



# Village of Lemont

418 Main Street • Lemont, Illinois 60439

## Village of Faith

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Charlene M. Smollen

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## VILLAGE BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

APRIL 18, 2011 - 7:00 P.M.

- I. CALL TO ORDER.
- II. ROLL CALL.
- III. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. DISCUSSION OF VEHICLE STICKERS.  
(ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE)(REAVES/SNIEGOWSKI) (WEHMEIER/  
SCHAFFER/FRIEDLEY)
  - B. DISCUSSION OF ILLINOIS STREET IMPROVEMENTS.  
(ADMINISTRATION/PUBLIC WORKS)(REAVES/BLATZER)  
(WEHMEIER/SCHAFFER/PUKULA)
  - C. DISCUSSION OF KRYSTYNA CROSSING SALE AND AMENDMENTS.  
(PLANNING & ED)(STAPLETON)(BROWN/JONES)
  - D. DISCUSSION OF GLEN OAKS REVISED PLAN AND ANNEXATION  
AGREEMENT AMENDMENTS.  
(PLANNING & ED)(STAPLETON)(BROWN/JONES)
  - E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE.  
(PLANNING & ED)(STAPLETON)(BROWN/JONES)
  - F. DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS.  
(ADMINISTRATION)(REAVES)(WEHMEIER/SCHAFFER)
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.
- V. NEW BUSINESS.
- VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION.
- VII. ADJOURN.

**Village Board  
Agenda Memorandum**

Item #

to: Mayor & Village Board  
from: Ben Wehmeier, Village Administrator  
George Schafer, Assistant Village Administrator  
Subject: Discussion of Vehicle Stickers  
date: April 12, 2011

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

The Village of Lemont has required vehicle stickers for all village residents for many years, but the process has changed over the years. About 18 months ago the Village purchased a software program that provides for a more efficient way to identify vehicles that are registered to the people of the Village. In the past, the Village would send notices out to residents only if the particular vehicle was registered with the Village beforehand. Using the software, the Village can now send notices to vehicle owners, even if the resident hadn't purchased a sticker before, by merging data from the secretary of state with the Village's address data. With the new program, the Village was able to have many more vehicles licensed than in the past. With more vehicle owners receiving notices as a result of the program, many calls and concerns surfaced. Staff wanted to present these concerns to the Village Board before notices are sent out, so the municipal code can be updated to reflect desired policy.

1. One issue that surfaced was whether or not individuals that register their vehicles to their business address that was in the Village were required to have stickers for the vehicle. It was the Village's policy last year that any vehicle registered to an address in the Village of Lemont required a sticker, even if the owner lived outside the village limits. If this is the desired policy, staff will clean up the language in the municipal code on this issue.
2. In a similar concern, some residents have their company vehicles registered to their home in Lemont, but the business (and vehicle) does not reside within the Village of Lemont. It was the Village's policy last year that these vehicles would require a sticker because it was registered through the state at a Lemont address.
3. Vehicles the resident may still be in possession but do not drive anymore. Situations were presented in which residents may have a vehicle still but do not drive the vehicle. Last year, the policy was that if the vehicle no longer was registered with the state, then it would not require a sticker. However, if the vehicle was still registered with the state it required a village sticker.
4. Vehicles that have been sold, junked, or registered elsewhere. Because the database the Village uses from the state often contains old information, a resident may get a notice for a vehicle they no longer have. Last year, the Village required the person to fill out a form provided by the secretary of state and submit to village. The Police Department would then take them out of the database

after verification and send notices to the state notifying them they no longer had the vehicle, or it was registered incorrectly.

5. Price Structure- The Village requires a sticker by August 1<sup>st</sup>. If the sticker is purchased after August 1<sup>st</sup>, the sticker shall double according to the ordinance. Residents who were unaware they had to purchase a sticker for their vehicle were unhappy about the “doubling” of the fee. This provision along with the other price structures is listed in the chart below. If there is a preference for a change, the Village can have codified into the municipal code before issuing the notices.
  
6. Duration of required sticker. Currently the village requires a two year village sticker. This is uncommon among Chicago- land municipalities. The majority of communities in the area either does not require village stickers or have annual stickers, albeit at a reduced price. Some of the concerns with 2 year stickers include the effects of a substantial decrease in revenue in non-vehicle sticker years.

**Vehicle License Sticker Fees**

	Reduced Price Before August 1st, 2009	Full Price: After August 1st, 2009
Motorcycles or motor bicycles	\$ 39.00	\$ 78.00
Passenger vehicles	48.00	96.00
Trucks "B" license (pickup and R.V.)	60.00	120.00
Trucks "D" and "F" licenses	105.00	210.00
Trucks "H" and "J" through "Z"	123.00	246.00
Buses and motor homes	57.00	114.00
Antique vehicles	6.00	12.00
Transfer or replacement licenses	3.00	6.00

**Senior Vehicle License Sticker Fees**

	Reduced Price: Before August 1st, 2009	Full Price: After August 1st, 2009
Passenger Vehicles	\$16.00 (first vehicle), \$32.00 (each additional vehicle)	\$32.00 (first vehicle), \$64.00 (each additional vehicle)
Trucks "B" license (pickup and R.V.)	\$20.00 (first vehicle), \$40.00 (each additional vehicle)	\$40.00 (first vehicle), \$80.00 (each additional vehicle)

**Village Board  
Agenda Memorandum**

Item #

to: Mayor & Village Board  
from: Ben Wehmeier, Village Administrator  
George Schafer, Assistant Village Administrator  
Ralph Pukula, Public Works Director  
Subject: Illinois Street  
date: April 13, 2011

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

Over the course of the last 8 months, the Village has had various discussions as it relates to future plans for the reconstruction of Illinois Street. There are numerous factors that need to be considered and discussed as this project moves forward. Part of the reason for this topic to be discussed is several items are hitting critical path points, where larger money will need to be spent as it relates to engineering and traffic studies that will be required. However, several decisions need to be made prior to this work being done, as it would not be appropriate to authorize this work.

**Com Ed** – Staff had reached out to Com Ed to work on receiving a high order of magnitude estimate to underground their utility on Illinois Street. Staff has limited the initial estimate with Com Ed due to the much higher cost involved. Com Ed provided two cost estimates for us. The first was the entire length of Illinois from Lockport on the West to the intersection of Illinois and Main on the East. This cost was about \$2 million. We also asked for a separate quote from Holmes to Lockport. This cost was about \$1.3 million. Both quotes included the cost for conduit, which we have found we can often get done at a lower cost. Com Ed has indicated they will work with us on this again. In addition, Com Ed also reviewed the various utility maps for infrastructure to ensure this could be accomplished. At this point, Com Ed will not proceed forward until a) a decision is made of how much to underground and b) payment of engineering cost of \$55,000.

**Federal Road Money** - Part of the financial plan to reconstruct this road was to look at option available through the SW Conference of Mayor. The Village has applied for the designation of an FAU route for this street. In addition to this designation, the street must meet certain road construction criteria to receive funds, with ideally having 12 foot travel lanes and 8 foot parking lanes for a total width of 40 foot face to face of curb. Based on measurements taken, it is closer to 36 foot face to face of curb. Based on initial reviews, it may be difficult to expand the width beyond the current configuration, especially considering the change in grade from the south to north side of the street.

There is the option to seek a variation from these requirements. However, some of the considerations includes: accident history, average daily traffic and the percentage of trucks that use this route. Based on initial reviews, the Village may not qualify as a result. Several decisions need to be made including the

possibility of reducing parking to one side of the street. To proceed further, additional funds will need to be allocated to have the street surveyed to proceed with engineering, additional studies for traffic will also need to be done. In order to move forward, decision concerning parking and scope of the reconstruction needs to be discussed. If we are unable to receive federal funds it will be very difficult, even with the availability of TIF funds to do this project.

**ATTACHMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)**



Village of Lemont  
***Planning & Economic Development Department***

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418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439  
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

TO: Committee of the Whole #020-11  
FROM: James A. Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director  
THRU  
SUBJECT: Krystyna Crossing Sale and Amendments  
DATE: 9 April 2011

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### **SUMMARY**

A sale of Krystyna Crossing subdivision by the bank is imminent. Several entities have expressed interest in the property, and have questioned staff about certain provisions in the annexation agreement. Staff seeks consensus from the COW that certain changes to the annexation agreement would be acceptable.

### **BACKGROUND**

On 9 October 2006 the Village Board passed a series of ordinances annexing 10 acres and approving plans for single-family subdivision of 25 units on a total of 15 acres. (Five acres of the site were already within the corporate limits.) The subdivision, known as Krystyna Crossing, had had a long and contentious approval process. The post-approval development has not gone smoothly either. The site was graded, detention ponds created, and utilities and streets installed. One model home was constructed on site.

The property went into foreclosure and the lender, Standard Bank & Trust, eventually took control of the development. Standard Bank marketed the property, and at least five homebuilding entities have shown interest in the stalled development. In conversations with staff, these potential buyers have raised the issues listed below.

### **THE APPROVALS**

Site development is governed by approvals from October 2006 and October 2008:

*Ordinance O-92-06 authorizing execution of an annexation agreement for 10 of the site's 15 acres. This agreement contained exhibits, including a preliminary plat and declaration of covenants and restrictions. Most of potential purchasers' concerns are the covenants and restrictions (see below).*

Ordinance O-94-06 approving a special use for a PUD and the preliminary plat and plans, and rezoning the entire 15-acre site to R-4. The special use approval provisions included variations from our standard zoning requirements for lot width and setbacks:

**Section 3.** Approval of a special use—planned unit development is granted as provided in Lemont Zoning Ordinance §XVLH (Special Use – Planned Unit Developments) with the following variations and conditions:

- a. A variation from §VII.E.4.f of the Lemont Zoning Ordinance to decrease the minimum lot width from 90 feet at the building line to 88 feet for lot 12 and 86 feet for lot 17.
- b. \*\*\*\*\*
- c. The front yard setbacks for lots 6-9 shall be as follows:
  1. Lot 6 – 28 feet;
  2. Lot 7 – 65 feet;
  3. Lot 8 – 40 feet;
  4. Lot 9 – 28 feet.

(See attached plat.)

Representatives from one potential buyer are determining whether the front yard setbacks for lots 6-9 will readily accommodate their housing product. An amendment to the provisions above may be desired.

Ordinance O-50-08 granting final plat/plan approval, 27 October 2008. This ordinance approved the final plat and a final landscape plan for the development. The approved plat was returned to the developer for recording with the County. County records indicate it was never recorded. Therefore, the final plat will most likely need to be prepared once again and a new ordinance—with the new plat as an attachment—will need to be approved.

### **CONCERNS WITH THE COVENANTS**

Potential purchasers have concerns with several of the provisions of the covenants and restrictions found in §4.3 of the covenants and restrictions.

- *Minimum square footage of homes:* "All residences shall contain a minimum of [3,200] square feet of living area, exclusive of garage, breezeway, porches and basement."
- *Ranch homes prohibited:* "No ranch style homes shall be allowed."
- *Requirement for three-car garages:* "(A) private garage of sufficient size to house not fewer than three standard size automobiles shall be constructed or erected, which garage must be attached to the main residence."
- *Pitch of roof:* "A two story residence shall have a minimum roof pitch of Seven in Twelve."
- *Brick on elevations:* "The first floor of each house must be of brick construction."

The Village usually does not enforce covenants, but these have been attached as an exhibit to the annexation agreement. I believe the best course of action would be to amend the annexation agreement, deleting the covenants exhibit. I have reviewed the covenants and restrictions and do not find any reason for the Village to maintain them as part of the agreement. In addition to concerns raised by the potential purchasers, the

covenants also establish an architectural review board and include a clause that could be interpreted as prohibiting home occupations. **However, the Village should determine if it wants to require brick on a portion of the elevations.** If so, such a provision could be inserted elsewhere in the amended annexation agreement.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

Additional concerns expressed by the potential buyers:

- *Anti-monotony code:* Some potential purchasers were concerned that the Village's anti-monotony provisions would limit their production options. I informed them that it was staff's intention to revised these to a more realistic, fair, and workable form.
- *Entrance sign:* At least one potential purchaser questioned whether the entrance sign and landscaping around the entranced sign could be modified. I informed them that minor changes to such plans could be accomplished at the staff level. Changes, however, would need to be consistent with the general intent of the original plan, and the quality and quantity of the landscaping material would need to be approximately the same.

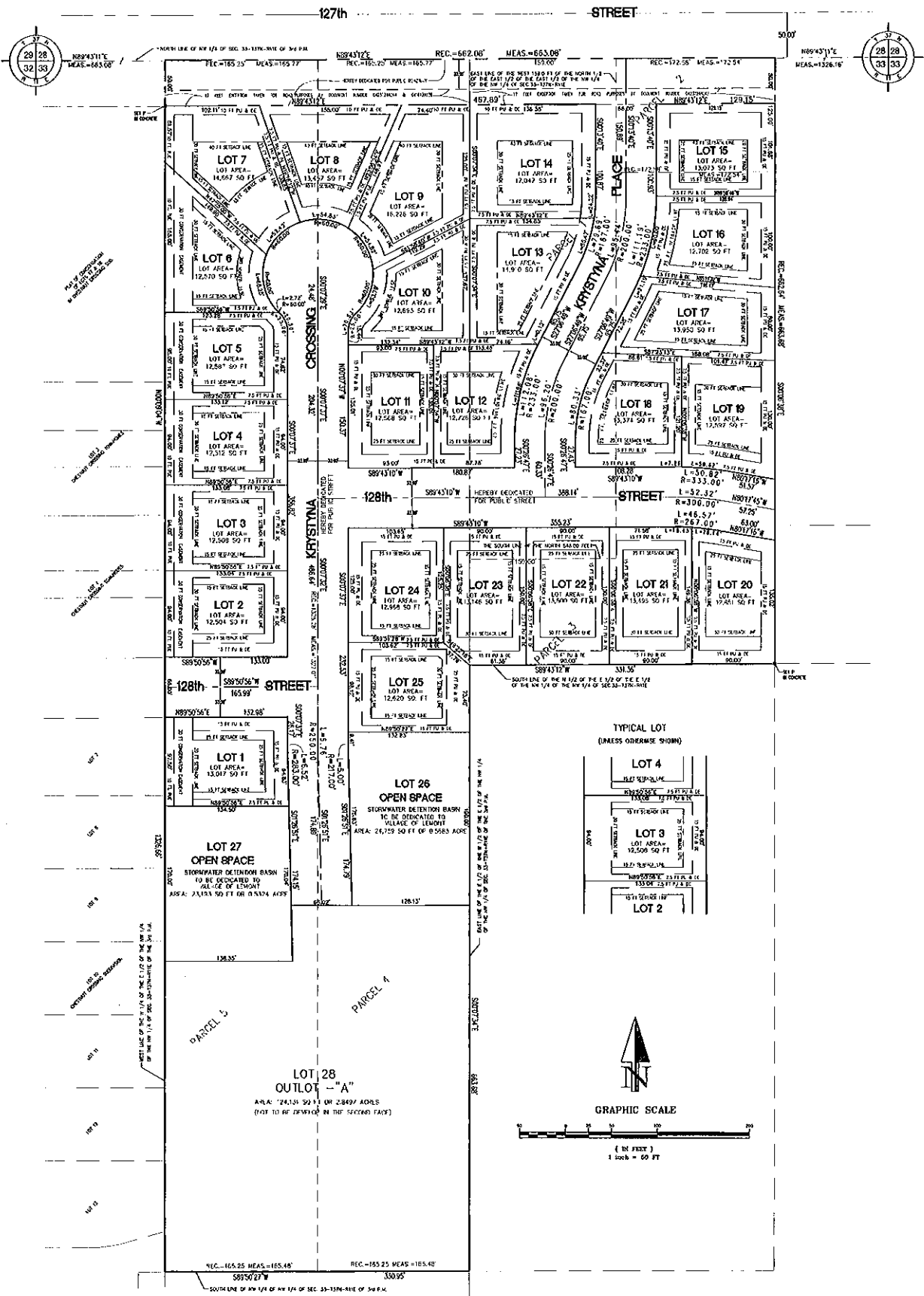
## **RECOMMENDATION**

Once the bank has determined who the purchaser and developer of the property will be, I recommend the Village work with the bank and/or new developer to amend the annexation agreement as follows:

- Remove the restrictions and covenants as an exhibit to the agreement
- Insert provisions covering basic architectural standards, e.g. a requirement for brick on the elevations or measures prohibiting "snout houses."



# FINAL PLAT OF KRYSZYNA CROSSING SUBDIVISION





Village of Lemont  
**Planning & Economic Development Department**

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418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439  
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

TO: Committee of the Whole #021-11

FROM: James A. Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director

THRU

SUBJECT: **Glen Oaks Revised Plan and Annexation Agreement Amendments**

DATE: 11 April 2011

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### **SUMMARY**

Over the last half year staff has been negotiating with the developer of Glen Oak Estates for amendments to an existing annexation agreement that would: (1) alter the site plan to allow more public open space and preserve some of the better site characteristics; and (2) relieve the developer of certain development obligations and reduce his fees. A revised plan that includes a substantial increase in open space has been proposed. To maintain the same number of dwelling units and still create that open space, the lot sizes and widths deviate from the Village's standard R-4 zoning requirements. Staff feels the current offer to reduce developer fees and obligations is worth the creation of permanent, public open space on the site, but cautions that acquiescence to developer demands for further fee reductions may be imprudent.

### **BACKGROUND**

On 13 August 2007 the Village Board passed a series of ordinances annexing 131 acres and approving plans for a subdivision of 250 single-family homes. The property was known as "Leona Farm;" the planned subdivision is now known as Glen Oak Estates. The property subsequently was acquired by Cardinal Development, represented by Anthony Perino. In September 2010 the Village approved amendments to the annexation agreement allowing, *inter alia*, a change to the phasing plan. Additionally, the Village modified its zoning ordinance so that farming could be reinstated on the property.

Last fall the Village and Mr. Perino determined that the engineering plans were based on erroneous topographic data. Since a total revision of the engineering plans was in order, I urged Mr. Perino to consider redesigning the site with more open space. Although he was initially reluctant to proceed with a redesign ("Why would I

want to open that can of worms again?"), he did agree to some initial discussions for sale of portions of the property to the taxing bodies. Design of a new site plan began in earnest following a stakeholder meeting held on 10 November 2010. This meeting was attended by representatives of Lemont Township and Lemont Park District as well as residents from the nearby area who had been particularly active in the public meetings when the subdivision was originally reviewed and approved. Comments on a potential site design that included more open space and housing products including town homes and/or smaller single-family lots were generally favorable.

Discussions continued over the winter, and several versions of a new site design were forwarded by Mr. Perino. OpenLands, a non-for-profit organization that assists with the acquisition and preservation of open space, was also involved at this stage. OpenLands does not purchase property outright, but does provide short-term loans for the acquisition of open space. The Village paid for an appraisal to serve as a basis for a sale. Ultimately, however, representatives from the taxing bodies could not offer cash for open space, and were reluctant to pin the hopes of raising money for open space on referendums.

Discussions continued, but now between only the Village staff and Mr. Perino and other members of his development team. The question was no longer about land acquisition but rather: To what extent should the Village amend the annexation agreement to allow for a new site design with more open space?

Starting with the stakeholder meeting in November and continuing through the talks over the winter, staff emphasized that all elements relating to site design were open to discussion, e.g. product type, lot sizes, street and ROW widths, so long as the number of dwelling units did not exceed 250.

## **A NEW SITE DESIGN**

The latest site design was prepared by Teska Associates, Inc. and is dated 23 March 2011 (attached). It allows for 249 single-family homes on lots of three basic sizes:

- 12,150 sq ft lots (90 x 135 ft) – 92 units
- 10,125 sq ft lots (75 x 135 ft) – 89 units
- 7,500 sq ft lots (60 x 125 ft) – 68 units

Note that all lot sizes and lot dimensions are approximate.

The smaller and narrower lots allow for the creation of more open space. The latest site design breaks the open space into several different pockets:

- A 9-acre public park site, intended for more formal and traditional park uses, e.g. playground, sports field
- A 10-acre area that preserves the highest quality oak trees on site
- A 7.8-acre corridor that connects the two open spaces listed above
- Smaller areas of 1.3 ac res, 4.5 acres, and a 1.8 acre commons are also included.

## ANALYSIS OF SITE DESIGN

I do not attempt to offer a full analysis of the attached site design of 23 March 2011. Instead, I hope to identify positive aspects of a design that would make the Glen Oaks subdivision unique within the Village and provide amenities for not only its residents but the community at large.

First, the major areas of open space offer potential opportunities for more formal, active recreational uses as well as passive uses such as hiking along nature trails. Moreover, the major areas of open space are all interconnected. The current annexation agreement and site design do not contain any provisions for the preservation of the outstanding grove of mature oak trees in the southwest corner of the site. This design and an amended agreement would correct that deficiency. Most of the open space shown on the new design would ultimately be donated to the Lemont Park District, Lemont Township, or the Village. The preservation of this open space would be a major accomplishment and could potentially become a major amenity for the community. While no taxing body has the funds to fully develop or restore the open space at present, the land would at least fall under public control, to be fully restored later as funding becomes available. The design is also sensitive to the concerns of residents who provided the annexation corridor to reach the Glen Oaks site: an open space corridor connects the stubbed Foxburrow Lane with the larger open space areas.

Although re-engineering of the site has not yet started, I believe the redesign offers a more environmentally sensitive approach to storm water management. Existing topography would be largely maintained, and the detention areas have been sited where depressional areas already exist. Seven separate storm water detention ponds are included in the design. These will be naturalized detention areas complete with native plants.

The design allows for clusters of three different product types, thus providing flexibility in responding to market preferences and future phasing. I note that all of the lots will likely be smaller than the Village's standard R-4 minimum lot size of 12,500 square feet. I see no issue here. Open space is created by maintaining the site's yield—250 homes—and simply reducing the aggregate of the lots that those homes occupy. Despite the reduced lot sizes, the overall site density remains about the same: 249 units / 131 acres = 1.9 units per acre. The ample and well distributed open space should prevent an oppressive and overcrowded feel to the development once it is built out.

I do remain concerned about the 7,500 square foot lots. Prior to any amendments to the annexation agreement, the developer should offer some examples of what he envisions the housing product on these lots will look like. **The Village may wish to include some architectural controls as part of any amendments.** For example, the Village should consider provisions that would prevent the construction of snout-houses, i.e. houses that appear to be little more than garages with a house attached to the rear.

## **POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS IN RETURN FOR OPEN SPACE**

And what should the Village concede in return for a better site design? In a sense, the Village has already conceded its normal zoning requirements: lots will be smaller and narrower than what would otherwise be allowed for this area of the community. Mr. Perino, however, claims that such concessions do not compensate for the loss in both time and money that he is incurring in the redesign. Indeed, because of the faulty topographic data he needs to re-engineer the site, but not necessarily redesign it. Both the Village Administrator and I felt it appropriate to offer relief from some other provisions of the annexation agreement. We discussed a couple of options, and on 16 March 2011 I sent an e-mail to Mr. Perino proposing we seek amendment of the current annexation agreement as follows:

1. *Park donation.* The current agreement stipulates the donation of a 6.9-acre park supplemented by \$295,000 in improvements. Instead, the Park District would get more land (nine acres), but the requirement for a cash donation would be eliminated. The developer would still be required to install any storm water facilities integral to the overall storm water management system.
2. *Parker Rd improvements.* The current agreement obligates the developer to improve the length of Parker Rd from 131<sup>st</sup> to the Will County line to the Village's curb-and-gutter standards. Instead we propose that the street be improved to a rural profile, i.e. swale without curb and gutter. The Village Engineer cautions that in order to provide an acceptable rural type cross-section on Parker Road, the horizontal and vertical plan and profile established by C.M. Lavoie in the firm's Parker Road plans dated 06/25/2010 should be used. Thus, the road will need to be reconstructed in its entirety to remove the improper vertical curves. The developer has countered that relief from Parker Rd curb-and-gutter requirements are financially insignificant.
3. *Fees.* Reductions in impact fees and the annexation fee as indicated in the table below.

### Glen Oaks Impact Fee Comparison

<i>Contributed to/for</i>	<i>Required per Agrmnt*</i>	<i>Required with 249 Single-Family Homes**</i>	<i>Amended Fee Offer</i>
Dist 113A	\$632,220.55	\$431,979	\$431,979
Dist 210	\$316,000.00	\$187,248	\$187,248
LFPD if no sprinklers installed	\$74,500.00	\$74,202	N/A
LFPD if sprinklers installed	\$25,000.00	\$24,900	\$24,900
Library Dist	\$40,453.27	\$32,859	\$32,859
Public Safety	\$250,000.00	\$249,000	\$186,750 (\$750 / DU)
Water Improvement	\$250,000.00	\$249,000	\$249,000
Annexation fee	\$62,500.00	\$62,250	\$49,800 (\$200/ DU)
Park Dist	Combination of 6.9 acres + \$295,500 for park improvements	Either of the following: (1) max 7.03 acres; or (2) max \$1,054,620 cash contribution; or (3) some combination of (1) and (2)	Land donation only
<b>Totals without Park District and no sprinklers</b>	<b>\$1,625,673.82</b>	<b>\$1,286,538.00</b>	<b>\$1,162,536.00</b>

\* Based on 50% 4-bedroom and 50% 3-bedroom homes

\*\* Based on 33% 4-bedroom homes, 33% 3-bedroom homes, 33% 2-bedroom homes

This offer reduces the developer's fees by over \$463,000, not counting the elimination of \$295,000 in park construction costs, and any savings from the change in Parker Rd construction requirements.

This March 16<sup>th</sup> offer was not quite what the developer had hoped for. From the perspective of the Village Administrator and me, it is fair. The deviation from normal Village zoning and site development standards is something we have never offered or approved on this scale. It is such reductions that in large part create the open space. The Village Administrator and I met with Mr. Perino and one of his team last week. We discussed additional ways to make an amended agreement more attractive, including changing the payment of impact fees to time of building permit, and various ways to reduce side yard setbacks.

Ultimately the developer is losing development rights to only one unit. Despite the smaller lots sizes, the developer should realize the following benefits of this revised site plan:

1. Development with more amenities = quicker sales
2. Opportunity to have multiple housing products

3. Relief from Village zoning standards and the attendant flexibility which should also help lot sales
4. Relief from certain Village site development/engineering standards and attendant cost savings in infrastructure
5. Savings of \$295,000 cash donation for the park
6. Savings of about \$463,00 in fees
7. Reduced carrying costs resulting from payment of impact fees at time of building permit rather than at platting of phases
8. Potential tax benefits or breaks, either from donation of land or from our takeover of the land and the decrease in the tax burden.

The community gets:

1. A formal park site of 9 acres (instead of 6.9 acres)
2. Additional open space of approximately 24 acres (excludes areas strictly for detention)
3. Tree preservation
4. A development consistent with the comprehensive plan, the open space referendum, and park district surveys on desired types of recreation

## **RECOMMENDATION**

I recommend that the Village Board embrace the proposed amendments, and consider a slight, additional reduction in the fees as outlined above. I cannot recommend waiver of all of the fees, as desired by the developer, or a significant reduction in fees over what has already been offered. The Village will incur costs in monitoring the development, and the community will to incur costs based on the impacts that the subdivision will generate.



Village of Lemont  
***Planning & Economic Development Department***

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418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439  
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

TO: Committee of the Whole #22-11

FROM: Charity Jones, Village Planner

THRU James A. Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: Economic Development Update – PZC meeting & Brokers Breakfast

DATE: April 12, 2011

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### **SUMMARY**

Recently, the Planning & Economic Development Department staff has had meetings focused on economic development issues. Below is a summary of three recent meetings for your information. The input gathered at these meetings will be used as staff updates the Economic Development portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

On March 15, department staff met with three members of the Chamber Board of Directors and the Chamber Executive Director ("the Chamber leadership"). The purpose of the meeting was to gather the Chamber leadership's thoughts on what economic development issues are facing Lemont and to discover what role the Chamber feels that the Village should play in addressing these issues.

The Chamber leadership's comments ranged from very specific (e.g. create a "business spotlight" in each Village newsletter) to more general (e.g. the Village needs more marketing). In general, the Chamber leadership seemed to agree on the following issues facing Lemont:

- More marketing of Lemont is needed to attract both businesses and individual customers.
- There needs to be greater cooperation within the Lemont business community / we need to build up the local small business community.
- Vacancies need to be reduced in the downtown. Specifically, a major anchor tenant (possibly a national chain store) is needed as well as several convenience uses.
- Route 83 & Main Street needs to be a welcoming gateway to the community.



- More residents need to support local businesses (increase local spending capture).

The Chamber leadership saw a role for the Village in addressing all of these issues. Specifically, they felt the Village should be more engaged in marketing and should be more aggressive in its business attraction marketing efforts.

## **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

On March 16, the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) dedicated its meeting to economic development. The purpose of this meeting was to update the PZC on recent economic development efforts and to get the PZC's thoughts on economic development issues facing the Village. In the first part of the meeting, staff and the PZC discussed what economic development is, how it is typically addressed in comprehensive plans, and what economic development planning activities the Village has recently engaged in. In the second part of the meeting, the PZC members provided comments on economic development issues and the Village's role in addressing those issues. Below is a summary of those comments, grouped by topic:

### **Marketing**

- The Village should commit funds toward marketing as an effort to increase sales tax revenue. One PZC member suggested the Village approach marketing like a business, setting aside a certain percentage of revenue toward marketing to gain future business.
- The quarry area is among Lemont's best assets and should be marketed to bring visitors.

### **Business Recruitment**

- The Village should actively recruit businesses. This should be accomplished by the Village engaging in direct recruitment (possibly through a consultant), attending trade shows/events, and supporting brokers who recruit businesses to fill vacant space.
- People starting new businesses or looking to locate a business in the Village struggle with the many different processes involved; the Village should establish a single point of contact for new businesses to guide them through these processes.
- Business attraction should focus on more than just retail.

### **Business Retention**

- The Village should play a supporting role to the Chamber in efforts to improve business cooperation.
- The Village should work to build relationships with existing businesses.

### **Downtown**

- The Village should continue to pursue increased Metra service.
- Tri-Central should be redeveloped (no specific comments regarding potential future land use).

## **Target Industries**

- *Tourism.* The PZC members expressed differing opinions regarding tourism. Some thought tourism should not be a high priority and that the Village shouldn't invest significantly in developing tourism. However, other members expressed support for the development of tourism, particularly in the Heritage Quarries Recreation Area. These PZC members stated that the quarry area needs to be developed to attract visitors; members suggested that the Village should work to add active recreation activities like scuba diving to draw large numbers of visitors on a regular basis. PZC members also suggested that the Quarries and its trail need to be better linked to the Centennial Trail.
- *Other Industries.* Generally, the Village's economic development efforts should not solely focus on retail.

## **Self Sufficiency / Reducing Leakage**

- Again, there was some disagreement among the PZC members. Some felt that local businesses need to take a leadership role in attracting local customers and that the Village should have minimal involvement. Others felt that since the Village has a stake in local spending (increased tax revenue) it should therefore encourage shopping locally through marketing and promotional efforts.

## **BROKERS' BREAKFAST**

On April 6, the Mayor, Trustee Chialdikas, and department staff met with ten commercial real estate brokers who represent properties for sale or lease in Lemont. Invitations were sent to all brokers or property owners who represent property or buildings currently for sale or lease in Lemont; approximately 30 total. The purpose of this meeting was to 1) begin to build relationships between the Village and the commercial real estate community, 2) educate the brokers on how the Village works to promote available sites and buildings, and 3) gather input from the brokers on the challenges and opportunities of marketing properties in Lemont and how the Village and the commercial real estate community can better work together to fill available sites & buildings. Below is a list of the comments received, grouped by the type of property in question.

### **Office Properties**

- Many office uses (e.g. medical) rely on nearby population growth to create demand. Lemont's relative geographic isolation and the overall slowing of area population growth are challenges to filling office space.
- I-355 is an asset, but Cook County taxes make Lemont's properties less competitive against comparable Will or DuPage County properties.
- Office users now are less location-specific; they are more focused on getting a good deal and moving in quickly. Anything the Village can do to speed up the build-out process will make Lemont's office properties more competitive. One thing that might help is to modify building permits to allow partial build-out permits.
- The brokerage community understands that the Village is not in a position to do anything about the Cook County tax structure, and likely can offer minimal, if any, local financial incentives. However, cultivating a pro-business reputation among the brokerage community will help compensate for these things.

## **Retail Properties**

- Lemont's lower population density is a challenge to bringing in retail, as is Cook County taxes. County taxes are particularly challenging in filling ground lease properties (e.g. shopping center outlots).
- I-355 is both a positive and a negative for retail. It has made Lemont more accessible, but also has reduced traffic volumes on Lemont roads.
- The Village needs to develop marketing materials focused on the Village as a whole that can be used to attract retailers. This would supplement site-specific marketing materials created by brokers for individual sites.
- The Village should be more proactive in recruiting businesses to Lemont (e.g. consider attending ICSC events, direct marketing campaign to retailers, etc.).
- Permitting is also a concern for retail properties, particularly streamlining the process and providing a single point of contact for permit reviews.

## **Industrial Properties**

- The Class 6b property tax exemption is an asset available to Cook County industrial properties. The Village should have a single point of contact on Village staff for all 6b questions; this person should be well versed in the 6b program.
- The Village should inventory its industrial sites, and consider marketing prime properties to industrial users.
- The industrial brokerage community is relatively small and close-knit. By cultivating positive relationships with industrial brokers the Village will improve the likelihood of new industrial development in Lemont.

## **COMMENTS**

This summary of recent efforts is offered to keep the elected officials abreast of not only staff work, but more important, of concerns and perceptions within the community. In some instances those that we met with did not seem aware of activities that the Village has already engaged in, e.g. the revamping of our website and the production of a business start-up guide that clearly directs interested parties to the appropriate Village staff.

**Village Board  
Agenda Memorandum**

Item #

to: Mayor & Village Board  
from: Ben Wehmeier, Village Administrator  
George Schafer, Assistant Village Administrator  
Subject: Committees/Commissions  
date: April 13, 2011

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

Over the course of the last two years the Village Board and staff have been reviewing and discussing the various committees and commissions within the Village. These discussions have mainly consisted of three primary questions:

- 1) What committees/commissions should exist?
- 2) What role/purpose should they have?
- 3) What level of authority should they have on behalf of the Village?

Attached is a staff memo from 2009 that Jim Brown and Charity Jones authored that gave a very good overview of committees/commissions the Village has or has had, along with recommendations. Subsequent to this memo, some of these committees were disbanded.

Based on recent requests, this is an opportune time to review this topic. As part of this discussion, staff is seeking guidance on all three questions above. With initial guidance, staff will begin to draft the necessary documents accordingly to include additions/amendments to the Lemont Municipal Code and other polices, some of which are currently being updated.

**ATTACHMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)**

Staff Memo from Jim Brown and Charity Jones – May 12, 2009



Village of Lemont  
*Community Development Department*

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418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439  
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

TO: Committee of the Whole #084-09

FROM: James A. Brown, Community Development Director  
Charity Jones, Village Planner

SUBJECT: Downtown Commission & Economic Development

DATE: May 12, 2009

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## **BACKGROUND**

I understand that the discussion of appointments to various boards and commissions at the Executive Session last week prompted an attendant discussion of whether we want to keep some inactive commissions, add some new ones, or re-align some commission responsibilities. The Village Planner, at the request of and in cooperation with Trustee Virgilio, had done some research and prepared some documents concerning the various downtown committees. This staff repeats much of what the Village Planner had prepared. While wanting to remain focused on the issue at hand—the appointment of commissions—and not wanting to turn this into a broader discussion of what economic development activities the Village should be involved in, I nevertheless have offered some thoughts on the roles of my department and economic development.

Economic Development is a broad term that encompasses a myriad of activities. Some examples of economic development activities include: targeted infrastructure improvements, business recruitment and retention, tax incentive programs, advertising campaigns, market research, and workforce training. Which activities should the Village engage in and how should responsibility for these activities be assigned? Should staff, under the direction of the Village Board, directly engage in these activities? Or should primary responsibility for these activities be assigned to volunteer committees? This staff report is intended to stimulate discussion of these questions. The report includes particular attention to downtown for two reasons. First, because downtown is our historic central business district and a unique asset to the community. Second, because downtown is a TIF district, and therefore dedicated revenue is available to engage in economic development activities for the downtown.

**DOWNTOWN COMMISSION – CURRENT STRUCTURE**

The Village currently has several commissions or committees engaged in activities related to the downtown and/or economic development. The Village created a Downtown Commission with the purpose “to establish, develop, and implement sound activities, programs, and projects for the Village, consisting of, among other things, downtown economic development, festivals and special events, and the overall preservation of downtown heritage” (Lemont Municipal Code Chapter 2.61). The organizational concept was to have several committees under the umbrella of the Downtown Commission. The exact purpose and scope of the committees was not well defined, however. The committees and their purposes, as detailed in the Municipal Code or observed in current practice, are listed in the table below.

<b>Current Downtown Commission Structure</b>			
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Downtown Commission	Five members: a Chairperson, a secretary, and the chairpersons of the economic development, festivals and heritage committees.	To serve as a liaison between the subordinate committees and the Village government.	Inactive.
Heritage Committee	Seven members.	To preserve the historical integrity of the I&M Canal and adjacent towpath.	Active.
Festivals & Special Events Committee	Seven members.	To organize, publicize, and execute special events in the downtown.	Active.
Economic Dev. Committee	Seven members.	Economic Development activities for downtown (undefined by ordinance).	Inactive.

The overall umbrella organization—the Downtown Commission—has been inactive for some time. The Economic Development Committee has also been inactive. The Heritage Committee and the Festivals and Special Events Committee have operated independently of their umbrella organization, the Downtown Commission.

I believe the elimination of these two bodies is in order. There is no need for a Downtown commission to serve as liaison between the other (sub)committees and Village government—that's what our trustee liaisons and staff are for. A proposed alignment of committees and their scopes and activities is listed on the following page.

## SUGGESTED COMMITTEES, SCOPES, AND PURPOSES

Commission/Committee	Scope	Purpose/Goal	Economic Development Activities (example)
Heritage Committee	I&M Canal and towpath area	To preserve the historical integrity of the I&M Canal and adjacent towpath area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canal clean up/maintenance.</li> <li>• Design review of capital improvements along the canal.</li> </ul>
Historic Preservation Commission	Historic District (including downtown)	To help preserve Lemont's historic architectural and cultural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review applications for façade improvement grants.</li> <li>• Create heritage tourism content/activities and promote such to the citizens of Lemont.</li> <li>• Review of private development within downtown.</li> <li>• Design review of capital improvements within the downtown, not along the I&amp;M Canal.</li> </ul>
Festivals Committee	Village-wide	Primary goal is to conduct festivals that 1) are accessible and appealing to a broad range of residents, 2) build a sense of community and 3) are provided free or at low cost. Secondary goal is to provide exposure for downtown businesses by directing residents into downtown for festivals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan, organize and implement festivals.</li> <li>• Fundraise to defray festival costs.</li> <li>• Organize volunteers to support festivals.</li> <li>• Promote festivals to Lemont residents.</li> <li>• Support downtown "brand" by its use in festival promotional materials.</li> <li>• Coordinate with other entities on any business promotions that may occur concurrently with a festival.</li> </ul>
Breakfast Club	Downtown	A forum for open communication between downtown stakeholders, the Village, the Chamber of Commerce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly meetings with presentations from various sources to share information among downtown stakeholders.</li> <li>• Collection by Village of information on preferences of stakeholders related to econ development</li> <li>• Facilitate networking and solidarity among downtown business owners.</li> </ul>

**I believe the above alignment adequate to cover most economic development activities that are most appropriately handled by committee.**

There are other economic development activities that the Village could be involved in, e.g. branding, marketing, business recruitment and retention efforts, tourism development. Two other possible committees and their functions are offered below:

<b>Potential Future Committees—Not Recommended by Staff but Offered for Discussion</b>			
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Purpose/Goal</b>	<b>Economic Development Activities (example)</b>
Marketing & Promotions Committee	Downtown	To increase revenue for downtown businesses through general marketing efforts and specific promotional activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing and implementing business promotional events (i.e. events intended to bring people downtown to shop or utilize service businesses).</li> <li>• Advertising promotional events.</li> <li>• Fundraising to offset costs of promotional efforts.</li> <li>• Creating a “brand” for the downtown; supplying “brand” imagery to downtown business owners for their use; reinforcing “brand” through its use in all advertising/marketing materials produced by the committee.</li> <li>• Market the downtown to Village residents (general, not related to a specific promotional event).</li> <li>• Market the downtown to the region (general, not related to a specific promotional event).</li> <li>• Market heritage tourism/eco tourism opportunities in the downtown to the region.</li> </ul>
Business Development Committee	Village-wide	To create a business-friendly environment that supports existing businesses and encourages the establishment of new businesses in the Village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct market research to identify opportunities for new business/industry in Lemont.</li> <li>• Identify targeted businesses/industries based on research.</li> <li>• Create and implement business recruitment strategies for targeted businesses/industries.</li> <li>• Create and implement business retention strategies.</li> <li>• Provide training/assistance to businesses to help them be successful.</li> <li>• Collect and disseminate relevant information for people looking to start or expand a business.</li> <li>• Develop promotional literature for Lemont, targeted to business owners and entrepreneurs.</li> <li>• Develop recommendations for incentive policies to stimulate business growth.</li> </ul>

I would like to note that the Community Development Department has already taken the lead or been involved in many of these efforts, and I expect us to continue to work with the Chamber and I&M Canal Corridor Association on economic development activities.

Moreover, we also already have two forums that offer business owners a voice in economic development: the Lemont Area Chamber of Commerce and the Breakfast



Club. The Community Development Department has become much more involved with the Chamber over the last year, and the Department assumed leadership of the Breakfast Club upon the departure of the Institute for Community from Lemont last December. Although I embrace citizen involvement, I am against the creation of these committees. I strongly believe that these functions can be handled by the Community Development Department and other staff, the trustee liaisons, the Lemont Area Chamber of Commerce, ad hoc groups, or consultants hired for specific studies and efforts.

I recommend the Village Board take the following steps:

- Eliminate the Downtown Commission.
- Elevate the Heritage Committee to a commission, and expand its scope to include not only the I&M Canal, but review and comment on all non-architectural urban design elements in the downtown (e.g. landscaping, paving), and review and comment on all activities that promote heritage tourism.
- Elevate the Festivals Committee to a commission, and define its scope to include the planning, marketing, and operation of festivals for economic development purposes.
- Per resolution, acknowledge the Breakfast Club, under leadership of the Downtown Liaison and Community Development Department, and encourage participation of downtown stakeholders in the Breakfast Club.