



Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

September 10, 2024

5:30 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Roll call was taken when reconvening into open session. A motion was made to convene into closed session at this time.

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. 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)(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*

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

The meeting reconvened into open session and Mayor Barnett led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Barnett asked Village Clerk Rosa Berardi for a roll call.

5. Proclamations

A. National Preparedness Month

Mayor Barnett said that leading into the National Preparedness Month Proclamation, he felt it fit to read something he found on the internet about the tragic events surrounding 9/11, written by an unknown author.

Mayor Barnett then read the proclamation about National Preparedness Month and asked all to thank those that respond to disasters.

6. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2024-10216 — A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – September 3, 2024

MOTION: To adopt The Meeting Minutes of the September 3, 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

Janet Whittingham thanked Mayor Barnett for his proclamation on National Preparedness Month and for providing the information he did to assist the public.

David Rose expressed disappointment about Village Council meeting minutes, what he considers a lack of transparency from staff and the Council, and concerns with the Council's definition of sustainability.

Vibha Rajput thanked the Mayor and staff for communicating with her since her comments at last week's meeting.

Tod Baratas said he watched the video from last week, and requested that the Council take the time to respond to constituents.

8. Consent Agenda

BIL 2024-10244 — A. Bills Payable: No. 6824 – September 10, 2024

RES 2024-10456 — B. Resolution: Authorize the Disposal of Personal Property Owned by the Village of Downers Grove

Summary: This resolution authorizes the disposal of personal property owned by the Village of Downers Grove. This includes two current reserve ambulances.

RESOLUTION 2024-62

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DISPOSAL OF PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

MOTION: To adopt The Consent Agenda of the September 10, 2024, 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

9. Active Agenda

MOT 2024-10451 — A. Motion: Authorize Staff to Negotiate a Redevelopment Agreement for Civic Center Lot 2 with Amended Key Terms

Summary: This motion authorizes staff to negotiate a Redevelopment Agreement for Civic Center Lot 2 in accordance with the amended key terms including reduced purchase price by \$1,215,000 from \$2,760,000 to \$1,545,000, Waive Village building permit fees excluding any Village reimbursements relative to out-of-pocket

expenses incurred by the Village for consultants or any outside review, the Village is to pay for the costs of the Village-owned off-site public improvements near the shared drive aisle serving the development and the vehicle fleet garage, an increase in the earnest money from 5% of the purchase price to 18% of the purchase price, and minor changes reflecting that the IEPA has approved the Remedial Action Plan for the project and a revised grading plan.

MOTION: *To adopt a motion To Authorize Staff to Negotiate a Redevelopment Agreement for Civic Center Lot 2 with Amended Key Terms, as presented.*

RESULT: *Motion carried 5-2.*

MOTIONED TO APPROVE: *Commissioner Glover*

SECONDED BY: *Commissioner Gilmartin*

AYES: *Commissioners Glover, Gilmartin, Davenport, Tully, Mayor Barnett*

NAYES: *Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt*

Public Comment

Janet Whittingham returned to the podium and expressed her concern with the changes to the RDA happening after many months had lapsed since negotiations with the developer began. She expressed this was a “blow” to the taxpayers.

James Mansfell, with the Plumbers Union, said many of his colleagues worked on the Civic Center and many other Village buildings; he asked that the Council vote no to this.

Laura Temple, a resident, expressed her disappointment with this developer and asked for the Council to consider going out to bid to look for a different developer. She requested the use of all union workers.

Clorinda Greco, business owner, requested the Village look into grants, move the fleet garages to the Public Works facility, and instead of an apartment development, create a venue with restaurants and underground parking. She requested the Council go out to bid to find another developer, even if it pushes things back a year.

Tom Syron, with the Sheet Metal Workers Local Union 275, stressed the importance of using union workers; stating that many of his colleagues live in Downers Grove, and using union workers on this project would provide them with the financial support they need. He also said Local Union 265 is moving to a building in Downers Grove and requested the Council consider only hiring union workers for this project.

Todd Baratas echoed the others that spoke. He said he read the RFPs that came in, and he thinks that they missed the part about taxes.

Dan Piskowski, resident, does not want to see this going in a downward spiral. He shared that he is with the Bricklayers Union and asked the Council not to approve this.

Rick Owens, union sheet metal worker, said he has worked on many projects in the Village and requested the Council only consider union workers. He requested that the Council does not approve this.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Commissioner Glover said he thinks time is what kills most deals. He said this was made over a year ago and the market has changed since then. He said we do not know what we would get with other developers, but the time lost to go out to look for another developer could also cost the Village \$1.6 million. He said the “blow” to the taxpayers would be offset with the taxes the Village would be collecting over the course of the loan (on the Civic Center). He said he does not want to risk not accepting this, only to find out that the Village is in the same situation two years from now.

Commissioner Hosé said the Village usually does not have a say so in who is being used to develop buildings in the Village, except for Village owned buildings and situations where the Village is selling property. He said not using union workers is a deal breaker for him. He spoke about selecting LCIDP, among the other RFP responses, because they proposed the best terms and using Leopardo Construction –good union contract workers. The Commissioner

then spoke of a 2021 study, from the Illinois Economic Policy Institute, that showed that union construction sites are much safer and are less likely to have health and safety violations when compared to non-union. He spoke of union workers that work in Downers Grove and said that they should be paid to work on this development. The Commissioner explained that construction work takes its toll on those that perform the work, and LCI is looking to use non-union workers to fatten their bottom line. He opined that going back to RFP will not take that long - it could be as quick as 60 days. Commissioner José said if no other companies come in with a better option, then LCI could take the deal. He said he is not in support of this item.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she agrees with Commissioner José, and shared that over the last 6 months there have not been any rate hikes. She said there is no particular information that this developer did not have when they accepted the bid. She expressed that their requests to cut union labor to 65%, and for permit fees to be waived, are deal breakers for her. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt concluded by stating that as Streetscapes are discussed, her vision for the Village does not include selling land for less than it was agreed upon, and for developers to use non-union workers to solely to increase their bottom line.

Commissioner Gilmartin received confirmation that the proposal was for 65% total union workers, not 35% union. He said he is not thrilled about how the Village got here, and he shared what made the decision to go with LCIDP comfortable for him, was their relationship with Leopardo. He said this decision does not come easily, but based on all of the information the Council received, he thinks it in the Village's best interest to move forward. He shared that this is based on the new projection, with net proceeds and higher tax revenue. The Commissioner explained that this would be a net positive for the Village, beyond original projections, and would exceed this deal's losses. He also noted that LCIDP is a for-profit developer, and if the Council decides to put this back out to RFP, there is a risk to lose out on tax revenue. He explained this was approved in November 2023 and time is not on the Village's side, compounded with the fact that apartment developments are slowing. He reminded all that there are protections in place, should LCI not hold their end of the contract, and he expects there will be provisions listed in the final contract. Commissioner Gilmartin also noted that LCI would be investing \$50 million in a development within the community, and though he wishes the work on this would be 100 percent union, he still believes this deal serves the best interest of the Village.

Commissioner Davenport said he does not think that having this as a union labor project was a part of the original RFP. He said he is glad there will be at least 65% union workers, but that is not a deal breaker for him. He said there risks with both moving forward with this and not – and he is concerned because the market has changed since the Village went to RFP, which could cause the property to be sold for much less if taking this back out to bid. The Commissioner shared that when looking back at the three proposals that came in, this one had the best terms but yielded the least amount of money of all the proposals. He said if the Council decided to go out to RFP, new proposals could be more intense, further explaining that even with \$1.2 million "haircut, this is still the best deal for him, and the Village would end up better off financially than it was with the original proposal. Commissioner Davenport also spoke of the protections the Village has in the key terms, and suggested the removal the word "reasonable" from the key terms regarding the Village's reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.

Commissioner Tully said he was not present last week, but watched the meeting. He shared that what drives him the most is time and experience – he has seen time work against the Village. He spoke of Station Crossing and the current Civic Center building, and expressed that delays were costly to the Village. He further stated that a delay with going back out to bid could cost the Village much more than this \$1.2 million "haircut". He said he has seen delays cost the Village more than once and he does not want that to happen again. Commissioner Tully noted that this deal pencils out better than the other two RFPs received in November, and is also less dense project than the other two projects. He said the community said they wanted the development to be less dense. He explained this is not a "blow" to the taxpayers, but rather puts the Village in a better place financially than it did in November. He opined that 65% of union work is better than 2 years of no union work because there is no project. Commissioner Tully explained that this is not an ideal situation, but is in the best interest of the community. He shared that tweaks like this have been made on other projects, and with this project, the Village is well down this journey and needs to continue down this path.

Mayor Barnett said he agreed with those that are in favor of moving forward with this. He said that the union piece of this is not a part of the question, because it was not a part of the RFP package. He said the Council could make it that the next time the Village sells property, but it was not a Village requirement for this RFP. He said he does not think at this stage the Council should make a decision based on union versus non-union work – he agrees with

Commissioners Gilmartin, Tully, Davenport, and Glover. The Mayor expressed that while he is not happy about this, even if this does not happen, the Village still owns the property and holds a \$1 million – and if it goes through - the Village will hold \$2 million more than originally thought in November. The Mayor shared that the biggest motivator to him is the financial obligation to the Village, and this includes financial benefits to the residents of Downers Grove.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she agrees with the Mayor, that 100 percent union workers was not a part of the RFP, but stressed that it was a part of her decision to choose LCIDP because of their relationship with Leopardo Construction. She said that the developer has broken her trust in this project. She compared this situation to that of Longfellow, stating that she voted for it because it was in the best interest of the Village. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt shared that trust needs to weigh on both parties, and the union piece is a big part of that.

Commissioner José said whether or not the RFP included the union piece is irrelevant. He said if this were the original proposal, he would not have chosen it. He opined that at the end of it, there will be an issue with this project being denser. The Commissioner spoke about delays with the Civic Center and what that cost the Village, but thinks the delay with this development is much different. He said the reality is that non-union contractors will submit lower bids than union contractors, and oftentimes charge more. Commissioner Hose's concern is that the savings will benefit the general contract and subcontractors, but not the work.

Commissioner Davenport questioned Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt and Commissioner José and asked, aside from the union piece, if going back to RFP made them confident it would better financially and developmentally for the Village than the proposal that was before them.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks that moving forward this would not be the bottom line with this developer. She said, looking at this, the Village could end up with a different project or one that is tweaked. The Commissioner opined that she does not have the level of confidence need to move forward with this as the right decision.

Commissioner José spoke of a partially complete project on Warren that did not move forward. He said that worries him. The Commissioner opined that this proposal has set a baseline, and even if the Village does not end up with worse proposals if going out to RFP, he would rather complete this project with a different partner, if this is where the Village is going to end up financially.

Commissioner Tully said if that situation on Warren did occur, but that there are protections in the key terms of this agreement that would address a half constructed project.

Commissioner José said the gap between the earnest money and the projected TIF funding is very significant, and he thinks the Village Attorney could negotiate similar protections in another agreement.

10. First Reading

ORD 2024-10454 — A. Ordinance: Authorize a Second Extension of Special Use Ordinance 5477 for 1300-1418 Butterfield Road to Permit a Restaurant with Drive-Through and Parking Variation to March 07, 2025

Community Development Director, Stan Popovich, presented via PowerPoint. He explained the proposal was for a Wendy's restaurant with a drive-through. He shared slides with maps of the location and the reasoning for the extension request (first extension was approved in April of 2024).

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said this is something that has been seen in the past and said she is good with this.

Commissioner Davenport asked for confirmation that the developer knows this is the last extension they can request.

Mr. Popovich said yes, the developer is aware. He explained that there is a provision that states if they want another extension, they have to wait for a certain amount of time before asking again.

11. 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 authorizing a second extension of Special Use Ordinance 5477 for 1300-1418 Butterfield Road to permit a restaurant with drive-through and parking variation to March 7, 2025.

12. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's report.

13. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Davenport thanked the Mayor for his comments about September 11th.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt thanked all that came out to the Grove Foundation's Golf Outing and shared that over \$17,000 was raised that will go back to the community through its Grants Program.

Commissioner Tully reminded all that there are recordings of the Village Council meetings online for anyone who would like more information than what is included in the meeting minutes.

Commissioner José said the Grove Foundation Golf Outing was an incredible event and thanked all that attended. He said he appreciated the comments about September 11th made by Mayor Barnett.

Mayor Barnett called for a brief recess at 8:18 p.m. before reconvening at the back of the Chambers for the Manager's Report.

14. Manager's Report

REP 2024-10449 — A. Report: Guiding DG: Comprehensive Plan and Related Projects - Downtown and Fairview Focus Area Streetscape Prototypes

The meeting reconvened at 8:24 p.m.

Mr. Popovich explained that the night's presentation would include prototypical conceptual streetscape designs of the downtown area, the Fairview area, and the connection between the two. He said what was being presented are segments of the designs and the full set of design development plans would come in the spring of 2025. Mr. Popovich explained that the objective of the night was to get the Council's feedback on the prototypes. He said a similar process was taken with the Civic Center Project.

Mr. Popovich introduced Tim King with the Hitchcock Design Group. Mr. King reviewed the streetscape design process and the purpose of the evening's session. He explained what was reviewed in the Existing Conditions Memorandum and also reviewed the Outreach Key Takeaways as: streetscape function and character; expanded flexible amenity areas; public gathering spaces and programmed events; and a public art component.

He reviewed the guiding principles of streetscape conceptual design and shared that he received input that this should be a traditional type style, but should be progressive and forward-looking with materials, etc. He spoke of and shared renderings and drawings of baseline improvements, added character improvements, how to add traditional yet innovative style, and character influences.

Mr. King then shared the downtown streetscape existing conditions, followed by prototype options for the downtown streetscape. These ranged from the most conservative, Option 1, to the least conservative, Option 3. The three options included some of the following: bump outs (where space could be gained without impacting vehicular traffic), the addition of pergolas and canopies, more gateway signs, and areas for outdoor dining and/or public art. He then reviewed a slide with expanded flexible amenity areas, including options for outdoor dining or displaying public art.

Next, Mr. King reviewed the Downtown Public Space Existing Conditions, followed by three downtown public space prototype options, in addition to a prototype of an expanded downtown public space area.

Village Manager Fieldman took notes on the white board as the Council started their discussion.

Village Council Comments/Questions

Mayor Barnett opened the conversation to the Council.

Commissioner Tully said he appreciated seeing the opportunities. He said when it comes to the downtown, he is in favor of supplementation and not supplanting. He thinks there are many things shown, that would the downtown more opportunistic and esthetically pleasing, without replacing things. He shared that he favors augmentation rather than substitution. He said with outdoor dining, even though having outdoor seating all the time would be great, it is seasonal and he is reluctant to make a permanent change. The Commissioner expressed that Options 3 and 4 make him nervous because they include changes that are permanent. He said he is appreciative to have restaurants located in Downers Grove today, but that those restaurants could relocate in the future – this is why he wants to explore options that are flexible. The Commissioner expressed he wants this to be creative while maintaining a high level of flexibility, with the focus on enhancements. He said it may not be the most aesthetic option, but he is looking for that balance. His choice would be Downtown Streetscape Option 2. He said when it comes to the public space at Burlington Avenue and Main Street, he does not want to take away the fountain. He said that is where people gather and the tree lighting happens. Commissioner Tully said he also wants to keep the clock as well.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she is in line with Commissioner Tully. She explained she prefers not to have every element on every street, and is not interested in removing all the parking on the streets. She said she is for Option 2. She opined that implementing the plans south of Curtiss, on Main Street, would allow for more options to expand curbs. She also expressed she would be for Option 1, north of Curtiss, with the smaller store fronts. The Commissioner shared that moving further from the center of downtown, she would be okay with expanding sidewalks. She said closer to the heart of the downtown, her choice is Option 1 and moving away from the downtown, Option 2. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt expressed her appreciation to the thought given to the trees, and asked if the outdoor dining could be semi-permanent – suggesting to work with Downtown Management to swap things out seasonally.

Manager Fieldman confirmed she was referring to things like parklets (removable outdoor dining spaces on the street).

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said if they are more flexible areas, and the sidewalk could be expanded for some more clearance, then outdoor dining could be put there. She said the Village could add more cultural art things in the place of outdoor dining in those areas, during the off seasons.

Mayor Barnett asked what Commissioners Tully and Sadowski-Fugitt's thoughts were about the concept of the current reallocation of parking for other uses.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she would like to keep the extensions that the Village has currently further from the downtown. She said in the downtown, her preference would be to move back a little bit and try not to take up all of the parking spaces. She expressed it is harder in the heart of downtown, because there are also non-restaurant spaces, and people need to park to pick things up and drop things off. She spoke about the fountain being something hard thing to lose, but also expressed there may be a cost-benefit to what the construction of something new would be compared to the cost of maintaining the fountain. The Commissioner expressed that said she does not think the loss of the clock will be detrimental to downtown, and also shared that she wants to keep the turnaround by the train station.

Commissioner Tully said he is okay with keeping outdoor dining similar to what it has been post COVID. He said he wants to create opportunities to remove the outdoor dining, to be able to use the parking space - he wants to stay flexible.

Manager Fieldman asked for confirmation that the Commissioner Tully is open to the idea that there would be a temporary improvement in a parking space that could be used for outdoor dining that could then be removed – i.e. parklets.

Commissioner Tully said yes, and by flexible he means when they do not want it, they do not have to have it.

Commissioner Davenport said if a new fountain was built today, it would have to be built differently. He said there will come a day when the fountain will need to be replaced - and maybe not with another fountain. He loves the idea of the plaza space and wants a grassy lawn, not turf, with some type of edging. Commissioner Davenport shared that he thinks this is a place where events could happen. The Commissioner shared he likes the drop off area addition added to the Main Street station.

Mr. King noted that changes would be vetted with the traffic.

Commissioner Davenport said when speaking of art, if outdoor dining is flexible, then during the part of the year it is not happening, then maybe art could go there temporarily. He said the adaptable, sustainable, and flexible idea is attractive to him. He reminded all of the pedestrian first attitude and that giving people more room to move on the sidewalks is a good idea, because it provides safety. The Commissioner reminded all that with the downtown area, the lane width varies from a minimum of 11 feet to a max of 15 feet. He said that studies have shown that less crashes happen when streets are narrower – and by narrowing the street to 11 feet, it could provide a lot of extra space to work with. He opined that parking in the downtown area is needed and he is not interested in losing parking. He expressed that he would be ok with possibly loose parking in areas of the downtown that are not as intense, and are further from heart. The Commissioner asked how long (lengthwise) the parking spaces are.

Mr. Popovich said he thinks they are 21-22 feet long.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks looking at removing the extra space from parking spaces (that are longer than 22 feet) might be a good option to work with on expanding the sidewalk, and would provide some added safety. He said when hearing the words “road diet”, he thinks it is about getting the lane width down. He asked for clarification as to whether or not the connection of the downtown to the Fairview area was included in the plan at the beginning.

Manager Fieldman said yes, it was. He asked if Commissioner Davenport had any thoughts on parklets, purposeful but seasonal improvements, and he also asked his opinion on the clock.

Commissioner Davenport said he is open to those ideas, but wants to learn more about them. He said he is impartial to the clock. He added that he hopes the improvements are something that people will love and will not miss anything that is changed.

Commissioner Glover said he also likes Option 2 for all of the downtown. He said he is looking for something more purposeful and he wants to see uniformity across the downtown. He expressed that with the possibility of changes, he wants the option for outdoor dining spaces to be used for other purposes. The Commissioner expressed, however, that he does not want to eliminate any outdoor dining in the foreseeable future. He asked for confirmation that there was only the loss of one parking spot with Option 2.

Mr. King said the team is analyzing the whole space, in attempt to lose the least amount of parking possible.

Manager Fieldman asked if Commissioner Glover was talking about a permanent improvements, as opposed to parklets, which are seasonal.

Commissioner Glover said yes, and he would be interested in seeing what parklets look like. He said he wants to also learn more about what the shade structures at the crosswalks would like, and he likes the bumped out curbs near crosswalks. He asked if there would be a designation of where seating would be and if it would all be on the same side of the sidewalk.

Mr. Popovich said with the bump outs they discussed, it could be defined better. He said as of right now, outdoor dining goes out onto parking spaces and causes a zig-zag affect.

Commissioner Davenport said with the way outdoor dining space is used now, compared to the new plan, there would be less space used without the barricades, etc.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 10, 2024

Commissioner Glover said for the public space around the train station, he loves the model with the turf. He said he would be okay with losing the fountain and the clock. He said he thinks there could be so many different uses there. Commissioner Glover asked why the other Commissioners did not like the turf.

Commissioner Davenport said he likes the idea of natural turf, just not artificial turf.

Mr. King said when speaking of plaza space, when discussions began, green space and open space was one of the Council's request.

Commissioner Glover said he is good with artificial turf. He said he sees the space being used for a lot of different events, i.e. music at the Farmers Market, tree lighting, etc.

Commissioner José said he agrees that Option 1 is not enough and Option 3 goes too far. He said coming into this meeting, he was ready to say he was okay with the loss of parking that the Village currently has allocated to outdoor dining – that was before he had heard of a parklet and said that he would be happy to learn more about it. He likes the idea of flexibility for outdoor dining that could be used in other ways, because as was said, there could be changes with restaurants, etc. The Commissioner share he would like to include more parking spots with time limits, that have additional enforcement. He emphasized that those are two important pieces for him, also sharing that he is good with the expanded downtown public space, without the artificial turf. He said he also wants the drop off at the train station included, as mentioned by Commissioner Davenport. He shared that he likes what Commissioner Glover said about moving part of the Farmer's Market there to help alleviate space for parking at the market. Commissioner José expressed his thoughts that this adds to the downtown in many ways.

Manager Fieldman asked for thoughts on varying the extent of the options based on locations within the downtown.

Commissioner José said yes, that makes perfect sense. He said he does not think it has be completely uniform, but would like some consistency.

Manager Fieldman asked if Commissioner José liked what Commissioner Glover was saying. Commissioner José said yes.

Commissioner José said he is in favor of keeping the fountain and the clock.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if a parklet is just basically what is currently in the downtown.

Manager Fieldman said yes, it is conceptually, but it is a very different designwise, because it is purposefully designed for temporary application.

Mayor Barnett said the fundamental premise still uses what was previously a parking space, but it becomes temporary.

Commissioner Gilmartin emphasized the importance of having consistency with the feel throughout the downtown. He said he wants the downtown to feel tied together, and he is concerned about making temporary things look temporary. He shared that lighting is important to him and referred to some of the pictures that Mr. King used in the presentation. The Commissioner expressed that he agrees with Commissioner José that Option 1 is not enough, while Option 3 is too much. He said Option 2 is okay, but he is not interested in loosing parking. He noted that when the parking lot is completed at the Civic Center, there will be about 200 spots that will be open to the public on the weekends and evenings (when Village Hall is closed). Commissioner Gilmartin shared that he loves the expanded plaza, which could be used for different purposes and said it is different than Fishel Park. He asked if we own the Train Station.

Village Attorney, Enza Petrarca, said yes, the Village owns the station, but not the land.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if the Village can allow whatever business they would like in the train station.

Attorney Petrarca confirmed that was correct.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 10, 2024

Commissioner Gilmartin said that would open up the opportunity for another restaurant, and/or other opportunities. He said he is indifferent to the turf. He shared that he wants to keep the clock, and noted that having a clear path in the downtown is pedestrian first. The Commissioner shared that he likes a lot of this and it will boil down to specifics like features. He shared he would like to see if the fountain can be incorporated into this.

Commissioner Tully said he fully supports enhancing and/or augmenting the plaza. He opined that the Village should be thoughtful of its assets and those of its partners. He expressed he does not want to design something for a particular use, if the Village can partner with another unit of government. He gave the example of an event space in the parking deck, that can be closed off to hold covered events, and shared that it is used for the Thanksgiving race gathering. The Commission shared his thoughts that while it was a good idea, it is not used often. He said he does not want to design something for a purpose that will not be used.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said to keep in mind that there will be a large plaza at the Civic Center that is not completed yet as well

Commissioner Gilmartin said he likes the idea of revising the drop off area at the train station. He said the example of the area in the parking garage is a great example, but he sees this being used differently and more intentional - while the use of the gathering space in the parking garage was more flexible.

Commissioner Davenport said this is the town square of the Village and it is very visible with open space. He said this would give people more space to gather in the downtown and would attract people. He spoke of having a lawn area, that would soak up water and would also be an oasis for the area.

Mayor Barnett spoke of the parking garage comment and said that is the opposite of what is being considered. He said this is to create an improved gathering space. He expressed that he is more interested in permanent structures and creating "a place to be" is the most important thing – he does not want so much focus on outdoor dining. He said the green space is important to him, but he is not interested in artificial turf. He added that if real turf is not a possibility, he wants actual plantings. He thinks a mix of Options 1, 2 and 3 need to be used throughout the downtown. The Mayor shared that with Option 2, some additional use of what would otherwise be auto centric space is okay with him. He agreed with Commissioner Davenport's comment about looking for every inch, and added that maybe adding more one-way streets could be a possibility, because that would create additional space without eliminating parking or traffic. He shared that he wants to keep both the fountain and the clock because they have become the landmarks of the community. He said he is good with road dieting the streets and minimizing the size of the lanes. Mayor Barnett expressed that the concept of "use of space" is where he is at, and he wants to reclaim as much pedestrian space as possible. The Mayor shared that no matter what the sidewalk space is used for, it needs to be accessible and traversable by everyone.

Commissioner Gilmartin added that he would have interest in looking at closing Main Street, temporarily, from Curtiss Street to Burlington Avenue to add usable space.

Commissioner Davenport said he has seen this more on side streets.

Mr. King then continued with the presentation and spoke about the Fairview area connection to the downtown. He reviewed the Connection Streetscape Existing Conditions on Rogers Street, then reviewing some of the streetscape improvement suggestions, and connection considerations, related to a dedicated bike lane and an off street shared use path. He said when it came to the connection considerations, the team did not suggest a dedicated bike lane, nor did it suggest an off-street shared use path, though the shared use path could be considered with some tradeoffs. He spoke of a possible connection consideration on the BNSF right-of-way.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she would prefer landscaping buffers and she is interested in seeing what would need to go into an off-street shared use path on whatever connection it is more feasible.

Manager Fieldman said Village staff's position is that it is easier to attempt to add an off-street shared use path on the Roger's Street right-of-way.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 10, 2024

Commissioner Tully said he would prefer the off street path along the BNSF right-of-way, though that would take negotiations on the Village's part.

Manager Fieldman expressed it could be challenging to get BNSF to agree to this use on their property.

Attorney Petrarca confirmed she would check with BNSF.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she is interested in an off-street, shared use path and she would be willing to loose trees on this connection if it is permanent.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he wants to look into the BNSF, and would also like it to be connected to Belmont. He said lighting is important, as well as connecting the character.

Commissioner José said he likes the connection streetscape idea and would be willing to explore the off-street, shared use path on Rogers, though he a little concerned about the loss of trees and the change in grade on Rogers for the path. He shared he is also interested in looking into the BNSF path. He added that he is actually willing to do both connections.

Commissioner Davenport said the off-street multipurpose trail is essential, along with proper lighting along the way, and other visual cues as well – this is creating a place where people can walk from one place to another. He said on-street lanes are not something he wants to talk about. He asked Mr. King why he suggested that the trail was not the best use of resources.

Mr. King said, per Baxter and Woodman, this is due to issue with the grade change on Rogers, crossing driveways, and the cost involved, they did not think it would be worth it.

Manager Fieldman said more was to come on this piece of it, he asked for confirmation from the Council of their general agreement to the remainder of Mr. King's presentation regarding the streetscape improvements.

Mayor Barnett said he would like to take the off-street path, along BNSF, all the way to Belmont, if possible. He also shared that the Roger's Street right-of-way is owned by the Village, and expressed that he is willing to take this from the curb to the end of the right of way – as there are not a lot of old grown oak trees there. He said he wants to add knee walls and planters to the connection, making it feel like a continuation of the downtown.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks signage is an important part of this.

Manager Fieldman asked Commissioner Davenport to confirm he is referring to way-finding and gateway signage.

Commissioner Davenport said yes. He said at the HPDRB meeting, one of the Commissioners brought up the history of the Fairview area and how it used to be called East Grove. He said he likes the idea of calling it East Grove, rather than Fairview, and the name change would also signal that something is happening there.

Mr. King went on to review the Fairview Focus Area, he reviewed the Fairview Area Existing Conditions and then reviewed three prototype options. He also provided examples of the Fairview Focus area public space prototype.

Commissioner Tully said it is ok to go bold in this area. He suggested Mr. King produce even more than three prototypes for the Council to consider. The Commissioner agreed with creating pedestrian green space, something that is historic, and nostalgic. He said in this area it is about supplanting and this is where to create new patterns, usage, and new things - be creative. He suggested using the train station parking lot to hold events and create gathering spaces.

Manager Fieldman said that Mr. King showed wide open pedestrian spaces, along Fairview, in addition to some parking. He asked Commissioner Tully if he is suggesting that on street parking is not included and only wants to include pedestrian spaces.

Commissioner Tully said this area is completely different than Main Street. He said there is almost too much parking there right now and it does not get used.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 10, 2024

Commissioner Hosé said this is near his home. He said he is excited to see the three prototypes and suggested it would be good to see two more prototypes. He shared he likes the idea of other gathering spaces.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt expressed that she is worried about the loss of lanes and how it could get messy.

Commissioner Hosé said he thought the lanes were already messy, because they go from two lanes, to more lanes, and back down again.

Commissioner Davenport said the issue is that cars queue up near Maple Avenue. He suggested Baxter & Woodman look into this.

Mayor Barnett said there is a huge functional issue with the train getting hooked up there now.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said if she was giving up space, she would be more willing to give up parking than the lanes.

Manager Fieldman said from what he is hearing, some commentary from the Village's traffic team would be beneficial.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she does not think anything on the north side of Fairview is possible because that is BNSF property. She said she would like to see the public space piece happen.

Commissioner Davenport asked what the sidewalk width is on Fairview, in comparison to the downtown.

Mr. Popovich said Fairview feels wider because of the grade changes, with steps.

Commissioner Davenport expressed that the Council is starting off in a better place to create what needs to be done. He cautioned that though it might not take as much work as the downtown, there could be consequences later to the decisions that are made now. He said thinking about that could help detail future conversations.

Mayor Barnett asked if the tool that the EDC has could help here.

Manager Fieldman said for it to work, people would have to remain in a certain area for 10 minutes or more. He said it does not work well in cars because they are constantly moving.

Commissioner Gilmartin said this is an opportunity to do more. He read in the meeting notes from last week about wanting to give this a distinct look and said he is not totally on board with that. He said he thinks this is a gateway and there needs to be consistency. He noted that he needs some more explanation, or discussion, to understand what this train station parking lot space would be used for.

Manager Fieldman said due to the ownership, the primary use of the parking lot needs to remain parking. He asked for confirmation that the Commissioner is asking if it could be designed for a different use, on the weekends and maybe even evenings, as an activated space or maybe even on that has design features that can be parked on.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that was correct, and asked, with regard to sidewalks, what the impact would be if they are widened. He noted that he would like to create more character there too.

Mayor Barnett shared that part of the things the Council is working on, is making this space an area people want to invest in. He said in his mind, a lot of this is to create an environment people expect, so they would better know how to use it.

Commissioner Glover said he likes Option 3, and wants to go bold to spur development in the area. He said he does not think it matters how many lanes are in this area, cars will be backed up either way. He opined that there would not be much of an impact with reducing lanes. He said in terms of the discussion about the train station parking lot, that would only work if they go bold with everything else.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 10, 2024

Mr. King reviewed the next steps in the process, including the conceptual design refinements, public open house, preferred streetscape design and graphic illustrations (with a focus on the downtown area first), HPDRB and Village Council reviews and presentations, and finally creating a Streetscape Plan.

Commissioner Gilmartin spoke about the comment Mr. King made, when speaking about the Roger's Avenue bike lane being cost prohibitive. He said he wants the Council to make those decisions.

Mr. King said he would bring that back to the team.

Public Comment

Robin Tryloff, a resident, said she wants a drop off area at the Main Street Station, on the south side of the tracks – and not in the parking lot. She spoke about the Streetscape Plan and suggested that the Council consider character when making these decisions by including public art as a part of the plan.

Janet Whittingham returned to the podium and expressed her disappointment in the Streetscape Plans, and her concerns about what is already a lack of parking, with the possibility of removing additional parking. She requested that another parking study be completed.

Clorinda Greco returned to the podium and said the Council already knows her opinion on parking. She expressed her concerns about the process of developing the Streetscape Plan.

15. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: *To adjourn the September 10, 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 10:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi
Village Clerk