

PLAN

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING
BEFORE THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

COMMISSION

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had before the Village of
Northfield Plan and Zoning Commission taken at the
Northfield Village Hall, Board Room, Northfield, Illinois on
the 7th day of April, 2008, at the hour of 7:05 o'clock p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

GEORGE WARGA, Chair (via telephone)
JOHN DOLAN
DAN deLOYS
WILLIAM HIELSCHER
PHILIP JONES
LEONARD RUBIN
BILL VASELOPULOS

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ROBERT CALDWELL
JOANNA STEIN

ALSO PRESENT:

ANNE KANE, Director of Community Development

1 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: I'd like to call this
2 meeting to order, the April 7th meeting of the Planning and
3 Zoning Commission. I'm Bill Vaselopulos, I'm your Chairman
4 pro tem tonight because our Chairman George Warga is out of
5 town, but is joining us via telephone. And I'd like everyone
6 on the commission to introduce themselves. George, why don't
7 you start first.

8 CHAIRMAN WARGA: Hello everybody, George Warga.

9 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: John?

10 COMMISSIONER DOLAN: John Dolan.

11 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Len Rubin.

12 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: Bill Hielscher.

13 COMMISSIONER deLOYS: Dan deLoys.

14 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. The purpose of
15 tonight's meeting is to conduct two public hearings, the
16 first of which is to consider the Village Center
17 Redevelopment Plan. And the second matter the Planning and
18 Zoning Commission will consider is a proposed tax amendment
19 to the zoning regulations within the Village Center district,
20 as well as examine changes to the current off-street parking
21 regulations.

22 This Commission is a recommending body and will be
23 forwarding our recommendation, and our recommendation only,

1 to the president and the board of trustees for their final
2 determination as to whether or not to adopt the Village
3 Center Redevelopment Plan, and as a component, as a component
4 of the Village Comprehensive Plan, and whether or not to
5 adopt and implement the proposed zoning changes to help
6 facilitate the redevelopment plan within the district.

7 The Village will consider these items that are being
8 discussed this evening at their next meeting, which is
9 schedule for next Tuesday, April 15th at 7:00 o'clock in this
10 same board room.

11 Tonight's public hearing will require that all persons
12 wishing to be heard on the matter will be asked to be sworn
13 in, and that their statements be recorded for the meeting
14 minutes.

15 Following the Village and Myefski Cook's presentation
16 tonight, and after the Commission has had an opportunity to
17 ask questions and discuss amongst ourselves the issues, then
18 all interested parties here will be given an opportunity to
19 speak. When we're doing that we would like you to, to
20 provide your name and address, and your interest for record.

21 These proceedings are recorded, and we would request
22 that each and every one of you speak at the podium and into
23 the microphone. And at that time, before we, after, before

1 we start that process we will ask that everyone that's
2 interested to be sworn in too.

3 The first order of business today is to approve the
4 minutes of the plan, of the Planning and Zoning Commission
5 meeting that were conducted April, excuse me, March 3, 2008.

6 Do we have a motion?

7 CHAIRMAN WARGA: Motion to approve.

8 (Chorus of seconds.)

9 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: All those in favor?

10 (Chorus of Ayes.)

11 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Motion carries. Our first
14 item tonight on the agenda is the consideration for the
15 discussion of the amendment to the Village's Comprehensive
16 Plan to adopt the Village Center Redevelopment Plan.

17 I'll ask that members of Myefski Cook and any task
18 force members tonight that wish to speak, and any interested
19 parties in the audience, at this time if they'd please stand
20 up and be sworn in.

21 (Witnesses sworn.)

22 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Okay. At this time, I'd
23 like to ask Terry Gottlieb, who is the chairman of the task

1 force to make a few introductory remarks. Mr. Terry?

2 MR. GOTTLIEB: Brief introductory remarks.

3 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Okay.

4 MR. GOTTLIEB: Thank you. Just, I want to give you a
5 sense of the process and what we set out to accomplish, and I
6 think where are we going to go. Briefly, we had posted --
7 Committee, which was from a variety of backgrounds and
8 disciplines, approaches to the idea we had two main verses in
9 to put in this project.

10 One, was to look at the existing downtown and determine
11 what could we do to really improve it from a cultural, from a
12 economic problem, just a sort of a lifestyle concept. I
13 mean, right now we have some great -- there, but for the most
14 part it's not a place where people come to spend time to take
15 part, and there's no really Village activities there.

16 And the second thing is -- given all the development
17 plan around us we really dealt with the -- to really provide
18 an economics stimulus to the area that we felt would really
19 help us now and also, you know, for the next 20 to 40 years
20 to come.

21 In looking at the downtown, it's actually a great
22 balancing act, because you're trying to one, on the one hand
23 do what you can to aggressively provide framework to sort of

1 stimulate the economy and provide incentives for developers
2 to come in and start projects.

3 At the same time, you, because we're a small town you
4 have to be very cognizant of the fact that whatever we're
5 going to be doing is going to impact our residents as well.
6 So even if, if that wasn't an issue we could just put up 40-
7 story buildings and, and run with it.

8 So it's really, it really was, the first thing we did
9 as a commission was really try to set forth a mission of what
10 we thought the Village, the downtown center could be and
11 should be. And really, everything sort of flowed from, from
12 that.

13 In terms of determining the mix of what we were doing,
14 again, not, as you'll see in the plan, nothing is written in
15 stone from the standpoint that this particular area is going
16 to have this, and this particular area's going to have that.

17 What we're trying to do is really provide a framework
18 whereby developers who come in sort of execute their own
19 vision, and hopefully do it at a profit, and the building
20 would benefit as well. So that's essentially what you're
21 looking at.

22 The other thing I should really point out is we did
23 this with the, with a --, and we didn't have public funds

1 available to provide the stimulation. I know a lot of other
2 projects have, some of the concerns from the committee were,
3 like, how much is this going to cost this Village. And we
4 don't have millions of dollars to spend to, to sort of
5 stimulate development of them, for developers. And so we
6 really had to do it in terms of the project itself and in
7 terms of what we were trying to accomplish.

8 That through these other changes, and through providing
9 this, that we wanted it, that encourage some stimulation in
10 local economy, and in turn provide a very nice environment
11 that the residents, hopefully, within a few years will be
12 able to come here jealous. So that's what you're going to be
13 looking at.

14 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you, Terry.

15 MR. GOTTLIEB: Thanks.

16 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: I'd like to also commend you
17 and your hard work on this plan. I was one of the members
18 who was fortunate enough to be on the task force along with
19 another member. The chairman is, this committee, George
20 Warga, and there were a couple of architectural members too,
21 architectural commission members. And I thought you, you did
22 a great job of bringing everyone together and pushing the
23 plan forward.

1 I think Anne Kane's going to speak to some more of the
2 specifics of the plan, and then she'll turn it over to
3 Myefski Cook, who are the architects, who have, who are going
4 to have a slide presentation for us.

5 MS. KANE: Thank you. Yes, I had the distinct pleasure
6 of being the staff liaison to the task force, and working
7 with both, all George, Bill, and Terry in the development of
8 this plan, which really represents the culmination of 10
9 years of planning here in the Village.

10 Back in 1999, the Village adopted a Comprehensive
11 Vision Plan for the Village, which was the first major update
12 since 1958 when the Village adopted its first comprehensive
13 plan. And that, and back in 1999, looked at the whole
14 Village in its entirety.

15 Subsequent to that, the Zoning Ordinance was recodified
16 to ensure that physical environment reflected the
17 redevelopment, excuse me, the physical design of any
18 redevelopment in the community corresponded with that vision
19 plan.

20 And then back in 2006 when the task force was
21 redesigned, that macro examination of the Village really
22 focused on just the Village Center and how we were going to
23 create the environment that Trustee Gottlieb had just

1 explained.

2 Again, specific effort was made to ensure that both the
3 Planning and Zoning Commission, the Architectural Commission,
4 past and previous, as well as current Trustees of the
5 Village, as well as property owners and business owners
6 within the Village Center were represented on this task
7 force. So that there was -- throughout the community into
8 the vision that was, that will be presented this evening.

9 So over the last 18 months, the task force has
10 conducted a number of public meetings to investigate the
11 alternate means of encouraging and shaping the way in which
12 Northfield will redevelop over the next five, 10, hopefully
13 not much longer years, but possibly 15 or 20.

14 The task force did do its due diligence and
15 investigated the pros and cons of a full scale, comprehensive
16 redevelopment all in one fowl swoop. But I'll, as Trustee
17 Gottlieb indicated, a lot of times that needs to be
18 stimulated by some public participation. And it's doing
19 thorough investigation of the tax increment financing as an
20 alternate here, it was determined that that just wasn't going
21 to be feasible here.

22 And so we did approach it, the task force reached the
23 conclusion that incremental, lot by lot development was more

1 preferred, and would be more appropriate in scale and
2 character for Northfield.

3 And when that consensus was reached last summer, we
4 started interviewing various design firms, who had worked
5 with similarly sized communities to help articulate that
6 vision into a plan that will be presented this evening.

7 So since August of last year, Myefski Cook Architects
8 has been working and surveying the Northfield Village Center,
9 working hand in hand with the task force to ensure that the
10 scale, the intensity, and the character is in keeping with
11 what the task force vision and direction to the design firm
12 has been.

13 In January, a community presentation meeting was held
14 to introduce the plan to Northfield residents, business, and
15 property owners. A summary of those, that meeting were
16 provided in your packets this evening.

17 I guess the Village Code does prescribe that the
18 Planning and Zoning Commission has jurisdiction over any
19 amendments to the comprehensive plan. So we did invite
20 Myefski Cook back this evening, as well as provide a notice
21 to so many property owners of tonight's meeting.

22 And I think that summarizes the points I wanted to make
23 in my introductory comments. And I going to ask our

1 questions when we get to that point.

2 CHAIRMAN WARGA: Thank you. Can I add something?

3 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Go ahead, George.

4 CHAIRMAN WARGA: I'd like to reiterate the point that
5 Anne mentioned, that the vision plan that we based our work
6 off of, the task force, was the original plan basically was
7 better than 1958, and I had worked on the plan that was
8 revised in 1999.

9 And I think that the vein in which we did our work is
10 consistent with those previous, that previous vision, and
11 that we had tremendous professional support from our village
12 staff and from outside resources. And just to emphasize that
13 this isn't in, it is consistent with previous thoughts about
14 what should occur in our village over time.

15 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. Now I was going
16 to ask for Myefski Cook to step up and show us some of the
17 details.

18 MR. COOK: Thank you. My name is Chuck Cook from
19 Myefski Cook Architects, we're located in Glencoe. I also
20 have with me tonight, from our office, Gene Boldt. Gene has
21 been instrumental throughout this process of interacting with
22 the task force, and in helping to develop the recommendations
23 that you're going to see tonight.

1 It was our pleasure to work with the task force. We
2 found the entire body to be very receptive to ideas that were
3 brought forth, and be very forthcoming in proposing ideas to
4 us also. And we found it to be a great collaborative effort,
5 which we appreciate.

6 So everyone should know that, from our point of view
7 too, that the task force did a great job on this project.

8 As Anne mentioned, we began the project by first
9 analyzing the existing conditions of the Village Center area,
10 both streetscape, streetways, building massing, building
11 uses, to get a really good understanding of what was here to
12 begin with. We also did kind of detailed analysis of, or get
13 a profound and detailed understanding of what the Village was
14 trying to achieve, what the goals were here, so that we could
15 formulate a response to all of that.

16 And that, over the course of the last six or eight
17 months, through a series of meeting and presentations, we've
18 come to certain conclusions and certain recommendations that
19 we think will help the Village to achieve here your long
20 range goals on the redevelopment of the Village Center.

21 The first thing that, that we were, that we did that we
22 found, it'd be easier to organize the approach to this
23 Village Center was to identify various kind of commercial

1 neighborhoods that kind of naturally exist today. The, and
2 hopefully you, you all have a copy of the booklet and have
3 gone through these. So, I'll try to just briefly touch on
4 what each of these areas are.

5 Within the boundaries that were defined for the Village
6 Center, we found a series six or seven neighborhoods. The
7 first being the southeast corner of, of the Village Center,
8 which we identified as the Village Center retail district,
9 which is really where we saw the greatest potential for
10 developing a very strong pedestrian-friendly, or pedestrian-
11 oriented retail district.

12 Just to the north of that is the Civic Center, which is
13 the area that we're in right now with the post office,
14 library, and Village Hall, and the police station facilities.

15 To the west of that, the two large retail zones, being
16 the grocery store and the Walgreen's to the north of Willow.

17 Those are really kind of flanking an area that we've
18 identified for potential development also, which we're
19 calling the Willow Road Retail District.

20 To the west of that is the River Response Corridor,
21 which we saw as two-fold. One is the ability to take
22 advantage of the waterway that works its way through the
23 Village. Most people don't pay much attention to it, or have

1 a great appreciation for it, but it actually is one of the
2 unique features that Northfield has to offer.

3 And I think with time, and care, and consideration, it
4 could become an asset to the Village Center also. It helps
5 to define that west edge of the Village, and so we saw that
6 as, as a critical component to that area.

7 And then to the north of Willow Road we have the Maple
8 Avenue Commercial District, which we saw as somewhat
9 transitional between retail and office space. And then to
10 the north of that is really what is truly office, the
11 existing office park area.

12 So having a more clear understanding of those
13 neighborhoods, we found beneficial in analyzing it and then
14 helping to formulate how the Village Center as a whole should
15 be developed.

16 So from that, that formulation, and through the series
17 of proposals and discussions, we ultimately came up with the
18 plan, this proposed redevelopment plan, which kind of goes
19 through each of those neighborhoods and identifies the
20 proposed ideal massing, or maximum massing of buildings in
21 those areas, potential arrangement of buildings and parking.

22 And gives you a better sense of the, the scale of the
23 proportions between building sizes and parking requirements

1 that go along with those, those buildings. So this is really
2 what would be used to formulate those, those long range
3 development goals that are going to be encouraged by private
4 development throughout the Village Center.

5 Most of the buildings that you see on this map or
6 diagram are, are proposed to be three to three and a half
7 story maximum height.

8 We found that to be the optimal height to be proposed
9 from the standpoint that it is significant enough scale to
10 help to encourage developers to want to come into the
11 Village, it gives them enough building mass to offset the
12 cost of, of properties. But also, at that three to three and
13 half story it may maintains a, what you would call a
14 pedestrian friendly scale to the, to the Village Center.

15 Another thing that you'll see demonstrated within that
16 diagram is that most of the buildings are pulled up to the
17 sidewalk, or up to the street front. This is done
18 intentionally, and it is intended to create a more
19 traditional retail downtown for the Village. Most it would
20 be, older communities have that type of activity, along with
21 even in the City of Chicago, which would have buildings that
22 really come up right up to the sidewalk.

23 And really, and what that does is it helps to encourage

1 synergies between different retailers. When people come to
2 the Village to, to a specific destination they are much more
3 inclined to then shop to other destinations if they are all
4 directly adjacent to each other in that manner.

5 People can essentially, you know, window shop as they
6 stroll along the sidewalk, as opposed to the feeling of
7 retailers that are set back dramatically from the road, and
8 separated by an expanse of parking, which then encourages
9 people to drive to that destination. And then once they've
10 completed their immediate task to basically get back in their
11 cars and leave again.

12 So we're really trying to create a much more pedestrian
13 friendly environment with the downtown, and also create that
14 synergy amongst different retailers and commercial users.

15 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: Could I interject one question
16 on this?

17 MR. COOK: Certainly.

18 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: If we look at the, I just
19 noticed in my packet, if we look at what I would describe as
20 the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Ash Street. There
21 are two pieces, I think I know the answer to the question,
22 but at least on this, which are not marked as far as use, and
23 it may be, I could show it to you. I think I know which,

1 currently where the bank is located.

2 MR. COOK: Well, I should point out that we kind of had
3 a balancing act between the neighborhood that I talked about
4 in the beginning as being the Office Park District, the, was
5 on some ways determined to be not as essential to the core of
6 this Village Center redevelopment. And the thought was that
7 that use is going to remain as, as it does today as office
8 space.

9 On the other hand, we have addressed, from the
10 standpoint of potential future massing and allowing for even
11 greater heights there within the new buildings that may be
12 built there in the future. But the focus was not on those
13 buildings.

14 So the intent, really is that those buildings would
15 most likely remain as they are today, and that's why there's
16 not great attention paid to them.

17 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: Thank you.

18 MR. COOK: Um-hmm. In addition to the scale and the
19 relationship of the buildings that I was just describing as
20 being pulled up to the street front, and then really
21 encouraging that pedestrian and retail-type use, there were
22 other areas that were identified that might even allow for
23 greater density. And primarily, those are along the Edens

1 Corridor.

2 So you're seeing those in the diagrams with a, a darker
3 shading, or darker color to them, which could allow for
4 buildings at that north area that we were just talking about
5 up to six or eight stories tall.

6 And then also in the southern portion along the Edens
7 Corridor, a similar approach, but the idea was to soften that
8 a little bit because that is directly adjacent to more of a
9 residential scale neighborhood to the south. So we would
10 want to control that through ordinances to allow for those
11 buildings to essentially cascade down to a lower scale.

12 So they're kind of shown as shoulder of buildings that
13 might be more in that four story, or four to six story scale,
14 with the center portion may be allowed to go up to six or
15 eight stories in height. Again addressing that corridor
16 along the Edens.

17 As part of, or as a further development of that, of
18 this redevelopment plan we then kind of looked at each of
19 those individual neighborhoods in greater detail, and talked
20 about the fabric of those, which I've mentioned briefly.

21 But the first one, which we found kind of as the
22 primary catalyst for this is the Village Center Retail
23 District. And the detailed focus, or detailed analysis of

1 that area really centered around, first of all, showing those
2 ideas that I mentioned of, of buildings that would be pulled
3 to the street front, encouraging on-street parking along Happ
4 Road, right in front of those stores.

5 And then developing a more defined and cohesive
6 intersection of Orchard Lane and Happ, which we kind of see
7 as the kind of critical juncture in that, that area. We
8 looked at a couple different options for how that might be
9 developed. Option 1 showed what was primarily to encourage a
10 kind of pedestrian friendly plaza area. Creating a four-way
11 intersection with stop signs at all corners there and
12 separating off the spur up into the Walnut kind of parking
13 area, so that it was a cleaner, a more clearly defined
14 intersection that also allowed a greater space for gathering
15 for pedestrians.

16 There are a lot of great features about the way that
17 plan lays out. But we also looked at a secondary option,
18 which included the idea of a roundabout at that intersection,
19 which doesn't work quite as well for creating that plaza-type
20 space.

21 But the benefit to this scheme is that the roundabout
22 becomes a more flexible node, which will allow for the
23 existing library and post office building to remain intact.

1 The previous scheme showed the straightening out of Orchard
2 Lane as it runs due west, which we think there's some benefit
3 to.

4 But this roundabout scheme allows the buildings to
5 remain intact until such time that it may be, may be able to
6 be reconfigured, and then allow for that direct extension of
7 Orchard Lane to the east, or I'm sorry, to the west again.

8 So the benefit of this roundabout type scheme is that
9 it does afford greater flexibility with the way that the
10 roadways come into that intersection, which are impacted by
11 the existing surrounding buildings to it.

12 So, you know, we do think that those would be the
13 benefits of, of this type of scheme. And there was, the
14 roundabout idea, in general, was received very favorably.

15 The next area that we looked at was the Maple Street
16 Commercial District to the north. And really what this slide
17 is just demonstrating is that the potential of, of allowing
18 that to be developed into larger buildings, both of height
19 and in footprint, and providing a central or common parking
20 area would be the most efficient way for that to be
21 developed, and probably the most in harmony with the way that
22 it is used now.

23 Again, you're seeing the ideas of pulling the buildings

1 that would be closest to Central and Willow toward the street
2 front, and encouraging that, that retail pedestrian friendly
3 activity. And then placing all of the parking to the rear of
4 those buildings that can be centrally utilized by, by all of
5 those building inhabitants.

6 And you're getting a sense of scale of, as these
7 buildings get larger the parking requirements, obviously, go
8 along with that.

9 And, you know, that's going to be the case in all of
10 these different areas, and goes with no matter what the scale
11 of these buildings are, as we allow for the increase in
12 scale, increase in parking is going to be, need to be
13 accommodated.

14 A similar analysis was done for the, for the River
15 Response Corridor area. Same kind of things are apparent
16 here that the building itself being placed closer to Willow
17 to encourage that pedestrian and retail interaction.

18 One of the points that should be made here is that we
19 are showing a building that for one, would be pulled back
20 from the river's edge a bit to allow for outdoor use along
21 the river front.

22 There was discussions about, this would be a great
23 location for a restaurant, or that type of activity. But

1 also to encourage, this building would become somewhat as a
2 gateway element to the Village Center of Northfield as you're
3 approaching it from the west. And we'll see that a little
4 bit later in one of the slides of a potential perspective
5 sketch.

6 The other things that you may notice about this
7 proposal is that it shows the vacating of Alice Place and
8 kind of rearrangement of, of those roadways that exist right
9 now to create a more efficient plan to utilize that space and
10 create a more cohesive street along Willow. Which would
11 require some rearrangement of access to the existing town
12 homes that are back in that area. But this is at least a
13 proposal showing one way of achieving that, that goal.

14 The next area that we looked at in more detail was
15 directly adjacent to that, which was referred to as the
16 Willow Road Retail District. What you're seeing here is the
17 idea that, that the northernmost portion of the parking for
18 the grocery store could potentially be developed for
19 essentially an outbuilding or retail building, again along
20 Willow Road to continue that continuity of retail as it moves
21 to the east.

22 You're also seeing a pedestrian pathway, which is shown
23 shaded in the brown sidewalk that would link directly across

1 to, as it moves east, directly to the front door of the
2 Village Hall to help make that visual connection to the
3 Village Hall. That's one of the things that we feel is,
4 could, the Village could benefit from a more prominent sense
5 of the Village Hall.

6 Even though it is directly in the center of all of
7 this, it tends to kind of get lost in the, really kind of
8 lack of identify the front door and the way it's approached
9 from other areas within the Village Center. And we'd like to
10 make that a little bit more prominent, and this is one of the
11 ideas that was suggested to help do that.

12 This next slide is giving you a sense, just of the
13 vertical scale of these buildings, we try to talk about them
14 in plan of their heights. But the top portion of this
15 drawing is showing you still the potential range of what
16 buildings might look like along the Happ Road Corridor,
17 encouraging buildings that would range from two to three and
18 a half stories tall.

19 It's really, although we, when you see that in plan,
20 you have to keep in mind that all of those recommendations
21 are the maximum building heights.

22 And most likely, and in fact ideally, we would see a
23 variety of building heights within that, that proposed range

1 to maintain the individuality of building facades, and create
2 more of that traditional downtown neighborhood kind of feel
3 as opposed to a monolithic large commercial development.

4 So you're seeing in that top slide buildings that range
5 from two to three and half stories, and with various roof
6 forms being flat roof or sloped roof forms. There can be a
7 greater articulation architecturally, and those architectural
8 features can impact the perceived height of those buildings
9 by use, changes of materials and changes of those roof forms.

10 Some shallow mansard roofs with dormers on the top
11 level help to bring the scale of buildings down visually and
12 create a little more architectural relief.

13 And on the bottom portion of this slide, you're seeing
14 potential building heights along that Frontage Road Corridor
15 that's just south of Orchard Lane. Seeing buildings that, as
16 I said before, kind of shoulder with lower buildings at
17 either edge and might rise to a taller building in the center
18 that could be in the neighborhood of six to eight stories
19 tall. It helps, that kind of cascading helps to transition
20 down to the residential areas to the south.

21 We also looked in more detail at proposing the
22 materials and approach to that
23 typically -- Again, this would be a section along Happ as

1 part of that intersection to Orchard.

2 But this is really just to demonstrate the typical
3 elements that would help to create a more pedestrian friendly
4 streetscape through the use of different paving materials
5 along the sidewalks, introducing peninsulas at crosswalks, so
6 that the distance that one actually travels in the roadway
7 itself is shortened.

8 Instead of far curb to far curb, peninsulas help to
9 shorten that distance and allow for planters and elements
10 like that, that would give both kind of visual relief. Also
11 work as a buffer to the vehicular traffic, and also signal to
12 the vehicular traffic more strongly that it is a pedestrian
13 crossing, and that they should beware of pedestrians in that
14 area.

15 You're also seeing the introduction of a regulated
16 planting along these, these streetscapes and at major
17 intersections. The idea of introducing benches and planter
18 boxes and elements that, again, are, that add visual relief,
19 opportunities for color and greenery, and to provide places
20 for people to, to congregate, or to sit and rest, or to meet
21 up with others.

22 Here you're seeing those same notions in a more, in the
23 vertical sense, or in elevation. The bottom right slide --

1 you're seeing this scale of a pedestrian, even though these
2 buildings are shown as three stories tall.

3 The idea of introducing awnings, benches, planters,
4 street posts, all help to bring in and keep it at a very
5 pedestrian friendly scale, which is critical to making this
6 feel the way that you want it to feel, to feel like a
7 traditional downtown retail neighborhood.

8 These sketches, on the next slide, are really intended
9 to demonstrate just the potential of, of what the ideas start
10 to formulate into. The top drawing you're seeing is a sketch
11 on Willow Road as you approach this Village Center from the
12 east, or from the west heading east.

13 This building is what you're seeing on that site plan,
14 and the River Response Corridor. And shows the idea of a
15 gateway-type feature, which could manifest as a tower element
16 architecturally, or some kind of iconic component to help
17 signal that you're entering the Village Center.

18 You're also seeing that it is showing you an outdoor
19 kind of terrace area. Again, the idea of potentially a
20 restaurant in that area seems like that would be a great fit.

21 And then either residential or office space up above
22 that retail area. We think it would be a great location for
23 residential, because it does, again, transition to some

1 residential neighborhoods to the west of there, and would
2 also take advantage of that, that river front area.

3 The center sketch you're seeing is, is that
4 intersection of Happ and Orchard, demonstrating the idea of
5 pulling the buildings to the streetscape. You're seeing the
6 pedestrian friendly plaza idea in this particular drawing.

7 And then also, in the center, and kind of a distance,
8 the buildings along Walnut, which are shown as what would be
9 viewed as a two and a half story building. Again introducing
10 more of those sloped roof forms with dormers to create a more
11 residential scale to the retail district, and creating a
12 continuity of store fronts that, that will create more
13 synergy amongst these retailers.

14 You're also seeing, to the left side of that drawing,
15 just the idea or potential of enhancing the, the building of
16 the Village Hall to also include some of these ideas that
17 we're talking about for the retail commercial district.
18 That's showing the tower that exists right now, embellishing
19 it further to be, make it a little bit more of an iconic
20 feature to the Village Hall.

21 And then the bottom slide is, also you're seeing the, a
22 back side of the north and east side of the Village Hall on
23 the right there, with some further architectural

1 embellishment. And then a proposed massing of a building
2 that would in-fill that existing vacant gas station site.

3 Again, demonstrating those ideas of keeping the
4 buildings to the sidewalk and to maintain that street front
5 retail with large store fronts. And then a building that
6 could be two or three stories in scale with a tower element,
7 again, at the far east edge to signal the gateway to the
8 Village Center.

9 So hopefully, briefly, you've kind of seen that the
10 culmination of what was a long thought process. And there's
11 a lot more information in your booklet that really supports
12 these ideas that were briefly discussed here tonight.

13 But the, really the upshot of it all, I think we
14 really, we're trying to develop a plan that, as Terry eluded
15 to in the beginning, will allow for, or provide a catalyst
16 for growth within the Village, allow an enticement for
17 developers to want to come in, because we're promoting
18 buildings of a slightly larger scale.

19 But at the same time, create a much more pedestrian
20 friendly and community friendly Village Center for, for the
21 entirety of Northfield.

22 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you very much. Does
23 the commission have any questions?

1 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Yes. My memory, which may be
2 faulty, is that there has been talk of using the former
3 railroad right-of-way as an extension of the bike path that
4 goes north from, in Northbrook. And from everything I've
5 seen here, that right-of-way has been totally used up and it
6 would be impossible to have that bike path continue through
7 Northfield.

8 MR. COOK: No, the intent would be to be able to allow
9 for that bike path to continue up through, since I don't have
10 a pointer I'll actually talk up here and point that out.

11 This point lies -- meander and bisects through is
12 really on that, that right-of-way, and that green space would
13 be encouraged along that right-of-way to create more,
14 although we can't develop that to a great extent to create
15 more of a park-like feel within that, that green corridor.

16 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: I saw the white line in that
17 drawing. But in later drawings, I don't see any
18 accommodation for it. For instance, hold on a second.

19 MS. KANE: I can, hopefully, clarify a little bit that
20 staff did direct Myefski Cook to stay away from a couple of
21 areas that are, were under study by different planning and
22 consulting groups.

23 One being Willow Road, we didn't want them to get a

1 design or, although this segment of Willow Road is not under
2 debate as far as the number of lanes, it's at its four-lane
3 capacity here. In fact, recommendations are included to
4 perhaps eliminate curb cuts or consolidate those, to provide
5 safer vehicular movement through the Village Center.

6 But as far as the configuration of the lanes and that
7 right-of-way, the Village has been engaged in a study with
8 the Lakota Group. And we didn't need to duplicate efforts or
9 contrary opinions on that matter.

10 And similarly for the bike path along the UP right-of-
11 way. There is a multi-Village, I believe five villages
12 working in conjunction with the Chicago Bicycle Federation.
13 And so they've illustrated it as a white line without getting
14 into the details.

15 Certainly it was our intent, as you'll see in the next
16 discussion of parking regulations, where we now require
17 bicycle parking, we want to encourage that type of access to
18 our Village.

19 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Okay. It just wasn't marked as
20 bike path on any of the drawings. So I didn't recognize it.

21 MR. COOK: Okay. Well, no, it's a good point, because
22 we think that's a critical component to the Village Center,
23 to encourage that type of activity where we are, although we

1 want to accommodate cars and vehicles, we would actually like
2 to encourage more pedestrian and bicycle activity for people
3 coming into the Village. So I'm glad you pointed that out.

4 COMMISSIONER deLOYS: In regard to -- was there any
5 consideration to extending further south and using that white
6 industrial area that's got some residential with the senior
7 center, a daycare center, to extending some of this to the
8 south and having -- zone after that area?

9 MR. COOK: Well, the consensus right in the beginning
10 was, was not to do that, was to, the line that is defined
11 around the Village Center was, was the agreed upon boundary
12 that this study should be focused on. And in think in part
13 with the thought that that area down there was less likely to
14 change --

15 COMMISSIONER deLOYS: Yes, because you have river side,
16 you have river front there also.

17 MR. COOK: Right, right. And that, you
18 know --

19 MS. KANE: I can say that on the onset of when MCA,
20 Myefski Cook, joined this discussion, that was the conclusion
21 of the task force.

22 But I will say that Northfield Road was discussed in
23 detail, and we were fortunate to have a couple of developers

1 who are familiar with the retail component, or, you know,
2 retail industry.

3 And they felt that there would just not be the synergy
4 to really attract retailers to that area, and that we wanted
5 to focus that more off the south Happ Road area, and
6 concentrate it, and get that critical mass so that we have
7 the synergy created by sidewalks, and pedestrians, and
8 shoppers. And that Northfield Road just was not going to be
9 conducive to that type of redevelopment.

10 So it was considered, and it was put off the task force
11 focus area before Myefski Cook joined us.

12 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Another question, according to,
13 again, the way I read this, and I could be wrong, the
14 proposal is to extend Orchard Lane past the front of
15 Dominick's so that Orchard Lane would be between the parking
16 lot for Dominick's and the entrance to the store. And how do
17 we worry about pedestrians traffic with shopping bags and
18 shopping carts across Orchard Road?

19 MR. COOK: It would still be, have to be controlled in
20 a similar manner, in that we would have stop signs and
21 clearly demarked, where a pedestrian should cross.

22 And the thought was that it, there is a roadway that's
23 part of the parking lot, that exists there right now. And

1 that in essence, the functionality, or the ideas that you're
2 talking about, wouldn't change dramatically from the way that
3 it is right now.

4 But in fact, we would like to articulate that a little
5 bit more with the same notions and ideas that we've talked
6 about for the other streetways, with paving materials,
7 planters, benches, peninsulas that, that connect across so
8 that there's continuity to the Village Center, so it doesn't
9 feel like that one area was just left separate from that, but
10 to address those concerns in that way.

11 COMMISSIONER JONES: I was wondering about, in this
12 plan, the six to eight story buildings. I guess I got sort
13 of two questions off that. One is, and I'm wondering if
14 there are other examples of this that you can tell me about,
15 that are either in our Village, or other villages right
16 around in the downtown area that have buildings of that
17 height.

18 And then I'm also wondering, how critical is it to the
19 financial viability of this plan to have buildings of that
20 height?

21 MR. COOK: There are buildings of that scale up on 41,
22 or Skokie Boulevard, as it gets up into the Northbrook area,
23 close to where 94 is crossing. Some of those buildings are

1 in that scale. And that's part of the thinking, that that
2 area is transitional enough to allow for those, those
3 building heights.

4 As far as the economic viability, it's really going to
5 be market driven. But that's, this scale was what we found
6 would be necessary to encourage that kind of development
7 there.

8 And really, it's going to come back to that, that
9 balance of the building size and the parking that goes along
10 with it, because providing parking at that scale becomes
11 expensive also.

12 And although we did analyze it in several different
13 ways, it's ultimately, as with any of these parcels, going to
14 be up to private users to determine what, from a market point
15 of view, what is the optimal building scale, you know, that's
16 going to work for them financially there.

17 But from our preliminary analysis, we found that at
18 least providing the opportunity to go to that larger scale is
19 going to make it much more likely to be viable for them.

20 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Does anyone else on the
21 commission have any questions? Anyone in the audience have
22 any questions or comments? Yes, sir? If you could stand up,
23 identify yourself, and come over to the podium where the

1 microphones are located.

2 MR. HENDERSON: My name is Jim Henderson, and I live at
3 1723 Northfield Square. It's really great to see this, and I
4 think it's great you all have spent so much time pulling this
5 activity together.

6 And I understand, I understand the difficulty, when I
7 look, when you drive through this Village Center and we look
8 at these different buildings, and you understand that you
9 want to do this privately, and you see the different
10 configurations of buildings and plots of land that are, that
11 people currently own, and it's simply hard for me to
12 understand, because this isn't my business, how you get from
13 where we are, with this disparate number of buildings, and
14 plots, and private owners, into something that really looks
15 this great, you know. I mean, I appreciate this vision.

16 And I was trying to, trying to sort this out in my own
17 mind what the steps are, and I mean, this might not be the
18 purview of your discussion tonight, because I think you're
19 probably very focused on taking this good proposal, this good
20 vision, to the Village Council.

21 And I'm guessing that from there they are going to come
22 up with some things that, that are approximate to their
23 authority, and their ownership, which is public lands, and

1 sidewalks, and streets, and zoning, and perhaps
2 infrastructure, the size of sewer pipes and water mains. I
3 don't know.

4 But I'm just kind of interested in, in what are the,
5 what are the probabilities and the steps that might get a
6 project like this to the sort of pictures that we're seeing
7 here, ultimately involving the public, or the private sector
8 and those owners who might want to develop something to this
9 scale. I presume it also might require putting some pieces
10 of property together, you know, for such partnerships.

11 And it seems pretty complicated to me, but I guess I
12 don't know if you guys would start with what the Village owns
13 and put trees and sidewalks up to make the plan, and then
14 that might attract developers. What's the sort of sense of
15 the chain of events?

16 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Terry, you want to speak to
17 that?

18 CHAIRMAN WARGA: I can, I could just hear that a little
19 bit.

20 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Go ahead, George, sure, go
21 ahead.

22 CHAIRMAN WARGA: The, as you're aware, it is a vision
23 plan, and we -- to people for that, with knowledge of what

1 developers may like to see, as far as our zoning, to be more
2 inviting, or to encourage certain types of development.
3 That's what basically the purpose of what our zoning
4 requirements are here tonight too. And it's too get a --
5 certainly, it gives us the flexibility to see if they can
6 meet our vision, and we hope that can occur.

7 The probabilities are greater than they were prior to
8 this plan if it were to be adopted and never be anything --

9 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Terry, if you want to add
10 something?

11 MR. GOTTLIEB: Just, yes. First of all, that's a very
12 good question, and it needed to be asked. And the point is
13 that really, this is a -- process. And you're right, if the
14 Village owned all the land it would be very simple, we would
15 just knock everything down and start.

16 And there's two reasons we have to have zoning. One,
17 we don't own all the land, we don't have all the, we don't
18 even want to buy the land. So what we needed to do was
19 really provide a stimulus to start the process.

20 And the way we control the process is through what
21 we're doing tonight, the zoning, through incorporating design
22 criteria to really control that process. And you need one
23 project to start, and from that it will evolve. And then you

1 can, based on those projects that private enterprise will
2 come up with, will then determine what needs to be done to
3 the streets, and what needs to be done here.

4 But without a plan you really, you really never know
5 where you're going. So, I think it was a good question that
6 needed to be asked, and hopefully we've provided you a little
7 bit of an answer.

8 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Yes, ma'am?

9 MR. HENDERSON: Yes, thank you.

10 MS. MOORE: Bobbi Moore, I live in Northfield. I
11 enjoyed Len Rubin's comment, because the Skokie Valley Trail
12 is something I've been working on for probably seven years.
13 I know we've come to this board before about it.

14 I do want to mention that, as Len said, if you don't
15 label it, the Skokie Valley Trail, every developer will look
16 at it as free zone. I already heard that Dominick's, after
17 the roof caved in, asked if they could expand to the east.
18 Well, that's exactly where the trail is.

19 So my comment, which is to compliment Len for bringing
20 it up, is to say, please label it so that every developer who
21 looks at this realizes that there is something going in there
22 that's important to this community. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you very much. I

1 think that's a good point, and I would maybe emphasize
2 Myefski Cook if they could possibly label that, and maybe we
3 can make a, if the commission agrees, would propose maybe
4 making an amendment to this to label the bike path.

5 And also, what Bill had pointed out on the northwest
6 corner there of Central and Ash Street, if we could label
7 those buildings as to what they are currently. I think that
8 would be good for clarity purposes.

9 Anyone else in the audience that has any questions?
10 Commissioners, any further comments or questions? Do we have
11 a motion?

12 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: Yes.
13 I would suggest that this Planning and Zoning Commission move
14 to approve and recommend to the Village Board of Trustees for
15 approval an amendment to the official comprehensive plan for
16 the Village of Northfield to add the Village Center
17 Redevelopment Plan as presented by -- Architects, Inc. in the
18 packets dated February 19, 2008 with the following caveats,
19 that the packets be amended to label the bike path as well as
20 to the anticipated uses for the properties noted, the path
21 marked at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Ash
22 Street.

23 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Do I have a second?

1 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Second.

2 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: All those in favor?

3 (Chorus of Ayes.)

4 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: All opposed?

5 (No response.)

6 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Motion passes. Our next
7 item tonight is to consider and discuss the proposed text
8 amendments to Article XIII of the Village Center Zoning
9 District regulations, and to Article XX, the off-street
10 parking, and loading, traffic, and access regulations of the
11 Northfield Village Code.

12 I would ask that staff, Anne if you would provide us an
13 overview of the proposed amendments?

14 MS. KANE: Sure. As just discussed under the previous
15 agenda item, Northfield has been actively engaged in planning
16 for the further redevelopment of our Village Center. And
17 toward that end, subsequent to developing this plan, the task
18 force, along with the guidance of Myefski Cook Architects,
19 completed a review of the zoning code to determine which
20 regulations should be revised to more accurately reflect the
21 desired character and density as depicted in the plan just
22 recommended for approval.

23 I do want to say while Myefski Cook Associates, or

1 Architects did suggest a number of proposed text amendments,
2 which is sought to provide very specific zoning regulations
3 to guide future efforts, both staff and the village attorney
4 have concerns that outlining such firm criteria could
5 actually limit the Village's flexibility in affecting the
6 physical development of future projects. And he provided a
7 memorandum to such end that was included with your packets
8 this evening.

9 For example, as Chuck Cook touched upon, there was a
10 lot of discussion about requiring these buildings to be
11 pulled up to the street. And the village attorney felt that
12 by, you know, mandating that without any flexibility it would
13 be, perhaps we would be forced to say no to a project the
14 Village really did want, and so he raised concerns.

15 And he suggested that we instead address that through
16 design guidelines that will be developed here in the next
17 month and presented to the Architectural Commission in may.
18 So while a, possibility a far more reaching comprehensive
19 amendment to the Village Center Zoning District was initially
20 envisioned, what's been presented this evening is a bit more
21 subtle in nature.

22 I think what was touched upon is that the allowable
23 building height is being proposed to increase from the

1 current level of 35 feet to 45 feet, or three and a half
2 stories. And that is to accommodate, you know, the majority
3 of this area depicted in the Village Center Plan, to
4 encourage both property owners and the development industry
5 to explore various redevelopment possibilities on their
6 properties.

7 This additional height will also create the critical
8 mass that's desired within the Village Center to attract and
9 support the sorts of restaurants, specialty retailers, and
10 boutiques that this community wants to have in our downtown.

11 Also allowing the three and a half stories, or three
12 plus stories encourages the mixture of uses necessary to
13 create that activity interest and vibrancy beyond just the
14 business day, closing down at night and for most of the
15 weekend here in the Village Center.

16 And I do want to point out that there is also two
17 overlay districts which were touched upon in the presentation
18 by Myefski Cook. One which responds to the middle fork river
19 along the western boundary, which you have to be a real
20 visionary to see that this could be wonderful natural
21 element. But, you know, there are examples just in our
22 neighboring community of Glenview where they have responded
23 to the river. And I think this overlay district is

1 important.

2 As well as an added building height that's depicted in
3 the Village Center overlay district, which comprises the
4 parcel, or properties along Frontage Road south of Orchard
5 Lane. And the exhibit illustrating that location was
6 included in your packet as well.

7 And I guess, aside from the Village Center regulations,
8 probably the most, the most, the other element of the zoning
9 regulations that, had to be most closely reviewed was our
10 parking regulations, because with the added intensity that's
11 shown in the plan this evening will be the increased need for
12 additional parking, which already consumes a real sizable
13 portion of the Village Center District in its current layout.

14 However the vehicle is a reality of today's lifestyle,
15 and while it needn't be the primary focus of design, it
16 certainly needs to be accommodated in the district.

17 Therefore, again, Myefski Cook presented subtle
18 changes, such as allowances for compact car parking stalls,
19 establishing for the first time requirements for bicycle
20 parking, and increasing the allowable distance for remote
21 parking for employees from the current distance of 300 feet,
22 the length of a football field, to 1,000 feet.

23 I think anyone who works in downtown Evanston or

1 Chicago feels that this just is more than reasonable,
2 particularly if you're walking through a pleasant streetscape
3 environment and have something to look at in the storefronts
4 on your path.

5 And probably the two newest concepts presented in the
6 draft amendment to Article XX which is the off-street parking
7 requirements, is the creation of an entirely new section
8 specifically regulating adjustments to parking requirements,
9 so that there's certain matrix provided in the zoning code
10 that says, you're given certain credits based on whether you
11 meet criteria.

12 That will require a public hearing, any reduction from
13 our current parking requirements, and we're not proposing any
14 change to our parking requirements, but we're creating this
15 avenue for an adjustment to reduce the parking so that
16 perhaps certain establishments could get up to a 30 percent
17 reduction based on if they meet certain criteria. And I just
18 want to clarify that that would require a public hearing
19 before this board.

20 The second concept presented is to limit drive-thru
21 facilities within the Village Center District to single lane
22 configurations, which is consistent with the overall goal of
23 creating a pedestrian-oriented environment. And it provides

1 for a balance for the convenience of the users without having
2 to have that wide expanse of asphalt necessary to accommodate
3 these number of service lanes that are rarely, if ever, used
4 concurrently.

5 And so that's probably the most significant change to
6 the zoning regulations that's presented in this evenings
7 packets.

8 I guess I want to clarify that I would anticipate that
9 there will still be forthcoming amendments over the next
10 several months as a result of this Village Center task force
11 recommendation. What we really wanted to do, when I say we,
12 me and the village attorney following the direction of the
13 task force, was to focus our review on the Village Center
14 Zoning District and the parking regulations. Those are the
15 two real realities that confront redevelopment in
16 Northfield's Village Center District.

17 And as this board is well aware, we have a moratorium
18 on new development that is set to expire on May 6th. And so
19 what we wanted to do is attempt, as best as possible, to get
20 our ducks in a row to present at today's meeting, so that
21 when that moratorium is lifted we're ready to conduct a
22 review of that.

23 So I do want to clarify that further amendments to

1 possibly the Office Research District, because now we've made
2 recommendations that expand outside the scope of the original
3 project area of the Village Center will be presented to this
4 commission in the next few months.

5 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. And does the
6 commission have any questions of Anne?

7 COMMISSIONER JONES: I just have one comment, which and
8 maybe I'm in the minority here. I'm just concerned about one
9 thing, which is eight-story tall buildings in the Village.
10 That concerns me, I think that's awfully high, and I don't
11 think we've got that in other villages.

12 And the one example that we've got is, is the buildings
13 up on 41. Boy, I mean, if we had several of those buildings,
14 like, right on the street front like they are designed in
15 this plan, I think that would, that would concern me.

16 So, you know, I don't know if I would agree with the
17 proposed amendment and, what am I looking at, 13.5.b. Is
18 that it? Which says that you could go a maximum of 60 feet
19 or six stories with an ability to increase to 80 feet, or
20 eight stories, provided it satisfies a design criteria.

21 You know, I recognize we, I mean, you want to have some
22 taller buildings in here, given them flexibility, I can
23 understand that. But the flexibility in the ordinance to go

1 right to 80 feet without doing anything further, that
2 concerns me.

3 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Terry, did you want to
4 address that, or Anne?

5 MS. KANE: I'll let the task force respond to that.

6 MR. GOTTLIEB: Okay. It's an issue that we struggled
7 with, and one of the conclusions we came to was that one, the
8 areas that we felt were appropriate for that type of -- were
9 A, along Edens. And two, really except for this one area
10 right in the center, it was really not in the Village Center.

11 Really removed from that and in an area where we felt some
12 additional height would be appropriate to stimulate,
13 hopefully to stimulate that development.

14 Regarding the specific area within the Village Center,
15 that's going to be a tough call anyways, because if you look
16 at the footprint it's really not conducive, I mean, we're
17 saying it can be from six to eight feet, but in practicality,
18 I don't see how a building that tall is going to get built
19 given the narrowness of the particular footprint.

20 But again, we, one of the things we really struggled
21 with was the idea of sort of not even hearing what the
22 developer has. In other words, if we make it so restrictive
23 and so limited -- that we've really just created an exercise

1 in futility.

2 And so one of the things we wanted to do is provide a
3 framework where developers could use some imagination, would
4 get the flexibility to come in and say, hey, let me show you
5 what I can do with this property to do that. So, again, it
6 was really providing the impetus to take a look at it.

7 At the end of the day we all live here, it isn't like
8 we're proving this, we're saying, see it. We all have to
9 live with this, and whatever we're doing here, whatever a
10 developer comes with is going to be subject to a review of
11 this board and review of the Board of Trustees as well. So
12 we're not just sort of providing an open checkbook.

13 But again, that being said, it was very important that
14 we felt that we did provide the flexibility to at least
15 address the idea that maybe something could create or could
16 be done that would make money and provide, you know, really
17 the kind of show we want.

18 So I'm not even sure my lengthy comment answered your
19 question, but, so what I'm saying is that to, could it be
20 four to six in that particular area, maybe even, and very
21 likely it may be, but we really take it as -- and we would
22 have the ability to look at it, we felt it was appropriate to
23 provide that.

1 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: I share Philip's concerns. And I
2 wonder whether the task force did any sort of, of research
3 into whether this is necessary in order to sell portions of
4 these plans to developers from time to time. In other words,
5 this, what's going to happen here is that the developers
6 hopefully would be attracted to our area, and to developing
7 for profit, the buildings.

8 And is it necessary? Is it really important that the
9 height restriction go up to eight stories? Do we have any
10 research that says, developers would be more interested in,
11 in this context, in the context of our Village Center by,
12 would be more, more interested in our plan with an eight
13 story building than there would be with a six story building?

14 MR. GOTTLIEB: Again, I think that's a very pertinent
15 observation. And the answer to your question is yes, we
16 actually, on the task force we had two developers who we
17 relied on a lot in terms of, from their professional point of
18 view, that if, if, I'm really speaking about south of Willow
19 when we're talking about about everything north -- as well,
20 because then I think they're two, almost two different
21 situations.

22 If we're talking about the north of Willow, they
23 thought that was really, it was sort of a no-brainer. In

1 other words, you're not going to get anyone to go in there
2 and spend money to amass that type of property with the idea
3 that if they didn't have the ability to create something
4 economically viable, it just wasn't going to happen.

5 And again, this particular area south of Willow is
6 really a struggle, and it was a struggle for a couple
7 reasons. One, that it was an existing residential area. One
8 of the points that one of the commission members made is that
9 five or 10 years from now we don't even know what that
10 residential is going to look like.

11 And we can struggle and say, you know what, let's not
12 need more than two or three stories there, and the, at the
13 end of the day that whole area may be redeveloped as well,
14 and then we'd feel kind of silly that, you know, we sort of
15 restricted a key area in the Village for something that may
16 or may not even exist a few years from now.

17 So even if there's no, the truth is there's no black or
18 white answer to the question. I think that at the end of the
19 day that, I think the expression is, the devil's in the
20 details, and the devil is in how we created this framework
21 and then how we -- .

22 And again, I fall back to the idea that we're not going
23 to approve anything for the sheer volume of it, and we're

1 going to do something that's appropriate for the
2 surroundings, and makes sense, and it looks good, and
3 provides some impetus as well.

4 And so --

5 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: but are you going to be able to
6 tell a developer who wants to build an eight story building,
7 and has looked at our resolutions, and says, oh, that's
8 permitted, so we're coming before the Planning and Zoning
9 Commission and we're saying, you guys said it was okay to do
10 an eight story building, I want an eight story building.

11 And we, for some reason, decide we don't like it, no,
12 you're not going to be able, you're not going to have your
13 eight story building. Can we do that?

14 MS. KANE: Yes, I will say that, as the Planning and
15 Zoning Commission's aware, right now in the Village Center
16 Zoning District any new development that comes through is
17 considered a special use. And it goes through this
18 heightened review because of the, the vital importance of the
19 Village Center that serves all, you know, the community.

20 So they will have to meet those standards for special
21 use, and you can review each of them case by, or point by
22 point. The Planning Commission and the Village Board will
23 have the ability to say, no to the projects even if the

1 zoning amendment, or the zoning amendment goes through with
2 the additional height.

3 But as Terry has indicated, it was struggled, and we
4 struggled with how to create incentive language in a zoning
5 ordinance, because it's typically found in design guidelines.

6 And, you know, perhaps we can address it there.

7 I mean, I guess I would look for the Planning and
8 Zoning Commission's input on that. I don't think that
9 property is going to be one of the first to redevelop here in
10 the next month or two. In fact, there's a lot of money going
11 into the glassworks building.

12 So, you know, certainly, if you felt more comfortable,
13 if it was appropriate in the design guidelines to best
14 address that, then perhaps we can provide those incentives
15 for the added height beyond the six stories in that area.

16 COMMISSIONER JONES: And maybe that's the way to go. I
17 guess my other concern is as I look at this proposed language
18 on 13.5.b, and, you know, maybe because I don't see, you
19 know, I don't have the whole thing in front of me, and it may
20 be because I haven't had to sit and apply this myself, but,
21 you know, it doesn't, to, you know, on it's face look like
22 it's, you know, limited to any specific part of this plan,
23 right.

1 And so, I mean, well, couldn't somebody come in and --

2

3 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: It's specific to the Village
4 Center overlay district, which is that --

5 COMMISSIONER JONES: East --

6 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: -- it's the eastern corridor
7 right here along West Frontage Road.

8 COMMISSIONER JONES: Okay, so that --

9 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: -- that, in fact in his
10 package here, if you go to the color, a couple pages before,
11 you see it to the east river blue-lined area, that's --

12 COMMISSIONER JONES: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: -- defined as the overlay
14 portion of this. To the left is the River Response overlay
15 portion, the other kind of more darker blue.

16 COMMISSIONER JONES: Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: And --

18 COMMISSIONER JONES: That answers my

19 question --

20 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER JONES: -- which is, it is kind of, but it
22 is limited --

23 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: And I would comment that, to

1 add on to what Terry was saying, you know, that these areas
2 that are being contemplated going to six, between six and
3 maybe even eight stories, not only were away from, to the
4 north at least, away from the Village Center where pedestrian
5 traffic would be, but also was contemplated that it is a, it
6 is making a statement to Edens Expressway, to, as people are
7 approaching Northfield to stand out a little bit, to make a
8 statement that, you know, something is going here.

9 I think that was also one of the thoughts of this, the
10 Village Center, what we just discussed, that overlay district
11 again facing Edens. It kind of makes a bit of a statement.

12 Certainly, if you can envision the heart of the Village
13 Center, that's where the -- comes in, that's where the, the
14 ambiance comes in. And I think everyone on the commission
15 agreed that going more than three stories in there really
16 creates --

17 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: I think you mean everyone on the
18 task force.

19 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Excuse me, yes, I flip-flop
20 that back and forth. Thank you very much.

21 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: You're welcome.

22 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Everyone on the task force
23 wanted to maintain that, and didn't want to go the way other

1 villages have gone, where they really build in mass in a
2 little bulkier, maybe some of the villages to the north of us
3 are where we've seen that over the last five or 10 years.

4 So I think that was, that was thought, trying to
5 balance that with the idea that, you know, you, probably
6 everything can't be just three stories, otherwise you're not
7 going to have the type of development that one would, one
8 would want to invite.

9 Any other questions or comments from the commission?
10 Does the public have any questions or comments? Yes, just
11 step on up to the microphone and introduce yourself.

12 MR. HOBSON: My name is Irv Hobson, I live at 155
13 Higgins Road in Northfield, and I have some concerns I wanted
14 to share with the commission.

15 Eliminating the open space and doubling the dwelling
16 density per unit acre, as well as allowing eight story
17 buildings in the Village Center, drastically changes the
18 character of Northfield from predominantly a single-family
19 small town with a rural field to something that looks,
20 frankly, a little more like Schaumburg.

21 Increasing the density in the Village Center with these
22 zoning changes, at time when we're fighting to keep Willow
23 Road from expanding, is counterproductive, and can put

1 children at risk. The increase in multi-family housing alone
2 will increase the population of Northfield by five to 10
3 percent in just a few block area.

4 Allowing the smaller multi-family units lowers the
5 value of existing homes, it was, of existing housing stock,
6 and it puts greater demand on services such as schools and
7 emergency services.

8 The other point I'd like to make is none of the
9 surrounding communities do have eight story buildings in
10 their, in their downtown. And that eliminating the open
11 space requirements further increases the flooding issues
12 facing Northfield.

13 And I appeal to you to use your prerogative to limit
14 the zoning changes to a maximum height of six stories so that
15 the existing fire ladder truck may service them. And keep
16 the eight to 12 dwelling unit per acre density limit that you
17 currently have, as well as eliminate the Village Center
18 overlay district south of Willow Road. That's that area
19 between Orchard and Mount Pleasant along the Frontage there.

20 And actually, I guess it extends a little bit north of
21 Orchard.

22 But that area in there where I think a, you know, a
23 eight story residential tower, which is what is planned, is

1 not really something that is fitting the community.

2 And I think that in doing these things that you'll help
3 maintain the character of Northfield, and be able to, to lift
4 the moratorium, which is, has kept development from the
5 Village. Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. Any other
7 comments or questions from the audience? Commission, any
8 more comments or questions? Do we have a motion?

9 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER:

10 I would suggest that this Planning and Zoning Commission move
11 to approve and recommend to the Village Board of Trustees for
12 approval amendments to Article XIII and Article XX of the
13 Northfield Zoning Ordinance as presented in the attached
14 draft exhibits in our packet dated April 3, 2008. And I
15 would suggest, based on the comments made, that, from this
16 commission, that the Village Board of Trustees, as did,
17 obviously, the task force, take a hard look at the potential
18 for an eight story structure as indicated in the
19 comprehensive plan recommendations.

20 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Is there a second?

21 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Second.

22 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: All those in favor?

23 (Chorus of Ayes.)

1 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: All opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Motion passes. Anne, any
4 unfinished business or item, new items to discuss tonight?

5 MS. KANE: No, I guess I would just say, I would ask
6 Terry if I should run up to my office to get some exhibits of
7 some well designed six story buildings and taller buildings
8 that have been approved in neighboring communities. And I'll
9 distribute those electronically to the Planning and Zoning
10 Commission, because I will share those with the Village
11 Board.

12 And we've also asked Myefski Cook, and I know they're
13 planning to have it prepared, an exhibit of an eight story
14 structured illustrated on that particular site in the, along
15 Frontage Road, because that has been discussed at various
16 levels, and want to make sure that it's an informed decision
17 when that matter is decided at the board level.

18 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. I'd also like
19 thank Myefski Cook for their hard work. They've been working
20 with the task force for 15 months or so, and they've, I
21 think, put together a nice package. So thank you very much,
22 gentleman.

23 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: I have one quick comment.

1 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Okay, Bill.

2 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: I'm going to take off my
3 commission hat for a second and put on my resident hat. As a
4 lifelong resident of Northfield, I refuse to state how many
5 years now, I just want to thank staff, and Terry, and Bill,
6 and George, and all the other members of the task force for
7 doing what I think is an incredible piece of work.

8 Thank you very much. Very nice, good work guys.

9 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: Thank you. Tonight's
10 recommendations will be considered at next Tuesday's Village
11 Board meeting on April 15th at 7:00 again in this room. If we
12 have nothing else, do we have a motion to adjourn?

13 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: To --

14 COMMISSIONER HIELSCHER: Second.

15 COMMISSIONER VASELOPULOS: So moved.

16 (Whereupon the above meeting concluded at 8:30
17 p.m.)

18

19 ***Approved 5/5/08***