

MINUTES
Glen Ellyn Plan Commission
Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 7:00 PM
Glen Ellyn Civic Center
Galligan Board Room
535 Duane Street

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Tim Loftus called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and explained the Plan Commission's function and operating procedure as an advisory board. He described the public hearing protocol including for public comment and announced that comments would be recorded.

Roll was called.

PRESENT: Chairperson Tim Loftus, Plan Commissioners Connie Arango, Laura Brown, Peter Cooper, Ian Dawson and Student Plan Commissioner Emma Smith.

ABSENT: Commissioners Adam Kreuzer, Sumita Mukherjee, Parag Thakkar, Robert Wyant and Trustee Liaison Steve Thompson.

Also in attendance: Daniel Harper, Planning Manager and Julie Settles, Recording Secretary.

B. Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None

C. New Business

Pre-Application – Glen Ellyn Metra Station and Multimodal Improvement Project

Staff Introduction

Sworn in, Daniel Harper, Planning Manager for the Village of Glen Ellyn, introduced the pre-application of the Glen Ellyn Metra Station and Multimodal Improvement Project. He stated the scope of the proposal would include the demolishing and construction of new train station and warming shelters, the creation of an accessible pedestrian underpass, site improvements to improve accessibility, parking lot reconstruction and streetscape improvements. He discussed possible Metra Station improvement zoning requests including applying for a Special Use Permit to allow for transit station use in the CR Conservation Recreation zoning district stating a definition for "Transit Station" or similar will need to be added as a text amendment and the application for variations regarding building setbacks and other possible items including signs, fences and obstructions in yards, accessory buildings and uses, landscaping requirements and off and on street parking dimensions. He then stated that the Plan Commission action would be to

consider and provide comments that will assist the petitioner in preparing a formal application. Also, in reviewing the project, the Plan Commission may wish to consider and/or provide feedback regarding the following:

1. If the Commission is generally supportive of the development concept.
2. If the Commission has any comments / concerns regarding parking and traffic circulation.
3. If the Commission would like to clarify any concerns.

Mr. Harper stated that Rich Daubert, Village of Glen Ellyn Village Engineer, would be discussing the project.

Sworn in, Rich Daubert, Village Engineer for the Village of Glen Ellyn, stated that eight years ago the Village Manager stated there was a need for a new train station and underpass and hired CDM Smith, Inc. to design a new train station, warming shelters, underpass, covered stairs and ramp, reconstruction of north and south parking lots and streetscape improvements. He stated that the current station is owned by Union Pacific Railroad and that they and Metra are looking forward to the Village of Glen Ellyn to take ownership. He stated the following recent issues to the area: sewer backups, furnace failure, pipes bursting, hand rails in need of repair, yellow markings in poor condition and accessibility issues. He introduced Sarah Sutherlin from CDM Smith.

Sworn in, Sarah Sutherlin, Lead Architect for CDM Smith, showed proposed site plans of the area. She stated the new proposed inbound station is approximately 3500 sq. ft. and will include heated and cooling waiting areas, a covered outdoor waiting area, restrooms and vendor area. The platforms will include two enclosed warming shelters designed to match the architectural style and finish of the inbound station. The proposed plan includes a new pedestrian tunnel located below the tracks to allow for greater connectivity for pedestrian travel north/south near the station. The northern entrance to the tunnel will be located west of the inbound station building. The northern entrance will be surrounded by the landscape courtyard and will be directly adjacent to the bus stop and passenger loading zone area northwest of the station. The south entrance of the tunnel will be located directly north of the Forest Avenue south parking lot. The tunnel is designed to be ADA accessible. The proposed station design incorporates a plaza adjacent to the west of the inbound station building. The proposed planting will include a variety of shade trees, ornamental trees, shrubs and ground cover with a focus on low maintenance native species. The Metra station is serviced by four dedicated parking lots with additional public parking provided on Crescent Boulevard and Forest Avenue. The proposed design will provide an updated configuration to meet Village and Metra design standards guidelines. The proposed parking designs show a reconfiguration on Forest Ave and the south lot from head-on parking to angled parking spaces. Parking spaces located on Crescent Boulevard and north Forest Avenue are proposed to be converted from angled parking spaces to parallel spaces.

Rich Daubert stated there was a preliminary public survey from June to August 2017 with 839 responses. Some obstacles that were brought up were crossing the tracks, limited parking and the vehicular traffic around the areas. Some desires expressed were pedestrian friendly improvements, improvement to outdoor waiting area and the addition of public space and parking. The Village held a public meeting with five residents in attendance. Some desires that came out of the public meeting are a Pace Bus shelter and safety improvements such as more lighting. He stated the proposed project involves multiple agencies including the Illinois

Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Capital Improvement Commission, Historical Preservation Commission and Metra. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that federal agencies consider the effects of projects they carry out, approve, or fund on historic properties. He also stated that as a result of the proposed parking lot and on-street parking redesigns, 107 total number of parking spaces will be lost. The proposed designs were brought for review by Village Board at the April 15, 2024 workshop and staff was given direction to propose alternatives to what was presented for the redesign in order to reduce the number of lost parking spaces as much as possible. This will continue to be reviewed.

Chairperson Loftus stated that there are four parking lots and three are used for Metra passengers. He asked if the lot at the northwest will stay customer parking or permit parking. Mr. Daubert answered that the Village has a lease for that parking lot. He stated the lot on the east side maybe be used for customer parking and that it will be up to Union Pacific. He stated the intention is to use the west side lot for customer parking.

Chairperson Loftus asked if the proposed design will inhibit outdoor dining on Crescent. Mr. Daubert answered that during COVID there were four parking spaces that were closed for outdoor dining. He stated if the sidewalks are widened, outdoor dining would be on the sidewalk.

Commissioner Brown asked if there were going to be dedicated women's and men's bathrooms or unisex. She also asked if anyone has spoken to the library about a book drop area. Ms. Sutherlin answered that there would be single bathrooms that would have diaper changing stations. She answered regarding the library that she wasn't aware of anyone speaking with the library, but she can ask.

Commissioner Arrango stated that with losing parking spots and train riders increasing and parking down, are there thoughts of charging station parking spaces. Ms. Sutherlin answered that they are looking at two locations for charging stations. Commissioner Arrango stated that charging parking spaces will also lead to loss of regular parking spaces and with ridership increasing, she's concerned how parking will be accommodated.

Commissioner Dawson asked the dimensions of the warming shelter, how many people will fit in them and how often is the new station going to be locked. Ms. Sutherlin answered the warming stations will be 18X9' where four people can sit and a few can stand. As far as the times of the station being locked, that has to be worked out with the Police.

Commissioner Dawson asked if elevators were considered. Ms. Sutherlin answered that elevators were considered however, a concern is if the elevator breaks down there wouldn't be an accessible path and also the timing it takes to go up and down was a concern. She stated Metra didn't like the elevator idea.

Commissioner Cooper stated that as of now the Union Pacific and Metra say there will no longer be ticket agents. He asked if this changes in the future if it can be accommodated. Ms. Sutherlin stated that it could be accommodated but some of the waiting area would have to be sacrificed.

Commissioner Cooper stated that he was very concerned about the loss of parking spaces and fears that merchants will be affected by the parking reduction. Mr. Harper stated that the Civic Center garage is under utilized and the pedestrian underpass tunnel will help with people parking in the garage.

Mr. Daubert stated that everything needs to be brought up to compliance so they will continue to work on maintaining parking. He stated that the last parking study was done in 2013 and that maybe all parking should be looked at to help with parking turnover.

Commissioner Brown asked if the current station could be preserved. Ms. Sutherlin answered that bringing the existing station up to code would be a significant amount of money and it wouldn't be a significant cost savings.

Commissioner Dawson stated that lots of places don't have a train station anymore because everything is done on the phone. He asked if there has been consideration on not having a train station. Mr. Daubert stated that it was not considered and that there is still a need for a train station.

Commissioner Arrango stated that since Metra is changing how tickets are purchased, would it make sense to redo a total train station and add a large warming station. Mr. Daubert answered that the grant money the Village will receive is to support ridership. Funding would not be available if the train station and warming area didn't happen. Commissioner Arrango then stated that a building doesn't affect ridership and asked if it should be considered. Mr. Daubert stated they would have to reapply all over again.

Commissioner Loftus asked Mr. Harper if there was any public correspondence to which the answer was no. Commissioner Loftus then asked if there were any public comments.

Sworn in, Elenor Saliamonas, 626 Newton Ave Glen Ellyn, asked if solar panels were considered. Ms. Sutherlin answered that the idea came up and no ultimate decision was made. Ms. Saliamonas stated that she thinks the current station is beautiful and she hopes it stays that way. She asked how old the IDOT standards are for parking spaces and would they be changed any time soon. Ms. Sutherlin stated that IDOT's standard is smaller than Glen Ellyn's.

Chairperson Loftus commented to do what needed to be done to recoup parking spaces.

Commissioner Brown stated that the tunnel is a great improvement, and she thinks a lot of the data collected is dated because it was gathered pre-COVID. She also stated she likes the current train stations and hopes it can be rehabilitated.

Commissioner Dawson stated that the tunnel will be a great asset and he will support the new train stations even though he doesn't think it's needed.

Commissioner Cooper stated that the Commission is here to discuss certain design and zoning issues and the Village Board determines the rest.

D. Trustee Liaison's Report

None.

E. Chairman's Report

None.

F. Staff Report

Daniel Harper stated that the language recommendations for outdoor platforms and outdoor music will go before the Village Board on May 13, 2024. He stated the May 23, 2024 Plan Commission meeting will have Glen Oak's County Club parking lot expansion and façade changes to the former Fresh Market that Northwestern Medicine is now renting. He also stated that coming up soon will be Glenbard South who wants a parking lot expansion north of the Biester Field House.

G. Other Business

None.

H. Adjournment

Commissioner Arrango made a motion to adjourn the meeting: Commissioner Brown seconded the motion and the motion passed by voice vote at 9:10 PM.