



rRemarks Data for November 19, 2024 Village Council Meeting

Agenda Section & Item: Manager's Report - REP 2024-10571 A. Guiding DG: Comprehensive Plan and Related Projects - Comprehensive Plan Goals and Recommendations Follow-Up and Preliminary Future Land Use Map

Commenter: Susan Clement

Comment: I'm specifically concerned about the planned use of land located at Saratoga and Warren. I would be strongly against another tall condo building in this area. I am hoping the council planning committee would consider other uses for this land. I've lived in Downers Grove in the Prince Pond area for 48 years. I am not against development in general but find the amount of large buildings that now exist have changed the nature of the village and would hope planning can be open to other ways to expand that can maintain the general historic nature and people-oriented aspects of the village.

Agenda Section & Item: Comments of a General Nature

Commenter: Allison Folkerts

Comment: I would like to thank Commissioner Davenport for bringing forward the proposal to place an advisory referendum on the April 2025 ballot that would ask taxpayers whether or not the DGPL should become an independent unit of government. I will withhold any additional comment until Commissioner Davenport has the opportunity to provide additional context/commentary during his council member report, but wanted to submit a comment ahead of time to express my full support for any movement towards DGPL having an elected board of trustees.

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Commenter: Maggie

Comment: I strongly oppose some of the proposed elements of the comprehensive plan/future land use map. More specifically, my main opposition is the proposed development for the six (6) lots at the corner of Saratoga and Warren. This will have a severe negative impact on the very nature of this beloved/historic neighborhood and increase unwanted congestion around Prince Pond.

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Commenter: patrick sexton

Comment: I oppose the designation for downtown development for the six lots at the corner of Saratoga and Warren. This is an historic neighborhood and would ruin the beauty of the area.

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Commenter: Jan Pranger

Comment: I strongly oppose the comprehensive plan for future land use in DG. Specifically the proposed multifamily development on the six (6) lots at the corner of Saratoga and Warren.

Agenda Section & Item: Comments of a General Nature

Commenter: Margaret Mark

Comment: My comment is regarding the proposed referendum item that Downers Grove Public Library become an independent unit of government.

I'm concerned this will adversely increase the tax rates the residents will be paying for the library .

If this change was made, wouldn't the library lose the discounts they currently receive, such as not paying for electricity and utilizing the shared services of bookkeeping and auditing just to name a few? The electricity charge alone would be a HUGE financial increase.

Also would this change DGPL being part of SWAN & RAILS?

We are extremely lucky to live in a community that has an outstanding library with a 5 star rating!! Our wonderful library is definitely a benefit for all the residents of Downers Grove.

I worry that this move would set the library back instead of enabling it to continue to grow and flourish. It also would be an increased tax burden to the Downers Grove taxpayers.

Agenda Section & Item: Comments of a General Nature

Commenter: Margaret Mark

Comment: The west side of Saratoga is composed of beautiful historic homes, and should not be included in downtown development.

The Key Recommendations for the Village's Guiding DG plan include promoting preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods, and ensuring residential new construction, additions, and renovations complement the established character and scale of the established neighborhoods.

The neighborhood directly surrounding Prince Pond, a beautiful prominent public park that is central to this neighborhood, should be protected from high rise development. Prince Pond is a beloved and gorgeous park that is well-used year-round. Even though I live on the south side of Downers Grove, I go out of my way to visit there whenever I get the chance. This is a long established and historically significant neighborhood which should be preserved, high rise development shouldn't be allowed around Prince Pond.

In 1892, E. H. Prince platted this subdivision and constructed Prince Pond to be a focal point of this neighborhood. In appreciation of this, in 2002, the Downers Grove Park District recognized Prince Pond as an historic site. One of the houses adjacent to these six lots was a home built by Israel Blodgett's son Charles, and the home next to it was his barn and is now Landmarked.

The picturesque single family home neighborhood surrounding Prince Pond is a prime example of a historic neighborhood that we're lucky enough to still have in Downers Grove. I'm asking the Council to remove these homes/lots from the Future Land Use Map.

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Commenter: Jesse Friedl

Comment: I strong oppose.

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Commenter: Al Lapinskas

Comment: I am writing regarding the lots of land at the Northwest corner of Warren and Saratoga. As a resident of the area, I strongly disagree with developing this land for anything other than residential purposes. This area should not be developed to keep the neighborhood quaint as it has been for over 100 years. My wife and I just moved into the neighborhood in September 2024 and this development would negatively impact the perception of the neighborhood near Prince Pond.

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Commenter: Ken Hammer

Comment: My name is Ken Hammer and I live at 1205 Franklin St in a Landmarked home. We have lived here for nearly 40 years and love our neighborhood and we love Prince Pond. I have been a life long resident of Downers Grove and remember fondly many enjoyable days skating at our beloved pond. I have been very concerned about all of the development in our town and that was our primary reason for Landmarking our home. You are attempting to raise additional taxes at the expense of our property values. The traffic on Saratoga is already ridiculous adding more parking lots and more cars will only make this project more objectionable. It seems that you and the council are continuing to make exceptions to our use rules too easy to obtain. I hope you will reconsider this plan. It will affect many people and many home values. People that want to live in Downers Grove want to feel like we are a community . These apartments and condos make this town feel cold and sterile. Consider your residents and not the developers . With Deep Concern, Ken Hammer

Agenda Section & Item: Comments of a General Nature

Commenter: Eric Blau

Comment: This is not a comment of a general nature, it is a comment about the agenda item: Council Member Reports: MOT 2024-10501 A. Library Board Advisory Referendum

Since Commissioner Davenport pulled this item from the November 12th meeting without comment, I have been trying to get answers from him, and the rest of the Council about who was consulted prior to drafting the motion, whether the pros and cons of a potential switch of the Downers Grove Library to a district library have been researched, and what the reasoning was regarding bringing this forward as an advisory referendum, seemingly without having even discussed it with the various stakeholders. I have received replies from Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, and Hose, indicating that they do not know why Commissioner Davenport has chosen to bring this forward, and, in at least one case, did not know about it until the agenda was announced. I have not received responses from Commissioners Tully, Glover, or Mayor Barnett. Commissioner Davenport's response to my questions was that he would be answering "most of them" at tonight's council meeting.

Since Commissioner Davenport says he intends to address my questions at tonight's Council meeting, I am including them here.

Commissioner Davenport,

I have several questions regarding your motion to place an advisory referendum on the April ballot, concerning converting the Downers Grove Library to a district library.

1) With whom have you had conversations about this, prior to first placing it on the agenda for the Nov 12 meeting? Have you talked with any of the Library Board members about it? Have you talked with any of the board members of the Library Foundation? Have you discussed it with other council members, prior to placing it on the agenda for the Nov 12 meeting? Were there any other groups or individuals with whom you discussed this topic, prior to placing it on the agenda for the Nov 12 council meeting? If so, with whom?

2) Have you investigated the pros and cons of the library making such a switch? Will there be a presentation of such pros and cons before any vote on placing this referendum on the April ballot?

3) Why do you think that an advisory referendum is the right step to take at this point? At the moment, and noting that this impression could change depending on your answers to the questions in paragraph 1, it seems like this motion for an advisory referendum is being brought forth without having had a discussion with the various stakeholders. Who came up with the idea of putting this referendum on the ballot, and what is the goal of putting it before the people, without, seemingly, having worked through what the consequences would be?

Why did you decide not to bring this motion at the Nov 12 Village Council meeting, instead deferring it to the Nov 19 meeting? The text of the motion has not changed.

As a long time Downers Grove resident, thank you for your time in answering these questions.

Sincerely,
Eric Blau