

**CITY OF WARRENVILLE
PLAN COMMISSION ROUTE 59/ROUTE 56 SUBAREA PLANNING
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2007**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Deniger called the City of Warrenville Plan Commission Special Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall at 28 W 701 Stafford Place.

2. ROLL CALL

Plan Commission Members Present:* Tim Cosgrove (arrival 6:45 p.m.), June Nelson, Steven Gregory, Roland Laurin, Leah Goodman, Jeffrey Deniger, Joseph Rossi

Plan Commission Members Excused: John Davis, Mike Mulcahy

Quorum: Yes

Also Present: Community Development Director Ronald Mentzer, Senior Planner Natalia Domovessova, Recording Secretary Marie Lupo

*(No members were present by video or audio conference)

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER GREGORY MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LAURIN, TO DESIGNATE COMMISSIONER NELSON AS ACTING CHAIRPERSON OF TONIGHT'S MEETING. The motion carried unanimously.

Acting Chairperson Nelson welcomed all in attendance and reminded the public that questions and comments could be posed after each segment of the presentation.

4. BUSINESS OF MEETING

A. Project Overview

Community Development Director Ron Mentzer introduced himself to the audience and stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss the City's efforts to develop a detailed subarea land use plan for the Route 59/Route 56 area of the community. Phase I of the process would provide a project overview and share information that the City has accumulated over time about existing conditions and planning efforts that the City has conducted to date, together with focusing on what makes sense for the community regarding the future of this area.

Director Mentzer recapped that in October of 2007, the Plan Commission conducted its first meeting on the matter, and established logical geographical limits for the study. The City Council agreed on such defined area, which totals 240 acres, and encompasses large

tracts of vacant property available for sale. As such, change is imminent for the area, which is the primary basis for the study at this time.

Director Mentzer pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan, which is the current document that sets forth guidelines for the area, dates back to 1984. This process would result in an updated, detailed plan for the subarea, which would ultimately be incorporated into the City's revised Comprehensive Plan.

Director Mentzer then proceeded with outlining the project purpose, goal, work program, and oversight/coordination, set forth in a Power Point presentation, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

The following audience member voiced this comment:

- Keith Dale, a new resident of Estes Street, noted that the stated goals of the project did not include a means by which the process would be least disruptive to residents, and expressed his desire that such condition be taken into consideration.

B. Existing Conditions Review

Director Mentzer then continued with his Power Point presentation outlining existing conditions and land uses, and land availability and key opportunity sites, noting the variety of zoning designations, the fact that the City owns portions of the northeast and southwest quadrants, and that 45% of the total land area in the Subarea is actively being marketed. Director Mentzer brought attention to the significant amount of wetlands and flood plain located in the subarea, and the development challenges this presents. He spoke of current and Year 2030 projected traffic for the major arterials of the subarea. Director Mentzer set forth the IDOT Route 56 expansion project and its preliminary design parameters, together with its effects on Barkley Avenue, Briggs Avenue, and Estes Street. The City of Naperville's Route 59 expansion plans were outlined. Although not widely serviced by utilities at present, Director Mentzer stated that the City has plans to extend utilities to all areas of the community, and will work with the right developers to do so for the subarea. Finally, Director Mentzer spoke of ongoing development in neighboring Aurora (Butterfield Center for Business) and Naperville (Monarch Landing and City Gate Centre), which would have an effect on the future development of the Route 59/Route 56 subarea.

The following audience members voiced these questions/comments:

- Peter Gianakas of Coldwell Banker Commercial Realty, representing the owners of the Anderson property, inquired about the time frame for development of the subarea, and the City's resultant infrastructure costs.

Director Mentzer replied that the retail market analysis indicated that a certain amount of retail space could be absorbed into the subarea within the new few years, and that the market would dictate the time frame. He stated that the City is actively implementing a \$12 million sewer and water expansion program throughout the entire community, but will logically schedule such installation to coincide with impending development in the area, with the added benefit of less impact on adjacent property owners. Funding for the utility expansion program is not from

property taxes, but rather from past and future new development and its resultant connection fees.

- Two-year resident Nancy Robertson of Patterman Avenue inquired about the assurance that IDOT would maintain the open drainage system after widening Route 56, since she felt it is not maintained at present, is constantly filled with weeds, and adjacent neighbors must mow the grass. She also expressed concern about the residential areas of the subarea and how they would be affected.

Director Mentzer responded that the widening of Route 56 would result in dramatic improvements to the open drainage system and its cross culverts. Presently, IDOT is required to perform maintenance on the system two times per year. As to the residential portions of the subarea, Director Mentzer assured Ms. Robertson that such housing's existence would not be threatened, but indeed would be affected by the development of neighboring vacant property. Acting Chairperson Nelson concurred, and reassured the audience that unless their property is put up for sale, nothing would happen to it.

- Resident Helen Dale, who owns a home on the corner of Estes Street and Briggs Avenue that backs up to warehouse zoning of Aurora, expressed fear that the City was going to surround her with additional unsightly development.

Director Mentzer stated that the City must recognize what it is occurring around the area, and this subarea planning process entails long-term preparation for what makes sense for the community as a whole.

C. Previous Planning Studies/Analysis Review

Director Mentzer then continued with his Power Point presentation outlining previous planning studies and analysis. In 2003-2004, the City worked with a consultant to revise the 1984 Comprehensive Plan, but it was not pleased with such consultant's work product, and consequently ended their contract.

The 2004 Subarea Plan for the Southwest Quadrant of Route 56/Route 59, illustrating a new north-south connector street to connect with a new signal at Barkley Avenue and Route 56, was endorsed unanimously by the Plan Commission and the City Council's Community Development Committee of the Whole, but the Council never took formally adopted such plan because they envisioned it being a component of the overall new Comprehensive Plan.

Director Mentzer discussed the northeast, northwest, and southeast corners of Route 59 and Route 56, the southwest corner of Prairie and Home Avenues, and the east side of Route 59, north of the Prairie Path. The 2005 Citizens Survey was discussed. Director Mentzer outlined the goals and findings of the 2006/2007 ERA retail market analysis, along with the 2007 Warrenville Strategic Plan, and the Metra STAR Line study, which would ultimately connect the north and south suburbs of Chicago with O'Hare Airport.

The following audience members voiced these questions/comments:

- Resident John Lewis, who lives on the west side of Home Avenue, inquired about the status of Bob Seibert's plan to bring a semi-pro baseball team to the City.

Director Mentzer responded that the reality of such proposal was that it involved the City providing substantial upfront funding for such venture, and that geographically, it sought out properties solely on the east side of the City, specifically the proposed middle school site, so as not to compete with the Kane County Cougars facility.

- New resident Mr. Bantar of Virginia Avenue inquired whether the City had any official architectural design guidelines or regulations.

Director Mentzer replied that although the City does not have a formal architectural design controls, it often imposes architectural design conditions on new projects through the PUD process to achieve appropriate and desirable character. Development of architectural design control guidelines could be a recommended follow-up action of this process, if desired.

- Estes Street resident Betty Rubic asked the total number of households that exist in each of the quadrants of the subarea, and whether any pending developments are in play. She also asked whether any other study had been done on the subarea outside of ERA's retail analysis, and whether a doctor's office would be considered retail development. Finally, she requested an update on the proposal for high-end townhomes that were to be built on the Anderson property

Director Mentzer replied that he did not know the total number of households off hand, but that he could calculate such number from the illustration. The Singer property located at the northwest corner is currently under contract, and since it would likely be done as a PUD and has a variety of zoning classifications, it is apt to require multiple public hearings. A residential analysis of the community was conducted during the Old Town/Civic Center subarea planning process, which confirmed a fairly significant market for residential housing. Director Mentzer stated that doctors' offices are considered office development, and though no official analysis has been done on such development in the City, for the past five to six years no interest has been expressed from potential builders for office-type development in the Route 59 corridor. As to the proposal for townhomes on the Anderson property, it involved a net density of approximately 12 units per acre (high density) and a commercial strip center along Route 59, which Director Mentzer stated was inconsistent with both the 1984 Comprehensive Plan and the 2004 Draft Subarea Plan for the Southwest Quadrant of Route 56/Route 59, and was fraught with infrastructure issues such as improvement of Estes Street and extension of City sewer and water. wrought

- Resident Mark Goff of Estes Street commented that although the developer of the above-mentioned townhouse development on the Anderson property was not requesting any variances from the City, the City appeared to provide a negative reception to his proposal. He wondered why the City is not satisfied with the

revenue it is obtaining from single-family homes. He feared that the City would eventually exercise the use of eminent domain.

Director Mentzer clarified that the Plan Commission identified a number of issues in connection with the townhome proposal, such as utility extensions, roadway improvements, and the overall quality of the proposed project. In addition, such developer was proposing private, rather than public roads within the development, to derive more density out of the development. Following his appearance before the Plan Commission, such developer never followed up with staff about the project.

Commissioner Gregory spoke of the new State law that greatly limits the use of eminent domain. Director Mentzer concurred, adding that although it has never been exercised in Warrentville, it is limited to public development for purposes such as parks and schools, rather than private sector use. Director Mentzer noted that a substantial amount of the subarea is currently zoned for non-residential use. Director Mentzer also confirmed that municipalities could use eminent domain to acquire right-of-way for new roads.

- Resident Helen Dale inquired whether a market analysis was done on recreational use in the area, and if any consideration was given to the impact on wildlife in the subarea. She asked the approximate percentage of residential, commercial and natural habitat zoning the subarea comprises. She suggested that the City buy the land surrounding the Prairie Path and devote it to recreational use.

Director Mentzer replied that market analyses are typically not done on open space use. Developers are required to submit an endangered species application to the State when development is to occur, but because the subject parcels likely do not house endangered species, there are no other requirements in place to accommodate the common types of wildlife that are present. Director Mentzer indicated he would have a breakout of the percentage of various zoning classifications available at the next meeting.

- Resident Keith Dale of Estes Street stated that his former Texas community incorporated a well-received plan that protected an equal distribution of zoning usages between residential, commercial, and open space, and he would ideally like to see such plan incorporated into Warrentville.
- Resident Bantar of Virginia Avenue inquired about the leverage of adjoining municipalities.

Director Mentzer replied that although it is not required, staff has had discussions in the past with neighboring municipalities concerning development projects that may affect the City. As an example, staff has worked closely with Naperville in connection with the Monarch Landing project, which is partially situated in Warrentville. However, municipalities generally tend to do what is best for their

own interests. Director Mentzer noted that the Aurora warehouse property abutting Ms. Dale's home has been zoned for non-residential use for more than 20 years.

- Commissioner Laurin repeated the advice that if a homeowner does not sell his or her property, nothing will happen on their property. On the other hand, if a homeowner elects to sell his or her property, the new buyer has a right to do with it as they choose, including approaching the City for rezoning and variations. The results of this process will be one of the tools we will use to evaluate one of your requests for such change.
- Commissioner Gregory commented that one way the burden of extra taxes could be shifted from residential property owners would be to encourage retail development where it is appropriate and responsibly done, and makes sense.
- Resident Mark Goff questioned the need for additional retail development within the City, and cited the example of Cantera development not having reduced taxes. He envisions that if additional retail is encouraged, the subarea could become "Cantera West," rife with big box development. He regrets the loss of small town mentality in Warrenville.
- Resident Betty Rubic summarized that change is inevitable, and spoke of this planning process as an opportunity to ensure that residents have a voice in how it changes. She clarified that potential developers would be developing the properties of the subarea—not the City.
- Mayor Brummel clarified that the City is not the agent that wishes to change the properties in the subarea; rather, the City recognizes the fact that land is and will be purchased by developers. The Plan Commission is attempting to represent the community and its long-term best interests in crafting a plan for the future. Developers desire larger parcels of land to accomplish their developments. Quality development is more likely to result if the City exercises its ability to determine how it wants to develop such larger portions of land, rather than allow them to develop in a piecemeal fashion.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chairperson Nelson reminded the audience that the next meeting would take place at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 4, 2007.

COMMISSIONER GREGORY MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COSGROVE, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:37 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Lupo, Recording Secretary