

Village of Justice
Zoning & Planning Commission
Minutes of Monthly Meeting
Date: June 18, 2012

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Chairman John Bruce.

ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken. Present at meeting were: Henry Oszakiewski, Charlene Carter, James Brock, Chairman John Bruce, Secretary: Shirley Shilka, & No Attorney.

Bogdan Ogorek arrived 7:06.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman John Bruce entertains a MOTION to approve the Minutes from the May 28, 2012 meeting.

MOTION: To accept Minutes from May 28, 2012 meeting.

James Brock: SO MOVED

SECOND: Charlene Carter

VOTE: All Ayes.

Henry Oszakiewski: In regards to 2012-01, where does this stand?

John Bruce: To Trustee Rusch has there been an ordinance or resolution to this Petition for the Kamp property on 86th Avenue or is it still pending?

Trustee Rusch: Still pending I believe.

John Bruce: There was a problem with the plats, John has the corrected plats now, will get them signed off and to the county clerk's office to verify the documentation.

All in favor on the minutes

All Ayes

Unanimous

John Bruce: We have the findings and recommendations from the petition 2012-01

Chair entertains motion to accept FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS on Petition 2012-01 as submitted.

Henry Oszakiewski: SO MOVED

SECOND: James Brock

Roll Call: Henry Oszakiewski, Charlene Carter, Bogdan Ogorek, James Brock, John Bruce.

John Bruce: We have nothing on procedures; last change on the Comprehensive Plan was the South Side of town 2007-2008. Modified for the square footage and green space, we created three sections, North Side, South Side and Roberts Park, and then we proceeded to act on Phase 1, 2 and 3.

Henry Oszakiewski: Presentation: Passed out documentation. Brian Bernadoni,

Ed Shilka, Jim Lurquin and I went to presentation at Moraine Valley College on April 21, 2012, regarding Planning & Economic Development. All notes are in the documentation that has been passed out.

As our next step, we need to take a look at documentation and should then have a dialogue within our group about the comments and then possibly present this to the Village Trustee's along with the Lakota Group.

Some items can be done quickly; one is to create a mission statement, which would get everyone on the same page.

Next we need to work more with our business community. We could possibly celebrate the successes of the business community and work more with The Chamber of Commerce. We could have someone meet with the chamber at their regular meetings and discuss some quick hits that we can do.

We need to really start moving forward on this.

Henry Oszakiewski then introduced Brian Bernadoni.

Brian Bernadoni: Presentation of Economic Development.

Village is taking a great step by sending Henry Oszakiewski, Ed Shilka, Jim Lurquin and I to this presentation to see what is going on.

We are not all experts but I have done this for a living. I have dealt with and worked in several areas. The questions you should have is who is going to guide the charge to move this forwards?

The Mayor is the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and most mayors are. What the Mayor decides in the coming months and years ahead is to take the leadership that is going to be critical to determine if we are a growing community or not.

Reference Bridgeview, which has turned into a negative for us, we need to rethink those boarders and start taking what is ours and take collaborative efforts with Moraine Valley College and Lakota Group.

We have a lot of work ahead, but it is not impossible. It will take a different style of leadership, which will have to start taking the form of where can we find new opportunities of land, and what kind of conversations can we expand upon. Whether it is the archdiocese, to look at land that they are clearly not going to use any time soon, and how do we reposition the village, what do we do about the 294 extension.

What can we do to beautify the community in the mean time to make it more attractive?

With the tax base we have and the assessments going down the tax rates have not other choice but to go up. This is not a good situation, not only for us but also for the taxing bodies, whether it be the park district, sanitary district, or school district all of which are going to be negatively impacted.

The key thing that this community can look at is actually the regulations that are imposed on new business's coming into town. There are certain things you can do to make it easier and less restrictive and open up the town for business.

The challenge for this committee is where the leadership is going to come from and when are they going to start putting it in action.

Working with the Chamber is a key thing we have to acknowledge the people that have decided to stay here. County and State will not be there to help us.

John Bruce: Where are we tax wise/percentage wise as compared to the other communities? What does it cost to do business in Justice?

Brian Bernadoni: I think the biggest thing that screws up a business coming in to town is the element of time; they need to know they can fast track a permit and if they know the building inspectors will be consistent. You can model the thing and say it is going

to take" X" amount of days to get into the property, that the zoning process is reliable, no transfer stamps and it is transparent. If I am coming into a community I can do that because I have modeled into my business plan.

What I don't model into a business plan is delays, unreasonable building codes, new laws put into effect, those kinds of barriers.

Taxes? We are in Cook County

John Bruce: Have you looked at our municipal tax as compared to our share of the pie compared to what it costs to go to Hickory Hills or Bridgeview?

Brian Bernadoni: I haven't looked at that, I think we have charts from Lakota.

Henry Oszakiewski: What's your point on that?

John Bruce: I am just curious where we are tax wise from a business point of view because obviously what is it going to cost them to come into town.

Brian Bernadoni: I think it is worth while for you as chairman or the Mayor to change this group to look at the comparative tax burden and then report back to you what that actually looks like that could be changed for building permit fees, inspections, zoning changes, things along that line.

If we were looking at this from the outside I would put us up against Worth and other areas with large cemeteries in the middle of the town, to take a look at how they structure vs. how we structure.

John Bruce: Mistakes were made in the past and now we have to do the best we can.

The best and biggest parts of land that we have frankly are where the Archdiocese is, that is our opportunity. What is Senator Landek want out of that area before we have that opportunity?

Henry Oszakiewski: Think about destination, you go for groceries on a weekly basis, do you go to Justice? What is the destination for people from the outlying areas to the Village of Justice, the cemeteries?

Brian Bernadoni: Jim Lurquin said something right. You can model your code to the future rather than the existence you have today.

If you have a code that doesn't allow you to build and grow, you're never going to get past the front door of recruiting someone. Clearly there are certain areas that we don't

want high rises, high rise offices, but Jim Lurquin stated we ought to start looking at where we can add height. WE it doesn't negatively impact us.

John Bruce: You are aware of why the height limitation is in affect? Fire protection.

Brian Bernadoni: Fire Sprinklers can change that.

Ed Shilka: Not necessarily fire sprinklers. We do not have the fire equipment around here, including Bedford Park,

Henry Oszakiewski: So for example let's talk about a Hotel, say a Hyatt would come into Justice and ask, what is your zoning code, what is your code for the Village or height for a hotel or motel?

We would say "Oh, sorry we can't do that here because of our code.

All things equal they will go to Hickory Hills.

Brian Bernadoni: Even on fire protection issue, I question this point, if you took a look at the ROI on the property tax, that you would have generated from allowing height to go up, you could have paid for that fire truck.

These questions are not, yes or no, but how.

Fact of the matter is, the bedroom community that we have does not have the sustainability. The burden on the committee, the trustees, and the Mayor is pretty significant but this is a good start.

Henry Oszakiewski: We need a leader that a business, who is interested in coming into the village and what it can provide, can go to. Maybe it's the Mayor maybe it's Jim Lurquin or somebody in this group.

The Archdiocese of Chicago is a good idea, there is some land there that they are never going to use, but they are not in the business of taking that land and thinking about what to do with it.

John Bruce: They are very proprietary.

Henry Oszakiewski: If there was a leader who would say, let me talk to Roman and let's see what we could do and then put a plan together or a proposal

There is a lot here that we can do but we can't go about it the way we have in the past 100 years.

Ed Shilka: to Henry, you have pretty much covered everything. Two items we need to address are 1.) Proposal to put up hotel/motels. 2.) Signs out of the parkways so it doesn't hinder driving

John Bruce: Are those modifications going to Trustee Rusch or Trustee Symonds, are those modifications or recommendations coming to us now. In the past it has been the Village Board who is very proprietary about ordinance changes.

Ed Shilka: If I have an opportunity tomorrow I will present it to the board

Henry Oszakiewski: These are examples of let's make this a business friendly community, have some rules for signs, and also make this a people friendly community. Keep signs low, so businesses would be attracted here.

We the zoning board need to take ownership of the town. We need to divide into teams or groups of two and each take ownership of a part of town. We really need to know this town so if someone says "there is an issue at 88th and 83rd" we know those 4 corners of that part of town.

I recommend that we each take a section of town, and own it, we would drive around that part of town and look at things and make notes on what could be on that section of town.

Ed Shilka. That is a good idea Henry but we have to follow thru with what Brian is saying. First of all we have to come up with someone or more than one person to lead.

Henry Oszakiewski: I am saying that the zoning board needs to have ownership in parts of the town. Then we bring those ideas to the plan commission, such as what would we envision to be on this property if it came up for sale. So that when that property came up for sale it is already written in our plan as to what we would like to see.

Ed Shilka: We have to move quickly because there are some people coming to this town with some ideas for a hotel and so forth.

Henry Oszakiewski: Such as the triangle TIF-3, what we would like to see is two people on this group who are homeowners would get together and say these are some ideas we would like to put on this triangle. They would bring this to the group and we would talk about it, people would be almost charged to convince us that, that is what is good for the Village. We would then present it to the Trustee's and the Lakota Group.

Ed Shilka: All the Lakota Group does is spend money that we did not have to begin with.

We need to turn around and terminate that contract.

Brian Bernadoni: There is an opportunity that, that commercial real estate developer would say, they only want a certain type of business coming in. Unfortunately the reputation of the town is that a lot of real estate individuals don't want to do business with the town because of the structure we have.

Lakota is to define out property and give us street scape and give us some organization to division. That is what Lakota is supposed to do, it is supposed to bring people together, there is a chair person of this committee that is supposed to hold meetings and do those things that hasn't been able to work into his schedule. That is not the problem in the Lakota respect, that's the problem that the committee is not functioning under a chairman right now. I would say that Hand has taken the leadership in absentia of the chairperson that was supposed to be leading it thru.

Lakota is there for a reason, Lakota has given us a new base document. That process has never gotten the right start, mainly because the planning process has been criticized. Add that to a chairman with other responsibilities, you cannot function and move things forward. Then you end of having meetings like this where a couple good ideas have been raised about signs and other thins to get the ball rolling. You can't do it because you don't have the leadership and direction to do it.

What I would like to see is some leadership come from someone who would say they will hold regular meetings. (I am glad to be saying that on the record) I would like to see those meetings taking place again.

I think the committee needs to be restructured; I thought that since the beginning, we need to have a few more residents on that committee.

John Bruce: You're talking about the Economic Development Committee?

Brian Bernadoni: Yes, I think we need to open up that committee a little more. How can we have committee where we don't have some of the major land owners on that committee?

For those who say the Archdiocese is impossible to deal with on land matter, Reverend Michael Pollard understands a 99 year land base.

Open the door to have regular rank and file community members actually have their say and put it out there, have meetings in rooms for people where they have literally crayons and have maps to say what you would like to see here and here, if at all possible.

Those things can happen if you allow them to happen, I think that was the essential vision of what happened until it got tossed around that we can do it better or we have a different vendor or we don't want outsiders in our town.

John Bruce: Did you give this presentation the Village Board?

Brian Bernadoni: Yes I did

John Bruce: Keep in mind the limitation that that has been with Zoning and Planning, we can only do what we are directed to do, or review what we directed to review. That's always been the process in the past.

Trustee Symonds: I am relatively new to this, your talking building codes and sign and codes for hotels, that I think as a group we would certainly take suggestions. I wouldn't look for codes on hotels, I wouldn't know where to start, but if the zoning and planning commission team came and said, we need to address this, here is our suggestion, you can explain it to us, and I would certainly accept that.

John Bruce: The board is now going to be more open.

Trustee Symonds: I am only 1/6th.

John Bruce: We have two of six in audience actually.

Trustee Symonds you have been around here long enough to know how long it took to get a comprehensive plan for the town and we did the entire town totally in less than a year in three sections. Then we made some modifications to it.

Henry Oszakiewski: Let's talk about here and now. We can do that we can do here and we have been given the opportunity to have regular meetings to put together and to talk to leaders from a zoning perspective. If each of us takes a look at our part of the comprehensive plan and we start putting together our ideas and share them with the economic development group we are going to start moving this forward.

Such as Czarnik Memorials, if that monument place comes up for sale do we want another monument place or do we want something different?

Ed Shilka: It is up for sale; we have a couple of people interested.

Henry Oszakiewski: We would want revisions for this piece of property.,

Ed Shilka: Talking about the monument company they had a manufacturing plant on there, the soil is contaminated; with that in mind, there is no restaurant in the world that would entertain the thought of putting a restaurant on the property.

Henry Oszakiewski: Unless they had it cleaned up.

Ed Shilka: That's correct, now you're looking into what you want to put on that property.

Same situation is at the vacant gas station.

Henry Oszakiewski: So how many years have we not been getting tax dollars on that property?

Ed Shilka: We get tax dollars from the foreclosed bank. We are not getting any sales tax.

Henry Oszakiewski: The point is, that we have a plan and we work with businesses or potential business, and potential owners of businesses. This is what we would want on this piece of property, let's work with you. That has to do with the chairman as Brian was saying.

John Bruce: Is the old gas station on 88th Avenue structurally sound?

Ed Shilka: Not any more, it needs a lot of work. The biggest problem over there is the contaminated soil, and everyone knows about it, including Com-Ed and the gas company.

The contaminated soil needs to be removed and cleaned up.

John Bruce: That's the issue right now, does the village code allow for condemnation and demolition of a building.

Ed Shilka: Sure, if you have the money. If you legally condemn it you have to tear it down and turn it into vacant property

Someone bought the old car wash on Roberts Road because it was in foreclosure; he knocked it down and wanted to put up a day car/pre school. The biggest problem was in order to make money to pay the bills, he had to build a two story building, but he didn't want to put in an elevator. You can't bend that law; the law says if you have a two story building you have to put in an elevator for handicap accessibility.

John Bruce: Is there a state law as far as hotels are concerned and ADA. What level do they have to have elevators, three floors or more?

Ed Shilka: The first floor has to be handicap accessible but you cannot tell them they cannot put on a 2nd or 3rd floor, but they must provide some type of a lift.

If you want to know anything about any type of hotel, you can talk to someone from Bedford Park, they have 7.

John Bruce: What happened to the proposed project, 79th and Roberts Road, on the Northwest corner, the cemetery corner, did that fall thru?

Ed Shilka: That was something that was being worked on by Mel; unfortunately, Senator Landek had a different set of ideas, because they wanted to run 71st St. thru that area.

John Bruce: I was talking more about the corner on 79th Street.

Ed Shilka: There was also a deal for that corner but that is also off the books. You would probably have to talk to Randy.

Henry Oszakiewski: So what about dividing us up into groups and then take a look at parts of the village and bring a proposal back. Maybe within three months, or two months, know we are not all here.

John Bruce: Trustee Symonds have you heard anything on filling Ed Figura's seat?

Trustee Symonds: The Mayor has asked for recommendations. Don't know if he has received any.

John Bruce: I have given him one.

Henry Oszakiewski: There are still six of us here, the new person can float in and can be part of one group.

Then the goal would be to look at the comprehensive plan and two of us would look at that part of the plan and see if it needs to be updated, if it needs any changes, what opportunities are available for that piece of property. Then we could bring that to the other groups like Brian was saying. That is where we as the zoning board can make recommendations. We are a recommending body, that's all. Then we present it to the Economic Development Committee.

John Bruce: Who has the where-with-all as to know who is looking for property?

Ed Shilka: Southland Development, they have a book they put out which says, such as, Justice has how many people and how much square footage.

Brian Bernadoni: Also South Suburban Council of Mayors.

John Bruce: How would we know a business is looking to come here?

Brian Bernadoni: We need someone like Southland Group or different vendors to see how to come up with what they are looking for. We need an economic developer to come up with demographics that must match up with building codes and zoning codes or they will look elsewhere.

We need to think about the future, along with signs and facades; we need money in pocket, such as grants. We also need to find someone who can do this. We need to reform the Economic Development Committee.

Ray Hodson: Talk to Marcus & Melchap, to look at the truck stop area. I think a truck stop would be an eyesore, the property is an eyesore. Contact Marcus & Melchap and let them make a suggestion on their dime.

John Bruce: Why aren't you on the Economic Development Committee?

Henry Oszakiewski: I am asking that each person on zoning committee look at a section of town, at the next meeting let us know what part of town you would like to own and we can present to Economic Development Committee.

We will need a copy of the comprehensive plan and each pair up and look at plan.

John Bruce: I will e-mail to Henry a digital Village Zoning Map.

Henry Oszakiewski: We will need consistent leadership on Economic Development Committee.

Ed Shilka: A non-employee should run the leadership of Economic Development Committee.

Brian Bernadoni: We will need to talk to the Mayor.

John Bruce: Ask Jim Lurquin if he is tired of wearing the hat for Economic Development.

John Bruce: Next meeting will be 3rd Monday of next month, July 16, 2012, 7:00pm

Henry Oszakiewski: By then everyone decide what section of town they would like, this will be a working meeting.

To Brian: Great Job.

John Bruce: Asked if any other questions for the audience or Building Department.

No questions were asked.

John Bruce: Thank you Mr. Bernardino and Henry Oszakiewski.

Chair entertains motion to ADJOURN: 8:35PM

Henry Oszakiewski: SO MOVED

SECOND: Charlene Carter

VOTE: All ayes

Respectfully submitted

SHIRLEY SHILKA, SECRETARY

John W. Bruce

John W. Bruce, Chairman