

**SUMMARY NOTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
VILLAGE CENTER TASK FORCE MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2007**



On Tuesday, April 24, 2007, in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Northfield Village Hall, the Village Center Task Force convened the following meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Terry Gottlieb, Members Todd Berlinghof, Evan Karnes, Pat Karr, Ruth Lucchesi, Blair Robinson, Bill Vaselopulos (at 7:40 pm), and George Warga (at 7:40 pm)

**ABSENT:** Members John Birkinbine and Robert Lopatin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Trustee Bobbie Moore, Trustee-elect John Chapin, Community Development Director Anne Kane, and interested residents

Chairperson Gottlieb opened the meeting and requested approval of the summary notes of the prior meetings of the Task Force held to date. Member Lucchesi made a motion, seconded by Member Karr, to approve the summary notes as presented. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Community Development Director Kane outlined a series of discussions with representatives of Friedman Properties that had occurred since the last Task Force meeting in March. In developing a preliminary pro forma of the redevelopment project, the existing value of the Northfield Village Square complicated the ability for Friedman to integrate that site into the redevelopment footprint; therefore, they had studied a reduced focus area which included only those parcels north of Orchard. Subsequent discussions with Bob Lopatin and Albert Friedman indicated that project feasibility was unlikely. However, before making a final determination whether or not to proceed with Northfield's project, Mr. Friedman requested Village authorization to make contact with representatives of the properties within the reduced focus area (Edens Bank, Seuls and Metamorphosis Salon). In response, Staff encouraged Friedman to initiate discussions with these property owners at the first available opportunity.

There has been no follow up from Friedman, and Member Lopatin was unable to attend tonight's meeting. However, the Task Force has completed valuable and necessary due diligence over the past three (3) months to explore whether a redevelopment project with Friedman Properties as the lead developer would be feasible for this community. It appears that the financial numbers and municipal guarantees desired by Friedman Properties simply cannot be realized in this project. Therefore, Director Kane suggested that the Task Force refocus on creating a Redevelopment Plan for the Village Center which does not rely on large scale redevelopment, but rather incremental, lot-by-lot redevelopment that occurs over a longer time span.

There was discussion among the Task Force as to the posturing and/or negotiations that may or may not be prompting Friedman Properties' indications, and whether or not Mr. Friedman remains interested in doing a redevelopment project here in Northfield. Chairman Gottlieb stated that he felt the Task Force had made it abundantly clear that Northfield was not able to provide much incentive or assistance. Nonetheless, the original charter for the Task Force still remains in place and it may be the appropriate time to pick up once again with finding a design firm that can assist the Task Force in creating a common vision or design for the Village Center.

Member Berlinghof reiterated a statement he made at the initial Task Force meeting to allow market forces to drive the redevelopment project, and the Village could effect the character through zoning and site plan review processes. He cautioned that developers are limited on their "pursuit costs" to find new projects and lengthy RFP processes don't necessarily result in a superior project. He suggested the Task Force bring on a design firm to complete a massing study of the Village Center. Member Karnes agreed and cautioned against using a planning consultant to complete the study, as they often want to expand the scope of the study and become very protective of all aspects.

7:40 pm

Member Lucchesi questioned whether the planning area should be expanded to include Northfield Road. Member Berlinghof cautioned that the corridor does not work for retail and is only marginal for office. Member Karr provided a brief overview of recent real estate activity within the corridor. Member Karnes supported including the corridor in any visioning study, but felt that its redevelopment was not likely to occur in the short term.

Member Karnes outlined the four focus areas that comprise the Village Center: Northfield Road, north of Willow along Central, and the north and south areas of the Village Center. Member Karnes moved, and Member Robinson seconded, that Staff invite select design firms to participate in interviews with the Task Force at their next meeting. Chairman Gottlieb concluded the meeting by asking members to provide Staff with their availability for the next meeting, tentatively scheduled for either May 16<sup>th</sup> or May 17<sup>th</sup>.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.