



Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

June 18, 2024

07:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

2. Roll Call

Council Attendance (Present): Mayor Barnett, Commissioner Hosé, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Glover, Commissioner Tully, Commissioner Davenport

Council Attendance (Not Present): None.

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

3. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2024-10207 — A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – June 11, 2024

MIN 2024-10395 — A. Minutes: Executive Session Meeting Minutes for Approval Only – June 11, 2024

MOTION: To adopt *The Meeting Minutes of the June 11, 2024, Village Council Meeting and The Executive Session Meeting Minutes of June 11, 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

4. Proclamations

A. Garden Week

Mayor Barnett presented the proclamation to Downers Grove Garden Club member Sandy Koutouvidis.

B. Juneteenth

Mayor Barnett presented the proclamation to Warner Kiunte, Margaret Childress and President Mike Childress of the NAACP, Unity Partnership member Paul Scott, and Not in Our Town DG member Robin Tryloff. Mr. Childress and Ms. Childress spoke on behalf of the NAACP.

5. Public Comments

Clorinda Greco, business owner, spoke about concerns with outdoor dining affecting the parking in the downtown. She also expressed concerns with the ratio of patrons to bathrooms at downtown dining establishments.

Scott Richards, resident, expressed concerns about the possibility of permanent outdoor dining in the downtown area.

Mayor Barnett clarified that no one is voting to eliminate parking in the downtown. He explained that Guiding DG is an update to the Comprehensive Plan, and this is the third update since 2011. He shared that there have been many opportunities for community input, and he provided examples of the methods in which the Village has used to notify residents about the process including newsletters, emails, social media posts, and six live public survey events. He encouraged the public to get involved. He said that no decisions have been made on removing parking, closing Pepperidge Farm, performing eminent domain, or rerouting the train – all of which he has been questioned about. The Mayor requested the public participate and come to meetings, and not to come to conclusions without participating. He explained that later in the meeting an Existing Conditions Report would be presented that been developed over a three to four month process, on a variety of subjects in the community.

6. Consent Agenda

COR 2024-10230 — A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6557, Payroll - May 31, 2024

BIL 2024-10231 — B. Bills Payable: No. 6808 - June 18, 2024

MOT 2024-10397 — C. Motion: Approve a Contract with SAFEbuilt Illinois, LLC for Residential Permit Development Review Services

Summary: This motion approves a contract with SAFEbuilt Illinois, LLC for residential permit development review services through December 31, 2025.

MOT 2024-10408 — D. Motion: Approve a Contract with TPI Building Code Consultants, Inc. (TPI) for Residential Permit Development Review Services

Summary: This motion approves a contract with TPI Building Code Consultants, Inc. (TPI) for residential permit development review services through December 31, 2025

MOT 2024-10398 — E. Motion: Authorize the Execution of a Settlement and Release Regarding Herrera v. Village of Downers Grove, 2022 L 007912

Summary: This motion authorizes the execution of a settlement and release regarding Herrera v. Village of Downers Grove, 2022 L 007912.

MOT 2024-10391 — F. Motion: Approve a Contract with Morton Salt, Inc. of Chicago, Illinois, for the purchase of Bulk Rock Salt

Summary: This motion requests approval of a contract for the purchase of bulk rock salt from Morton Salt Inc. of Chicago, IL at a cost of \$73.90 per ton up to an amount of \$133,020.00.

RES 2024-10394 — G. Resolution: Approve an Agreement with Engineering Enterprises, Inc., of Sugar Grove, Illinois, for Consulting Services Relative to Compliance with the Lead Service Replacement and Notification Act (LSRNA)

Summary: A resolution has been prepared to authorize a contract for consulting services relative to compliance with the Lead Service Replacement and Notification Act ("LSRNA") with Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI), of Sugar Grove, Illinois in the amount of \$26,675, increasing the total amount paid to EEI for LSRNA consulting services from \$107,565 to \$134,240. The requested increase includes a 10% contingency.

RESOLUTION 2024-48

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES, INC.

RES 2024-10392 — H. Resolution: Approve an Agreement with Midwest Meter, Inc. for the purchase of 504 ACLARA 2-way Meter Transmission Units (MTUs)

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Summary: This resolution authorizes an agreement with Midwest Meter, Inc. for the purchase of 504 ACLARA 2-way Meter Transmission Units (MTUs) for a total price of \$80,388.00.

RESOLUTION 2024-49

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND MIDWEST METER, INC.

RES 2024-10406 — I. Resolution: Authorize the Execution of an Amended Memorandum of Understanding between the Village of Downers Grove and DuPage Public Safety Communications (Du-Comm)

Summary: A resolution has been prepared authorizing execution of an amended memorandum of understanding between the Village of Downers Grove and DU-COMM.

RESOLUTION 2024-50

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AMENDED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND DUPAGE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS (DU-COMM)

MOTION: To adopt *The Consent Agenda of the June 18, 2024 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. First Reading

ORD 2024-10402 — A. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 2424 Ogden Avenue (2424 Ogden Planned Unit Development)

Summary: This ordinance rezones certain property located at 2424 Ogden Avenue (2424 Ogden a Planned Unit Development).

ORD 2024-10403 — B. Ordinance: Amending the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Downers Grove to Designate the Property at 2424 Ogden Avenue as Planned Unit Development #69

Summary: This ordinance amends the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Downers Grove to designate the property at 244 Ogden Avenue as Planned Unit Development #69.

ORD 2024-10404 — C. Ordinance: Authorizing a Special Use for 2424 Ogden avenue to permit a Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Business

Summary: This motion authorizes a Special Use for 2424 Ogden Avenue to permit a vehicle repair and maintenance business.

Mr. Popovich presented Items A-C via PowerPoint, and explained they included a Planned Unit Development proposal, a Zoning Map Amendment to create the PUD, and a Special Use at 2424 Ogden Avenue. He shared details about the items and that the Plan Commission recommended approval of them at their June 3rd meeting. He said there were representatives from Castle present to answer any questions.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt asked for confirmation that the service building had to be built, and with the company being under new ownership, it was decided that it would be kept on the property to make things convenient for the customer. Mr. Popovich confirmed that was correct. She asked if this decision would decrease the proposed greenspace. Mr. Popovich said it was about the same and provided details.

Commissioner Davenport added that the building would be built on what was already an impervious area, so the addition of the building does not create anymore impervious space. He said he is grateful for the investment in the community.

Commissioner Tully asked Mr. Popovich to confirm that this is the second proposal in 2024 that did not seek any deviations, variances or exceptions from Village ordinances. Mr. Popovich confirmed, and further stated that this meets all of the block requirements. Commissioner Tully opined that there would not have been any issues approving this back in 2022, so he has no issues supporting it now.

Commissioner José said if it came up in 2022, he would have voted for it then. He thanked the Castle Group for their investment in Downers Grove and shared that he is looking forward to voting for this item.

Mayor Barnett said there are a variety of documents and materials available online that are associated with these agenda items. He said when the Council speaks about compliance with things like zoning and the Comprehensive Plan, it is important because the Village is in the process of updating the planning documents that are regularly used by Village staff, and the Council, to make decisions on the behalf of residents.

8. Attorney's Report

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

1. An ordinance rezoning certain property located at 2424 Ogden Avenue (2424 Ogden a Planned Unit Development).
2. An ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Downers Grove to designate the property at 244 Ogden Avenue as Planned Unit Development #69.
3. An ordinance authorizing a Special Use for 2424 Ogden Avenue to permit a vehicle repair and maintenance business.

9. Mayor's Report

RES 2024-1045 — A. Resolution: Appointing Members to Village Boards and Commissions

Summary: This resolution appoints members to Village Boards and Commissions: Library Board of Trustees, Matt Topic to a four-year term expiring on August 31, 2028.

RESOLUTION 2024-51

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS TO VILLAGE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

MOTION: To adopt **A Resolution Appointing Members to Village Boards and Commissions**, as presented. **RESOLUTION 2024-51**

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

Village Clerk Rosa Berardi read the following Village Council Appointment: Library Board of Trustees, Matt Topic to a four-year term expiring on August 31, 2028.

Mayor Barnett thanked everyone that applied to the position for being willing to serve their community. He thanked Mr. Topic and everyone's involvement in the process. He said the Village will be looking to fill a variety of open positions on different Village Boards and Commissions in the near future, and that anyone interested should apply before the process to appoint members begins in July.

10. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Tully announced that there are only two days left until Rotary Grove Fest. He shared a brief history of the festival (Heritage Fest) and encouraged residents to attend.

Commissioner Gilmartin wished the Rotary Grove Fest volunteers luck and thanked them for their work. He also noted that with school out of session, there are a lot more kids walking and biking around. He reminded drivers to take extra caution during this time.

Commissioner José spoke of the new Civic Center move approaching and acknowledged his time spent in the current Village Hall Council Chambers..

Commissioner Davenport encouraged residents to attend Rotary Grove Fest. He shared that it is an important fundraising event for the Rotary and many other groups in town, including the issuance of tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt thanked the Mayor for the Juneteenth proclamation. She encouraged all to spend money at black owned businesses, or and buy a book written by a black author, in an attempt to help recover the loss of generational wealth as a result of slavery.

At 7:42 p.m., Mayor Barnett announced there would be a 5 to 7 minute recess. He shared that the meeting would reconvene in the Committee Room for the Manager's Report. He encouraged all in attendance to join.

11. Manager's Report**REP 2024-10410** — A. Guiding DG: Existing Conditions Report

The meeting reconvened at 7:52 p.m. in the Committee Room. Mayor Barnett explained that the Council received copies of the Existing Conditions Report and shared that it was also linked online with the agenda materials for the public to view.

Village Manager Dave Fieldman explained that this meeting would include the start of the conversation regarding the Existing Conditions Report and the conversation would be continued at the July 9th meeting. He then introduced Josh Koonce, Principal with Houseal Lavigne.

Mr. Koonce explained that he and Macayla (Planner) were there representing Houseal Lavigne (Comprehensive Plan) and representatives from the sub-plans that make up Guiding DG project were also in attendance. This included Tim King, with Hitchcock Design Group (Downtown Streetscape Plan), and Aaron Tuley, with Baxter and Woodman (Bike and Pedestrian Plans). He explained that most of the meeting would be spent reviewing the Existing Conditions Memorandums, specifically key takeaways, that are a part of the Existing Conditions Report. Mr. Koonce said he understood that there was a lot of information for the Council to take in within a short amount of time, but he was looking to get their initial feedback. He explained that from here, the plan would pivot from the baseline of the existing conditions and move into visioning and goal setting; then a determination would be made as to what kind of feedback would be sought from the community. Mr. Koonce said that he thinks it has been a successful project thus far, and because of regularly scheduled meetings with the Council and Village staff, there has been good direction to help adhere to the project goals that were established as a part of the RFP process. He shared that there has been excellent outreach and public input thus far and he thinks that will continue – with current feedback both online and in person. He explained that the project has included high quality and timely deliverables, and he credited staff and their review process to make sure they were well vetted before they get to the Council. Moving forward, Mr. Koonce shared that best practices and planning knowledge would be filtered into the process by the all of the firms present and also by GZA (Sustainability Plan). He reviewed details about outreach and participation across the four projects, again expressing that both have done well. He suggested anyone that wants to review the key takeaways from the project kickoff and community kickoff events could do so on the project website at guidingdg.com. He further explained that the Existing Conditions Memorandums (ECM) were on schedule for three of the four projects, with GZA getting up to speed quickly on the Sustainability Plan. He shared that internally, Houseal Lavigne, Hichcock, Baxster and Woodman, and GZA were gelling and the team is very strong. Mr. Koonce explained that GZA is up to speed with

everything that the team is doing and they will share their ECM in July. He summarized that this report is the baseline of what the Village is today, so that the vision of setting goals, objectives, and key recommendations can begin.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Gilmartin said the report was marked as a draft and asked if there will be revisions to it that they can review.

Mr. Koonce said the Council should review the draft and give their comments to staff. He said this should include anything they think does not fit in the report, any punctuation/grammar errors, or anything that they think should be added (corrections, fixes, additions to the report and jumping off points).

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if the data around number of people that may still participate will make its way into this report.

Mr. Koonce said yes, and that the data could have already been updated since this report was put together for the presentation. He indicated that once the final ECM is ready to be closed, and when the survey is closed, the numbers will then make their way into the report.

Mayor Barnett asked what Mr. Koonce anticipates as a cut off point and what further efforts will be made to solicit participation.

Mr. Koonce said the Inside DG newsletter included a QR code to the surveys and they would also be included in the pop-ups around town. He said the cut off would be around the time that the visioning workshops are done – explaining that there is a lot of overlap with what people think are issues, versus what people envision. He shared that the estimated cut off is the end of July and at that point the team would pivot to looking ahead.

Mayor Barnett said that looking at the data of who responded, 35% were over age 55 and 75% were 10 years or longer veterans of Downers Grove. He said he wants to try and have other age groups involved.

Mr. Koonce said across other projects, it is not uncommon that residents over the age of 55 take the time for the survey, over young parents and high school students – though he indicated that 100 high school students participated in Downers Grove, and that was a great number. He said he will take the Mayor's request back to the All Together Team and see if they can find other ways to push out the QR Code to encourage the younger population to take the survey.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt shared that the age group of 35-54 represents the most popular demographic in Downers Grove and she would like to hear from them.

Commissioner Davenport said that responses from the population that fell between the ages of 0-24 years was at 0%. He shared he needs more data than what has been collected, and the input needs to be representative of the population in town. He said it is especially important that the Council feels confident with the data, especially with the big decisions that they will need to make.

Mr. Koonce assured the Council that he has ideas and will discuss them with the All Together group. He explained when looking at how the ECMs are assembled, the survey is only one ingredient in the Comprehensive Plan "cake". He detailed some suggestions to get the younger part of the community to participate.

Mayor Barnett asked if there was any way to measure the amount of duplicative participants—people that took the survey online and also participated in the live events.

Mr. Koonce said that may be hard to measure, but he would work with All Together to see if they can ask people at the workshops if they have already taken the survey.

Mr. Koonce continued his presentation, focusing on most of the key takeaways. He reviewed the ECM organization including:

- Regional Setting
- Community Outreach
- Past Plans and Studies
- Demographic and Market Study
- Land Use and Development
- Transportation and Mobility
- Streetscapes Summary
- Community Services, Parks and Recreation

He explained that at the end of each section there is a summary of key takeaways – with the most common things heard being: the desire for more affordable and attainable housing- for everyone from lower income residents to seniors and young professionals; the desire for more trails and bike lines - to get around without car; to get a clearer understanding of the zoning process – for anyone looking to develop a piece of property or to meet building codes; additional recreation opportunities - trails connecting to recreational opportunities in Downers Grove; more public gathering spaces; a perception that storm water can be improved. He shared that with regard to community character, there was a high response rate in the survey and, generally, people had a very high view of community facilities and services. He said people identified opportunities for the Village to continue to build on its established character and requested it be telegraphed out to the community more. Mr. Koonce reviewed the demographic/market key takeaways, stating that, generally, the Village has been trending upwards in population. This includes a growing senior population within the last decade and a decrease in the number of families with school aged children (currently approximately 27% of the population); household incomes increasing in last 10 years – those making over \$150k has doubled in last 10 years; Education levels are higher – with Master’s Degrees and above. Mr. Koonce continued by sharing that there may need for more housing for seniors and that the median sales price for housing in Downers Grove has risen over the past decade, remaining higher across the board than the rest of DuPage County. Mr. Koonce said that comparing salaries with the cost of housing, there is a conflict with some residents spending 30% of their salary on housing. He then reviewed the number of individuals that both live and work in the Village, stating that the number of jobs in Downers Grove has increased by almost 5k, at a rate of 11%. He said the information and input that comes out of these studies are reflected in the Comprehensive Plan, as well as in the additional planning studies that are being completed. He shared details about land use, transportation and mobility, facilities and services, and additions and opportunities.

Council Comments/Questions

Mayor Barnett said though he had not gotten through the entire document, he reviewed what was being discussed at this meeting and had started to work his way back into each section. He said he is 1/3 of the way through the nine sections.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that there is a lack of affordable housing in Downers Grove, yet there is a concern about apartments (stating she thinks it is because rent is \$3k and is too costly). She said at the Illinois Municipal League conference there was a presentation given by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus about the Homes for a Changing Region program, where funds are received through HUD. She said they can help communities look through what housing they are missing. She said the information is on Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus website. She gave the example of Woodridge, stating that it was determined they were missing single story, age in place housing for seniors. The Commissioner said she thinks this is along the lines of what the Village wants, to determine what is missing and would could help get Downers Grove where it needs to be. She said a lot of the homes that are being built in the Village are 4-5 bedroom homes, with the demographics pointing more toward people aging in place. She spoke about \$464k being the median price of a home in Downers Grove, being 13% higher than the average in DuPage County – accrediting that to the size of the homes being built. She thinks having a more detailed report would provide better data could help with providing the right direction for the Village. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted that the housing stock in Downers Grove is high and the apartments are costly. She said the Existing Conditions Report is fascinating, noting that there is a polarization of more people earning over \$150k and also the number earning under \$25k. She shared that with regard to race, the demographics in Downers Grove is more white than neighboring communities. She said the housing stock does not attract a diverse community and that one cannot afford a \$400k house with a salary of \$115k, without some help. That help usually comes from family and knowing that there are a lot of families who missed out on generations of wealth, that is a concern for the population. She spoke about Downers Grove having an aging population, and also having a history of closing and reopening schools based on the fluctuations in families being able to afford living in town. She said she would like to prevent that from happening again.

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Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said the MMC report is very important, especially with the data reflected in the Existing Conditions Report showing a mismatch between income and population, and what the housing stock looks like.

Mr. Koonce shared that the down payment on a \$464k home would be \$92k.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt commented that it is too high, especially knowing that student loan debt is on the rise.

Mayor Barnett said that there is not a lack of houses being sold in Downers Grove. He said houses in Downers Grove sell, and also shared that there is a housing shortage across the US. He said that if the houses in the Village were to expensive, they would not sell. The Mayor shared that there may be a shortage in demographics within the Village, but it is the Council's responsibility to take care of policy issues, and those are not policy issues.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that zoning needs to be more permissive with multi-family, even if just allowing town homes. She suggested offering affordable housing incentives to new developments. She stressed there is a need for more data and again suggested engaging the MMC to get the report completed to see what housing the Village could be missing based on its population.

Mayor Barnett said he has no problem with additional data, but the challenge is the amount of conflict that goes on when trying to blend the areas. He said he is unsure if people would be ok with duplexes going up next to their home.

Commissioner Davenport suggested looking at existing zoning that is zoned single family and is underdeveloped, and not as desirable to develop more expensive single family homes (i.e. busy streets, busy corner). He suggested those may be more suitable for other opportunities that could help address the affordability issue.

Commissioner José spoke about the larger homes in town being an investment for those people buying them. He said with income and education levels rising, it is not surprising. He asked if the aging population is higher in Downers Grove than it is in the rest of the country, or if it is specific to Downers Grove. He further asked if it is attributable to the Baby Boomer population.

Commissioner Davenport said that was a great point and questioned if it is a trend that is going to continue in the future. He suggested the Village may just be going through a bit of a valley period and that it may be beneficial to get information from the schools in terms of projections for the student population moving forward.

Commissioner José said what is happening in Downers Grove at this time may be happening in the country at large. He said he would like to understand more deeply than what they have been presented, because he does not want to see the team overreact.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that there is data provided in the report that compares Downers Grove to DuPage County and Downers Grove is a community with an older demographic.

Mayor Barnett said the community is aging faster than others.

Commissioner Davenport said the schools complete five-year look ahead studies.

Commissioner Gilmartin said with the changes to Herrick, he thinks they already have the answer with what is happening with the population, but it is worth asking the schools about the projections.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said people are going to want to age in place and the housing stock in Downers Grove does not support this now. She reiterated getting more data to see if that is potentially happening, because that could be an important piece of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Davenport expressed concerns that 44% of respondents saw that apartments had a negative impact on the community. He said he wondered what percent of survey respondents were apartment dwellers. He questioned who is answering the questions, because that can affect the takeaways.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he too questioned that a portion of the community thought that apartments and condominiums have a negative impact on the community and townhouses have a positive. He said it seems to him like

a bit of an affluence view. The impact is not the same of what someone might want and the survey results might just be their opinions (i.e. the opinion is not how someone feels about staying in an apartment but more about what they think about having them in town). He said single family homes are having a greater impact (78% positive) – yet there is a struggle with having the inventory for those who live alone, for seniors, etc. He said what made him most curious was the idea that apartments and condos had a more negative response than townhouses, because to him they seemed to be the same, except that a townhouse is fancier.

Mayor Barnett said he sees what is being said, but does not peg it on affluence. He spoke of the zoning changes that were made in 2017 because people have been so upset with the development in the downtown. He said he thought they were appropriate changes, but he is not sure that everyone understood what they meant because now everyone is saying that all of the apartments are ruining the town,. This why he does not think it is as much an affluence thing, as much as it is a reaction to 15-20 years worth of heavy building of apartments.

Commissioner Davenport said that things do not end at the Village borders. He pointed out that neighboring communities have more affordable housing options and that there is not a bubble around Downers Grove. The Commissioner said when looking at and analyzing the issues, they need to decide what the solutions should be. He does not see this as just a Downers Grove issue. Mayor Barnett referred to an explanation in the report about what the average home price is and what a down payment might look like. He asked if the numbers show what the property taxes might look like, because he wants to make comparisons to other cities in DuPage County.

Mr. Koonce said the numbers include property taxes.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the report shows that there are a lot of long term residents and that 54% of residents are age 55 and older. He questioned what percentage of them are retired. He said he wants to do whatever it takes to help the older population, but consideration needs to be given to the fact that this is a 30 year vision.

Commissioner Tully said he did not find a lot of surprises in the report, and that over the years there have been changes in Downers Grove, but nothing striking. He said he is concerned about trend issues and wants to think long term. He said he thinks about things like location and layout, and is struck by some of the same themes that reflect the eclectic diversity in the community. He said the Village needs to figure out what it wants to be and where it should be compared to. He further stated that the key is whether Downers Grove is a successful community. Commissioner Tully said the community should continue its historic preservation, and that he wonders if the negative reaction to apartments and condos is more about having the buildings in town, then it is to the cost of living in them, etc. The Commissioner said that some people like them and some do not - similar to outdoor dining. He said he is struck by how little has really changed.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that the data shown on the household makeup chart on page 40 shows that in 2022, 70% of households in Downers Grove had no children. He asked that it be checked for accuracy and if it included people that had children and they moved out.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she was surprised about that too – and when commenting about 4-5 bedroom homes, that is what she was considering.

Commissioner Tully said to take into account that some bedrooms are used as offices now.

Mayor Barnett there was a time that he would have said 60-65% of household in Downers Grove do not have children in their households under the age of 18.

Commissioner Davenport said 94% of respondents were satisfied with the overall community. He said its worth reflecting that most people are really happy. He said it makes it easier to figure out what is wrong with the community. He shared it was also positive that 82.5% of the community thought highly of the community image and reputation – it is something to celebrate, because so much is wonderful about Downers Grove.

Commissioner Gilmartin spoke referred to page 46 of the report showing the area of Prairie, Warren and Lee – he questioned the data showing that 10-15% of the people that live in that area are below the poverty line. It also showed that 43% of households had less than 100k in income - something worth remembering.

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Commissioner Davenport said he too saw that.

The Mayor asked if it was reversed.

Manager Fieldman said to think about all the various multi-family housing types, in and around the downtown area, that show up in the census tracts because that is influencing the number. He further stated that there was deeper dive done on this at the staff level.

Commissioner Gilmartin said it is an interesting grouping of area. He then said on page 53 the on of the key takeaways says that a large proportion (27%) of the Downers Grove population consists of families with school aged children, and it is also the fastest declining household group. He further shared that he did not see anything showing the decline.

Commissioner Davenport said he appreciates Commissioner Gilmartin's comment due to the word "fastest" was used.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the word "fastest" seemed dramatic.

Commissioner José said there is a disconnect because the schools are expanding.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said there is a drop off in attendance at the kindergarten level, at the grammar school in her area.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that Lester School was just bursting.

Commissioner Davenport said he was interested in the projections moving forward, more than data on what has happened.

Commissioner Gilmartin referred to page 89 and the section on broadband access – indicating that it shows that 10% or more in that area do not have access.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said it seems strange that part of downtown does not have broadband access. She noted that even with multifamily housing there, it seemed questionable to her that the downtown seems to be the least connected.

Commissioner Davenport said that the schools have done a good job providing Wi-Fi access to families that do not have it.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that was only to households with kids.

Commissioner Gilmartin referred to page 45 and said he thinks the dates of 2022 and 2010 should be flipped because of the way data should be read – he said it was not clear to him. He said he wanted confirmation as to whether the poverty rate is going up or down.

Mayor Barnett agreed and said that Commissioner Gilmartin's point of flipping 2010 and 2020 is a presentation thing and that is why this is a draft.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said according to the text, the poverty rate is down in DuPage County and up in Downers Grove (because it is reported that there are more people that make under \$25k).

Commissioner Gilmartin then referenced the data on page 44 about incomes.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt spoke about the Bike and Pedestrian portion of the report, referencing 2.4 miles of bike lanes and 2.6 miles of great connection paths, which confirms some of the concerns about the 2013 Bike and Ped Plan. She said very few of them were implemented, and residents have communicated that it is hard to get around town if you are not in a vehicle.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is looking forward to creative ways to overcome challenges, and he is pleased that

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41% of the survey respondents identified bike and pedestrian trails as a weakness. He said this highlights the challenges and he looks forward to addressing them.

Mayor Barnett said his that the concern is traffic safety, congestion and connections - there is a conflict in this. He found that interesting and said it is going to be challenging to sort through.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that it may be difficult to control because some of the roadways areas are not controlled by Downers Grove. When looking at the crash data, most of the worst of the areas are not controlled by the Village (light timing, etc) and that makes things challenging.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks that just about all of the 1.66 miles of new trails on 75th street that were identified belong to Woodridge and Darien, so he does not think they should be included in the Council's purview. He further stated that the 2013 Bike and Ped Plan was 11 years ago, and needs to be used as the foundation/starting point to move forward. The Commissioner shared it has less meaning to him than some of the more recent studies that have been done.

Mayor Barnett said that he sees it as starting with a blank sheet of paper, but with some goals. He said Council Policies and decisions have been lacking in this area.

Commissioner Davenport said he agrees with the Mayor because it is 11 years old.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he does not want to lean on it..

Mayor Barnett said he agreed he does not want to be constrained by it.

Commissioner Tully said it is a data point and equally as important are the obstacles from the 2013 Plan that prevented it from going into place. He said it is even more important to determine if those obstacles still exist.

Commissioner Davenport said he wants to take a dive into it. With regard to transportation, there was 2019-2020 Metra data that is irrelevant at this point. He continued by stating that even if it's the most recent data available, it is not useful and not reliable to base any policy making decisions on.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she has seen reports indicating that more companies are bringing people back over the next couple of years – so things will be hit or miss over the next couple of years. She further stated that having Metra ridership is a big draw to Downers Grove, but for now it is unknown what ridership will look like long-term.

Mayor Barnett spoke about C-Map and Metra possibly working together to get this information.

Commissioner Gilmartin said it was interesting to see the percentage of residents that walk or bike to the train – even if numbers are down, those percentages will likely hold or be close.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she wants to keep in mind that Pace Bus service has been dramatically reduced compared to the past, so there may be interest in having other options.

Aaron Tuley said when looking at Metra ridership data information, it is almost as important to look at getting ridership information that includes the ridership on a station by station basis.

Commissioner Davenport noted that on page 48, the data states that 2,356 people live and are employed in Downers Grove, however, 20% of Village residents reported working from home in 2022 – which is not included as a separate category. He said this changes the patterns of train ridership and the use of Village resources.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she wanted to know if there is any idea of the overlap, historically, about the people that live and work in Downers Grove.

Commissioner Davenport said the data he just read was from 2021 and was three years old.

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Commissioner Gilmartin shared he was surprised with number of people that travel to the Village to work, and he would like to know how that has changed over time.

Commissioner Tully, Commissioner José and Mayor Barnett said it is a high volume of people and the population pretty much doubles.

Commissioner Davenport said for him, a lot of this was extensive, useful and enlightening. He said his schedule has not allowed him to dive in as much as he wanted to, but that Village staff did good job getting him up to speed. He reiterated that there is great information in the report.

Commissioner Tully referred to the crash breakdown data on page 74, stating that it was interesting and questioned if he was interpreting the crash breakdown correctly – the page lists *Total Crashes* broken down by *Vehicular, Cyclist and Pedestrian* and then below the numbers 14, 0 and 4 are listed. He questioned if he interpreted that correctly.

Commissioner Davenport said it also breaks it down by *Day and Night*.

Mr. Koonce said that he knows cyclist and pedestrian crashes are under reported by both emergency responders on the scene and also by people in general (i.e. – getting slightly bumped by a vehicle and having an injury that was not treated until a later date).

Commissioner Davenport said he forgot to ask if, going forward, there could be additional links included in the report, particularly to past studies and reports.

Mr. Koonce said he made a note to link them and it should be easy to do because they are on the Village website.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said when speaking about the business survey in particular, there was a percentage of approximately 11% that were considering leaving Downers Grove. She questioned if there was a way to find out what businesses those were and what they cited what the reasons were (i.e. was it permitting or zoning concern). She questioned if there would be a way to retrieve that sort of data, even with the small sample size.

Manager Fieldman said he could reach out to the EDC, and they can do some attraction and retention visits to try and get that data.

Mr. Koonce said that he is not sure if the Village's survey responses got that granular.

Commissioner Davenport referred to page 52, with regard to the business survey, he said there were 152 participants, but only 30 of which were business owners. He said it would be much more beneficial to have more input from business owners. He requested a bigger sampling.

Mayor Barnett asked if the EDC played a role in soliciting that kind of input. He also asked if the Chamber did as well.

Mr. Popovich stated that the team had both the EDC and Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) push out the survey to their membership groups, and that he thought that the DMC also participated in the Downtown Streetscape related surveys as well. Mr. Popovich said they reached out to the Chamber, but he is not sure if the Chamber reached out to their group.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks more effort can be put towards this.

Commissioner Gilmartin clarified by stating that they are just referring to the survey – there was the survey and also small focus groups. The reference was just to the survey and not focus group.

Commissioner Davenport said there was a Business Community Workshop and that only had nine participants.

Mr. Popovich said the survey push out was from the partner organizations (EDC and DMC) to their groups.

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Commissioner Davenport said the key takeaways are very preliminary and he needs more, further stating that the takeaways need to be what the community wants to see happen. He said he is hopeful to get more that what has been received. He further stated, as Mayor Barnett explained, decisions that future Councils make 3-5 years from now will be made based on this.

Mayor Barnett referred to the intermediate takeaway sections throughout the report and said, with regard to editing, that about 95% of them were statistical takeaways, and there were just a few that were different than that. He said the Housing, Trails, Zoning, and Bike and Ped sections were different from the rest – referring to pages 26 and 32. He said all the rest were takeaways not suggestions. The Mayor stressed that he was pointing this out because eventually this will be a document that will be looked back at and the takeaways should be informing the Council about decisions, issues, and opportunities. The rest of the takeaways were statistical statements.

Commissioner José referred to the Fairview key takeaways, and said they are basically all policy recommendations.

Mayor Barnett spoke about using caution with wording. This is because the Council needs to start with the takeaways and needs to move onto developing the issues and opportunities. He said what is presented to the Council, with regard to both takeaways and issues and opportunities, would be considered a starting point for them to work from.

Mr. Koonce said he agreed with the Mayor, however, with regard to data points some of it is a science – some of them are concrete, but others are not. He further stated that some of it involves best practices. He said though he agrees there should be some consistency across key takeaways, some are more statistical and some are more observations, or qualitative. Mr. Koonce gave the example of land use, stating that there is no Existing Conditions Report on this, so they could say what percentage of the observed land use is single family homes, but that would be a little different than the census data.

Mayor Barnett said he had not gotten as far into the report as Commissioner José, but referred to page 41 with regard to Streetscape Character, the takeaways all seemed to provide some sort of direction about what might be good policies to consider. He said the takeaway should be conditioned - best practices outside of Downers Grove, or input that was received from customers and residents about what they would like. The Mayor said the next steps would be for the Council to use that data to decide what direction to go in. He said he does not want them in as directive takeaways, and reiterated that this document will be one that people could be reading out of context in a year or two from now.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she took that as industry standards and that best practices have changed. She asked if that is what is informing some of the more qualitative measures and key takeaways.

Mr. Koonce responded stating that it certainly could be. He said with regard to Streetscapes, he would let Mr. King answer, but he said he viewed the Comp Plan and the Bike Ped Plan planning documents as comparable – there is data and community input. With regard to Streetscapes, it is different because what is being discussed is much more concrete – i.e. sidewalk width and street furniture. It includes different things than the other two studies. Mr. Koonce said he thought that the Sustainability Plan will probably also be different. He said there could possibly be a different way to talk about it.

Commissioner José said it could be as simple as changing the headline to observations rather than key takeaways.

Manager Fieldman gave the example of the Village Flight analogy being similar to this process.

Mr. King said that the team really struggles with making the separations between key takeaways and issues and opportunities because it is difficult to find statistical data. He said they have a lot of experience with it, and can point to other communities and what they have done.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is worried about limiting this because then it puts the onus on the Council.

Commissioner José said that looking at all the reports, the key takeaways are one thing and issues and observations are another point.

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Commissioner Gilmartin said he liked this one because when looking at the data, people love the character of the community, and one of the key takeaways is that the Village's character is not cohesive when it comes to streetscape.

Mayor Barnett said that was the takeaway.

Commissioner Gilmartin said not only is it a takeaway, but it could also be the next policy decision.

Mayor Barnett said it could also be an opportunity.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he commends the feedback received and thinks when it is not about data, it is valuable to the Council, because they have to make decisions on things and they should be looking to the experts to do that. He said he knows there will be a second phase with regard to recommendations, but this has helped him to start to think about things and the character of the streetscape being more cohesive – something he did not think of before. He said tying that to the communities opinion about the strength of the community's character is important to him, and it is considered a takeaway in his opinion.

Mayor Barnett said, with regard to the report, it is not so much about content and is more about format and presentation and wording. He said he agreed with Commissioner Gilmartin, however, he said people may feel differently from one another about the community – some wanting to create a different feel in portions of the community and others who would say they want to intentionally tie them together. The Mayor said the Council could have to pick a direction. He said the takeaway is that there is not one right now and there is no consistency or plan to it.

Commissioner José said that the obligation is to be sure that the wrong expectations are not set. He referenced the 2017 Comp Plan, the concept of scaling back the 75th and Lemont development by knocking down businesses and putting in multifamily. He said there were many apartments erected that the neighborhood did not want. Commissioner José said the report has to be framed in the right way.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the difference is there is community input and people have said the character of the town is important and this is a way to exemplify that.

Mr. Tuley, with Baxter Woodman, presented on the Bike and Pedestrian Plan. He shared some of the draft guiding principals and the developing of the whole *pedestrian first* kind of plan. He reviewed how the ECM was organized. He said history is important, and shared an overview of the accomplishments of the 2013 plan. He said as a Village, not many changes have been made since the 2013 plan. He said the report also provided a fairly thorough assessment of the existing thoroughfares both in the Comp Plan ECM, and the Bike and Ped Plan, and it also includes the intersections as well. He spoke of the team being interested in the public transportation element as it relates to the Bike and Ped facility improvements, not only to the Metra Stations, but to all to the Pace Bus Routes. He shared a map that showed the Pace Bus Routes and those that have been discontinued. He explained the team drilled deeply down into the 2013 Plan, and said there was also an overview of their public outreach. Mr. Tuley shared the Regulatory Environment and the Facilities and Thoroughfares key takeaways. Next, he reviewed the Issues and Opportunities section, highlighting the issue with many thoroughfares being under DuPage County's authority. He said the Village's active transportation network consists of bike routes and sidewalks, and there are very few dedicated on street bike lanes and there are no protected on street bike lanes whatsoever. He explained that with this plan it is going to take a variety of different facility types to be run through the entire Village – not just one type. Mr. Tuley shared that the community engagement program is ongoing, but highlighted that when speaking with the Downers Grove Bike club they expressed that they prefer biking on bike routes more than any other thoroughfare. He said that a gap analysis needed to be completed with regard to key sidewalks and other facilities. Mr. Tuley expressed that his team wants to make sure that all the tools are in the toolbox for the Village to be able to measure how it is doing on a year by year basis.

Next Mr. King, with the Hitchcock Design Group, presented on the Streetscapes Plan. He shared that Manager Fieldman's analogy of the Village Flight Plan was a good one, because it is good to look at things at ground level versus being at 30k feet. He reviewed the ECM organization and said the team evaluated existing conditions and were asked to look at the downtown and it's connection to the Fairview area – also noting that the Village is studying zoning changes in the Fairview Focus Area. He explained what defines the streetscapes in the two areas. He then reviewed the Key Takeaways, highlighting that the reality is that on some streets, or areas, the streetscape is improved and maintained better than other areas – this is something that will need to be studied more. He spoke of what people

would perceive the streetscape to be in one area versus another, and also during transitional periods. Mr. King said it can be tricky to figure out what the right approach is, but it is the key takeaways that need to be addressed throughout the process. He spoke about streetscapes as they relate to outdoor dining and also when the Village is hosting events. He spoke about the Issues and Opportunities section of the report. He shared that streetscapes will be a topic within the visioning study. Mr. King said that moving forward the team will start to develop alternative streetscape concepts, with many different options. He explained the feedback part of the Streetscape Plan comes further down the road.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Davenport commented on the streetscape maps/diagrams in the report and said it would be helpful if the streets were labeled and had directional arrows.

Mr. King said they are generally based on specific locations and there may be four or five different prototypes to look and they would be so similar it would be difficult to see what the differences were.

Mayor Barnett said the Bike and Pedestrian Plan and Streetscape Plan will be discussed by the Council in July.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Clorinda Greco, business owner, spoke of concerns with parking when it comes to outdoor dining, a lack of consistency when it comes to beautification on both the north and south sides of the tracks, and a lack of senior housing. She also expressed that she believes the residents have issues with apartment developments because they only live in them for a couple of years and do not have a vested interest in the community.

Janet Whittingham, a resident, expressed concerns with apartment developments being too dense and not having any streetscape, as opposed to townhomes. She expressed concerns with safety at the Washington Street crossing and the lack of parking in the downtown due to the outdoor dining.

A member of the public (inaudible) said she had no opinions or comments yet, but saw the frame being painted at this meeting.

Laura Temple, a resident, requested the Village join forces with the Park District when it comes to recreation, expressed the opinion that apartment dwellers (and the younger population) are not as engaged in the process because they do not have as big of a stake in the Village or may just not care. She also commented on regulating scooters and e-bikes, and requested the regulation of golf cart usage also be considered. She received verification that unincorporated areas were not included in this process.

Robin Tryloff, a resident, quoted some of the statements she heard at the meeting from the Council. She read about Culture and Public Art from the report and said she supports it.

Warner Kiunte, a resident, requested the Village consider housing for those with disabilities and special needs. He requested the Village explore grants that are available through the State and County for this purpose.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner José spoke of the public's mischaracterization about parking in the downtown area, stating that some parking being eliminated, does not mean that all of it will be. He requested that people do not spread inaccurate information into the community.

Commissioner Davenport spoke of a public comment he heard earlier in the meeting about the Council "hitting the accelerator" and said that he hopes the public understands that this is actually about pumping the breaks. He said the Council is listening to the public.

Mayor Barnett said that there will be some decisions made by the Council within the next 10 months. He said the Council is listening and sometimes things may be voted on in a way that some people may not agree with, but he hopes that all see that the Council has serious debates about the issues.

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Commissioner Gilmartin said this provided him with a lot of information about what the next steps should be. He thanked all that put the work into this and said it is a great start to pinpoint and question some data points. He said some of the information is subjective and the Council is elected to make decisions for the community. The Commissioner said he likes that this Council looks at the data and is all about getting it right.

12. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: *To adjourn the June 18, 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 10:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi
Village Clerk