

**APPROVED SUMMARY NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE CENTER TASK FORCE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2007**



On Wednesday, May 16, 2007, in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Northfield Village Hall, the Village Center Task Force convened the following meeting at 7:07 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairperson Terry Gottlieb, Members John Birkinbine, Blair Robinson (at 7:10 p.m.), Bill Vaselopoulos, and George Warga

ABSENT: Members Todd Berlinghof, Pat Karr, Evan Karnes, Ruth Lucchesi, and Robert Lopatin

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Anne Kane, Bobbie Moore, as liaison from the Skokie Valley Bike Trail Committee and interested residents

At the May 16, 2007 meeting of the Village Center Task Force, a quorum was not present, however, five of the ten Task Force members present determined it was in the best interest to move forward with scheduled interviews of the two selected design firms.

John Myefski and Charles Cook presented an overview of their Glencoe-based architectural design firm, Myefski Cook Architects. They shared example buildings and infill projects they've designed in surrounding downtown districts, discussed a voluntary design review procedures and incentives, and stated that whether or not Northfield wishes to prescribe an architectural style is ultimately a community decision. Their project approach would consist of four (4) steps: 1. Assessment of the existing physical attributes; 2. Development of schematic concepts; 3. Community Presentation and input; 4. Finalization of the Plan Concept in response to community input. In discussing Northfield's Village Center specifically, mention was made regarding the Village Hall's placement at the center of the district and that minor modifications and exterior enhancements can make a significant difference. A period of six (6) to nine (9) months would likely be a realistic project time line.

The next interview was conducted with Robert Ruggles with Ruggles Architecture firm out of Lake Bluff. He presented a power point presentation with provided an overview of the boutique firm he owns with his wife, Monica. Followed by a series of slides depicting the vast range of architectural projects and design challenges they've worked on. A detailed study of Lake Bluff's CBD, which began with a comprehensive inventory of existing condition, was presented to provide an example of how his firm would approach Northfield's Village Center. In discussing Northfield's Village Center specifically, he noted that the CBD lacks an identity unique to Northfield; traffic patterns are vehicular; what pedestrian traffic exists is minimal and challenging; "drive-up" park and shop is the pattern of retail development; parking lots obscure view into retail areas; and, parkway, median areas, and pedestrian streetscape is minimal or non-existent. The

plan could identify core areas, even as small as character defining corners, that have the greatest impact.

Following presentations by each of the candidate firms, the Task Force reached consensus that it would be most appropriate to invite both firms back for second interviews when a quorum of the Task Force could be present. Extensive discussion and debate ensued as to the most significant challenge or hurdle; how to approach the project; what exactly the Task Force expects from either firm, what elements would be desirable in the development, etc.... The following topics were identified: gateways, Village-owned properties and facilities, streetscape, greenspace, incentive programs, building design; and Staff was asked to prepare a summary list of the issues discussed by the Task Force to provide both firms with the same basis in preparation for the follow-up interview.

Tentative dates for the next Task Force meeting were discussed, with Staff directed to see if both firms would be available to return on either Wednesday, May 30th or Thursday, May 31st. In addition, the Task Force would need to be polled.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.