



# Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

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**Council Chambers**

**September 17, 2024**

**07:00 PM**

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## 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 Davenport

**Council Attendance (Not Present):** Commissioner Tully

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

## 3. Proclamations

- A. Constitution Week
- B. National Good Neighbor Day
- C. United Against Hate Week

After reading the proclamations, Mayor Barnett presented the United against Hate Week proclamation to members of EQDG (Equality Downers Grove) and NIOT Downers Grove (Not in Our Town).

Dr. Jodi Harap, resident and Chair of the Civic Affairs and Public Policy Committee for Equality Downers Grove, thanked the Mayor for the United against Hate Week proclamation and spoke about working in conjunction with the NIOT organization on the You Belong Campaign.

## 4. Minutes of Council Meetings

**MIN 2024-10217** — A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – September 10, 2024

**MIN 2024-10467** — B. Minutes: Executive Session Meeting Minutes for Approval Only – September 10, 2024

**MOTION:** To adopt the September 10, 2024, Village Council Meeting Minutes and the Executive Session Meeting Minutes, 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, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

**NAYES:** None

## 5. Public Comments

Warner Kiunte, a resident, asked for the Council's consideration of a stop sign at the intersection of Curtiss and Belden due to an increase in the amount of traffic in the area. He also requested the Council consider including affordable housing in their plans when considering future housing opportunities within the community.

Janet Whittingham, a resident, spoke about concerns with the lack of parking in the downtown and requested the Council consider the residents and neighborhoods as they move forward with projects that could impact parking.

David Rose, a resident, spoke of disappointment with the public comment portion of Village Council meeting minutes and concerns with past actions taken by the Village Council.

Tod Baratas, a resident, paid compliments to Community Development Director Stan Popovich and Village Staff for the good work they do for the community.

## 6. Consent Agenda

**COR 2024-10245** — A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6569 – September 06, 2024, 2024

**BIL 2024-10246** — B. Bills Payable: No. 6826 – September 17, 2024

**RES 2024-10457** — C. Resolution: Approve an Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation for Traffic Signal Modernization Along Ogden Avenue - State Contract Number 62U21

**Summary:** This resolution authorizes an agreement with the Illinois Department of Traffic Signal Modernization Along Ogden Avenue - State Contract Number 62U21.

### RESOLUTION 2024-63

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAFFIC SIGNAL MODERNIZATION ALONG OGDEN AVENUE; STATE CONTRACT NUMBER 62U21**

**RES 2024-10459** — D. Resolution: Approve a Renewal Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois for Medical Claim Administration Services

**Summary:** This resolution authorizes the renewal agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield for medical claim administration services for FY 2025.

### RESOLUTION 2024-64

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A RENEWAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS FOR MEDICAL CLAIM ADMINISTRATION SERVICES**

**RES 2024-10460** — E. Resolution: Approve a Renewal Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois for Stop Loss Insurance Coverage

**Summary:** This resolution approves the renewal of an agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois for Stop Loss Insurance Coverage.

### RESOLUTION 2024-65

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A RENEWAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS FOR STOP LOSS INSURANCE COVERAGE**

**RES 2024-10461** — F. Resolution: Approve a Renewal Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois for Group Insurance Policies

**Summary:** This resolution approves the renewal of an agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois for group insurance policies.

**RESOLUTION 2024-66**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A RENEWAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS FOR GROUP INSURANCE POLICIES**

**RES 2024-10463** — G. Resolution: Approve a Renewal Agreement with Humana for Medicare Advantage Insurance for Retirees Over 65

**Summary:** This resolution approves the renewal of an agreement with Humana for Medicare Advantage Insurance for Retirees over 65.

**RESOLUTION 2024-67**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A RENEWAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND HUMANA FOR MEDICARE ADVANTAGE INSURANCE FOR RETIREES OVER 65**

**RES 2024-10464** — H. Resolution: Approve a Claims Administration Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois

**Summary:** This resolution approves a Claims Administration Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Illinois.

**RESOLUTION 2024-68**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A CLAIMS ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS AND THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE**

**RES 2024-10465** — I. Resolution: Approve the Renewal of a Group Dental Insurance Contract with Delta Dental of Illinois

**Summary:** This resolution approves the renewal of a group dental insurance contract with Delta Dental of Illinois.

**RESOLUTION 2024-69**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING RENEWAL OF A GROUP DENTAL INSURANCE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND DELTA DENTAL OF ILLINOIS**

**RES 2024-10466** — J. Resolution: Approve an Agreement with HealthJoy, LLC

**Summary:** This resolution approves an agreement with HealthJoy, LLC to perform benefit coordination services.

**RESOLUTION 2024-70**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN HEALTHJOY, LLC AND THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE**

**MOTION:** *To adopt The Consent Agenda of the September 17, 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, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett*

**NAYES:** *None*

**7. Active Agenda**

**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

**Summary:** This ordinance authorizes 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.

**MOTION:** *To adopt 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 07, 2025, 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, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett*

**NAYES:** *None*

### **Village Council Comments/Questions**

Mayor Barnett said that this item has to do with a potential fast food restaurant with a drive through. He explained that the special use has expired and the requestor is looking for an extension.

## **8. First Reading**

**ORD 2024-10458** — A. Ordinance: Amending Provisions Concerning the Impoundment of Animals

### **Village Council Comments/Questions**

Village Manager Dave Fieldman explained that the Village no longer operates the impoundment of animals and the Village will be relying on the County for this service moving forward. He shared that this is a Village Code housekeeping measure.

Mayor Barnett explained that there are situations where the Village looks to work with other communities and the County to meet the needs of the Village.

Commissioner Gilmartin said this is not a major shift. He explained the Village's part in the impoundment process was as a temporary holding area before the animals were sent to DuPage County.

Mayor Barnett said this is due to the building of the new facility.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted that the Police Department still has the ability to scan microchips.

Manager Fieldman confirmed this and shared that there will be no change to the Village's service level.

## **9. 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 amending provisions concerning the impoundment of animals.

## **10. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Barnett reiterated that civil rights are the first calling for both the nation and the community. He said he wants to make sure that the Village keeps working hard at this and expressed that the theme of the night's proclamations should be echoed through everything the Village does, from policing to permit reviews.

## **11. Council Member Reports**

Commissioner Davenport thanked Mayor Barnett for his proclamations. He encouraged parents that have kids going off to college soon to take advantage of the FAFSA courses offered by the Downers Grove high schools. He spoke of the Library's Food and Toiletry Drive taking place on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> and encouraged the residents to attend.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt echoed her thanks for the proclamations.

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Commissioner Gilmartin thanked the Mayor as well.

Commissioner José said that he represented the Village at multiple events the week prior to the meeting. He shared that he attended the Oak Trace Honor Wall event, honoring all of the residents who are veterans, and expressed that it was a fantastic and inspiring event. He also shared that he attended Goldfinger's Oktoberfest, to tap the first keg.

Mayor Barnett called for a five-minute break at 7:35 p.m to give the Council time to move to the back of the Council Chambers for the Manager's Report.

## **12. Manager's Report**

### **REP 2024-10450 — A. Report: Guiding DG: Comprehensive Plan and Related Projects – Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision and Preliminary Land Use Framework**

The meeting resumed at 7:39 p.m. Mayor Barnett explained the purpose of the meeting was to receive an update on the Guiding DG public engagement process. Then, the Council would be having a serious discussion regarding the vision statement of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Development Director Stan Popovich introduced Maritza Schultz, with the consultant All Together, who would be presenting virtually to provide some details about the public engagement process since the last update in August. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Schultz outlined the community engagement schedule and highlighted that the public engagement survey expectations had been exceeded. She spoke about the results from in-person engagements and pop-up events, sharing photos that captured the experiences. Ms. Schultz noted that 62% of participants were under 18, indicating a youthful demographic. The pop-ups attracted a diverse crowd, with a significant number of families in attendance. Ms. Schultz also presented the top 15 pop-up topics and explained the engagement methodology that was used. She detailed the top 5 engagement themes, resulting from the quantitative and qualitative data received.

Josh Koonce, from Houseal Lavigne, expressed the value of having All Together as part of the team. He noted that both qualitative and quantitative responses had been collected and that these insights, along with the shared photos, would be included in the planning document.

Ms. Schultz shared insights from the community survey and visioning workshops, providing details about the engagement theme categories, resulting from the quantitative and qualitative data. The themes included Housing for All, Keep it Local, More Ways to Move, Green Spaces and People Places, and Welcome to DG. She then outlined the next steps, explaining that these themes would serve as a checklist for future actions. Ms. Schultz explained that the feedback gathered from the community would play a crucial role in the decision-making process moving forward. She concluded by inviting the Council to join the discussion.

### **Village Council Comments/Questions**

Mayor Barnett opened the conversation to the Council.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked, in terms of the ranking of the pop-up topics, what residents were ranking.

Ms. Schultz said it was not a ranking. She explained that each topic was presented as an open-ended question that residents could respond to. She said the ranking involved the top responses received from the residents, regarding Village assets, hopes and dreams, and visions for the future of Downers Grove.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked what a top ranking of a park would mean.

Ms. Schultz said the rankings were the themes that came out of the resident responses written on stickers at pop-ups. She explained that each response was annotated by her team and then sorted into these themes.

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Commissioner José said the opportunity for the Village to partner with other government agencies, such as the Park District, Library and School District, stood out to him as a common theme throughout the five themes. He said this is an opportunity for education and collaboration, and that is something to keep in mind throughout this process.

Commissioner Davenport said that he had some qualitative data to add to some of the themes. He shared that the Park District just finished updating their Comprehensive Plan and that it has a lot of relatable information. He spoke of the walking trails and paths, the theme of sustainability, their collaboration with the Village on storm water and increasing the tree canopy. He said their plan included the results of what the constituents requested, including things outside their purview. The Commissioner shared that in the plan, the Park District highlighted south Downers Grove, as an area to focus on to better serve the residents. He said he did not expect to see south Downers Grove mentioned, but clearly the Park District heard that from the residents and included it. Commissioner Davenport said he thinks the Village should use this information. Then focusing on the Village's community engagement process, he asked how to interpret the data stating that 30% of respondents felt population diversity was a community weakness.

Mr. Koonce said he thought there was more than just weaknesses or strengths on it –there was a scale. He said he had to get back to the Council with the way that question was structured.

Commissioner Davenport said he wants more information included on that topic, so the Council could decipher what to do with it.

Mayor Barnett said he is struggling with what to do with this information. He expressed that without understanding what the questions were, and without seeing the stickers that people wrote on, he is not sure how to use the data presented. The Mayor said, after seeing various pieces of data, it posed the question of how to move forward with it. He emphasized the need for more data.

Ms. Schultz said the team could provide the Council with all of the raw data, and explained that this was just a synopsis. She said with regard to what people liked about Downers Grove, the top answer in their responses was the parks.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said this issue came up at Coffee with the Council. She shared that residents had a hard time filling out the survey because when they were supposed to rank things, there was nowhere to explain the reasoning behind their responses. The Commissioner shared that the Council needed to see the detailed qualitative and quantitative data.

Mayor Barnett said there is also some conflicting directions within the results. He said if the Council had some of the raw data to see what drove those comments, it would be helpful. He said understanding what it was that put the themes into the documents would help as well.

Commissioner José said while thinking of some of the specific questions and suggestions, 75<sup>th</sup> and Lemont stood out to him – putting a mix of retail and housing there. He asked how many times that came up in the responses and in what context. He said he wants to know how many people provided the input, and in particular, he was interested in what the reaction was from the residents on the south side of town.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she cannot say anecdotally, but through conversations she's had with a lot of people, they have said that would be their ideal use in that particular space (south Downers Grove). She said that this may be turning point.

Mayor Barnett said the Council is talking to people and that it is an important part to include in this.

Commissioner Gilmartin noted that the challenge of this process actually helps guide and ultimately benefits the Council, as it reflects topics brought forward by residents with minimal prompting. While he expressed concerns that the current data may not fully meet the Council's needs, he emphasized that the themes in the report feel organic and significant because they emerged from genuine community input. The Commissioner gave the example of 57% of respondents identifying pedestrian and bike safety as their top priority, underscoring its importance. He shared his thought that much of the report aligns well with the five engagement themes. Additionally, he pointed out that while a substantial portion of participants were under 18, there was also a considerable adult input that provided valuable guidance.

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Mayor Barnett said in regard to the respondents that are under 18, the Council does not know the exact ages of those respondents. They could be age 17, 16, or even younger.

Commissioner Gilmartin said, with regard to the survey, over 50% of survey respondents saw affordable housing as a concern, indicating that the Council needs to prioritize this issue. He referenced an informal survey he conducted shortly after being elected, which revealed that bike and pedestrian safety ranked as the top concern, followed by outdoor dining and downtown district planning and improvements. The Commissioner opined that these findings suggest that the Council is moving in the right direction.

Commissioner Davenport concurred and added that seeing things align with the previous Comprehensive Plan, is proof that the Council is on the right track.

Mayor Barnett spoke about the line in the report that spoke of the Business Survey and that 36% of the survey respondents were members of the business community. He asked if that meant that 2/3 of the data was from people that are not in the business community.

Mr. Koonce said he would have to review the results but shared that the survey asked the survey takers if they wanted to take the Business Survey, and then it asked if they were a member of the business community.

Mayor Barnett said he would like to see some differentiation between the responses that were from the members of the business community versus those from customers/consumers. This is because they could provide different perspectives.

Mr. Koonce said he wants to go back and look at all the responses and said he would report back.

Commissioner José asked if it would be possible for the business owner responses to be separated from the consumer responses.

Mr. Koonce said the team has the supporting data and they can sort through it. He shared that though map.social is closed, it is still live on the website for anyone who wants to see the actual responses left by participants. He said the shapefile will be turned over to the Village. Additionally, summaries of all of the workshops will be scanned and Mr. Koonce explained that the responses have been summarized and all original handwritten worksheets are available.

Commissioner Davenport said the Council wants to have the data of the business community, because as the Council discusses the vision statement, goals, and key recommendations, this type of data will be driving their decisions.

Mayor Barnett said he does not disagree with Commissioner Gilmartin, and that at the 70 to the 90 thousand foot level, there are repetitive things that are the right subject matter, but somehow they need to be narrowed to bulleted items that can help drive the big decisions the Council needs to make moving forward. Mayor Barnett reiterated that the Council needs to be able to review the data details more thoroughly.

Commissioner José said his takeaway is that people do not know all of the services that are out there.

Mayor Barnett said his biggest take away is that the Village needs to be able to communicate better.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that he has heard some of the sentiments in the report before. He spoke of the Village Zoning Code and how it relates to businesses. He said there is a perception that the Village has tough Zoning Codes, but that it may just be a lack of communication on the Village's part.

Commissioner José thanked Commissioner Gilmartin for bringing that up. He said some people speak of how good staff is at explaining Zoning Codes and others just do not understand them.

Manager Fieldman said that Village staff did some follow up on this. He shared that a lot of residents think Health Codes are a part of Zoning Codes and that might be contributing to this. He explained that staff is digging into this.

Commissioner José said that will help the Council moving forward. He said when looking at some regulations, such as health safety, do not fall under the Village's purview. The Commissioner shared that 62% of business owners

selected more support to local businesses as a top priority. He said the Council needs further information as to how the Village can provide that support.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she was curious as to how as well.

Commissioner Glover said as a business owner, he previously shared the perception that the Village made it hard for development and for businesses to prosper. He explained that since becoming a Commissioner, he now has a better understanding and has a totally different perception.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that as a business owner one would want to make money, which is understandable. He said he thinks if there is a perception that the Village is more restrictive than it really is, that is something that needs to be addressed.

Commissioner Glover said there may be regulations for things such as adding a sprinkler system to an old building, that business owners may not like, but it is something they must comply with.

Commissioner Davenport said that the Village of Downers Grove regulations are no different than other communities when it comes to zoning. He said starting from scratch with a new building is much less complex than turning over existing infrastructure and making it work.

Ms. Schultz noted that the public engagement reviewed was engagement that went through August. She shared that there is another round of engagement coming up and she will work with staff, and the Council, on how to dig deeper.

Mayor Barnett asked Ms. Schultz to keep in mind some of the challenges the Council is having with the data and asked that the Council is provided more of the raw data moving forward.

### **Public Comment**

Janet Whittingham, returned to the podium, and spoke in regard to a conversation from an earlier meeting where the Council decided that the survey responses received from businesses were less than robust and they wanted additional efforts made to reach out to different businesses, to get more feedback. She said when asking around, she did not find that any additional businesses were contacted, so she asked which businesses were contracted and what their responses were.

Ms. Schultz clarified that at the last meeting there was a lower response rate in the business survey, so she worked with Village staff to push the survey out again and there was an increased response from both business owners and customers. She explained this was because it was a public facing survey and anyone could choose to take it.

Mayor Barnett asked Ms. Schultz to consider what was posed by the Council earlier, finding the percentage of business owners that were actually participants in the business survey. The Mayor requested that moving forward, the all public engagement efforts be quantified when reporting back to the Council.

Ms. Schultz said that 38.9% of the survey respondents self opted to check that they were either business owners or were members of the business community and 41% of the respondents were a part of the community at large. She said there was also some voluntary specific information requested that included business names, which was voluntary for the survey takers.

Mayor Barnett said it would be interesting to know who those business owners were and to see if they were located in or outside of downtown.

Mr. Popovich introduced Josh Koonce with Houseal Lavigne to present on the Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision.

Mr. Koonce presented via PowerPoint and explained that when planning the layout of the Comprehensive Plan, the key themes will make their way in. He said it will all thread together to form the vision statement. He went over the agenda for the evening and said all of this information is in the draft plan. He said they will review where this all fits in the plan, the vision statement, goals, land use framework and next steps. Mr. Koonce explained that the connections of the Guiding DG sub plans will inform the actions of the Comprehensive Plan. He reviewed the typical plan structure and explained that the community profile section of the document will provide the key community engagement



pieces. He said this evening the Council would be focusing on the vision statement and he explained this should reflect what Downers Grove should be 20 years from now – the horizon of this documents is 20 years into the future. He reviewed what a vision statement is and explained that it contains an aspirational narrative, depicts the community's collective desires, serves as the foundation for the Plan's goals, recommendations and actions, is long range, and is based on community feedback. The Downers Grove Vision Statement incorporates all four of the Guiding DG Plans and he reviewed the draft vision statement. Mr. Koonce explained that input on the vision statement was provided by staff and all of the sub consultant teams, including GZA, Baxter & Woodman, All Together and Hitchcock Design Group. He reviewed the differences between the new vision statement and the past vision statement, explaining that the past was speaking of the Village retrospectively and the new was speaking of the Village prospectively. He said the trend in comprehensive plan vision statements are to keep them shorter, and this one is about a quarter shorter than the last. He then reviewed the things that would remain the same in the vision statement. He shared that Downers Grove has a great reputation in the region, and the Village is updating its Comprehensive Plan in a timely manner, while many other communities wait much longer. Mr. Koonce then asked for the Council's input.

Mayor Barnett said he would like to discuss the vision statement paragraph by paragraph. He explained that the Comprehensive Plan is used by Village staff on a daily basis and it is a document that is handed out to the community. He opened the conversation to the Council.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that the Comprehensive Plan is also one that should reflect the voice of the community.

Commissioner Davenport said that wordsmithing is important. He said words matter, especially because the goal is to be more concise. He also opined that the idea of a retrospective narrative, versus a bullet pointed list, sounded more visionary to him. The Commissioner said he thought there should be more of a tie in to the elements of the plan of work. He spoke of the reference to the Bike and Ped Plan and said there should be a template for some of the other paragraphs that ties them to the different plans.

Commissioner José said he thought of this a little differently. He said there are other references to the other sub plans being worked on – i.e. the Environmental Sustainability Plan. He said he thought of the vision statement as more of an introduction to the Plan, as opposed to being guided by it. The Commissioner said it felt more blocked and he preferred a subtler connection to what is about to come in the plan. He said he wanted it to be more visionary and transitional then a bulleted list.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she had the same reaction.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he agrees with Commissioner José. He said pointing to the other plans felt more like an introduction than a vision. He thinks as is the vision statement it should go deep/specific on some things. He also shared he wants this to feel more visionary then process based. The Commissioner said that he could go either way in terms of it being written retrospectively versus prospectively.

Mayor Barnett said there is a different tone prospectively versus retrospectively. He said one sounds like a how to versus what we were hoping for.

Commissioner Davenport said the retrospective felt more visionary.

The Council then engaged in a review and discussion about draft **Paragraph 1**:

*Since its incorporation in 1873, the Village of Downers Grove has grown to become home to 50,000 people and a model community within Illinois. As a result of the four Guiding DG plans, over the coming decades the Village will continue its long tradition of excellence, known for its diverse and well-maintained neighborhoods, premier regional and local commercial choices, strong Downtown, commitment to sustainability, accessible and attractive open spaces, safe connectivity for all road users, and an array of quality municipal services and amenities.*

During their discussion the Council shared the following changes:

- Change the characterization of a “strong” downtown to a “vibrant” downtown.
- Add more about the community and people – i.e. a diverse community that is inclusive and belonging.

- Remove “as a result of the four Guiding DG Plans” – the plans are not actually setting the vision.
- Include commentary about people being the greatest asset.
- The paragraph reads as more of a summary/introduction to the multi paragraph vision statement.

Mr. Kooce explained that the first paragraph is the introduction to all of it. The rest of the paragraphs should map back to the different things the plan document is going to cover. He said it would occupy the center point of the plan, like in the 2017 Plan, coming after the introduction and community profile, it is the centerpiece and tees up everything after it. He said with other communities, they have used paragraphs similar to Paragraph 1 as the vision statement of the Comprehensive Pan, and then moved the vision statement for each chapter closer to each chapter within the plan. He said this process could be discussed as they get more into the document design. Mr. Koonce said that the team also mentioned leaving the entire vision statement of the plan center prominent, and then using some sort of call-out boxes to mention the vision statements of the 3 sub-plans.

Manager Fieldman explained that one of the reasons the Council is going over the vision statement is because it will drive not only all the elements of the plan, it will drive the other components too. He said the team wanted to get the Council’s opinion on the vision statement because they want to be sure that whatever is produced in the supporting plans supports the vision statement.

The Council then moved onto reviewing and discussing **Paragraph #2:**

*Downers Grove will provide a variety of housing options price points to accommodate residents at all stages of life. Whether it be seniors, young professionals, or new families, anyone will be able to call Downers Grove home. Given the historic nature of the Village, new housing will reflect the architectural style and character of the community. Mixed-use development will enable living, working, and playing in the Village’s most compact areas, encouraging walkability and neighborhood vitality.*

During their discussion, the Council shared the following changes:

- Remove “price points”.
- Change the word “provide” to either “include”, “promote”, or “encourage”.
- Remove the second sentence – it is redundant.
- Include the idea of housing to age in place – to include all stages of life and income levels (socio-economic).
- When referring to the Village in its physical form, it should be referred to as “Downers Grove”.
- When referring to the Village as an organization, it should be referred to as the “Village”.
- Remove “architectural style” from the third sentence.
- The third sentence should include the diverse housing options within Downers Grove.
- Add some qualifiers to describe housing diversity: age of homes, size of homes, style of homes, homes for all incomes, homes for all people, and that housing diversity contributes to Downers Grove’s eclectic character.
- The fourth sentence should incorporate that Downers Grove will have areas of mixed use throughout the community, that will enable living and working, and encourage walkability.

Manager Fieldman confirmed that throughout the entire document, when referring to the physical Village, it will be referred to as “Downers Grove” and when referring to the Village as an organization, it will be referred to as the “Village”. He said when getting into partnerships with other organizations, some clarification may be necessary.

Mr. Koonce said the team would thread through the document and make the necessary changes. He also said that that the terms could be explained at the front of the document, in the community profile.

The Council then reviewed and discussed **Paragraph #3:**

*Downers Grove’s business-friendly environment will continue to attract businesses and investment. The Village will continue to improve its attractive commercial corridors, growing them as regionally recognized destinations and home to notable activity centers. The Village will be known for supporting new entrepreneurs and existing small businesses alike, both in the thriving Downtown and throughout the community. The Village will continue to drive economic development by attracting major employers, fostering a thriving job market with living wages and above.*

During their discussion, the Council shared the following changes:

- The second sentence should use “Downers Grove” instead of “Village”.
- In the last sentence delete “living wages and above” and end at “thriving job market” – this verbiage includes all types of jobs.
- In the last sentence keep the word “Village” - it refers to the Village as an organization.

The Council wrapped up the evening with a review and discussion of **Paragraph #4:**

*Downtown Downers Grove will continue to be the heart of the community – a place where neighbors and visitors gather and businesses thrive. The Downtown and Fairview Focus Area Streetscape projects will catalyze functional, innovative, and sustainable streetscapes and public spaces that encourage community interaction and commerce, improving the pedestrian experience and draw of Downtown. Incorporating cultural elements will further create a unique environment, reflect community pride, and attract visitors. Fairview Avenue will be revitalized creating a unique multi-use center that will cater to residents, visitors from neighboring communities, and commuters.*

During their discussion, the Council shared the following changes:

- Remove the reference to the Downtown and Fairview Focus Area “Streetscape Projects” – referring to the Streetscape Projects is too specific.
- Keep the other pieces to the second sentence.
- Mention the Downtown and Fairview Focus Area connectivity.
- Mention that the Downtown is transit oriented, is the heart and a key vision of the community.
- Identify the two other transit oriented sites that are connected to the downtown via the rail-line: Fairview (current key focus area) and Belmont (mention later in document as a possible future focus area).
- In the third sentence remove the words “cultural elements” and replace with the words “culture and public art”.

Next, Mr. Koonce explained that the goals of the plan need to be set. He said they will not be as lofty and aspirational as the vision statement, but they should be things that the Village and the community of Downers Grove can work toward. He said the goals should align with the chapters of the plan: land use, growth and development, housing and neighborhoods, economic development, transportation and mobility, community services, facilities and public infrastructure and sustainability, parks, recreation, open spaces. He explained the next steps in the process..

Manager Fieldman said that the next meeting will be in October, and the team will present a rework of the things worked on at this meeting. Then there will be a review of the rest of the first draft that the Council did not have time to review at this meeting. Manager Fieldman explained that the schedule may have to be adjusted to accommodate the policy work of the Council.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked when there is a revision, that there is a redline version prepared for the Council to see the changes that have been made.

Mayor Barnett asked that the audience hold their comments for the next meeting or that they send the Council emails with their comments and/or concerns.

### **13. Adjournment**

Mayor Barnett called motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION: To adjourn the September 17, 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, Gilmartin, Davenport, Glover, and Mayor Barnett**

**NAYES: None**

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 17, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi  
Village Clerk