

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF NEW LENOX PLAN COMMISSION

Held in the New Lenox Village Hall, 1 Veterans Parkway

Tuesday, July 19, 2011 7:00 p.m.

#11-07-B

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Village of New Lenox Plan Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, with a quorum present.

Chairman Mark Muehlnickel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following were present: Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, Commissioners Rob Moss, John Kuchler, Gary Berner, Annette Boyd, and Tony Orsini.

The following were absent: None.

Also present were: Senior Planner Jeff Smith and Secretary Lorrie Sowko.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 21, 2011

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2011, Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Kuchler made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Boyd. Voice vote was taken. Commissioner Byerley abstained. Motion carried.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – RANDALL LOWMAN

Economic Development Director Randall Lowman was present to give a report pertaining to the economic status of the Village of New Lenox.

Randall Lowman referred to documents he had distributed to each commissioner.

The Annual Mayor's Report is published in the Business Facilities Magazine, which is a national magazine that is published monthly and sometimes sent to development prospects. This report contains current and future developments and also lists events in the New Lenox community.

The other brochure is used for the annual ICSC show in Las Vegas. Trustee Butterfield attended this show with Randall Lowman and adhered to the fact that there is ample interest in the community for retail, commercial, and industrial development. Residential development has decreased, due to the economy. To date, there are 27 new single family home permits that have been issued, which exceeds the amount of permits issued in 2010.

Next week, there will be a ground-breaking ceremony for the Provena Medical Arts Pavilion located on Route 30, across from Walmart (McVickers development). Provena will be constructing a 2-story, 40,000 square-foot medical arts pavilion.

Silt fencing has been installed on the far west portion of the McVickers development to prepare for construction of an Aldi grocery store. This store plans to open by Thanksgiving of 2011.

Discount Tire started construction of their facility on the far eastern outlot of the McVickers development, adjacent to Auto Zone.

The Building Department informed Randall Lowman that Chase Bank will start construction of their facility on the northeast corner of William Street and Route 30.

Goodwill has submitted for final plan review and will begin construction in approximately 30 days.

The Planning Staff noted that McVickers Development has discussed new retail plazas on two of the remaining outlots in front of the Walmart.

While attending the ICSC meeting, Trustee Butterfield and Randall Lowman met with Carolyn Castellni from Insight Development and discussed the 10-acre parcel on Route 30 (formerly known as Flowers by Dan), located across the street from Chili's Restaurant. There are plans for an 85,000 square-foot retail center with one or two junior anchors, some inline retail, and one or two outlots. If the tenant interest at the ICSC meeting remains, they would like to coincide the opening of the first portion of the development at the end of 2012 when the Route 30 construction is scheduled for completion. There was prior interest in developing this property when the Target/Lowe's site was being developed, but there were issues with access. With the improvements to Route 30, access could be achieved just north of Route 30 at Vancina Lane.

Trustee Butterfield and Mr. Lowman also met with Gary Howe of The Zaremba Group regarding the Cedar Crossings project. One lot has been submitted for a medical office building (MOB). The Zaremba Group has met with several big box retailers in Las Vegas such as Sam's Club. There is also continued interest from the grocery industry. Kohl's and Meijer's have retracted their interest, but once Zaremba constructs the access roads south of Route 6 into the project, additional interest will generate.

The parcel north of the Zaremba (formerly the Doede Nursery) has had interest from Brandt Developers to construct an MOB and possibly a proposal for a gas station. There has been ample interest from other medical office tenants in that area. The approved 5-story MOB has 80% occupancy.

Mr. Lowman spoke with Jeff Middlebrook of Center Creek Development, who is the primary contact for the outlet mall project. The development agreement and incentive agreement are being worked on diligently and some of the comments are being addressed from the June 6, 2011, special Village Board meeting. The estimated start for construction on this project will be in the spring of 2012. A certain percentage of tenant commitment is required before construction begins.

There is interest from Navistar and some of their key suppliers in the 10-acre parcel formerly known as the Homeland Security project site, near the Cherry Hill Business Park. There will hopefully be initiation of a project at that site within the next 12 months.

Contrary to the downturn of the economy, there are only a small percentage of retail commercial vacancies in the community. There is only approximately a 2% vacancy for retail commercial that exist in New Lenox.

In the upcoming weeks and months there will be impact throughout the communities, particularly to the retailers and commercial interest along Route 30. Temporary traffic signals were located at Route 30 and Marley Road, Route 30 and Schoolhouse Road, and Route 30 and Retail Road (in front of Target). Most of the underground utility work and relocation has been completed. There are still some ComEd power poles that need to be relocated and/or replaced. An ample amount of storm sewer pipe has been unloaded. IDOT and V-3 Engineering noted that the Route 30 construction that began at the east end will be quickly moving into the New Lenox area within the next month.

Annually, the Village obtains specific demographic information that is sent out to retailers and developers that have interest in locating to the Village, and also to generate interest.

New Lenox Channel 6 and the Economic Development Department began a show called "The Business Spotlight." Monthly, approximately five to eight local businesses are interviewed by the mayor and taped and eventually aired on cable network Channel 6.

Mr. Lowman added as a final note, that there are 48 restaurants in the community.

Commissioner Boyd questioned the commercial vacancy figures for the surrounding communities.

Randall Lowman responded that the surrounding communities have a commercial vacancy rate of approximately 6% to 10%. The Chicagoland area average vacancy rate is approximately 8%.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked if retailers at the ICSC show had interest in New Lenox, as opposed to surrounding communities, or is there an issue with obtaining funding for projects.

Randall Lowman commented that the ability to obtain financing is a critical issue for retailers.

There are retailers that have interest in the Route 30 Corridor, versus locating to the north. Although, there are retailers that have letters of intent or have signed leases for the future outlet mall project.

Some retailers are considering smaller footprints for their facilities and will not have large merchandise items such as appliances and electronics, in-store. These items may be viewed on a website and then ordered, rather than having to stock large items inside a retail store.

Chairman Muehlnickel questioned the idea that new commercial development follows increased new residential development, but the hospital will produce an amount of day people that will trigger the need for commercial development.

Randall Lowman explained that upon the opening of the hospital, it will increase the population by approximately 3,000 people.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked about future development along Laraway Road.

Randall Lowman responded that currently, he seldom receives inquiries for development along Laraway Road.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked if there is interest from other restaurants that want to locate to the Village.

Randall Lowman stated that he was informed that loans for restaurants are the most difficult to obtain. The success rate for a new restaurant is approximately 10%.

Outlet mall stores generate approximately 25% of retail sales.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked if stores such as Marshall's or TJ Maxx have had interest in locating to the Village.

Randall Lowman commented that these types of stores were originally destined for the Zaremba project, which was a much larger project.

The footprint for the outlet development will be almost the same as the outlet mall in Aurora that has 160 retailers, but the outlet mall to be located in the Village will have additional parking and some different outlet users.

Commissioner Moss asked if the owner of Culver's was satisfied.

Randall Lowman assured that the owner of Culver's was satisfied with the restaurant's progress.

Commissioner Berner asked why signs along I-355 do not depict New Lenox.

Randall Lowman agreed to discuss that issue with the Mayor.

Commissioner Berner asked why in some instances will businesses decide to locate to Joliet, versus New Lenox.

Randall Lowman replied that typically population will be a deciding factor for location of some businesses.

There has been some discussion regarding the development of an industrial site near the I-355 Corridor.

Chairman Muehlnickel questioned the interest of lodging establishments.

Randall Lowman stated that there is interest from two full-service hotels to be located near the outlet mall.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Jeff Smith informed that the next regular scheduled Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2011, but there are no items scheduled yet for this agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Berner. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Lorrie M. Sowko - Secretary

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF NEW LENOX ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Held in the New Lenox Village Hall, 1 Veterans Parkway

Tuesday, July 19, 2011 7:00 p.m.

#11-07-B ZBA

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Village of New Lenox Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:46 p.m., by Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, with a quorum present.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following were present: Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, Commissioners Rob Moss, John Kuchler, Gary Berner, Annette Boyd, and Tony Orsini.

The following were absent: None.

Also present were: Senior Planner Jeff Smith and Secretary Lorrie Sowko.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING OF JUNE 21, 2011

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2011, Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Commissioner Boyd made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Berner. Voice vote was taken. Commissioner Byerley abstained. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Orsini, seconded by Commissioner Kuchler. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

Mr. Nash continued by stating that an ordinance from 2004 allows for wells to be drilled in order to replenish ponds that are being used for irrigation in times of drought; it also allows for wells to be drilled in order to water quasi-public athletic fields that are at least 3 acres in size. He referred to a 1971 ordinance that states that a resident with an existing well is allowed to keep the well, unless a new well is needed and municipal water is within 300 feet. Facilities Manager Ron Sly said it's his recollection that the Village did away with this ordinance when Lake Michigan water came to New Lenox. Mr. Nash said he's not sure it states anywhere that a Village resident may not use his well. He said he's also not sure if there is anything in the Village's Ordinance that states that once a resident taps on to Municipal water, he can no longer use his well. Mrs. Dye asked if wells can be a way of conserving Lake Michigan water. Mr. Smith answered that water comes from the same source and noted that water is a commodity and the Village of New Lenox is in the business of selling water. Mrs. Dye said it's her understanding that two water sources should not be blended. Mr. Smith stated that contamination can be a risk when both water sources are available to a resident. Mr. Smith continued by stating he doesn't have strong feelings about the drilling of wells, but from a business standpoint, he thinks they are a poor idea within the Village. Mr. Nash said he would like to confer with the attorneys about the use of existing wells in the Village. He said he will also talk with Wayne Rassman about how many homes on Village water also have working wells. He said he will work on whether or not something needs to be added to the ordinance.

Mrs. Dye reported that she will be out of town on business on February 13th. She suggested that the February meeting date be rescheduled or the meeting cancelled. Mr. Nash said he would let everyone know closer to the meeting date.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

6:59 p.m.