

MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION
February 13, 2017

The regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order by Chairman Mark Moore at 7:40 p.m. at the Village Hall.

Members present: Chairman Mark Moore, William Cotey, Amy Flores, Walter Oakley, Kurt Schultz, and David Semmelman.

Members absent: Matthew Krummick.

A quorum was established.

Village Staff present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development; David Smith, Senior Planner; and Fred Chung, Senior Project Engineer.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

PC 17-06 Village of Libertyville, Applicant

Request is for an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan in order to include a Transit Oriented Development Plan in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, introduced the proposed Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the proposed amendment is a draft Transit Oriented Development Plan for downtown Libertyville. He stated that the last Village-wide update to the Comprehensive Plan was in 2005. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan includes a number of sub-area plans and the one specific sub-area plan that they will talk about is the Downtown Sub-Area plan. He stated that in the past there was discussion about building two parking garages and the second garage was just opened a few days ago. He stated that the Village is in the process of implementing other various objectives of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as well. He stated that during the course of a Comprehensive Plan update, certain elements have been or should be implemented and there may be other elements of the plan that merit updating or changing. He stated that one aspect of the Comprehensive Plan that merits changing is the Trimm property which is in the area next to the downtown Metra Station. He stated that Staff has met a number of developers to discuss a variety of ideas over the past few years on the Trimm property. He stated that the Plan Commission charged Staff with updating the Downtown Sub-Area Plan. He stated that Staff then applied for and was awarded a grant from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to do a Transit Oriented Development Plan which in effect is the Downtown Sub-area plan. He stated that the grant is an 80% – 20% matching grant whereby the RTA awards \$80,000 provided that the Village puts in \$20,000 to develop the TOD Plan. He stated that once the grant was awarded, the Village put together a Project Task Force. He stated that the Task Force was made up of members from various Village Boards and Commissions. He stated that also members chosen for this Task Force were Village residents and owners and operators of Village businesses. He stated that there was also representation

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from RTA, Metra and PACE on the Task Force. He stated that the RTA then hired the planning consultant Teska and Associates. He stated that Teska is a well-known organization out of Evanston, Illinois and two other agencies joined forces with Teska to collaborate in the creation and implementation of the TOD Plan and they are Business Districts, Inc. and Fish Transportation Group.

Mr. Michael Blue, Teska and Associates, stated that the TOD area generally centers on the Metra train station with a quarter (1/4) mile radius around the station. Mr. Blue reviewed the planning process which involved much input from the community and Task Force. He stated that there was also a lot of historical background information collecting and dissemination. He stated that they visited the high school to interview a student focus group, there were intercept interviews of the Metra commuters as they were stepping off of the train, and the Task Force provided ample input into the development of their TOD Plan.

Mr. Blue stated that they looked at the land uses, zoning, marketing, transportation, and design for the subject area. He stated that they focused on three sites within the quarter (1/4) mile radius. He stated that the first site is the Trimm property for which they have come up with a concept site plan sketch. He stated that the second site they focused on is on the north side of the Metra tracks and on the west side of Milwaukee Avenue, and the third site is located on the east side of Milwaukee Avenue. He stated that they felt that the third site lends itself more favorably towards an arts community with a shared street concept.

Mr. Blue stated that the Trimm development should have a more urban feel to it with the station building being the focal point. He stated that the Task Force suggested that the second site which currently has the Hansa Coffee establishment, could have a French Market feel, but the Teska team wasn't sure how marketable a French Market theme would be for this area.

Ms. Diane Williams, Business District Inc., presented a market snapshot of the area. She stated that the restaurants are a retail opportunity. She stated that the housing trends seem to illustrate that home building is up and that rentals are up. She stated that there appears to be retail and restaurant growth opportunities and that housing growth may level off by 2020. She stated that one of their key findings is that in the near term there may be opportunities for shared workspace situations.

Ms. Cindy Fish, Fish Transportation, stated that they looked at this plan from a Complete Streets/Multi-modal network perspective. She stated that it is important to make the Milwaukee Avenue crossing more visible, but that this may involve IDOT. She stated that the proposed plan also envisions certain local street improvements, a neighborhood Slow Streets Program, a Vision Zero Program, and certain pedestrian and bike path network improvements with added bike parking. Ms. Fish stated that PACE ridership should be strengthened and that additional parking improvements on the east side of Milwaukee Avenue be considered.

Ms. Katie McLaughlin, Teska and Associates, introduced the proposed Urban Design aspects of the TOD Plan. She stated that it is the intent of the Plan to build upon the success that the Village of Libertyville already enjoys. She stated that the Plan is intended to expand upon the positive character of the Village and to unify the downtown. She stated that the Plan

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incorporates a continuation of the Village's downtown decorative lighting and street trees. She stated that one of their recommendations is to incorporate wayfinding signage throughout and a long term goal should be to widen the sidewalks in the downtown.

Mr. Bill Cornell, 314 Lake Street, stated that many of the residents have been opposing the development of the Trimm property.

Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, stated that the Comprehensive Plan is a guideline with design concepts. He stated that there is a developer who has applied to develop the Trimm property. He stated that the review of the developer's plans is running concurrently with the review of the TOD Plan.

Ms. Ana Draa, 1020 Ashley Lane, stated that she compliments the Village for its forward thinking. She stated that there is too much neon signage in the downtown. She stated that she is concerned about the density and impact on traffic as it relates to the Trimm project. She stated that the speed limits should not be reduced. She stated that the proposed Plan contemplates an arts area. She stated that Cook Park is heavily used and that there needs to be stronger language as to how it is regulated.

Chairman Moore stated that Cook Park may be outside of the TOD Plan study area.

Ms. Joan Sayre, 732 Stonegate Road, stated that she understood that the Trimm property has soil contamination and asked how it will be mitigated. Mr. Spoden stated that the developer has indicated that he will dig out the contaminated soil as part of his proposed development.

Mr. Tim Smith, stated that he owns much of the Sub-Area Number Two (2). He stated that to remove any of the current site improvements would require any new development to meet current Code relative to setbacks and parking. He is concerned that it might make the land unusable. He stated that the Village could use more park land north of the Metra tracks.

Chairman Moore stated that at a conceptual level there could be a vision statement that speaks to more open space being included with future development.

Ms. Kathey Rooney, 520 Sedgewick, stated that the Plan should respond to those issues that appeal to the residents such as impact on traffic and schools and high density development challenges. She stated that the residents should have been more involved in this process.

Ms. Marie Hertel, 619 North First Street, stated that there needs to be better communication with the residents. She asked what the number is of non-conforming lots in the Village. She stated that she learned about tonight's meeting from the Lake County Board email. She asked for clarification of the commercial property next to the proposed Trimm development. Mr. Spoden stated that when they first met with the developer about the Trimm property the developer was advised the Trimm residential development be planned for a future connection to the existing commercial area to the east.

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Ms. Hertel stated that the residential development proposal for Trimm should provide for more guest parking. She stated that she is concerned about the traffic. She said that the street widths should be studied more and consideration should be given to incorporating bike lanes.

Ms. Jacqueline Anderson, 18320 Old Peterson Road, stated that consideration should be given to the eco-system. She stated that she supports any planning towards the arts. She stated that she supports defining the crosswalks better and a wayfinding sign program. She stated that she is concerned about additional high density residential development in the Village. She stated that with the additional commuter parking that there will be too much pavement expanded. She stated that open green space should be a higher priority. She stated that native landscaping should be considered. She stated that the potential impact upon the traffic, air pollution and the impact upon the school system. She stated that long term plans should include development cautiously.

Mr. Wade Wyzukovic, 1049 Lake Street, stated that he is concerned about the increase of traffic along Lake Street and Brainerd Avenue.

Ms. Beth Kraft, 1884 Warbler Court, Waukegan, stated that she works at 747 N. Milwaukee Avenue, and is concerned about the increasing traffic at the Lake Street and Milwaukee Avenue intersection.

Commissioner Oakley stated that this plan is a good start.

Commissioner Flores stated that consideration should be given to visually softening up the east side of Milwaukee Avenue, Sub-Area (3) Three. She stated that currently it is difficult getting out of Hansa parking lot out onto Milwaukee Avenue.

Commissioner Cotey stated that he participated in the focus group meetings for the TOD Plan development. He stated that perhaps there should be a stronger effort to promote Shop Libertyville. He stated that consideration should be given to tying in the local farmer's market with a downtown grocer. He stated that both Butler Lake and the Crawford Warming House are ecology learning opportunities and this should be promoted in the Plan. He stated that he supports wider sidewalks in the downtown and more street parking should be incorporated. He supports utilizing kiosks with smart phone Wi-Fi connection, wayfinding signage, etc. He supports an increase use of public transportation in order to reduce passenger vehicular traffic. He stated that the Plan should be sensitive to an aging population.

Commissioner Semmelman stated that he would like to see the north side of the tracks spruced up. He stated this is a great start so far.

Commissioner Krummick stated that more public transportation should be incorporated into the downtown. He stated that the TOD Plan should provide guidance as to how to better manage traffic. He stated that the restaurants contribute to the traffic congestion and suggested that the Village may be at a tipping point with too many restaurants. He suggested that consideration could be given to developing business incubator opportunities and improving public transportation ridership.

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Ms. Fish stated there once was a shuttle bus provided by Motorola, but has since been discontinued when Motorola sold their property in Libertyville and vacate the site. She stated that the PACE bus schedule does not appear to line up with the Metra commuter train schedule very well.

Ms. Williams stated it's typical for a downtown to have 15% of its commercial land uses to be restaurants. She stated that the intent of the Plan is to strengthen all businesses in the downtown.

Commissioner Krummick suggested that additional language could be incorporated into the Plan to strengthen the importance of mixed land uses in the downtown.

Commissioner Schultz stated that he was part of the Task Force process and that he enjoyed participating in that. He stated that there was a good cross-section on the Task Force. He stated that the Village is taking a proactive approach to the planning of the downtown.

Chairman Moore stated that it is good to include the north side of the Metra tracks as one of the TOD Plan sub-areas. He stated that consideration should be given to improve the connection between the Metra tracks and Lake Street. He stated that the TOD Plan discussion should be continued in order to provide the consultants and Staff the opportunity to address the concerns and feedback provided from tonight's meeting.

In the matter of PC 17-06, Commissioner Semmelman moved, seconded by Commissioner Cotey, to continue this item to the April 10, 2017, Plan Commission meeting.

Motion carried 7 - 0.

Ayes: Moore, Cotey, Flores, Krummick, Oakley, Schultz, Semmelman

Nays: None

Absent: None

COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSION: None.

Commissioner Schultz moved, seconded by Commissioner Cotey, to adjourn the Plan Commission meeting.

Motion carried 7 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.