

The meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, March 3, 2008 in the Village Board Room at the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Trustees Bulthuis, Cullerton, Finance Director Dubrowski, Economic Development Director Govind, Dennis Keating, Vincent Gatto, Sam Greco, Greg Hassler, Dave Casey, Scott Shepard, Don Murphy, Ron Guidolin, Carol Marcus, Carl Timmerman, Michelle Dix, Chris Aiello.

ABSENT: Daniel Verr, Rae Srch

OTHERS PRESENT: Trustee Blankensop, President Stupegia, Secretary Jennifer Johnson

WELCOME

Trustee Cullerton welcomed the committee members and stated that they were all here to put together the plan to guide the future. He explained that the last comprehensive plan was put together in 1984 and adopted in 1986. Trustee Cullerton stated that this plan would be the stepping stone to the future. Trustee Cullerton stated that Finance Director Eric Dubrowski and Community Development Director Shubhra Govind are the main contacts for the Committee and that Manager Bob Niemann is also a crucial part in planning. Trustee Cullerton stated that they are looking to put together a plan that would be adopted by the current Village Board and that will be used by the Current Village Board as well as future Village Boards. He added that this plan should be updated constantly as the views and goals for the Village change.

INTRODUCTION OF CPAC MEMBERS AND STAFF

Trustee Al Buthuis stated that he is a small business owner from New Lenox and that when he ran for Trustee, he saw the Village as a ship without a rudder and wanted to be a part of getting that changed.

Finance Director **Eric Dubrowski** stated that he is the Finance Director for Villa Park and is the liaison for the plan and to help provide insight. He added that the best way to contact him is through email at ericd@vppd.org.

Community Development Director **Shubhra Govind** stated that she has been with the Village of Villa Park for about 6 months now and is excited to be a part of shaping the future of the Village. She added that it is up to this group to decide how this plan will be formed and what land uses are intended for various areas. Director Govind stated that the Comprehensive Plan can be very specific or a general plan for all commissions and boards to utilize and that the plan from 1984 provides a good skeleton for the plan but needs updating. Director Govind stated that she had issued an RFP to hire consultants to assist the Village in drafting the plan. The RFP outlines the expectations/role of the consultant as well as the anticipated process. She added that the deadline for the RFP is March 14, 2008 and will be working with the two Trustees, Manager Niemann and Director Dubrowski to narrow down and select the consultant.

Scott Shepherd stated that he is a seven year resident and is on the Environmental Concerns

Commission. He stated that he has seen this town as stagnant and wants to be able to put his two cents in for the future plan.

Chris Aiello stated that he is a lifelong resident since about 1 ½ years old. He added that he feels he can contribute a lot and that he can help with development related rules.

Dave Casey stated that he is a 20 year resident and owner of Mike's Meat Market. He added that he sees great potential for Villa Park.

Don Murphy stated that he is the owner of the Wreck Room and has invested a lot of money into the Village of Villa Park and wants to invest more with a plan.

Vince Gatto has been a 14 year resident in the past and is now working on another 14 years. He stated that he has heard from a lot of people that Villa Park is stagnant and that it is heading in a bad direction. He added that there is a good Village Board up there right now and that the Village is on the edge of going either direction depending on how we go forward from here. Vince Gatto is also on the Planning and Zoning Commission for Villa Park.

Ron Guidolin is a 40 year resident and has seen the town move up and down and that there is some enthusiasm about the town by both young and old to come up with a future plan. He is also a small business owner on Ardmore Ave and is hoping something will happen with this plan.

Greg Hassler stated that he grew up in Elmhurst and has used the prairie path a lot as a child. He moved to Oak Park but then moved to the South side of Villa Park which reminds him of how the old Elmhurst used to be but that now the town is becoming stagnant. He loves his home and his neighbors and wants to stay in the town for a long time and feels it is his civic duty to get involved.

Michelle Dix stated that she loves Villa Park and Mike's Meat Market. She grew up in the South Suburbs and bought her first home on the North Side of Villa Park. Hoping that the town will develop on the North Side.

Carol Marcus stated that she is a 54 year resident and loves this town. She wants to see development happen and is annoyed by all the money being spent on all these plans with no action. Carol Marcus stated that the Village should be run more like a corporation with the same penny pinching philosophy and run more professionally. She added that there should be a lot more involvement with the residents and more information relayed to the residents. Wants to see more press releases on positive things happening in Villa Park. She is very active in the State and sees how grant money works and that there is currently money available for development. She stated that our old plan was wonderful, but there was no follow through or updates. She is the Chairperson for the Historical Preservation Commission and loves architecture both old and new that would blend in to the existing architecture. She added that people are spending the money on this architecture in town and that we need to help them by adding development.

Carl Timmerman stated that he is a lifelong resident and has a lot of family, young and old in town. He stated that he is on the Traffic and Safety Commission and had been chairman for 3

consecutive terms. Carl Timmerman stated that he loves this town and is glad he is involved. He is a professional truck driver and community activist who really gets involved especially where Traffic and Safety is involved. He added that he sees a lot of people moving out of Elmhurst into Villa Park as Elmhurst is becoming too unaffordable. Carl Timmerman stated that this is a nice community with easy access to all major expressways and he would like to help guide Villa Park in coming up with a master plan for the future.

Dennis Keating is on the Economic Development Commission and resident since 1970. He worked on the original plan in 1984 which was never updated. He stated that the future is here in Villa Park and that it takes time like Ovaltine which took 13 years to get off the ground.

Trustee Cullerton stated that other members that could not be here include Dan Verr who is on Planning and Zoning, Sam Greco who is a business owner as well as on the Summerfest Commission and Rae Rupp Srch who is active with the chamber and former Villa Park President.

DISCUSSION ON VISION STATEMENT

Director Govind stated that she would like to see if there was a common vision on how the town is viewed or on how it would like to be viewed. She added that they would like the Committee to try to come up with a few statements that could become a Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan. Following discussion ensued:

- Don Murphy stated that he would like to see the Village become more uniform in development.
- Vince Gatto stated that we can still keep the “Mayberry feel” with massive development.
- Trustee Cullerton added with respect for the history as far as architecture.

Director Govind inquired if they would like to have certain guidelines in place for developments.

- Vince Gatto suggested that they did but with some room for creativity.
- Carl Timmerman stated that there should be some variety for residential.
- Chris Aiello added that there could be different guidelines for commercial and residential.
- Michelle Dix inquired on how Villa Park got to be known as the Garden Village.
- Carol Marcus explained that Villa Park was always a ‘late bloomer” and that during the depression the gardens are what helped them survive, especially with the prairie path, Villa Park was the prettiest stretch of land
- Chris Aiello stated that it should be culturally diverse.
- Carol Marcus added that they need to maintain the quality of life in Villa Park.

Trustee Cullerton told the committee to think about what Villa Park means to them or what do they think of when they think of Villa Park. Dave Casey stated he thinks of the Prairie Path. Vince Gatto stated that they need to be proactive and jump start development. Chris Aiello suggested that they break up into small groups to discuss ideas and have a leader in each group that can bring back what each group discussed.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES:

Vince Gatto stated that his top three priorities were development, growth and preservation.

Michelle Dix stated there hers were Development, Crime Free Community, Family Orientated/focused.

Ron Guidolin stated to see a downtown area with gardens and more seating in parks, a “green” village and development for residential and businesses. Vince Gatto commented that there is a beautiful garden by the old Post Office, but not in an area that is utilized well for this and stated that one closer to proximity to a “downtown” area should be looked at.

Scott Shepherd stated that for him development and growth were the same meaning for him and would like to see, also a family focused crime free community and preservation were his priorities.

Director Eric Dubrowski asked to explain if by development they meant re-development or new development. Director Shubhra Govind stated that in a mature village re-development would be more likely. Don Murphy used St. Charles as an example of a town that has done a beautiful job of developing. Dennis Keating stated that Crime Free Community and redevelopment should be at the same time, Development and having St. Charles Road as a “downtown area” were his top priorities.

Chris Aiello stated that infrastructure, investor attraction, having someone promoting Villa Park and seeking out business/marketing development, and creation of assets were his top priorities.

Don Murphy stated that his priorities are infrastructure, development and to create and identity for Villa Park.

Greg Hassler stated that he would like to see uniformity in redevelopment, a downtown area and a main street. His thoughts were that Ardmore would make a good main street for Villa Park since all the major Village buildings were along Ardmore. He would like to create an identity for Villa Park and make more family orientated redevelop neighborhoods and preservation.

Carol Marcus stated that environmentally “green” technology like wi-fi, development, preservation and infrastructure were here priorities.

Carl Timmerman stated that he would like to see a stable safe family orientated community for all generations that they would want to stay in community through retirement, make Villa Park attractive to all business not just retail, a diverse tax base and infrastructure.

Chris Aiello commented that the “hodge podge” look was ok for residential but not for commercial property. Greg Hassler state that there could be uniformity and diversity together. Carol Marcus added that St. Charles Rd. is now unsafe and unattractive since becoming five lanes, all the trees are gone and would like to see some beautification of St. Charles Rd and sign control for identity. She stated that 700 people left Villa Park after St. Charles Road did the expansion and that we need to make more pedestrian friendly.

Sam Greco stated that his priorities are infrastructure as he has seen such a decline in the past four years. He believes that this ties in with development as you can’t have development without improvement to the infrastructure. Would like to see a strong downtown area and a “Main Street” as well.

Trustee Cullerton stated that for him Infrastructure was No. 1, and need a long term plan for

roads and sewers. Need to make sure that the infrastructure can handle development. Development is the key focus on North Ave and Roosevelt as for economic development. He stated that he sees St. Charles as more for the small niche businesses. He added that in the long term, we need green space and green technology. Trustee Cullerton gave the example of the Police Department's green roof to show that we take being green to heart. His top three would be infrastructure, economic development and being a green community.

Trustee Bulthuis stated that development, family focused and an enhanced tax base would be his top three priorities.

Director Eric Dubrowski stated that his priorities would be Development, tax base and a downtown area. He stated that Villa Park needs an identity to stand out and have a different edge from the other communities.

Guest Trustee Blankensop stated that we need to show who we are and what we have to offer, buying power in Villa Park to attract business. Need a Public Relations person.

Director Govind stated that perhaps out of the priorities the committee could come up with a mission statement.

Vince Gatto inquired if the Committee has a say in who is picked to be the consultant for the committee. Director Govind stated that the main panel would narrow down to three and bring the recommendations to the committee.

DISCUSSION ON SUB-AREAS OF THE VILLAGE

Director Govind stated that the committee should pick categorize and break strategies down and inquired on how the town should be divided. While the Village could be simply divided into 6 or 8 sections, or she suggested dividing the focus areas into 'Corridors' and 'Nodes' each with different development guidelines.

Carol Marcus stated that dividing into corridors and nodes made more sense to her. Trustee Cullerton stated that he thought North Avenue and St. Charles Road should not look the same developmentally. Don Murphy inquired if St. Charles Road could have the turn lane made into an island with cut outs for turn areas. Carl Timmerman stated that the actual Road would not be wide enough for truck turn around with this.

After some discussion Director Govind made a list of corridors being:

- North Avenue;
- Roosevelt Rd.,
- St. Charles Rd.
- Prairie Path;
- Ardmore; and
- Villa Ave.

She made a list of nodes being:

- The TOD area;
- The Prairie Path and Ardmore area; and
- The Prairie Path and Villa Ave. area.

Don Murphy suggested that Villa would make a great downtown area. Director Dubrowski stated that there are downtown areas as well as business districts.

Trustee Cullerton stated that things are still continuing while we meet and to think about areas that are currently being done like Villa Ave where the infrastructure is being redone. Don Murphy stated that we need specific time frames on road projects for business areas and give the company's deadlines to follow or be fined.

Director Govind also suggested that "gateways" be created into Villa Park to go with the identity.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS HOMEWORK

Director Govind stated that she would like everyone to identify strengths (for example good quality of life), threats or weaknesses and opportunities. Director Govind inquired if the committee would like to have any guest speakers from other towns. She suggested towns like Northbrook and Elmhurst who are doing well and have an established image that we could learn from. Carol Marcus stated that Glen Ellyn just completed their comprehensive plan and that Forest Park used to be a really bad area and have recently transformed into a new beautiful area.

DISCUSSION ON FUTURE MEETING DATES

Trustee Bulthuis asked if we should keep the meetings the first Monday of the month and if it should be the same time. After some discussion it was decided that the first Monday would work but to change the time to 7:30p.m. Carol Marcus suggested e-mailing SWOT homework prior to next meeting to save time and was agreed upon by the committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee will be April 7, 2008 at 7:00p.m. in the Village of Villa Park board room.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer C. Johnson

Secretary