



**SUMMARY NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE CENTER TASK FORCE MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2007**

On Monday, December 17, 2007, in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Northfield Village Hall, the Village Center Task Force convened the following meeting at 7:02 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairperson Terry Gottlieb, Members Todd Berlinghof, John Birkinbine (arrived 7:07 p.m.), Pat Karr, Robert Lopatin (arrived 7:20 p.m.), Ruth Lucchesi, Blair Robinson (departed 8:00 p.m.), Bill Vaselopoulos, and George Warga

ABSENT: Member Evan Karnes

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Director Anne Kane; Finance Director Steve Noble; Trustees Jack Chapin and Joan Frazier; Chuck Cook, John Myefski, Gene Boldt, and Jim Zumerchik, representing Myefski Cook Architects; and, interested parties.

Chairman Gottlieb opened the meeting, citing the main purpose of this evening's meeting is to allow the Myefski Cook Architects design team to make a presentation of the design concepts developed thus far, and if not tonight, at the next Task Force meeting, to reach consensus on the level of intensity desired for the Village Center. The summary notes of the previous meeting held August 6, 2007 were approved as submitted; and the members of the Task Force introduced themselves.

Chuck Cook, principal with Myefski Cook Architects, summarized their design approach as detailed in a presentation packet, dated December 17, 2007, noting that upon initial experience and analysis of the study area, the distinct sub-districts which comprise the Village Center became apparent. The design team identified street frontage development opportunities, where either buildings or landscape walls should reinforce the streetscape and define the pedestrian experience. He explained that the main crux of tonight's meeting is to determine what level of density/intensity of development is acceptable to the Task Force.

Walking through the three various levels of intensity, he noted the challenge posed by having to create "generic" building footprints, along with identifying to ground level building uses (i.e. commercial, office, municipal, etc...). However, he noted that the density impacts and parking requirements are accurately depicts in the three various plans. The different scenarios add varying levels of additional density to the existing 428,000 square feet of space that currently exists within the Village Center, ranging from 148,000 additional square feet in the Lot Intensity Rural Redevelopment Concept to nearly two million square feet illustrated in the High Intensity Urban Redevelopment Scenario. In the end, MCA concluded that the Moderate Intensity Proposal would be the most appropriate and community-responsive plan to guide the future redevelopment of

Northfield's Village Center. Four primary guidelines emerged as the framework for the Redevelopment Plan: 1. Design within the Existing Context of the Community; 2. Outdoor Spaces should be design on the Human Scale; 3. General Aesthetic Improvements can enhance the Village Center appeal; and 4. Reframing of the Village Center as an Engine for Economic Growth to benefit the entire community. Mr. Cook then walked the Task Force through the site specific redevelopment schemes created for each of the sub-districts.

Chairman Gottlieb opened the Task Force's discussion by highlighting both the good and the bad news: the bad news is that the Village has not assembled the properties, nor is the Village prepared to dictate exactly what must occur. The Village simply wants to create the incentive to entice the sort of redevelopment envisioned for the Village Center. The good news is that there is great opportunity for redevelopment, particularly given that some key sites are ripe and ready for redevelopment. In response to his specific question, it was noted that there are currently 1875 public and private parking spaces within the Village Center and the matter was opened for questions or comments from the Task Force.

Task Force Member Bob Lopatin inquired about the financial analysis of the low intensity scenarios and doubted if the incentive for any redevelopment emerged in this concept. Task Force Member Ruth Lucchesi then thanked MCA for an incredible job, and congratulated the design team on the thoroughness of the study, which provides all the requested information and analysis—leaving it to the Committee to decide on how to proceed, but all the necessary tools were provided in the presentation packet.

Task Force Member Todd Berlinghof stated that for redevelopment to occur it will be essential for the Village to provide the proper environment, citing that at all levels of review — Staff, Plan & Zoning, and Village Board — the desire to imprint upon the end product, and how this impacts upon developers, must be recognized. He noted the tax implications per square foot on the 5 story office building, which makes smaller lease scenarios unlikely but larger scale tenants, such as the General Binding Corporation's example up in Northbrook possible scenarios. He noted that the outlot buildings in front of Dominick's were probably unrealistic but perhaps establishing the landscape wall concept along this frontage could happen. Task Force Member Blair Robinson questioned how the future assemblages of property within the Village Center could be controlled.

8:00 pm

Trustee Frazier asked questions with regards to how MCA considered the Willow Road design in the plan, and secondly whether the redevelopment scenarios complied with applicable zoning regulations in the Village Center district. Community Development Director Anne Kane responded that MCA had specifically been directed to not address the cross-section and design of the Willow Road right-of-way, citing that the Lakota Study currently underway is addressing that topic in greater detail; and that each of the redevelopment scenarios anticipate amendments to the current zoning regulations in place in the Village Center district.

Task Force Member George Warga focused the discussion on the Friedman Property and questioned the number of additional residential units added in each of the scenarios, to which MCA responded ranged from 66 new units in the low-intensity scenario to 422 units in the higher intensity plan. Member Warga questioned at which point will there be sufficient incentive for Friedman to redevelop, to which Member Berlinghof responded when tenants start relocating to surrounding ~~competition~~ **retail properties** will the ~~economies~~ **market conditions** spur redevelopment. He continued by citing the Redevelopment Plan is simply a road map to guide future redevelopment. Task Force Member Vaselopulos stated the Village need to be prepared to take on some of the public improvements, and questioned if the Village has the financial capability and wherewithal to step in if necessary, particularly on short notice. He inquired where the parking for the Dominick's outlot buildings would be located, to which he advised that underground parking was anticipated in the plan.

The status of Youngren Cleaners was questioned and whether or not further subdivision of properties into condominiums was desirable, and how this might impact re-assemblage 20 years down the road. Community Development Director Kane noted a number of inquiries, particularly by those developers interested in the vacant BP site, were encourage to attempt assemblage with the dry cleaners property but the commercial entity continues to operate from the site. She also noted that buildings overtime have a way of evolving even if the interior use changes.

Chairman Gottlieb reiterated that the role of this Task Force this evening it to provide direction to MCA in preparation of the January 10th meeting and suggested that they may even try to reach consensus on which development scenario is acceptable. To which Member Lucchesi made a motion to request MCA to concentrate on the moderate intensity plan, and to look for increased intensity, especially along the Edens Expressway frontage, and to provide design ideas on how such redevelopment could appear; Member Vaselopulos seconded the motion, followed by a unanimous voice vote, all in favor: 8 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried.

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 10, 2008 and Member Vaselopulos asked what will be covered at that meeting and suggested that in anticipation of the January Community Meeting, that the particulars of the meeting process be discussed.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8: 45 p.m.