

Village of Lemont
Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting of February 16, 2011

A meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Village of Lemont was held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, in the second floor Board Room of the Village Hall, 418 Main Street, Lemont, Illinois.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Erber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Verify Quorum

Upon roll call the following were:

Present: Maher, Murphy, O'Malley, Erber

Absent: Armijo, Spinelli, Schubert

Village Planer Charity Jones, Planning and Economic Development Director Jim Brown, and Village Trustee Ron Stapleton were also present.

C. Approve Minutes

Commissioner Murphy made a motion, seconded by Commissioner O'Malley to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2010 meeting with no changes. A voice vote was taken:

Ayes: All

None: None

Motion passed

II. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS

Commissioner Erber stated that the meeting would have to be moved downstairs to the lunchroom due to computer problems.

III. GENERAL DISCUSSION

A. Comprehensive Planning

Mrs. Jones provided a presentation via power point to discuss the process for updating the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that as she goes thru the presentation if anyone had questions or comments to please speak up. She stated that the planning process is a continuing circle of observing, planning, implementing, and evaluating.

Mrs. Jones stated that there are six characteristics in local planning. One is that it is inclusive so that all the citizens have a chance to influence and be part of the planning process. She said that good planning is consensus based, it reflects the views of the

majority of the community. She stated that good planning is integrated so that everything works together. The process is a continuing process that it doesn't just end when the plan is adopted. Mrs. Jones said good planning should be coordinated, such as local efforts are coordinated with other municipalities and with the region. Mrs. Jones said that Mr. Brown brought a copy of the Go To 20/40 Plan. (The book was passed around to the Commissioners) Mrs. Jones stated that this plan was adopted last fall by CMAP (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning). It is the Comprehensive Plan for the seven county region. She stated that they would be looking at how Lemont fits in with those goals. The last characteristic of good local planning is that it is sustainable. She said that good planning should promote a community that is sustainable not only environmentally but also fiscally.

Mrs. Jones then went over general types of planning tools. One tool is plans themselves, like the current Comprehensive Plan, or other sub area plans, economic development plans, bike and pedestrian plans, redevelopment plans, and natural resource protection plans. She said that the regulations, for example Unified Development Ordinance, are another tool; these contain requirements for property owners. Mrs. Jones stated that initiatives are a third planning tool and are different than the regulations. The government uses initiatives as a more pro-active strategy. The initiatives can help implement the recommendations of a plan, such as open space acquisition.

Mrs. Jones stated that the Comprehensive Plan should be the centerpiece of the whole planning program. She stated that it should be the framework through which all other plans are viewed. A comprehensive plan should be based on facts and values and it should give the community direction on how to attain its goals. She said that the focus should be on inspiration, clarity, and priority. She stated that most Comprehensive Plans are long range (20 to 30 years), however they are constantly reevaluated.

Mrs. Jones said that in Illinois, Comprehensive Plans are advisory and are not a regulatory document. She said that it does not carry the same authority as the UDO. She said the plan could cover the Village limits and 1.5 miles beyond as long as the properties are not within another municipality. She stated that by law the plan requires a public hearing, must be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and then adopted by the Village Board.

B. Comprehensive Plan Examples

Mrs. Jones then talked about the typical components of a Comprehensive Plan. She said it would include an update as to what has happened since the last plan was adopted. The data and analysis could be a separate section showing influences effecting the community – projected trends, population projection, etc.. She stated that public participation would be included in the plan. She said the policy recommendations would be in the functional elements of the plan. The plan usually includes a map series. Mrs. Jones said that in Illinois it is not very common to see a capital improvement schedule of three to five years, but sometimes it can be included and is mandatory in

some states. She said a general implementation schedule is often included at the end of the plan that shows short, mid and long-range goals.

Commissioner O'Malley asked what the Village's long-range water capacity is.

Mrs. Jones stated that long range water supply and its capacity is one thing they would want to address in the plan. She said currently there is more capacity than what is needed.

Mrs. Jones then talked about the functional elements of the plan. She stated that some of the topics that are typically addressed are land use, natural resource, transportation, economic development, housing, community facilities, and historic preservation. She stated that a land use element shows the community's intention for the general location and characteristic of future land use. It is not a zoning ordinance, which is more specific. Mrs. Jones stated that the natural resources element could identify areas of protection and also areas that are in need of remediation. She stated that the transportation element would have to look at water, rail, bike and pedestrian transportation as well as roads. Mrs. Jones stated that the Village just received a grant for \$48,000 from Cook County to do planning for active transportation. She said that Mr. Brown would talk about that later in the meeting.

As far as the economic development element, Mrs. Jones said that it should define what role the local government is going to take in economic development and set goals for economic development. She stated that a housing element is not necessarily just about affordable housing, but also housing preservation and creation to meet the needs of the projected population. She said that a community facilities element would include the planning for major facility enhancements like aquifers or a school. It can also include standards like a certain number of acres of parks per resident. The last typical functional element, historic preservation, can cover preservation of residential structures, commercial buildings, transportation facilities, public art, etc. She said that the goals and recommendations contained within each functional element need to work together to achieve the overall goals for the community.

Mrs. Jones stated that plans are often organized in terms of goals, objectives, and policies within these functional elements. Mrs. Jones provided an example of a goal, then the objective, and then the policies that help achieve that objective.

Mrs. Jones then asked if anyone had any comments or questions.

Commissioner Erber stated that the downtown area was unique and historic. It should possibly be treated separately.

Mrs. Jones stated that the plan could include a special section on the downtown because there are some aspects of the downtown that are different from the rest of Lemont, like land use, but in other respects the Village's overall goals and policies would apply equally to all areas including downtown.

Commissioner Murphy asked if adding another train would be part of this Comprehensive Plan.

Mrs. Jones said yes it could be part of economic development as well as mobility.

Commissioner Murphy asked if they were going to be working with a consultant.

Mrs. Jones stated that most of the work would be done in house. Staff might get someone to do research for economic development. Also, the Village will be receiving consultant help through a recently received grant.

C. Tentative Comp Plan Update Timeline

Mr. Brown stated that they received a grant from the Cook County Health Department. The grant is aimed at reducing obesity and improving people's health. The grant would be used to plan for improving the networks in town to get people to walk or bike to local areas in town. Mr. Brown stated that there are not a lot of designated bike routes in the Village. He said that staff would come up with a signage plan the bike networks. Mr. Brown stated that they have a partner already with Active Transportation Alliance, who is contracted to provide technical assistance through the grant. He stated that everything for the grant has to be completed by next February. He said that there is a big public involvement that has to be included with this grant. The plans created through the grant will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Brown stated that there is another consultant that is working on what staff calls Destination Development. It is looking specifically at the downtown area and how to bring people into that area. He stated that hopefully it should be done by April of this year.

Discussion then continued on ideas for increasing tourism in the downtown area.

Mr. Brown stated that the grant and the consulting effort would come first. He stated that in August or September they would have a big meeting and at that time they would look at land use, housing, and transportation portions of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the grant gave any money to businesses that promoted health or wellness.

Mr. Brown stated that it did not.

Mr. Brown then presented on the computer a draft schedule for the Comprehensive Plan update. He stated that there will be a big kick-off meeting and they would gather a lot of public input. He said than staff or the consultant would start looking at community data. Then they would go through it chapter by chapter.

Mr. Brown stated that the PZC meeting in March will be a discussion of economic development. He stated that staff would not be presenting a draft but rather the key economic issues facing the Village. The next meeting either in April or May will probably be the bike planning. Mr. Brown stated that over summer staff would continue working with the consultant, who would be working with a steering committee. He said in September of 2011 they would have a big kick-off meeting. He stated that he is projecting to have everything done by October of 2012.

Mr. Brown then passed out a list of websites showing Comprehensive Plans within the region for the Commissioners to take a look at.

Discussion continued about the economic development of the downtown area.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Maher made a motion, seconded by Commissioner O'Malley to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken:

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion passed