



Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

May 21, 2024

05:30 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Council Attendance (Present): Mayor Barnett, Commissioner Hosé, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Tully, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Glover, Commissioner Tully (arrived at 6:08 p.m.), Commissioner Davenport

Council Attendance (Not Present): none

Non-Voting: Village Manager Dave Fieldman, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, and Village Clerk Rosa Berardi

MOTION: Move to Recess Until 6 p.m.

RESULT: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: Commissioner Hosé

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

AYES: Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

NAYES: None

3. Executive Session

A. Convene into Executive Session Pursuant to Section 2(c)(3) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider the selection of a person to fill a public office which the Village Council is given power to appoint under law or ordinance.

MOTION: To convene into closed session pursuant to Section 2(C)(1) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body. He further moved to convene into closed session pursuant to section 2(C)(3) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, to consider the selection of a person to fill a public office as defined in the Act, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance.

RESULT: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: Commissioner Hosé

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

AYES: Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

NAYES: None

Commissioner Tully joined the meeting.

The Meeting adjourned into Executive Session at 6:08 p.m.

4. Call to Order (7:00 p.m. – Reconvene into Open Session)

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

5. Proclamations**A. Public Works Week**

Mayor Barnett presented to proclamation to the Village Public Works Director Dave Moody.

B. EMS Week

Mayor Barnett presented the proclamation to the Downers Grove Fire Department staff: Chief Spinazola and Deputy Chiefs Pekelder, and McGivney.

6. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2024-10204 — A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – May 14, 2024

MOTION: To adopt the Meeting Minutes of the May 14, 2024, Village Council Meeting, as presented.

RESULT: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: Commissioner José

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

AYES: Commissioners José, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

NAYES: None

7. Public Comments

Mayor Barnett explained the protocol for the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Clorinda Greco, Downers Grove business owner, suggested the first floor of the Parking Deck be reserved only for customer parking and suggested that residential parking be moved to the top floor.

Warner Kiunte, resident, expressed appreciation to the Fire Department for their EMS services. He spoke of Juneteenth, and asked the Village Council to present a proclamation in honor of it.

Janet Whittingham, resident, shared concerns about insufficient parking in the downtown, including issues with the library parking lot being full during the day at non-peek hours. She asked the Council to compromise and resolve the parking issues in downtown.

Ed Briner, resident, gave thanks to the Downers Grove Fire Department. He spoke of his disappointment with the removal of Trustee Bill Nienburg and his concerns with Library staff and the current Library Board. He asked the Council to investigate and address any issues.

Christine Martin, resident, expressed concerns with parking spaces that have been taken up by outdoor dining and had specific questions about how that works.

Mayor Barnett said that there are agreements in place and he would get her a response with that information at a later time.

Selma Moberg, resident, expressed concerns with trying to navigate through the downtown by car, stating that the concrete dividers on street for outdoor dining make it difficult.

Ian Ogdon, resident, thanked the Fire Department for their EMS services and expressed concerns with the infrastructure in the area.

Jim Kelly, resident, expressed disappointment in his dealings with the Village related to his work. He also expressed concerns with the condition of the newspaper boxes at the train station, and the cleanliness of the station and Village sidewalks.

8. Consent Agenda

COR 2024-10202 — A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6553, Payroll - May 03, 2024

BIL 2024-10203 — B. Bills Payable: No. 6802 - May 21, 2024

RES 2024-10373 — C. Resolution: Approve an Extension to the Agreement with Microsystems, Inc. for the Scanning of Village Files into Digital Format

Summary: This resolution authorizes a contract extension with Microsystems, Inc. of Northbrook, Illinois, for the scanning of Village files into digital format in the amount of \$20,000, bringing the total not-to-exceed price to \$94,041.00.

RESOLUTION 2024-45

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION TO THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND MICROSYSTEMS, INC

MOTION: To adopt the Consent Agenda of the May 21, 2024, as presented.

RESULT: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: Commissioner Hosé

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

AYES: Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

NAYES: None

9. Active Agenda

ORD 2024-10310 — A. Ordinance: Authorizing a Special Use for 902 Maple Avenue to Permit Construction of a Three-Story Multi-Family Building

Summary: This Ordinance authorizes a special use in the Downtown Transition (DT) Zoning District to permit the construction of a three-story multi-family building with five units.

MOTION: To adopt AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SPECIAL USE FOR 902 MAPLE AVENUE TO PERMIT CONSTRUCTION OF A THREE-STORY MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING, as presented. **ORDINANCE 6050**

RESULT: Motion carried unanimously by roll call.

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: Commissioner Hosé

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

AYES: Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

NAYES: None

Public Comments

Al Domanskis, attorney for the petitioner, introduced Gytis Aranauskas, one of the owners of 902 Maple Avenue. Mr. Aranauskas explained that as the developer, he will take care of the site. He also stated that he has lived in Downers Grove since 2005, and shared that his brother, also an owner, is looking to move into the top floor of the proposed building. He said they have been listening to all of the feedback and made many changes, as requested.

Architect Simon Batistich said he has worked with this developer in the past. He shared that after listening to the Plan Commission meeting, and to the Village Council and residents, he worked with the Village and developer to redesign the building. He used a presentation to show images reflecting the changes made to the proposed building. The Downers Grove Design Guidelines were reviewed, and Mr. Batistich explained how they relate to the development. Then he reviewed some of the highlights of the building and gave further details about the changes that were made.

Attorney Domanskis returned the podium and explained that the engineer on this project was also in the audience to respond to any questions.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Davenport said that the four items of concern, that were brought up at the last Council meeting, were addressed. He thinks that the spirit of the Downtown Design Guidelines has been met with the latest proposal. He further stated that pushing this into any further direction would affect the style of the building, and that is not the intention. The Council's job is to approve the Special Use and to be sure that the requirements have been met.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said after speaking with the neighbors, she wanted to ask about the potential of putting up a fence and arborvitae at the north edge of the property.

Attorney Domanskis explained that this was reviewed with the neighbor to the north and they received the OK to proceed with the plan. He mentioned concerns with the roots of an existing tree, but that they would continue to work with the neighbor on that as well.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that because this project borders a neighborhood, she wanted to be sure that the landscaping incorporated includes native planting, especially on the Washington side of the property - this would provide a neighborhood feel.

Attorney Domanskis said the developer has concerns that the size of the trees (and things of that nature) could possibly cause sight line issues with the traffic at the corner.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she was not thinking trees, perhaps more like planters. She asked if there will be a Home Owners Association for the condominiums.

Mr. Domanskis confirmed there will be a Home Owners Association. He said that for the first two years, the developers are responsible for the landscaping and anything after that would be the responsibility of the Association.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt asked if the same would be true of the permeable pavers and things like that. Attorney Domanskis confirmed that.

Commissioner José explained he was not at the last couple of meetings when this was discussed and thanked his colleagues for their comments. He said because of their feedback, this went from a project he would not have voted for, to one that he intends to vote for. The Commissioner explained that the revised plans follow the Design Guidelines better now, and further commented that he thinks the traffic due to this will be minimal. He continued by stating that other uses, that could be built on this property by right, could cause significantly more issues with traffic. Commissioner José then read from the Municipal Code and explained this is proposed plan is for multi-family residential and this property is zoned for this purpose. He this meets the zoning and Design Guidelines.

Commissioner Gilmartin thanked Commissioner Davenport for articulating what his peers were thinking at the last meeting. He said he agrees with Commissioner José in that he would not have supported the initial proposal, further stating what could be built, by right, could have been worse – with a larger footprint. He thanked the developer and architect for coming to a compromise. He said this is the first time the Downtown Design Guidelines have been used specifically for the Downtown Transition District, and he thinks that this could be an opportunity to take a look at making changes. He also thinks this is an opportunity for the Council to reflect, moving forward, on how the Design Guidelines could be made better and how they want to use them. Commissioner Gilmartin said that he intends to support this.

Commissioner Tully said he agrees with his peers. He said the nuts and bolts of the requirements have been met and this plan is less dense and smaller than what it could be. The Commissioner emphasized that something much different could have been built on this property, and without welcoming the kind of discussions and community involvement as this has brought. He said when the zoning of this parcel was changed, this was something that was contemplated. He explained this is less intense and less dominating than what it could have been before that change. He said he could not speak to the style, and then referred to the same section of the Municipal Code that Commissioner José did, stating that this is expressly authorized as a Special Use and it meets all of the requirements.

Commissioner Tully said he also appreciates the way Commissioner Davenport articulated what he and his peers were thinking, and further stated that what was being looked at on April 9, 2024, versus the current renderings, are vastly different because the plans have been altered to fit in the neighborhood better. The Commissioner thanked the residents, his peers, and the developer for their input and work. He said this meets the Design Guidelines and the criteria for a Special Use under the Municipal Code.

Public Comment

Rebecca Edelman, resident, said that she is from the Whittier Community and that crossing at the Washington and Maple intersection is a right of passage for every kid in her community. She went on to express concern about the safety of that intersection.

Selma Moberg, resident, expressed concern and requested the Council vote against this and maintain the Village's history. She also expressed concerns with overdevelopment and with the Washington and Maple intersection.

Ian Ogdon returned to podium and asked the owner of the property why he will build a modern building after tearing down a historic building.

Christine Martin returned to podium, read a statement of concern from another resident regarding this development. She requested that the Council consider the effects this will have on the residents.

Katie Callahan, resides next to the proposed development, spoke of her concerns about the development and shared some of her requests of the developer. She also expressed concerns with overdevelopment in the neighborhood.

Maureen Callahan, resident and relative of Katie's, expressed her concerns with the developer and how this will affect the current residents, in particular Katie Callahan. She thanked the Council members for their engagement in this.

Janet Whittingham returned to podium and expressed her concerns with this and about the comments made by Council members regarding what could have been built at this location, by right, that could have been worse. She asked that the zoning of this area and the Design Guidelines be revisited and rewritten.

Forest Moberg, resident, expressed his concerns with this development. He requested that the revised proposal be sent back to the Plan Commission for consideration before the Council votes on this.

Glen Hoffman, resident, said that since this is the first time the Design Guidelines have been used in this area, this could be a learning opportunity. The Council should revisit the Guidelines.

Marshall Schmitt, resident, expressed concern with overdevelopment in Downers Grove and requested that this be sent back to the Plan Commission to determine if this meets the Design Guidelines. He also said that the comments made by the Council, stating the property owner had "the right" to build this, were incorrect because this proposal requires a Special Use permit.

Village Council Comment/Questions

Commissioner Davenport asked what type of foundation is being recommended for the building.

Mr. Batistich said it will be a standard 9 foot foundation. He said it would only be 6 feet on the east side because of the grade drop.

Commissioner Davenport said this that is the same as what is used on the houses.

Commissioner Tully said this was the third meeting to discuss this, which is more than most projects receive. He then clarified that when the Council members spoke of other things that could be built "by right", they were stating that there are things, much worse than this proposal, that could be allowed to be built on the property. The Commissioner said that the Council is the deciding body and they have listened to all of the comments regarding this development. He said that is why the developer made the changes. He requested that Maple Avenue residents landmark their homes and suggested that Maple Avenue, as a whole, be landmarked as a Historic District to prevent this from happening in the future.

Commissioner Davenport spoke of the comments that were made about taking a look at the Comprehensive Plan and zoning. He encouraged the community get involved with the Guiding DG efforts currently taking place, and said that is community involvement that will help make the changes needed.

Commissioner José said he watched the Council meetings he missed on YouTube, so he is aware of the conversations that took place. He explained Council discussions that took place in the past about the zoning of this property, and further stated that all of their decisions were made by considering comments made by the neighbors over an 18 month period. The Commissioner said when revisions were made in 2017, they were done with the public comments in mind. He encourage everyone to join the Guiding DG planning sessions, and said that for now this fits the requirements.

Mayor Barnett spoke of the traffic on Maple Avenue, and said that this use on that site will have the most minimal affect on the traffic in the area. He said if this was were to be an office use, there would be more people coming and going. The Mayor spoke of the placement of the driveway being beneficial, and said that though he agrees that traffic is tough at the intersection, adding this property will not make it worse. He spoke of the storm water management on this property, and said it should be an improvement versus what was there already. He said that in general storm water management has improved over the last 20 years. Mayor Barnett explained that the Village Council is following the law, but they do not legislate. He explained there is a vehicle in place for residents to protect their homes and it is up to homeowners to take the action necessary to landmark their homes – the Council cannot to force people to do it.

10. First Reading

ORD 2024-10372 — A. Ordinance: Increasing the Number of BF Brew Facility and WB Wine Boutique Liquor Licenses

Village Attorney Enza Petrarca presented and said this amends the Village Liquor Control Act to help new establishments to open in the Village.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Gilmartin asked for confirmation that the Village has met the number of licenses that are currently available and this is needed to accommodate new establishments.

Attorney Petrarca confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Tully said only a couple licenses were created years ago, and as time has gone on, more businesses have come to Downers Grove with uses that require these licenses. He said that this only allows the businesses to apply for the licenses, it does not grant them – this encourages more vitality in the community.

ORD 2024-10369 — B. Ordinance: Authorizing a Special Use to Permit Construction of an Accessory Structure Before the Principal Structure is Established at 3928 Morton Avenue

Community Development Director Stan Popovich presented via PowerPoint. He shared images and maps of the property, and explained that the petitioner is requesting to build a shed on the second lot and it would be built before the principal structure. He said the Plan Commission approved this special use.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Davenport asked if the property were to be sold, would the accessory structure need to be removed.

Mr. Popovich said yes.

Commissioner Tully said Special Use standards needed to be met, no matter what they are. He said this request involves replacing an existing shed with a newer shed. He further stated that the Council supports people using their property in the best way possible. The Commissioner reviewed the criteria and said that it had been met.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if the new shed would be replacing the old shed in the same location.

Mr. Popovich shared a slide that showed the location of the original shed and that of the new one. He said that it would meet the setback requirement.

Mayor Barnett said that all of the Village Council processes are the same, no matter what items are before them.

11. Attorney's Report

Pursuant to Section 2.5 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code, Attorney Petrarca presented for Village Council consideration:

1. An ordinance increasing the number of BF Brew Facility and WB Wine Boutique liquor licenses.
2. An ordinance authorizing a Special Use to permit construct of an accessory structure before the principal structure is established at 3928 Morton Avenue.

12. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's Report.

13. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Davenport congratulated the all of the High School graduates and said that this is a wonderful time for reflecting and new beginnings.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt shared that Pride Month is in June. She shared details about EQDG's Pride Fest scheduled to take place on June 8th.

Commissioner Tully shared that there are 30 days until Rotary Grove Fest.

Mayor Barnett called for a 10 minute break.

The meeting reconvened in the Committee Room at 8:51 p.m.

14. Manager's Report

Village Manager Dave Fieldman explained this portion of the meeting and introduced Jay Womack with GZA.

INF 2024-10384 — A. Information: Priority Action Item Update

Manager Fieldman gave an update of the Priority Action items. He reviewed the projects that are in the green, and said that the Meadowbrook TIF & RDA project is in the yellow - it is proceeding, but is moving slower than anticipated. Manager Fieldman suggested that anyone looking for additional information on the Priority Action Items view the slide deck posted online with the agenda materials.

Next, Manager Fieldman shared a video showcasing the progress made on the Civic Center Project. He said that the project is on schedule and on budget.

Commissioner Gilmartin expressed his content with the project.

REP 2024-10379 — B. Report: Guiding DG Discussion - Environmental Sustainability

Josh Koonce, with Houseal Lavigne, explained that most of the discussion during this meeting would be spent on the Sustainability Plan. He gave an update on the deliverables for the Bike and Ped Plan, the Streetscapes Plan, and the Sustainability Plan. He explained that all three teams were on track and on target. Mr. Koonce provided an update on the community engagement events schedule. He concluded by stating that Houseal Lavigne is putting together their own existing conditions report, and once it has gone through their internal process, it will be turned over to Village staff and then the Council for review.

Next, Jay Womack with GZA explained that he will be the Project Manager for the Sustainability Plan. He gave his background and provided the names of the other GZA team members that would be assisting with the Plan.

Village Manager Fieldman then introduced the Village of Downers Grove's Sustainability Coordinator Jason Michnick. Jason introduced himself and presented via PowerPoint. He explained that since starting with the Village has been learning about the Village's operations and existing efforts in the community. He said he is working to integrate sustainability into the Village's day-to-day operations. Mr. Michnick confirmed the 2023 GRC Staff Report findings, stating that a lot of deliberate effort goes into Village operations. He said that he is working to develop relationships and strategic partnerships, and he is investigating possible external funding opportunities. He spoke of Downers Grove's Environmental Stewardship, which is the Village's organized efforts to protect and enhance nature in the community. He then explained that the Village has made substantial investments into mitigation, resilience, and ecosystem services. He said that some examples include the new Civic Center, award-winning storm water utilities, "Green Fleet" awards, and efficient drinking water utility that promotes conservation/health. Mr. Michnick provided the history of the Greenest Region Compact and explained that overtime it has become more sophisticated and complete. He then gave the objectives of the GRC moving forward.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Gilmartin asked about the chart in the presentation, showing a break down of the goals and objectives of the GRC. He asked if they are regional and what that means.

Mr. Michnick said it means the Chicago metropolitan area and it is based off of international standards and goals.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that the numbers specific to Downers Grove were from 2019. He asked if there would be an Existing Conditions Report coming that would contain more recent data.

Mr. Michnick said he is looking to get updated data from Nicor and ComEd. He said he is trying to find out how working from home has impacted community patterns.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the percentages may stay the same, but quantitatively, the number could be reduced just based on usage. He said the number of people living and working from home is most likely higher than it was then.

Mr. Michnick then presented the Council with four workshop questions.

- **Question #1- What does being "sustainable" mean?**

Mr. Michnick referred to a slide in the presentation with definitions from the United Nations and also from the Village's Long Range Plan (LRP) Strategic Goals.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt thanked Mr. Michnick for his work thus far. For her, the definition would be a mix between the United Nations definition and the LRP definition. This is to live in a way that is compatible for future generations to have the same kind of biodiversity, without compromising major quality of life. She expressed concern about being in a place where the Village has to act now to make the rules and policies for years to come. She spoke of the Infrastructure Act and that there will be more restrictions coming down at the federal and state levels, stating it is in the Village's best interest to get a handle on this as soon as possible. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said the Village is doing what it can, but it will take more than that. She spoke of the prospect of everyone using only native plants in their gardens, and about reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Downers Grove. She said when talking about sustainability, the Council can get into the weeds with the goals, but his is about living within our means. The Commissioner said she wants to keep the definition generic.

Commissioner Tully said he likes the first sentence in the slide and would take the second sentence out of it.

Commissioner Davenport said that when he looks at the first sentence of the LRP definition, to him it says that the Village is leading by example.

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Commissioner Hosé said that he thinks the first sentence is the core of it and should stay the same, but that the statement needs to be broader. He said it needs to say something about regulatory framework, to be able to see the changes that need to be seen over the next 15-20 years.

Commissioner Davenport said if the State adopted a new energy code, then the Village would adopt it as well. He said that is the kind of thing that would affect other things in town, other than what the Village is doing.

Commissioner Glover thought it should include the responsibility to deliver services and maybe set policies that protect or enhance natural resources.

Commissioner Hosé agreed with Commissioner Glover, and said it involves going out into the market and should be a part of the Village's Economic Development Goals to control the types of businesses and innovation that is brought into town.

Mayor Barnett said that setting a vision drives policy. He suggested changing the second sentence

Commissioner Davenport said the Village has limitations.

Commissioner Tully said that everything the Village does is done in a measured way.

Commissioner Davenport gave the example of buying all electric snow blowers – it would be much better for the environment, but is not a practical thing to do.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked Commissioner Davenport to clarify if he meant it would not be as effective or if it would be too costly.

Commissioner Davenport said it could mean it would not be as effective, but may also involve the cost. He continued by stating that it may also be both things tied together.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he likes the term future generations. He also said he likes the United Nations definition because it is more concise, but that the LRP definition is more applicable to what the Village does - it is important to have something that is tied to meeting the needs of future generations.

Commissioner Tully said that "inherent in sustainability" is from the perspective of continuing to do something.

Commissioner Davenport said this is so the Village has a goal of wanting to continually innovate. He thinks the definition dovetails into that.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he has concern about the comments regarding cost effectiveness and feasibility, because cost can be defined in a lot of ways.

Mayor Barnett said that there are policy questions too. He used the example of Chinese EVs, and stated that is a choice people have and it has nothing to do with cost. He said the Village may have to make decisions that may not be purely based on cost, but could include additional factors as well.

Commissioner Tully referred to the slide that referenced the LRP Strategic Goals, stating that they need to be looked at holistically - the Village has a stewardship of financials; environmental and neighborhood sustainability; exceptional services; top quality infrastructure; a strong, diverse local economy; a beautiful, safe and welcoming community; and of continual innovation.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he thinks that environmental sustainability is a like a thread that has to go through all of the things mentioned by Commissioner Tully. He said this is because of the current climate crisis.

Mayor Barnett said that the new Civic Center is a good example of the Village doing this well. He spoke about it being a part of the culture of the organization.

Commissioner Gilmartin agreed that the Civic Center is a good example, and that the Village incorporates a lot of environmental considerations. He said that sustainable means that something needs to be kept up, and his hope is that in 10-15 years things that need to be better and upgraded will be.

Mayor Barnett said to Commissioner Gilmartin's point, continual innovation has to be applied here (as mentioned by Commissioner Tully with the LRP Strategic Goals).

• ***Question #2 – What is the intention or purpose of the Environmental Sustainability Plan? How do you envision using it?***

Commissioner Tully referred to the second sentence of the slide showing the LRP Strategic Goals for Environmental Sustainability. He said he likes the opportunistic approach the Village has taken in the past because he thinks it has been very successful. He said for the past 20 years the Village has been quietly opportunistic when it came to environmental sustainability; listing many of the Village's efforts and stating that the Village should have celebrated those accomplishments more than it did. The Mayor said that this framework gives the Village what is needed to recognize and seize upon opportunities, further stating that as an organization, the Village should encourage staff to speak up when they have an idea. He said he wants to leverage the framework in the way that lets staff do what they do best. He also expressed that the Village should get ahead of unfunded mandates now, because that is good planning. Mayor Barnett said the Village should be leading by example and celebrating its accomplishments and promoting what is being done more often. Lastly, the Mayor spoke of cooperation and collaboration, and the importance of the Village leveraging partnerships and seeking out new partnerships, so that we can all work together.

Commissioner Davenport said that he wants to celebrate what the Village has been doing, further stating that communication can be a challenge, but the community needs to know what the Village has accomplished.

Mayor Barnett said that top success is to continue with improvements in environmental sustainability, because the Village will never stop trying to improve communications.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that if the Village wants to set an example, than people have to notice the work that has been done. She said if the residents were aware, they may take the steps to do things like adding renewable energy to their home, or some other things similar to what the Village is doing. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she is thinking that long term, that will happen. She mentioned that the Village did not have staff with this expertise until recently, so while the Village has been doing the best it can, this is not the best it can do. She argued that there should be a bigger push to do more, rather than waiting to do things as they come up. She said there are a lot of things missing without having a formalized plan in place. She thinks that the Council should focus on the parts of the GRC that has seen the least amount of engagement – mentioning the energy sector and the policy sector not having policies in place to encourage environmentally sustainable behavior. The Commissioner said there should be consideration to offering incentives to businesses that come to town and want to use renewable energy. She expressed that she thinks that progress could be made on 10 key items in the next year or two, now that the Village has staff expertise and a consultant in place. She shared that she would like to see a shift in building energy, further stating that she would like to see improvements in the metrics that are being set based on the Existing Conditions Report. She spoke about the graph shown in the presentation, and mentioned the areas that the Village struggles with. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated that the greatest impact can be made from a municipal level, and if success is measured, the Village can start to think about putting some policy implication in place to encourage people to do the same things throughout the Village. She spoke about this connecting with the Bike and Ped Plan and said that the Village can make incremental changes moving forward, as projects arise, because the Village has more expertise to delve into things better than it has in the past.

Commissioner José said that the Village should remain opportunistic and take chances when they can be taken, just as it has done in the past. He further stated that he agrees that there needs to be intentionality and a plan that needs to be laid out, with the top key items to focus on - that is a part of success. He said it also involves looking at how those metrics change over a one to two year period and also fully developing a toolbox of whatever else can be done to not only affect the Village's operations, but also the community at large. Additionally, Commissioner José thinks that that the Village needs to consider regulation.

Mayor Barnett said that the Village has taken opportunistic approaches. He also stated that there have been policies in place to not only improve the Village's efforts, but also the effects on the community and the impact on the environment.

Manager Fieldman said that the GRC shows that a lot of Village policies are strong, like land use and water, but he also referenced energy policies, that were not as strong.

Commissioner Gilmartin echoed Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt and said that he thought there should be incentives, further stating that if there is behavior that needs to be changed, than the Village should incentivize. He asked why the GRP could not be similar to the Comp Plan – it should be a guiding document. He said that a lot of Village regulations cause reactions, and if the Village is to promote change, than incentivizing should be considered. He said the Council should identify what things the Village needs to tackle and work on them, to have an impact on areas of opportunity within the Village. Success to him, is a plan that is actionable and measurable.

Mayor Barnett agreed, but said this should be treated like the Long Range Plan because the Comp Plan has many pieces and is more aspirational and largely measured for free.

Commissioner Gilmartin said this should be considered a guiding document that can be actionable (like the Comp Plan), but that it should not be limiting – there should be room for interpretation for the Councils moving forward.

Manager Fieldman said that this discussion has been helpful and spoke o the layering of the Village plans.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he thinks there should be a discussion about whether the Sustainability Plan should sit at the Comp Plan layer, whether it would be aspirational, or if it should sit at the Downtown Design Guidelines layer, which is partly aspirational, but also directive in some ways.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks it should have some aspirational aspects to it, but also some real directives.

Commissioner José said it should be somewhere along the lines of the Downtown Design Guidelines. He said he takes for granted that staff implements these things and the Council operates from the position of facilitating. The Commissioner said he does not want to limit the toolbox right from the start, and that a serious conversation needs to be had about this – a broader conversation about facilitating and regulating.

Manager Fieldman said that the good thing is that the Council is working on the Comp Plan, the Sustainability Plan and the LRP – all levels, all at the same time. This means that the Council can slot policy statements, goals and visions into the appropriate level as they go.

Commissioner Davenport said that he thinks it is important to figure out what is appropriate for Downers Grove and asked if there are other municipalities in the Chicago metropolitan area that the Village should be looking to for suggestions.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that there are many examples on the GRC website.

Manager Fieldman referenced the Environmental Concerns Commission Staff Report from November.

Mayor Barnett said that he sees this being successful, and as an elevated priority. He said it has to be a part of the Comp Plan and he told Commissioner José that his description of the Design Guidelines was correct. The Mayor said this has to have an aspirational aspect of what will be done looking 10 years out, but also need to have the LRP aspect of what can be accomplished within the next 24 months – because the Council has turnover every two years.

- ***Question #3 – Should the Environmental Sustainability Plan focus on Village operations or the broader community.***

Commissioner Gilamrtin said he thinks the Village should focus on operations internally and also on the Village operations as they touch the broader community – he does not see it as an either or. He asked what the impact would be if it focused only on Village operations vs. incentivizing the community.

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Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she does not know that they are separated, because if they are talking about policy, then the broader community is something the Village has control over. She suggested starting at the aspirational level, and said it should be inclusive of the whole community. She said when speaking of LRP type directives, then those would change every couple of years. The Commissioner expressed that she wants to focus on Village operations to start, because that is where the Village has the most control and it can learn the most about what will have the greatest impact, be the most cost effective. The Village should then pass that along to the broader community.

Commissioner Tully said that the Village should serve as mentors. He gave the example of historic land marking. He spoke of incentives the Village can offer, and he suggested the Village partner with other organizations, like the EDC, to have a greater affect on the market place.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if a difference is really being made if the focus is only on Village operations.

Commissioner Davenport said that the recommendation presented lists it all – emphasis on Village operations, collaboration with strategic partners, easing pathway to sustainable practices in the community.

Commissioner José said that the Village needs to get things in order first before going out to the community.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the question is whether the focus should be on Village operations or the broader community.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that no one was suggesting that the broader community be ignored, but rather what Commissioner José said – to focus on the Village efforts first and learn from any mistakes before helping the community understand how they can do things better.

Commissioner José said this is about the Village leveraging partnerships, learning from other people, mentoring other organizations, and then the focus should be on the larger community. He stressed that the Village is not a stranger to being regional leaders and gave examples of the Peer Jury, the DMMC, Storm Water Utility. The Commissioner said that this is something the Village is equipped to do.

Manager Fieldman said that the answer is better than the question- this was posted as an either/or.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he feels as if the Village has lead by example by building the new Civic Center. He asked Mr. Michnick what more the Village can do to have an impact on the community. He gave the examples of the reducing emissions and the street lights having a positive impact on the community.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks the recommendation is on point and agrees with Commissioner Gilmartin, in theory, but thinks that the Village will not get other people on board unless they do more to lead by example. She said that the Council is talking about the broader community, but when speaking of the things that will be focused on over the next few years, the Village needs to focus on its own operations first.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that he cannot answer Question #3 until he knows what the impact of focusing on Village operations first versus focusing on the broader community would be.

Commissioner Davenport said that the recommendation captures what he wants to see happen from day #1, so he is not interested in answering the question.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked for clarification if the recommendation was written as Commissioner Davenport stated.

Manager Fieldman said yes - as opposed to saying the Village would jump into regulating activities in the community first.

Commissioner Gilmartin compared this to the DEI initiatives, where the decision was made to focus internally and then decide how it might be applied outside of Village operations. He asked if that is what this recommendation is saying.

Manager Fieldman said that was correct.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is not sure this would be applied in the most effective way if the actions taken will follow the order listed in the recommendation.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks if this is put into the Downtown Design Guidelines layer, it would be more of a goal with expectations, and that would create more definitive guidelines.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that the Design Guidelines set rules and everyone follows them.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that the Design Guidelines were set for the purpose of esthetics and for the Village to set its expectations. She said this is a bigger lift because the Village does not know moving forward what its biggest impact is going to be. She further stated that the Village should not incentivize until knowing what the benefits are. The Commissioner said she wants to understand things before incentivizing.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he agreed that it is hard not knowing what the benefits are, and while he is proud of the DEI initiatives, that is not where he wants to stop with this.

Manager Fieldman said that the Council has done a good job of framing this up. He said with the Environmental Sustainability Plan, the Council is expecting a detailed report that is a little less aspirational, with a focus on vision and goals that hit on the community and the Village as an organization. The Plan would have a suggested horizon of 2-5 years. In terms of next steps, he said the details would be reviewed during the first round of LRP. At that time the Council would pick approximately five things to start with as an organization, and then pick one or two things as a part of "easing pathways" (as listed in the recommendation). Manager Fieldman asked for confirmation.

The Council concurred.

- ***Question #4 – How literally should the “GRC Framework” be used in drafting the Environmental Sustainability Plan? Are there particular issues that should be a focus?***

Manager Fieldman said that this answer has already been communicated by using all of the Village plans (at all levels) in a stack, rather than going step by step through the GRC.

Commissioner Davenport said the focus should be on things the Village can easily do, that have not been done yet.

Mayor Barnett said there are things in the GRC Report that are beyond the Village's scope, but that the Report can be used for the Council refer to and to focus on things that that are within the Village's scope.

Mr. Michnick said that the Existing Conditions Report will include some additional analysis of the GRC framework to the points that were made.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is glad Mr. Michnick is a part of the Village's team. The rest of the Council agreed.

Public Comments

Ken Lerner, resident, said he was pleased to hear the discussion about Question #4, and stressed that the Village can influence the community as long as the community is made aware of Village efforts. He suggested the Village focus on cooperation with other government agencies and asked that consideration be made to things that may not be on the GRC.

Clorinda Greco, business owner, expressed concern about an increase in emissions due to all of the development taking place in the Village since 2019. She further commented on emissions increasing even more with the new Civic Center and the development to be built on Lot #2.

Janet Whittingham, resident, expressed concern that the Village does not have enough green space – using Maple Avenue as an example. She commented that the building and zoning guidelines need to be changed to focus on sustainability.

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15. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: *To adjourn the May 21, 2024, Village Council Meeting.*

RESULT: *Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: *Commissioner José*

SECONDED BY: *Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt*

AYES: *Commissioners José, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett*

NAYES: *None*

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 10:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi
Village Clerk