



## **Remarks Data for December 19th, 2023 Village Council Meeting**

**Agenda Section:** Comments of a General Nature

**Agenda Item:** Comments of a General Nature

**Commenter:** Clifford A. Grammich

**Comment:** I wish to comment on two issues regarding "Traffic Study 9," including the possible elimination of on-street parking on Fairmount between 55th and 59th (MOT 2023-10145 M).

First, regarding the stop sign recommendations, while I am not familiar with every specific one, I support all those with which I am familiar, including for reasons council members noted at their 12/12 meeting. In particular, I believe (1) replacing yield signs with stop signs will make streets safer for pedestrians, (2) installing "all-way" stop signs at 59th and Blodgett, 61st and Blodgett, and 61st and Grand will make walking to school safer for students at both Fairmount Elementary School and O'Neill Middle School, and (3) installing "all-way" stop signs at 61st and Grand can also help "calm" traffic on Grand between 59th and 63rd, a stretch on which there is currently no stop signs, and which occasionally attracts motorists seeking an alternative to Fairview.

Second, I was surprised to see the village is still seriously considering the elimination of on-street parking on Fairmount between 55th and 59th. I suspect any resident who attended the presentation of the study to the Transportation and Parking Commission and heard the subsequent discussion would be equally surprised. The resident consensus against that proposal appeared to be strong and unanimous--so strong, in fact, that I can understand why residents assumed their message had been delivered clearly and didn't feel a need to make their concerns about that known again this past week. Beyond that, while I appreciate the fact that, should parking be restricted on 59th, there would still be parking available on adjacent side streets, this option would not exist on Fairmount. There are no side streets crossing Fairmount in that four-block stretch. Furthermore, there is no parking on 55th Street, and the village is proposing eliminating parking on 59th. I assume that means that the closest on-street parking for residents of or visitors to that area would be at least one and as many as three blocks away.

I'd agree something needs to be done about traffic on Fairmount, which had the highest speeds recorded in the study. But you may wish to reconsider anything that would completely eliminate on-street parking there.

Many thanks for your consideration.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Harriet Plumpp

**Comment:** I have witnessed dangerous driving speeds by old to young drivers on Fairmount Avenue between 59th and 55th Street. Allowing Vehicles to park on Fairmount Ave slows these speeders down. When any driver is forced to share a "lane of traffic" it makes them aware of speed and they have to stop speeding. My husband and I have owned our home for over 11 years. Our children are in elementary and high school. We walk and ride our bikes to school and to the bus and have witnessed high speed drivers come down or go up our street. It is very scary. Having parked cars on our street does slow them down. Please keep Fairmount Ave a parking street. Because we are a direct route to O'Neill and to the YMCA parents and Members of the Y are often guilty of speeding. Can there be narrowing areas added to our 3 block strip? Can two permanent speed detector be placed on our street? Please do not prohibit parking on our street. Thank you, Harriet Plumpp

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Jennifer and Joseph Galvan

**Comment:** We are residents at 5540 Fairmount Ave and we are vehemently opposed to banning parking on one side or both sides of Fairmount Ave between 55th and 59th Street

Fairmount Ave between 55th and 59th is a very long street with no side streets. Parking for residents all times of year for guests, elderly residents would have to walk 3-4 blocks to get to most of the houses. Larger families with multiple vehicles trying to move cars around and many of the houses have single driveways making it impossible to move cars around.

In addition, where would landscaping trucks, tree trimmers, Comcast, Comed, Contractors like HVAC, plumbers, electricians, maintenance, and other maintenance vehicles park?

I would argue that allowing parking on Fairmount increases community involvement. There are many events at Patriots Park where Fairmount Ave is overflow parking. Events like cross country meets, swim meets and parties at the Swim and Racquet Club, large picnics, fishing derby and other club events, etc.

School events at O'Neill Middle School including:

- parent teacher
- open house
- pick up and drop off sports
- baseball
- softball
- Panther football practice
- YMCA and events, camps, etc.

In January, the annual district 58 science fair where hundreds of students bring there hard worked science projects to O'Neill Middle School. Where are all those families going to park?

You will be creating a hardship for the residents of the 55 homes who live on Fairmount Ave impacting our property value and increasing the safety risk on Fairmount. Vehicles parked on the street are just about the only thing slowing cars down on Fairmount Ave. You will be creating raceway down Fairmount increasing the risks of the residents and the VERY FEW bicyclists on Fairmount Ave.

Jennifer (25 year resident of DG) and Joseph (52 year resident of DG) Galvan  
5540 Fairmount Ave.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10109 I. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 635 59th Street for the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Christopher Franchi

**Comment:** I'm a resident of Dearborn Parkway in Downers Grove that is concerned about the traffic and bus lane planning for O'Neil middle school. I don't believe that the plans adequately address the safety of children or the traffic concerns of the

neighborhood. Any redesign plans should focus on keeping traffic out of the neighborhood and the buses off the street, which these plans do not adequately address.

Key areas of concern:

- The plans presented keep the existing layby lane and expand it while keeping it in use for bus pickup at the end of the day. These points in the day cause substantial traffic problems for the neighborhood and frustrated drivers, understandably, find alternative routes and will at times ignore the bus stop signs at high rates of speed. Cars will fly down my street to get away from the bus congestion that locks up the neighborhood for an extended period of time.
- The new drop off bus lane splits the sidewalk on Blodgett that is a primary thoroughfare for children walking to Fairmount Elementary creating a new point of child safety having to cross another major traffic point. While bus drivers tend to be more aware of children walking across the street/sidewalk children and other motorists that might use that as a cut through wont. This is a major safety concern for children.
- The plans don't address parent pickup and drop off where kids scatter across the neighborhood trying to find their parents. There should be more thoughts put into how to improve the pickup and drop off considerations of parents not just buses.

Potential Solution:

The existing pickup/drop off layby lane on 59th should be moved closer to the school and be a dedicated lane for busses that has physical separation from 59th street that takes the busses off of the street and allowing traffic to flow without stopping on 59th street. The space exists already, and this wouldn't require adding a new road that splits up the Blodgett sidewalk.

Thank you for your consideration  
Chris Franchi

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10110 J. Ordinance: Adopting an Institutional Master Plan for the Property Located at 635 59th Street, Commonly Known as the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Stacey Gruenwald

**Comment:** I'm a resident of Dearborn Parkway in Downers Grove that is concerned about the traffic and bus lane planning for O'Neill middle school. I don't believe that the plans adequately address the safety of children or the traffic concerns of the neighborhood. Any redesign plans should focus on keeping traffic out of the

neighborhood and the buses off the street, which these plans do not adequately address.

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- The plans don't address parent pickup and drop off where kids scatter across the neighborhood trying to find their parents. There should be more thoughts put into how to improve the pickup and drop off considerations of parents not just buses.

Potential Solution:

I would like the village to reconsider the North Loop Drive option. I believe the considered option creates a bigger safety risk to students of both O'Neill and Fairmount. I believe with proper education, supervision and scheduling a double bus lane will work in the North Loop. It will prevent disruption to Blodgett, traffic concerns on 59th st and allow for safer route for pick up of O'Neill students. Come on I know we can do better. Thank you for listening.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10110 J. Ordinance: Adopting an Institutional Master Plan for the Property Located at 635 59th Street, Commonly Known as the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Sarah David

**Comment:** Please reconsider approving the plan to Oneill middle school until the district adds a bus lane away from 59th street. Residents would like a specific driveway added (arc) so that traffic can flow normally during bus loading times. Student safety should be #1 and being close to the street is not safe. The principal or staff is often directing traffic at the corner of 59th and Fairmount. This is also unsafe and unsustainable. I often see drivers drive past busses with their stop arm out. I also don't think it's a good idea to mix car an bus traffic in the back of the school like the plan

proposes in the plan. Please ask the district to do this the right way and make a bus lane at ONeill like they are making at herrick.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10121 K. Ordinance: Amending Certain Traffic Control, Parking and Speed Provisions and Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements

**Commenter:** Rebecca J. Wing

**Comment:** I reside (for over 20 years) on Fairmount Ave. between 55th Steet and 59th Street and am vehemently opposed to any ordinance that who prohibit parking on either side of the Street. To ban parking on this stretch of Fairmount Ave. in essence would be to make residents, guest and service providers walk over 3 blocks to find parking that cannot be accommodated by a residence's driveway. Such a restriction would have a negative impact on our property values and would create a hardship on most residents.

Additionally, I am opposed to any bike lane being created on Fairmount Ave. between 55th Street and 59th Street. There is an existing biking path ½ block East of Fairmount Ave. in Patriot Park.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10121 K. Ordinance: Amending Certain Traffic Control, Parking and Speed Provisions and Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements

**Commenter:** Mike Populorum

**Comment:** I agree it is a good idea to address issues with car speed on both 59th St and Fairmount Ave, but to take away parking on Fairmount is not fair to existing residents and I don't understand the benefit. I can only assume the staff who voted to remove parking on both sides do not live on Fairmount. I do see bike riders on our street but not to a degree where I understand the need for bike lanes. Not a lot of people enjoy riding south of 55th up the hill on Fairmount, so it is largely people who bike frequently and safely. I have 3 college age kids living at home during the summer and I see more of a bike safety issue if they have to keep pulling in and out of the driveway all day to move cars vs. allowing them to park in the street. While I don't see the need to remove parking on either side of the street, I would hope the council will make the right decision to preserve parking on at least one side of the street. I appreciate the consideration of my feedback.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10109 I. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 635 59th Street for the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Kremer

**Comment:** Please recommend reconsidering the North Loop Drive for buses. I believe with proper scheduling, education and supervision - 6th - 8th graders can navigate a double bus lane. I think the safety risk is far lower than adding an access road that bisects Blodgett which has a high traffic of walkers during the same time as buses would use the access road. I worked in District #117, and they redid their bus drop offs, that didn't involve the traffic.

As I walk alot I see ksometimes students not walking to the corners to be crossed. In addition, all these years we've listend to the bus drivers honking their horns, it gets old, and you do worry about safety.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10110 J. Ordinance: Adopting an Institutional Master Plan for the Property Located at 635 59th Street, Commonly Known as the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Kristy Williams

**Comment:** I'm a resident of Dearborn Parkway in Downers Grove that is concerned about the traffic and bus lane planning for O'Neill middle school. Our street dead-ends directly into O'Neill at the south end and Patriot Park at the north end. We have no way to enter our street when coming from the west except via 59th Street. As an example, if I go to the Jewel at Main and 63rd and come home right when school is letting out and the buses have their stop signs out, re-routing is extensive as we cannot enter Dearborn Parkway off of Fairmount. I either have to go down Fairmount all the way to 55th and around the park and back in via 57th, or I have to wait it out. Same issue if I need to leave my house and go west at the time when the buses have stopped traffic, there's no easy way to go that doesn't require me going out of my way when 59th is blocked. The buses also aren't always there at the same time of day depending on different dismissal times, etc. Then there's the issue of other cars not obeying the bus stop signs and either going through or being confused about stopping.

Solution idea:

Create a new pickup/drop off "U" shaped lane closer to the school near the layby lane that's currently on 59th so that it could be a dedicated lane for buses that has physical separation from 59th street. I've seen this type of circle drive-in lane at many other schools and there's already room on the property to create that kind of lane. That would

remove the buses off of 59th street and allow traffic to flow as the buses wouldn't need to extend their stop signs. It would also keep kids safer.

Thank you for your consideration.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10109 I. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 635 59th Street for the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Marina Jovanovic Davis

**Comment:** We live at 546 59th Street which is the house directly north of the T-intersection of 59th and Blodgett. We have observed, experienced and heard the flow and activity in this intersection for more than fifteen years, having three students attend both schools and crossing there regularly. We have several concerns with the new proposed plans for the roads around O'Neill as well as the stormwater revisions.

With regards to the proposed plan to 59th Street. Initially it seemed as if the goal was to make the streets bordering O'Neill school safer for our neighborhood by moving the buses off the street as much as possible. Extending and adding a bi-lane on 59th which runs the length from Fairmount to Blodgett streets is extending the area of that stretch of road with buses. We understand it is to accommodate adding more students and thus more buses however that intersection has been until now a high visibility crosswalk. Adding buses up close to that intersection in the afternoon will dramatically reduce visibility particularly during a time when that intersection will be crossed by students from both Fairmount and O'Neill schools as well as other pedestrians. Passing the plan in its leading proposal would be a huge oversight in safety. Also we are not looking forward to cars blocking our driveway as well as all the other houses of our neighbors to the east and west when there is a backup from the intersection to Fairmount once all of the busses engage their stop signs.

Instead, we would like you to strongly reconsider the North Loop drive option with a double lane for buses. If safety rules were implemented and supervised such as having absolutely no bus movement of the buses until all students had loaded on, the double lane would be beneficial by having students' movements away from the street/bi-lane.

With regards to stormwater we are very concerned. Due to the Dearborn Street hill to the north, our area gets a lot of stormwater. We have reported this to the village numerous times over the years. Several years ago the village tried to improve the issue by putting a pipe diagonally across 59th in front of our house toward the intersection.

We are concerned that the new proposed O'Neill additions and revised stormwater site runoff will affect our area. Please make certain that there will not be any kind of increase of water flow, run-off or back up in the area of the T-Intersection of Blodgett and 59th.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Kind regards,  
Marina and Keir Davis  
546 59th Street, Downers Grove

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Dan and Michelle Buie

**Comment:** We STRONGLY oppose any alternative which reduces or eliminates the on-street parking that currently exists on Fairmount Ave. Our street is a continuous, uninterrupted half-mile long roadway with NO cross streets. If on-street parking was eliminated, our visitors would be required to park either a HALF-MILE AWAY on 59th Street, or alternatively a QUARTER-MILE AWAY on the opposite side of 55th Street, which would then require them to walk back across busy 55th Street to get our home!

It is also important to consider that Fairmount Ave currently provides much needed overflow parking for both Patriot's Park and O'Neill School, and for the daily drop-off and pick-up by parents of O'Neill School students.

In addition Fairmount Ave is a pedestrian-friendly roadway with public sidewalks on both sides of the street. And please note there is already an existing paved bike/pedestrian pathway that runs from the entrance to Patriot's Park on Dearborn Ave and through the park over to 55th Street. This existing bike path is only about 500 feet east of Fairmount Ave!

We are also opposed to installing a median on Fairmount Ave due to the uninterrupted length of our street. If something must be done, then our strong preference is for Alternative A. This common sense alternative continues to allow for on-street parking on both sides and will not greatly hinder daily travel along our street.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** ORD 2023-10109 I. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 635 59th Street for the O'Neill Middle School

**Commenter:** Colleen Enger

**Comment:** Hello, I am a resident located on Dearborn Parkway and 57th Street, close to O'Neill. I am writing with regards to the plan for the buses when the middle school addition takes place. I am very concerned with the plan that the buses will remain on 59th Street post-referendum project. On a very regular basis, I witness cars that pass stopped buses, with stop arms raised, on 59th Street. As I walk my child to/from Fairmount, I often hear a chorus of horns, and I don't even have to look to know what has happened....I have seen it enough to know that a car has become frustrated and decided to drive past stopped buses with their stop signs swung out. This is a safety hazard for the students. As a driver, I know the inconvenience of waiting for the buses, and if the district and village are committing to this project, it needs to be done correctly for the safety of pedestrians and drivers. Please consider some sort of driveway along 59th Street for the buses or further brainstorming ideas that will lead to a safe neighborhood. Thank you!

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Scott Larson

**Comment:** The issue on Fairmount Avenue is a speeding issue. I am not sure why staff of the Village is attempting to prohibit parking on both sides of the street - that does nothing to limit/minimize vehicles speeding between 55th and 59th Street. This was not an option that the committee on the Study had recommended.

A solution that may be favorable to the residents on this portion of Fairmount would be "speed bumps" / tables as being utilized on other DG streets.

Prohibiting parking on the street does not stop speeding.

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**Agenda Section:** Comments of a General Nature

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**Commenter:** David Rose

**Comment:** What will it take for the VC, DG, and ECC to take environmental sustainability as a real and serious goal?

The resuscitated ECC met for the second time Thu, 14 Dec.

Main agenda item of the meeting: discuss the 'Sustainability Plan' of certain other municipalities who have signed onto the Greenest Region Compact.

In attendance at the meeting:

i) two staff members — the VM and the person serving as temp staff to the ECC ('temp' until the new "sustainability" coordinator joins the staff).

ii) two ECC members not present at the Nov meeting, the ECC chair, and one of the other three members who attended the Nov meeting. [In other words, both meetings managed a quorum, but only two of the members attended both meetings.]

iii) three members of the public: a rep of the Greener Grove org, the head of the Pierce Downer Heritage Alliance (who also attended the first meeting), and myself.

By my take, much of the members' discussion reinforced my concern that the plans examined and thereby VC's objective and ECC's recommendations in developing a plan for DG amount to what I refer to as conscience laundering, i.e., an effort to make muni residents feel good about themselves for doing something rather than doing nothing.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, I pointed out that none of the plans examined define sustainability in a way that involved assessment of the current level of sustainability and enumeration of a target level of sustainability that the individual metrics of a muni's plan are purportedly trying to reach. Instead, the plans follow conventional political logic: the objective is simply to improve, to be "better than before" on those metrics.

As such, I again raised my concern that people do not understand the seriousness of the problem AND that the Greenest Region Compact (GRC) fails to serve as a mechanism by which to address it.

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

A key part of the problem is the definition of sustainability. Some of the sustainability plans examined don't even specify a definition.

Those that do usually duplicate/piggyback off definitional ideas used at the international level, defining sustainability (to quote the Hoffman Estates Sustainability Plan) as follows:

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As defined by the 1987 Brundtland Report, sustainability is an effort to, “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs,” and create a world that is “bearable, equitable, and viable.”

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Yet, to my knowledge NO political entity provides an adequate operationalization of what that means in practice. “Better than before” is NOT the same as “sustainable.”

So I repeated my assertion, made multiple times in remarks to VC and also at the Nov meeting: sustainability should/must be understood as a rate of resource consumption issue. By definition the set of resources humans consume must be consumed at a sustainable rate. That's the rigorous definition of environmental sustainability (ENVS) one must use if one is serious about achieving a sustainable way of living.

By then dividing resources into two types, renewable and non-renewable, the objective means

a) renewable resources must be consumed at a rate equal to, and for safety's sake, less than the rate at which they renew.

b) for non-renewable resources, consumption must shift to relying on renewable resources, because by definition non-renewable resources deplete.

And therein lies the fundamental problem.

Because when one examines the historical pattern, one is confronted by the fact just the opposite has happened. Unsustainable rates of renewable resource consumption have been overcome in recent centuries by humans shifting to using non-renewable

resources. The most crucial of those shifts is the one by which humans produce energy in its various forms.

What people living in rich nations deem their 'normal' way of living relies completely on using fossil fuels for energy. That energy and the energy-slaves (machines) it feeds amplify the amount of work done — and the resulting real (aka non-financial) wealth — in those societies.

So in short, with humans in rich nations ignoring up till now the issue of ENVIS, we're now forced to confront the hugely difficult question of what to do about our past (willful?) ignorance and past and present profligacy.

That understanding is not found in the GRC and thus is NOT the goal of the GRC framework.

Which to me means the fundamental question facing the VC in formulating and ECC in recommending a plan is:

\*) Is the purpose of DG's sustainability plan to launder consciences by following the GRC,

\*) or is the purpose to deal with the real problem, namely the fact that our current way of living is NOT sustainable?

As I said at the ECC meeting, what's the point of proposing and implementing a sustainability plan if it fails to deal with the real problem?

## HOW SERIOUS IS THE PROBLEM?

By coincidence, the most recent of the COP meetings, COP28, just ended. The COPs are international gatherings ostensibly intended to reduce global CO2 emissions, among other chemical contributors to climate change.

The 30 year effort has been a colossal failure.

Participants in COP28 celebrated coming to an agreement that included language about "reducing dependence on fossil fuels." Is that a big deal? Not really. For the ongoing reason that the commitments called for are voluntary with no enforcement mechanism for any nation failing to meet its target.

For its part, the US continues trying to have it both ways:

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/u-s-cop28-hypocrisy-fossil-fuels>

David Wallace-Wells' piece "What no one at COP28 wanted to say out loud: Prepare for 1.5 degrees" for the New York Times (Online) New York Times Company. Dec 15, 2023 includes this telling ...

excerpt +++++

"to avoid really dangerous warming required cutting global emissions almost in half by 2030. We are now halfway through that period, and emissions are higher than they were when the report was published."

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The report and period referenced above is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's "Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees Celsius," published in 2018.

Target date = 2030. Target objective = Lower global CO2 emissions by 50%.

So, have the various munis following the GRC lowered their CO2 emissions consistent with COP objectives? Surely, I jest.

As I remarked at the Dec meeting, I doubt any of the munis have a clue what the level of CO2 emissions of their way of living even is.

Which should also suggest why I scoff when for example VC congratulates itself for winning a greenest fleet award.

Q1: How much difference did the 'green fleet' make in reducing CO2 emissions by village vehicles?

Q2: What's VC's target date and amount for reducing village vehicle CO2 emissions?

Q3: for all vehicles owned and operated by village residents?

Q4: for all vehicles residents rely upon to maintain the village's way of living?

Are you starting to see the problem here?

Two of the ECC members actually explicitly commented at the Dec meeting that dealing with climate change was not a problem the plan could or should address!! Neither of the other two members disagreed with that sentiment, as far as I could tell.

So reducing CO2 emissions from current levels? Not ECC's job.

Likewise, ECC member pushback to my criticisms amounted to saying, "Yes, DG's plan is going for conscience laundering. We want people to feel good about themselves for achieving the plan's goals. So we can't set the goals too high."

Such an attitude is not surprising because even the people on the scientific frontier admit they don't have a clue what to do about humanity's ongoing failure to move toward a sustainable way of living.

Which is precisely why their default presumption is that little will be done until TSHTF!

AND TS Is HTF!

Right now, gasoline prices at the pump in the US are relatively low. Something to cheer, right?

What better time then to go out and buy/lease that big gas-guzzling expression of personal and national superiority!

By way of convenient, coincident exposition: Nate Hagens posted another podcast around 15 Dec, in what amounts to his ongoing discussion with petrol geologist Art Berman about oil (-equivalent) supplies in the US.

The podcast focused on tight (aka fracked shale) oil and its role in domestic and global supplies of 'oil' in recent years:

<https://www.thegreatsimplification.com/episode/101-art-berman>

Note particularly the graph of US oil production displayed at minute 24:10.

It shows conventional petrol supplies have been falling and supplies of tight oil exploding in the last few years.

BUT ...

Berman cautions that the rise in extracted tight oil is likely very near its peak, which means the peak in aggregated supply is also likely very near!!! Aka, peak oil (-equivalents)!!!

If anyone in position of political authority knows this, they are certainly NOT talking about it or doing anything about it.

Which also means:

EVERY muni sustainability plan oblivious to this reality and the need to prepare for it — and none of the plans the ECC examined indicate such awareness and action— is doomed to fail!

Or to be more precise, as they say about medical surgery, The surgery was a success but the patient died. The sustainability plan was a success but the muni 'died' ... because the plan avoided dealing with the real problem(s)!

WHAT WILL WE DO?

Once oil supply has peaked, what will we do?

As I have noted previously, Americans have been seduced to believe we can simply shift to 'renewable energy' and continue living as we have been.

As I keep arguing however, renewable energy cannot replace non-renewable energy in the amounts typically envisioned by proponents. It doesn't scale.

Many political conservatives recognize this but nevertheless endorse continuing on the present path. Mainly because they presume people in rich nations, most notably people in the US, are not prepared to give up their profligate way of living.

See this skeptical example of dealing with our predicament, as described and analyzed by one politically conservative commentator:

<https://mishtalk.com/economics/are-you-willing-to-pay-and-do-your-fair-share-to-address-climate-change/>

His sarcasm is fairly obvious.

Ironically, however, Berman's reaction to the implications of his analysis reveals that even people aware of the problem have no idea how we can avoid the worst.

So the derivative questions are:

i) whose ox is to be gored?

ii) starting when?

""THEY'LL THINK OF SOMETHING""

About ten years ago I gave a presentation on the subject of peak oil to a small group (made up mainly as far as I could tell) of politically conservative and politically involved DG men. The most vocal member of the group offered an answer conservatives want to believe in: "they'll think of something."

What are those somethings? Typically one of two paths, both reliant on new, as-yet-undiscovered and/or proven technology:

Rich guys like Elon Musk imagine (the 'special humans' will be) populating the universe, starting with Mars. That is, humans will continue a circular pattern of 'exploring' and 'settling,' with the reasons for exploring — exploiting and trashing — typically left unstated.

Others hold out hope for unlimited energy allowing humans to continue living on earth, by making possible increasing reliance on energy-slaves to produce ever more real wealth.

The latter, by the way, reflects an implicit assumption that nothing about our current economic system need change and, most notably, that the profit orientation of the capitalist system will incentivize "them" to "think of something."

That understanding implicitly takes the position that since we humans can't change our 'human nature' and the resulting behavior, the only way out of our predicament is to

change non-human nature instead. That is, it's an approach that presumes human nature is eternally fixed in its attributes, i.e., incapable of evolving/changing, either individually or collectively.

I would argue however that most people interpret that belief to be patently false, and instead believe people both individually and collectively are capable of evolving/changing. So the question we should be asking is: can we do so 'fast enough?' [Even religious conservatives believe in the possibility of religious conversion!!! It's what motivates their evangelism!]

In our current situation, then, the pertinent question is: Are people in rich nations willing to simplify their way of living in the time required so that we can dig out of the "resource hole" into which we have dug ourselves?

Or do we/they expect/accept the 'solution' to a system-wide decline of energy slaves to be a reduction in poor and/or subjugated people (both those living in rich nations and those living in the rest of the world). That is, the poor and subjugated will simply have to die/be killed until the resulting drop in population reduces the level of demand enough to achieve the rate of system-wide consumption required for the rest of us to go on living in the manner to which we have grown accustomed? [Handy real life example: Israel-Palestine.]

Framing the matter thusly should suggest why I have been arguing that the problem of ENVIS is at root a socio political economic problem. Which is also to say: if we are serious about achieving sustainability, the problem of socio-political economic inequality must be addressed head-on.

As I keep repeating: when economic growth is foreclosed by resource limits — by the need to shift to a sustainable rate of resource consumption for the system as a whole — the only peaceful way to attain system-wide sustainability is for the rich to reduce their rate of consumption while at the same time the poor lift theirs to a rate consistent with an adequate material level of well being, one that allows everyone to be a productive and responsible citizen.

Indeed, isn't that shared responsibility true regardless of the level of the supply of energy?

If it isn't, then the rich are (implicitly) telling the poor and subjugated that they are inherently subhuman, worthy only of being exploited.

So if oil supply is peaking and about to decline as Hagens and Berman discussed, how should the US plan to lower its rate of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel consumption by 20, 40, and 60% in the not-too-distant future?

How should that reduction be achieved and distributed? by region? in IL? in DuPage County? in DG?

What something(s) will WE think of?

#### WILL WE CHOOSE AND ACT WISELY?

Such stark questions should expunge among the environmentally sensitive the notion/hope that a village's sustainability plan will help raise individual residential property values. Such an attitude/hope is simply another variation on the theme that relatively little about the current economic system and way of living need change.

When current property values are a direct result of our unsustainable way of living (reliant on massive use of energy-slaves), how does a shift to a sustainable way of living raise their current value even higher?

Which is to say: maintaining/raising property values as a preferable (sub)objective of a muni sustainability plan is, by my assessment, simply another version of the desire of exploiters to maintain their exploitative, unsustainable way of living until lots of "someone else" end up holding the (empty) bag when everyone realizes the system and its symbiotic components are in fact unsustainable?

Will residents of DG refuse to pursue a genuinely sustainable way of living because doing so lowers their property's value?

Americans have avoided dealing with these issues since at least Reagan's presidency; indeed, we/they kept digging the resource hole deeper! Especially the richest among us, followed in hot pursuit by the remainder of the upper 50% of the society.

What is to be done?

What will DG choose to do?

Will a consulting firm and new sustainability coordinator coming in 2024 make a difference? Will they fill the gap in expertise and provide the guidance by which VC, DG, and ECC can begin to make ENVS a real goal?

Given the ongoing failures, disinterest, and lack of imagination shown by VC and DG residents more generally, let's just say I hope I will be pleasantly surprised.

So what (do you think it) will take for ENVS to become a real goal in DG? in IL, in the US, throughout the world?

At this juncture, I remain in the set of people who believe current trends suggest movement toward a sustainable way of living will come only when a crisis leaves us no other choice.

But also include me in the set of people urging the environmentally concerned to recognize the wisdom of not waiting until crisis hits before formulating plans to change ... not just one's personal way of living but the system(s) of which one is a part.

Can the American Dream be transformed from one of striving to become richer (make more money) to one of striving to live environmentally sustainably?

Impossible dream? Let's hope not.

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**Agenda Section:** Comments of a General Nature

**Agenda Item:** Comments of a General Nature

**Commenter:** David Rose

**Comment:** ADDENDUM on nuke power as an energy solution

Is nuke power a near-term/transitional/long-term solution to our energy needs?

Believers in nuke power might want to check the caution flag thrown and ponder the ongoing impact of the fukushima nuke plant disaster.

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2023/12/15/fukushima-japans-triple-threat-in-spades/>

excerpt+++++

Over 1 million tons of radioactive cooling water have accumulated in huge tanks at Fukushima. It is collected after groundwater and cooling water has poured over or run through the 900 tons of melted reactor fuel wreckage now lost somewhere under the three power reactors that were rubbished by the March 2011 earthquake-tsunami-melt-through at Fukushima-Daiichi.

Tepco said October 24 that it has finished dumping the second, 7,800-ton batch of radioactive wastewater, according to The Diplomat and AP. The company plans to release 31,200 tons of the wastewater by the end of March 2024. This would drain merely ten of the 1,000 huge tanks that were built onsite since the radiation disaster began. Due to the need to continually cool the ferociously radioactive melted uranium/plutonium fuel cores, follow-on collection of the highly contaminated wastewater will continue indefinitely.

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Hoping that “it can’t happen here” is not plan.

By the way, did you also know that US nuke plants and nuke weapons continue to rely on Russian sources for uranium?

Why? Because that’s where the low cost, high quality stuff comes from these days.

For info, at website

<https://johnhelmer.net>

look for

**“US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES DEPLETED BRAINS & BLACKOUT BILL FOR BANNING IMPORTS OF RUSSIAN URANIUM”**

key excerpt ++++

US Congressmen have adopted the unusual procedure of approving by voice vote – no tally — a ban on imports of Russian uranium to fuel US nuclear reactors. Hidden from the record are the Congressmen who insisted on including a loophole, Section 2, allowing a waiver of the law until January 2028 to keep the lightbulbs in their districts from blacking out.

The Pentagon also insisted on a loophole, Section 3A, allowing a waiver so that the manufacture of depleted uranium munitions for the Israeli, Ukrainian, and US armies, as well as nuclear warheads for tactical and strategic missiles aimed at Russia, will not be cut off from their Russian import source.

One-fifth of the US electricity supply is dependent on the special enrichment quality of imported Russian uranium ...

...

..According to the World Nuclear Association, 17 thousand tons of uranium are required annually for the operation of American nuclear reactors, but uranium production in the States themselves last year amounted to less than 100 tons. Only one uranium enrichment plant in New Mexico remains operational in the United States, and it belongs to the European consortium Urenco (Great Britain, Germany, The Netherlands). All raw materials are imported. The United States is forced to import fuel, in particular from Urenco, which supplies fuel to the United States from European plants, and from Rosatom. ..

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in short, another instance of Americans trying to have it both ways.

[I'm not quite sure I get the logic from Russia's perspective of selling to the US. But you do see the problem, don't you?]

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**Agenda Section:** Comments of a General Nature

**Agenda Item:** Comments of a General Nature

**Commenter:** David Rose

**Comment:** Still more on does a bully have a right to be a bully?

We seem to be witnessing olitical theater of the absurd.

So let me see if I've got this right.

Biden asks Israel to stop indiscriminate bombing because it risks losing international support.

But tells attendees to a hanukah event at the White House that “I am a Zionist.”

And continues the flow of munitions from the US to Israel, as if that were as unstoppable as the flooding of a dam break, and was NOT a central feature (can you say “supply chain”?) making possible Israel’s indiscriminate bombing.

Do Americans buy this nonsense? The rest of the world surely does not; and would be laughing were the results not so tragic.

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/israel-indiscriminate-bombing>

excerpt ++++++

According to Politico, Biden claimed during a closed-door fundraiser in Washington, D.C. that Israel “has most of the world supporting it”—a curious assertion that came on the same day the United Nations General Assembly voted 153-10 on a resolution demanding “an immediate humanitarian cease-fire” in the 67-day war.

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Also worth checking out: Ben Joravsky’s 17 Dec podcast

<https://chicagoreader.com/columns-opinion/podcasts/ben-joravsky-show-podcast-episodes/>

with Doctors Thaer Ahmad and Zaher Sahloul—Gaza Death Trap.

Around 28:00 min they discuss one aspect of the impact of Israel’s destruction of gaza:

water usage per person per day --

in gaza pre-07 Oct = 85 liters/person/day.

in israel = 250 liters

in chicago = 300 liters

international recommended minimum = 100 liters

in gaza now = 1.5 liters/person/day!!!

This piece argues starving Gazans is Israel's policy:

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/gaza-starvation>

In light of what is happening, Sen Bernie Sanders finally introduced a resolution purportedly trying to end US complicity in Israel's destruction of Gaza.

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/sanders-cut-off-israel-aid>

Prof John Mearsheimer opposes Israel's destruction in gaza:

<https://mearsheimer.substack.com/p/death-and-destruction-in-gaza>

You can also find his analysis in conversations with Judge Andrew Napolitano.

<https://www.youtube.com/@judgingfreedom/streams>

The US currently has troops in Syria and Iraq, neither of which is legal, i.e., neither is in the country because invited.

And yet the US claims the right to counterattack when those troops are attacked by parties supportive of the Palestinian cause. What is the legal basis for the US claim?

To state the obvious: Israel acts with impunity much like the way the US acts with impunity.

So did Israel learn from US or vice versa?

In that vein, it seems pertinent to ask: is the present outrage about the destruction of Gaza heightened because, like some condensed (in duration) tv drama, the action is easy to follow and demands less of the viewer to understand the storyline? I ask in order to contrast it with the handy example of the US GWOT, the decades-long US fight against 'terrorism', a conflict the US audience was happy not to watch, not that the

American audience got much media coverage it needed to avoid. The GWOT just wasn't the made-for-tv event Israel's destruction of Gaza is.

What's the acceptable kill ratio of Israelis to Palestinians?

What was the acceptable kill ratio (Americans to whomever) the US military applied in its global war on terror?

In its now-years-ago war on Vietnam (and V's neighbors)?

In the current conflict in Ukraine? [Thank you, Ukrainians, for dying so American military personnel don't have to.]

Conveniently, Biden approved release of intelligence estimates of the purported number of Russians killed in Ukraine fighting, just in time to encourage Congress to pass funding measures needed to keep that conflict going.

After all, we don't want to see US troops fighting and dying when Russia subjugates Ukraine and then marches into 'real' NATO countries. Are Americans still buying this line, these claims? Check out any Judging Freedom interview (accessed as above) for counter-arguments.

Speaking of kill ratios ...

This piece about renowned whistle-blower Dan Ellsberg suggests the knowing cruelty of US leaders' nuke war plans puts travesties of prior historical US war-making to shame:

<https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/daniel-ellsberg-2666603186>

"Omnicide," anyone?

MADness, the doctrine was called back then — mutually assured destruction. Some of the baby boom generation marched against it for years.

Have younger generations of Americans been lulled into believing the US can these days win a nuke war? If so, please explain the logic how.

If not, where are the protest marches?

Marches not just against what is happening in the Middle East or Ukraine.

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2023/12/18/israeli-and-american-jews-speak-out-against-horrors-in-gaza/>

But against that way of thinking more generally.

Wish: Peace on earth.

TPTB's favored means of attainment: Over your dead body.

2024, here we come.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Bruce and Linda Denby

**Comment:** We have lived on Fairmount for 23 years and are very opposed to banning parking on one side or both sides of Fairmount Avenue between 55th and 59th street. Currently there is no overnight parking allowed.

First, why were we not notified of this HUGE change in the making? That is not acceptable.

We just had a family Christmas celebration that involved several cars that needed to be parked on the street. That is not to mention year round events, other family celebrations, and house and village maintenance vehicles that need the ability to park. Fairmount is a very long street without any side streets unlike any of the blocks that surround it. It is very unreasonable and I might add unfair compared to the majority of Downers Grove streets to expect people to walk several blocks to get to most of the houses. There is also a steep hill included on Fairmount which adds to that difficulty.

In addition, there are many school, sporting and YMCA events that use the parking on Fairmount Avenue. We have never considered this a problem of which our kids have all grown up on this block.

It is interesting that the TAP was opposed to removing all parking but the Village wants to do that anyway. There are 55 homes on Fairmount Avenue that the Village would create a hardship for, impacting our rights and choices, and the decision we made to buy a house at this address.

Regarding the addition of bike lanes to Fairmount, we have never seen that many bikes on Fairmount. That could be because of the big hill. We do not understand that need and oppose it. That seems like it would decrease safety as there are hills that cause blind spots.

While it is nice to say that there is money in the budget for these changes, we have to wonder if this is the best use of taxpayer money. These changes will not improve safety, will not increase or provide better pedestrian zones and will not provide a good option for bikers (no one wants to bike that hill). On the other side it will greatly inconvenience all residents on the street by making their homes less accessible (one might argue that some in the middle of the street become inaccessible as some people may not be able to traverse the hill after parking ½ mile away to get there) and reduce home values without providing any more safety.

Respectfully,  
Bruce and Linda Denby

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Don Turlek

**Comment:** The recommended action of installing a School Zone 20 MPH limit reads that it is to be running from 59th St, southbound which is the private drive between the Y and O'Neil! The Zone is needed from 59th to run Northbound on Fairmount as far as legally possible

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Carolyn Targosz

**Comment:** Opposed to removal of parking on Fairmount. Opposed to median on Fairmount that prevents driveway access from both sides of the street.

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10145 M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Don Turlek

**Comment:** To address speeding on Fairmount B with parking on both sides plus installation of the landscape median do address speeding. Geese have been wandering the street for 40 years and I have not seen any hit, killed ... rather vehicles slow and stop for them!

The median is engineered to reduce speeding hazards to residents and drivers. Elimination of the median reduces hazards only to geese at the expense of improved safety to people! Priorities???

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**Agenda Section:** Active

**Agenda Item:** MOT 2023-10146 L. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the 59th Street Design Improvements Related to Neighborhood Traffic Study Area #9

**Commenter:** Michael Casella

**Comment:** Regarding MOT 2023-10146, this motion should be tabled until more community input and many questions are answered regarding the street parking ban on 59th street between Fairview and Main Street. The elimination of street parking would place an undue burden on our elderly neighbors who rely on service providers for everyday quality of life. The expansion of O'Neill school, will only bring more school events that also heavily rely on street parking to meet their parking needs. The transportation and parking commission addressed this issue in their recommendation voting 5-1 of option B for the 59th Street Design Alternatives. O'Neill school is not like Herrick who has the luxury of utilizing parking from Downers Grove North. The neighborhood must be heavily involved in this decision, and I feel more time must be given to find a compromised solution. One last note, 59th street is heavily used by bikers currently who often ignore the stop sign at 59th and Fairmount. My concern is

that a buffered dedicated bike lane would cause even more confusion and potential accidents; especially if the plan was to add additional stop signs.