

MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION
January 14, 2019

The regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order by Chairman Mark Moore at 7:03 p.m. at the Village Hall.

Members present: Chairman Mark Moore, Amy Flores, Matthew Krummick, Walter Oakley, Richard Pyter, Kurt Schultz, and Eric Steffe.

Members absent: None.

A quorum was established.

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

Others present: Matthew Hickey, Comprehensive Plan Review Committee.

Commissioner Oakley moved, seconded by Commissioner Steffe, to approve the November 26, 2018, Plan Commission meeting minutes.

Motion carried 7 - 0.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION:

Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, introduced the Plan Commission Workshop topic. He stated that topic will include an overview of the State of the Village Report and a review of draft subarea plans for the following three locations: (1) the True Value site on South Milwaukee Avenue; (2) the Young property at Rt. 137 and Milwaukee Avenue; and (3) the north end of the downtown area. He stated that Staff and the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CPRC) is reaching out to all of the various boards and commissions to get feedback on the Comprehensive Plan update. He stated that the Plan Commission is the first group that Staff and the CPRC is meeting with as part of that process.

Mr. Spoden stated that the Comprehensive Plan Update consultant, The Lakota Group, has completed the first half of the process which is putting together a snapshot of the Village in the form of the State of the Village Report.

Mr. David Smith, Senior Planner, reviewed the Draft form of the State of the Village Report. Mr. Smith stated that the report begins by stating what the key purposes of the Comprehensive Plan are and they included: (1) a Future Vision; (2) a Land Use Framework; (3) a Public Investment Guide; (4) a Private Investment Guide; (5) an Implementation Program; and (6) a Community Engagement Tool.

Minutes of the January 14, 2019, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 2 of 5

Mr. Smith stated that as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, the State of the Village Report is drafted in order to analyze the existing conditions of the Village in order to better understand the current planning issues. Mr. Smith stated that the State of the Village Report identifies ten (10) different issues that should be considered and they are: (1) Land Use; (2) Transportation Systems; (3) Infrastructure and Capital Improvements; (4) Neighborhood and Housing; (5) Downtown and Commercial Areas; (6) Market Assessment; (7) Historic Preservation and Community Character; (8) Parks and Open Space; (9) Arts and Culture; and (10) Community Capacity.

Mr. Smith stated that the State of the Village Report combines the 10 planning issues into 5 Sections in the Report. He stated that each Section is titled: (1) Introduction; (2) Community Characteristics; (3) Community Services; (4) Cultural Resources; and (5) The Community Speaks. Mr. Smith briefly presented each section of the Report with the Plan Commission. Mr. Smith reviewed the various tables, maps, and other graphics found within the Report that reflect the existing conditions of the Village relative to the planning issues. Mr. Smith stated that each section identifies Key Observations provided by The Lakota Group that are recommended considerations as the Village moves forward with the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Spoden presented the three (3) subarea plans to the Plan Commission in order to solicit their feedback. Mr. Spoden introduced the Young property located at the southwest corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Peterson Road which is the first of three subarea plans. He mentioned that the family no longer wants to be in the hotel business after the owner Earl Young passed away. He stated that it has been on the market for several years since. He stated that after the Hitch Inn Post Best Western hotel was removed from the site the Wildberry restaurant was developed with the condition that no other restaurants would be permitted on the site. He stated that the entire 15 acre site is zoned commercial. He stated that discussions in the past have given consideration for a transitional use towards the rear/western side of the property with commercial uses fronting Milwaukee Avenue. He stated that Staff has had multiple conversations with the owners and prospective developers to proposing a unified development that would include both commercial on the eastern half and residential or some other transitional use on the western half of the 15 acre property. He stated that Staff has typically met with residential developers. The last proposal was for over 360 dwelling units in four story apartment building.

Commissioner Krummick stated that it is his understanding that the property owners have a very high asking price.

Mr. Spoden stated that the Village is not in a position to influence the owner's asking price; however, it is important to have a subarea plan that can have a vision for the property put in place that can guide development in a way that makes the most sense from a planning perspective. He stated that the hotel market seems to be doing well and that Staff has heard inquiries of interest from hotels about this site. He stated that there is a need for banquet facilities in the Village and that this site could lend itself to address that market as well.

Mr. Spoden presented The Lakota Group subarea plan for the Young property that included a hotel fronting Milwaukee Avenue with single family detached and attached dwelling units on the western side of the site with an access road from Adler Drive.

Minutes of the January 14, 2019, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 3 of 5

Chairman Moore stated that he favors a development residential density that is similar to what surrounds the property on the western side of the site behind the Ace Hardware property. He stated that the existing Wildberry restaurant is a nice development for that property. He stated that he is not certain how feasible a hotel would be for this site. He asked if the plan did not include a hotel what else could go there in lieu of.

Commissioner Schultz stated that he likes the banquet hall idea.

Comprehensive Plan Review Committee Member Matt Hickey stated that it may be a viable site for senior housing or a medical office use or a combination of both.

Commissioner Oakley stated that he would be concerned about the availability of transportation for a senior housing development.

Committee Member Hickey stated that senior housing could work provided that adequate transportation linkages were put in place. He stated that the proximity to the downtown would also benefit a senior housing land use.

Commissioner Krummick stated that there should be a framework put in place for this site. He stated that there was a time when the discussion included incorporating the Ace Hardware into a commercial development on the Young property. He stated that the high asking price for the Young property will force development proposals with residential densities that are too high. Commissioner Krummick stated that he does not believe that a hotel at this location is feasible.

Mr. Spoden stated that they have received inquiries from hotels showing some interest in the property. He stated that the existing hotels become filled every weekend due to the graduations at the Naval Station Great Lakes training facility.

Commissioner Oakley asked if there are any indications of ground water contamination on the property. Mr. Spoden stated that there may have been a gas station several years ago on the 1757 N. Milwaukee Avenue property which abuts the Young property, but that was anecdotal information.

Chairman Moore stated that density seems to be an important issue for the Young property subarea.

Mr. Spoden presented a draft concept plan for the second sub-area proposal by The Lakota Group. He stated that the subject area is located between Lincoln Avenue and Rockland Road fronting Milwaukee Avenue. He stated the existing True Value Hardware is currently located at this site. He stated that this commercial strip along the east side of Milwaukee Avenue contain narrow lots. He stated that consideration has been given to creating a TIF District in this area in order to improve the streetscape in that area. He stated that the challenge for future development will be due to the lack of depth of these parcels. He stated that there are three different property owners along this strip and a significant portion of the site is for sale. He stated that the existing alley can supplement a future development of the site. Staff has suggested that a future development should incorporate buildings as close to Milwaukee Avenue as possible.

Minutes of the January 14, 2019, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 4 of 5

Mr. Spoden asked The Lakota Group to give consideration to two questions for the True Value subarea plan, the first quest is what could be developed there and the second question is whether it should still be a commercial site or not. He stated that the Auto Lab at the north end of the subject site is doing well and does not seem to be going anywhere anytime soon. He presented a more commercially and mixed-use oriented concept plan showing the True Value building to remain and be rehabbed. He stated that here this site is still challenged with limitations on parking availability.

Commissioner Krummick stated that this site lends itself to a build-to-suit development and not so much as a speculative commercial strip center. He stated that there is a parking issue to contend with for this site.

Mr. Spoden stated that the location would be good for a medical land use. He stated that if the entire site could be wrapped into a unified single ownership then it may be suitable for a planned development.

Commissioner Oakley stated that he would be concerned about vehicular accessibility for an intensive medical use. Mr. Spoden agreed that it would need to be a lesser dense development in that scenario.

Mr. Spoden presented an alternative sub-area plan on the True Value site with a stronger residential component including townhomes in the center fronting Milwaukee Avenue with mixed-use buildings on the either end of the block. The townhomes have garages in the rear accessed from the alley. He stated that the residential alternative plan could serve the Advocate Condell employees.

Committee Member Hickey stated that this area could serve as a viable gateway into the Village from the south side and that consideration should be given to the streetscape to reflect what the Village wants.

Chairman Moore suggested that retail may not be viable for this site. He stated that some sort of professional office might be better.

Commissioner Pyter stated that a medical land use might work better for this site.

Commissioner Flores stated that any future land use for this site should take into consideration its proximity to schools.

Chairman Moore a medical/professional office land use should be considered.

Committee Member Hickey suggested that it might work for a multi-family land use.

Commissioner Krummick stated that he would pick multi-family over retail.

Commissioner Pyter stated that this site has struggled with retail.

Minutes of the January 14, 2019, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 5 of 5

Commissioner Schultz stated that he would support a mixed-use with medical.

Commissioner Krummick stated that he can envision a mixed-use with medical on the ground floor and residential above the first floor.

Commissioner Schultz stated that he could envision a mixed- use side-by-side as well as stacked one on top of the other.

Mr. Spoden presented the third sub-area plan located downtown Libertyville on the both the north and south side of the Metra tracks. He stated that the subject site is a portion of the TOD commercial area that includes the Hansa Coffee site, the movie theater, and the commercial area bounded by Lake Street, Milwaukee Avenue, the Metra tracks, and Brainerd Avenue north of Lake Street.

Committee Member Hickey stated that any type of night club land use in this area may provide some challenges to the neighboring residential areas.

Commissioner Krummick stated that some aspects of this area may benefit from public/private partnership.

Commissioner Flores stated that the pedestrian sidewalk area north of the tracks seems dangerous to walk on due to it abutting the roadway so close.

Mr. Spoden and members of the Plan Commission turned the discussion to the Fould's property located along Church Street. It was noted that the Fould's building is an important historical structure that merits preservation, but that a mixed land use may work if parking can be accommodated.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSION: None.

Commissioner Steffe moved, seconded by Commissioner Pyter, to adjourn the Plan Commission meeting.

Motion carried 7 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.