MINUTES
REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
December 10, 2020

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Mary Loch, who explained the approach to be taken to conduct the meeting via videoconferencing due to the COVID19 public health concerns, described proceedings for the evening's remote public hearing, and listed Plan Commission duties. The topic of tonight's meeting, she said, is the draft Comprehensive Plan, and that discussion of it would be continued at a January Public Hearing meeting.

Chairperson Loch listed meeting participants Village Development Director Staci Springer, Planning Manager Kelly Purvis, Associate Planner Cole Jackson, Houseal Lavigne Associates (HLA) representatives John Houseal and Brandon Nolin, Village Trustee Bill Enright and Recording Secretary Barbara Dutton.

Roll call was taken. Chairperson Loch, and Plan Commissioners Lloyd Berry, Laura Brown, Angela Fanella, Tracy Heming-Littwin, John Mulherin, David Rodemann, Mohammed Saeed and Jamie Vondruska were present.

Adoption of Emergency Allowance of Remote Participation by the Plan Commission

A motion to allow remote participation by the Plan Commission in the meeting was made by Commissioner Heming-Littwin and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motion carried with nine (9) yes votes as follows: Commissioners Heming-Littwin, Vondruska, Berry, Brown, Fanella, Mulherin, Rodemann and Saeed, and Chairperson Loch voted "yes."

Public Comment Non-Agenda Items

There was no public comment pertaining to non-agenda items.

Approval of November 12, 2020 Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Saeed moved to approve the draft minutes of the November 12, 2020 Regular Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Heming-Littwin. The motion carried with nine (9) yes votes as follows: Commissioners Saeed, Heming-Littwin, Berry, Brown, Fanella, Mulherin, Rodemann and Vondruska and Chairperson Loch voted "yes."

Public Hearing to Review the Draft Comprehensive Plan

A motion to open the Public Hearing to Review the Draft Comprehensive Plan was made and seconded by Commissioners Heming-Littwin and Saeed, respectively. The motion carried with nine (9) yes votes and zero (0) no votes as follows: Commissioners Heming-Littwin, Saeed, Berry, Brown, Fanella, Mulherin, Rodemann and Vondruska and Chairperson Loch voted "yes."

Staff Introduction

After being sworn in, Kelly Purvis, Planning Manager, Village of Glen Ellyn, 535 Duane Street, reviewed the history of the Village's Comprehensive Plans to the current one adopted in 2001. She described

consultant HLA's role in helping to update it, as well as the involvement of a work group whose composition she outlined. Additionally, she stated, various activities – including development of a project web page, stakeholder meetings, digital surveys and open houses – had taken place in support of the effort to advance the new Draft Comprehensive Plan, the first half of which would be reviewed tonight. Planning Manager Purvis introduced the aforementioned representatives of HLA, and presented a list of items for which feedback was being sought this evening from the Plan Commission.

After being sworn in along with Mr. Houseal, principal, and Mr. Nolin, senior project manager, with HLA, 188 W. Randolph, Chicago, provided an overview of the planning area, which includes unincorporated land, for which policy direction is also given. He offered an inventory of future land-use plan categories: traditional residential, single-family attached, multi-family housing, neighborhood and corridor commercial, mixed-use, office, public/semi-public, parks and open space, light industrial, utility and transportation, and parking. Mr. Nolin reviewed a residential area framework, including opportunities for infill development, as well as commercial area frameworks, pointing to key spots for redevelopment. Turning to a subarea framework for downtown, he highlighted "catalyst" sites identified and stated that analysis of present Village zoning showed lower height and density regulations as compared to peer communities, and recommended revisiting these regulations, which, he suggested, currently limit modern commercial development. Another recommendation he offered was shuttle bus service connecting the downtown business district with the College of DuPage. He said analysis of parking had been performed, and identified a goal for the Village to encourage additional parking north of the railroad tracks, and recommended a ratio of 1.27 spaces per multi-family unit in downtown residential developments.

Mr. Nolin went on to review three downtown catalyst sites that had been identified:

1. Duane St. & Lorraine St.: A concept that depicts a parking deck and multi-unit housing complex in this area, which, Mr. Nolin said, currently contains outside storage, an industrial property and a vacant or underutilized single-family home.
2. Pennsylvania Ave. & Main St.: The "Fire Station Site," Mr. Nolin said could be transformed into a new anchor with a mixed use development, provided parties including the Glen Ellyn Volunteer Fire Company were "able and willing" to cooperate.
3. Duane St. & Forest Ave.: This site, suggested Mr. Nolin, could be a prime location for mixed use, and noted its proximity to such amenities as the small business incubator.

Mr. Nolin turned to discussing the Roosevelt Road corridor subarea framework, mentioning opportunities for landscape and pedestrian improvements to make a better "front door" for the Village. He expressed a desire for auto dealership expansion of the Haggerty Chevrolet site, but said that the site north of Haggerty alternatively could be developed into multi-family housing. He added that rethinking of uses for Nicole Way & Pershing property featuring outmoded office facilities would be in order.

Catalyst sites identified were:

1. Park Blvd. & Roosevelt Rd.: The northwest consolidation and repositioning of sites at the northwest corner along with improved frontage was suggested, along with adding a right-turn lane (westbound) on Park Boulevard.
2. Exmoor Ave. & Roosevelt Rd.: This area, he said, presents commercial redevelopment opportunity, including potentially a modern hotel.

3. Nicole Way 53/ & Roosevelt: This site, suggested Mr. Nolin, has potential for office, commercial and multi-family housing development.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Fanella asked what community opinion the consultant found most surprising, to which Mr. Nolin responded the high rate of survey participation. He added that the emphasis on more "attainable" housing was remarkable, as well. Commissioner Vondruska asked if affordable housing referred to empty nester opportunities or starter housing, to which Mr. Nolin indicated that his consultancy preferred the term attainable housing, and that such reflected both senior and starter residents. Commissioner Fanella observed that entry-level single-family housing is difficult to find in the community. Acknowledging a lack of single-family homes, Mr. Nolin stated that other options for consideration include townhomes with shared open space. Mr. Houseal stated that while there are strategies for retaining small homes, economic realities present challenges to doing so. Planning Manager Purvis interjected that zoning can be a tool to maintain smaller homes.

Pointing to the area in which the US Bank parcel sits, Commissioner Brown wondered if the idea of making this entire catalyst site into a downtown park had been explored. Mr. Nolin explained that the Consultant's charge had been to explore ways for reinvestment in privately held properties, to which Mr. Houseal added that the Village would have to compensate owners in a purchase for such a development. Planning Manager Purvis noted a desire on the part of the Village to see mention of park expansion or connecting amenities to the Prairie Path into a concept. Pointing to the lack of a playground in the downtown, Commissioner Fanella said there might be opportunity to partner with the Park District to provide a tot lot. Commissioner Brown agreed, thinking a playground could be downtown destination. Mr. Nolin thought a park amenity could be added, but noted that the space is currently awkwardly configured.

Commissioner Mulherin asked if there is a Federal grant for an underground pass at Forest, to which Planning Manager Purvis responded there is indeed funding for a project to be underway in 2024. Mr. Houseal noted that a railroad company can sometimes be a funding source for such projects. Chairperson Lock asked if the building envisioned for the west part of this site could be four stories instead of two, to which Planning Manager Purvis responded that inadequate parking is already a limiting factor in development size. Delineating parking in the current concept, Mr. Nolin, alluded to balancing parking and park space. Chair Loch and Commissioner Heming-Littwin both thought this area would be a good place for increased density.

Sworn in, Village Community Development Director Staci Springer, 535 Duane St., expects a $21 million train station project to move forward, and said that more information about it will be forthcoming.

Commissioner Rodemann said that, while some things in the draft downtown plan were good, the Village needs open space to give it more vitality. While the Prairie Path Park might not be the spot for this, he added, the Commission needs to step back and consider that there are perhaps significant ways to improve the downtown and address the lack of an identifiable open space. Director Springer said that Staff has been looking for opportunities to do this, but the challenge is in the way the downtown is built out. She said that a greater understanding of the Streetscape project in the works might help in

visualizing the “pocket parks” concept, which could include seating and artwork. She mentioned, too, that event space near the McChesney site is also under discussion.

Commissioner Heming-Littwin asked where possible sites had been identified for the Fire Station to relocate to should development of the northwest corner of Main and Pennsylvania be pursued. Mr. Nolin said none had been identified, to which Commissioner Heming-Littwin expressed surprise, and said that if this area is to be a catalyst site, she wants to know where the Fire Company could go. Director Springer recognizes the challenge of the site, which has been “noodled” at Staff level, adding that timing is a critical factor in a redevelopment endeavor for the site, and that engaging the Fire Company would be key to advancing such an effort. She continued by saying she would also expect developer participation and suggested language spelling this out be added to the Comprehensive Plan.

Observing that a comprehensive plan can become more like a marketing plan, Commissioner Berry thought the image displaying a concept for this catalyst site would be objected to because it doesn’t convey the community’s character. He went on to ask if Five Corners is really a “gateway” to the community, noting that the northeast quadrant is the only one left for redevelopment. He thinks Roosevelt Road-53 area blight is riper for gateway enhancement, saying a “wallscape” there might be more impactful. Commissioner Heming-Littwin countered that Five Corners is a major entry way.

Commissioner Fanella agreed that the “Fire Station” site concept is lacking in design, and that retail should be emphasized. Commissioner Vondruska offered a reminder that Pennsylvania and Main has been designated a target area so redevelopment is logical but a rendering does not represent an idea set in stone. Mr. Houseal concurred, stating that concepts are candidates for consideration. Commissioner Heming-Littwin asked if there is a reason why the concept for the Pennsylvania and Main catalyst site doesn’t reach further north on Main Street. Asking, “How far do you go?” Director Springer noted that a recent sale of property in the vicinity would make redevelopment less likely any time soon, though doesn’t preclude it. Commissioner Heming-Littwin thought maybe this area could be reconfigured to accommodate a park, to which Director Springer said that such a plan would entail a cost to the Village. Mr. Nolin stated that properties fronting Pennsylvania have real estate potential that offers “more bang for the buck.” Commissioner Rodemann asked if the catalyst site concepts, aside from parking ratios, fit into the current zoning pattern. Director Springer responded the assignment specified this, and Planning Manager Purvis affirmed the catalyst site under discussion does. Mr. Houseal stated that the concepts provide market-viable parking ratios.

Public Input

Sworn in, Michael O’Connor, 1902 Crimson Drive, Valparaiso, Ind., observed that the plan assumes uses are combined in mixed use and that multiple parcels are combined, a situation that he stated is difficult to achieve in reality. He added that parking decks adjacent to residential buildings are undesirable.

Ginger Wheeler, 765 Hillside Avenue, was sworn in, and advocated for bicycle travel consideration.

Jerry Anderson, 616 Davis Terrace, was sworn in, and asked if there had been feedback received about maintaining the quaintness of the downtown and building heights. He liked the idea of a significant park downtown, especially if higher buildings are constructed. Mr. Nolin responded that, in general, the survey didn’t ask about character or building height, there not being a piece focused specifically on the

downtown. Mr. Houseal stated that the interest among the community in the Village's character is apparent, and that a goal is to balance maintaining character with desirable, needed development.

Julie Evans, 554 N. Park Blvd., was sworn in, and expressed appreciation for the consideration of attainable and affordable housing, and hopes that attention will be given to housing options for adults with physical and intellectual disabilities, and offered assistance in exploring the idea.

Commissioner Discussion

Chairperson Loch directed the Commission to review the list of items about which Staff specifically asked for input:

1. *Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units in single-family districts as a Special Use.*

Commissioner Fanella wondered what an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) would look like and what it would mean to neighbors. Development Director Springer explained that such units are extensions of single-family homes, and could be in the form of a basement unit, addition or coach house. Commissioner Heming-Littwin asked whether parking would be required and if such units would fall under the lot-coverage ratio (LCR). Planning Manager Purvis said zoning would need to be altered to permit ADUs and that LCR wouldn't necessarily change. Commissioner Loch opined that, given the number of tall garages seen in the community, she feels "We're half-way there already," and doesn't see a problem with these. Commissioner Fanella asked about regulation to prevent undesirable activity stemming from homeowners creating rental units for income, to which Development Director Springer suggested this could be done through zoning code enforcement.

Commissioner Mulherin expressed concerns about life safety and the potential for Airbnb and similar lodging use as an opportunity for abuse. Mr. Houseal reported that communities use various approaches – including imposing size restrictions and specifying that ADUs be part of the primary structure, and requiring the property owner to live onsite – to address this. Finding the idea of ADUs "intriguing," Commissioner Vondruska related that he lives near a coach house that has been rented to responsible tenants. Commissioner Brown noted a trend toward multi-generational living and urged receptivity to the ADUs. Commissioner Fanella thought the concept sound so long as it isn't commercialized. Commissioner Heming-Littwin said good rules would be needed in permitting such special use.

2. *Allowing missing-middle housing types (duplexes, triplexes, multiplexes, courtyard apartments and townhouses) within single family neighborhoods.*

Planning Manager Purvis showed photos of examples of this type of housing, and Commissioner Heming-Littwin pointed to townhomes on the edges of a single-family neighborhood in town as a successful example. Mr. Houseal stated that such housing used to be "routine" in communities.

Commissioner Vondruska asked if potential builders would have to request a special use permit, to which Development Director Springer responded that this would be a suggested approach, but asked how the Commission thought single-family homeowners in Glen Ellyn would view this type of housing in their midst. Chairperson Loch thought that building duplexes would be an easier proposition than a four-flat, and Commissioner Rodemann said that this type of housing would be more appropriate in transitional zones but that he would be hesitant to set new special uses for the majority of the

community's residential areas. He said that maybe two-family structures would be acceptable, but that locating higher-density housing would need to be focused in transitional areas. Commissioner Heming-Littwin wondered if such housing could help with non-conforming lot issues. Planning Manager Purvis explained that to allow this would require an overhaul of the zoning code, as only detached single family homes are allowed in single-family districts at this time. Development Director Springer stated that the idea of placement on non-conforming lots could be considered, perhaps limited to fringes/transition zones. Commissioner Fanella suggested permitting this type of housing on a lot that is already next to a parcel allowing multi-family or commercial development; Development Director Springer remarked that this was a creative idea. Commissioner Vondruska thought it likely most people would "freak out" in hearing that a house next door was being converted to a two-flat, but likes Commissioners Fanella and Rodemann's ideas concerning limiting units. Commissioner Saeed asked if duplexes would be possible in the downtown area, and was told by Planning Manager Purvis that it was already allowed in the C5B district as a special use. Director Springer said allowing two-family as a permitted use could be explored, though Planning Manager Purvis cautioned care in considering converting commercial buildings into residential. Commissioner Saeed asked if duplexes could be placed at Main and Pennsylvania, but Director Springer advised that costs to do so would be prohibitive.

3. *The proposed location of the pocket park northeast of the intersection of Western and Pennsylvania.*

Chairman Loch asked why this location was chosen for discussion, to which Director Springer responded, just to make sure people were on board with the idea. Observing that the spot is close to a busy clinic entrance/exit, Commissioner Heming-Littwin asked why the location was identified for a pocket park and who would use it. Mr. Nolin indicated that it represented potential wooded open space and could be a component in redeveloping the corner. Commissioner Heming-Littwin and Chairperson Loch didn't think a park here would get much use; Mr. Houseal agreed, though stressed the value of maintaining mature trees.

4. *The building height recommendations for the downtown.*

Commissioner Vondruska stated that repeatedly offering variances on height restrictions gets "silly" in this day and age of higher ceilings, so believes that thought should be given to making changes, yet acknowledged the need to avoid canyon effects and maintain village charm. He wondered if height requests are due to new height requirements or more the desire for an additional floor. Mr. Houseal stated both were factors, as well as striving for greater population density to patronize "bricks & mortar" businesses and necessary ROI. Commissioner Rodemann recognized a need for some vertical adjustment, but declared the need to "hold the line" by maintaining step-back standards and controlling design. Offering a reminder that topographically the downtown is in a "gulley," Commissioner Heming-Littwin said the Village needs to find ways to change with the times, though within reason. Chairman Loch asked if anyone is uncomfortable with raising the building height. Staff clarified that the proposed height of 60 feet would apply to Zones C5A and C5B, the latter of which now has bonuses available, and the former of which currently has some parcels subject to a 45-foot restriction. Mr. Nolin said that despite the height recommendation also being envisioned for the overlay district, or historic core, a PUD process would still apply. While Chairperson Loch said she's observed recent reinvestment in Main Street properties, Commissioner Heming-Littwin wondered what might happen if some of these older

buildings should develop structural issues or are damaged by fire and need to be replaced. Commissioner Mulherin acknowledged that some downtown buildings are obsolete, to which Mr. Houseal added that some old buildings become too difficult to preserve. Commissioner Fanella thought that community outreach might be helpful in explaining building height adjustment considerations. Commissioner Rodemann said he is in favor of keeping the overlay and preserving the character of the Village and that he is hesitant to endorse any wholesale change to height restrictions.

5. *The recommended parking ratios for residential downtown developments.*

Planning Manager Purvis clarified that the recommended 1.27 parking ratio applied to residential properties in the downtown. Mr. Nolin stated that research presented was from parking consultant KLOA and based on similar-sized communities. Chairperson Loch thought the Commission was "probably pretty comfortable" with the recommended ratio, having previously considered similar ratios for projects. The Plan Commissioners concurred.

6. *The inclusion of some or all of the Village owned parking lot in the Duane/Lorraine catalyst site; and if included, to what extent parking should be replaced.*

Development Director Springer stated that the current daily-pay lot is now virtually empty and asked if the lot is valuable or whether the Village would be better served by offering parking area as a development incentive or by selling it. Chairperson Loch asked what the utilization was pre-Covid, to which Director Springer responded, 40 percent to 80 percent, given the day. Commissioner Heming-Littwin stated that occupancy depended on the day of the week, and that she'd encountered a packed lot on occasion. Commissioner Loch felt she lacked enough information to decide.

Commissioner Vondruska asked if the matter was about size of a parking or even the necessity of one. Director Springer responded that the question of redevelopment goes to bulk, and that divergent views on the subject have been expressed. Commissioner Fanella said a decision perhaps couldn't be accurately made until more is seen about repercussions of Covid19. Commissioner Heming-Littwin entertained the idea of a bigger garage. Vondruska suggested that a concept for potential use could evolve, and that it is not bound to have to become a parking garage or the particular building depicted.

8. Single-family attached or multi-family development (without commercial first floor) as an alternative development option for the east section of the Duane and Forest catalyst site.)

Planning Manager Purvis clarified that the reference to "single-family" was to "single-family attached." Chairperson Loch stated that she is comfortable with having no commercial space on the site; and Commissioner Fanella was okay with this, as well. Commissioner Rodemann thought the site should be left open to the possibility of commercial development. Commissioner Brown reiterated her desire to see the area transformed into a park, an idea that Commissioner Fanella agreed would be preferable to pocket parks, if the location was right. Commissioner Vondruska said that developing a park so close to the tracks would be tricky, but that some playground attractions downtown would be beneficial.

9. Multi-family residential development on the northerly portion of the Haggerty property as an alternative option if commercial redevelopment does not occur.

Staff explained that the thought was vacant land in the north part of this area, which is partially owned by the Village and partially by Haggerty, could be used for residential use. Commissioner Heming-Littwin said she could see this area as a transition space from residential to commercial and for multi-family housing.

10. The mid-block crossing at Surrey Drive on Roosevelt Road.

Mr. Nolin explained that creating an intersection shift at Surrey could be an opportunity for a mid-block pedestrian crossing and a road continuing south (and thereby avoiding a zig-zag through alignment) if area redevelopment were to occur. Director Springer, who outlined jurisdiction areas in the vicinity, stated that she doesn't know if IDOT would allow the addition of a stop light, and without it, pedestrians are in danger trying to cross. Asked about sidewalk on the south side Roosevelt, she related that sidewalks by Lombard Toyota end at the dealership's west end, and that Bucky's installed sidewalk. She asked whether the crossing concept should be included in the plan. Stating that the project would be large, Commissioner Vondruska asked what the Village's return would be. Commissioner Heming-Littwin thought it unlikely IDOT would put a light here for pedestrians. Chairperson Loch thought there was a low probability in such a crossing happening under this version of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Houseal said if IDOT could be convinced it's a benefit to them they would at least "play ball," and suggested KLOA be tapped for an alternate concept. Commissioner Saeed inquired whether the Consultant had talked to IDOT about putting a light there, and was told by Mr. Nolin it hadn't and that his consultancy had relied on KLOA for examples. Commissioner Saeed said, "If IDOT does not install any light there, I think that realigning Surrey Drive is a bad idea." Commissioner Rodemann stated that he didn't see any need to have these roads aligned, but proposing a light for pedestrian crossing wouldn't be a bad thing. Chairperson Loch thought a traffic light could serve to calm traffic.

A motion to continue the Public Hearing to January 7, 2021 was made by Commissioner Fanella and seconded by Commissioner Rodemann. The motion passed with nine (9) yes votes and zero (0) no votes as follows: Commissioners Fanella, Rodemann, Berry, Brown, Heming-Littwin, Mulherin, Saeed and Vondruska and Chairperson Loch voted "yes."

Trustee's Report

Trustee Enright said the meeting was great and that he appreciated comments made, especially the public input on affordable housing. The budget, cannabis and the Streetscape project, he reported, are all upcoming business for the Village Board.

Staff Report

Development Director Springer related that the McChesney Miller/Glenwood Station development is on the agenda for next Monday's Village Board meeting. She also gave background on the evolution of cannabis regulations. Planning Manager Purvis said that the Main Street Pedway would be the subject of the December 17, 2020 Plan Commission meeting.

Chairman's Report

Chairperson Loch thanked Staff and Commissioners for their work.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Chairperson Loch adjourned the meeting at 10:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Dutton
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by Planning Manager, Kelly Purvis