. They’ve submitted information to mayor’s office, alderman’s office and governor’s office but got no response.		This was investigated, with Sheridan going to the address and interviewing people in the area, contacting Mitts’ office, and getting information from the police department.	
<b>Demand:</b> That the city remove the scaffolded tower and swastika and get the man a mental health assessment.			
<b>Claim:</b> “The casinos courted River West with a CBA, they came to the table with a CBA, offered \$50,000 for people to have jobs and a liveable wage. We’ve been asking for \$28.50 from Amazon. What’s the difference between us and River West? Why aren’t we given the same respect?”			
<b>Claim:</b> Mitts’ office doesn’t provide Spanish translation services for Spanish speakers.			
<b>Claim:</b> Amazon has told Edie Jacobs that workers at the Humboldt Park facility will have to go to Skokie to be processed.			
<b>Demand:</b> That Amazon hire through local job placement organizations like Edie Jacobs’ Get to Work.			
<b>Claim:</b> Amazon’s West Humboldt Park facility sits in an Opportunity Zone and the company is not abiding by federal OZ best practices.			
<b>Claim:</b> Amazon told the community they would open in late 2022 and create 500 jobs.	The reporting quotes an Amazon official who says the facility “will be operational by the fall.”	The reporting references a past Tribune article that notes an Amazon spokesperson told the paper that the building “was not yet operating	

		because of supply chain concerns and 'business reasons.'"	
<b>Demand:</b> That Amazon and Mitts meet with community members to discuss the status of the facility.	See above reference to Mitts meeting protestors.	This is mentioned	
<b>Demand:</b> The city should change ordinances regulating major e-commerce warehouses		This is mentioned	