



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MAYOR

Andrew Przybylo

ACTING VILLAGE MANAGER

Hadley Skeffington-Vos

VILLAGE CLERK

Marlene J. Victorine

TRUSTEES

George D. Alpogianis

John C. Jekot

Danette O'Donovan Matyas

Denise M. McCreery

Craig Niedermaier

Dean Strzelecki

Niles 2040 Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

7:00 PM

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Project Steering Committee: Colin Baker, Michael DeSantiago, Tom Kanelos, Janet Lee, Joe Maccione, Denise McCreery, Dennis McEnerney, John Murphy, Craig Niedermaier, Scott O'Brien

Village Staff: Kate Lockerby, Staff Liaison/Recording Secretary, Charles Ostman, Nathan Bruemmer, Rich Wlodarski, Fred Braun, Tom Powers

Consultants: N/A

Other Attendees: N/A

Absent: Steering Committee Members: Adam Konopka, Mike Shields

Trustee McCreery called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

A roll call was taken.

Trustee McCreery asked for a motion to approve the March 24, 2021 meeting minutes. Trustee Niedermaier made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. DeSantiago seconded. All were in favor. The March 24, 2021 Minutes were approved.

Trustee McCreery discussed the "Old Business" section on the agenda. She noted that she was not at the meeting but watched it and thanked the Committee for the discussion. She explained that for the "Old Business" section of the meeting, it would be a recap of the discussion from the previous meeting.

Trustee McCreery talked about her vision for Niles. She said she will continue to rely heavily on plans that have already been created. She would like to continue to create destination environments within the community. Working on the Milwaukee Avenue corridor would be beneficial. She talked about living in Grennan Heights area of Niles, which is a very walkable neighborhood. She would like all neighborhoods in Niles to experience what she has in Grennan Heights (regarding walkability).

Mr. McEnerney shared his vision about Niles. He is very concerned about flooding in neighborhoods in Niles and how that affects people's interest in moving to Niles. He is also concerned about facades on buildings, as there are older areas of town that can use a nice "face lift". He also talked about the walkability of his neighborhood (Oasis area) and how that is a positive for him. He concluded by stating the Golf Mill property could be redeveloped similarly to the Saw Mill Station development in Morton Grove.

Mr. Maccione thought a lot of good ideas were raised at the last meeting. He thinks the plan should focus on a few small but broad areas and serve as a guideline for redevelopment.

Mr. Murphy believes that climate change should be a fundamental issue with this plan (regarding flooding, etc.). He'd also start including the Asian community in everything in town, building on that strength.

Mr. DeSantiago talked about advantages that other communities don't have, such as Golf Mill – it is a huge opportunity. He talked about a performing arts center and believes it's located well to investigate having that type of use at Golf Mill. He also agrees with climate change. He believes Niles has "good bones". He also talked about the uniqueness of the Leaning Tower and Niles' adjacency to the North Branch of the Chicago River.

Trustee McCreery talked specifically about the new development in Morton Grove and that that particular property sat until the right development came along.

Mr. Kanelos reiterated that he believes the housing stock needs to be improved. Niles needs 2-3 unit multifamily buildings along major streets. He believes Niles needs to be flexible – there is not one right answer.

Mr. Baker agreed that the housing stock needs to stay current with the market. He also believes the flooding was a good point, too. He believes Niles should take chances and needs to keep up with the surrounding communities. Trustee McCreery asked where people his age go to for fun. He stated that he didn't think people come to Niles for fun – it's typically Chicago, maybe Park Ridge for a restaurant, Top Golf in Schaumburg, etc.

Trustee McCreery thanked Trustee Niedermaier for all of the work that he put into his presentation at the last meeting. She also asked that the Committee let Ms. Lockerby know if there was something included that they really agreed or disagreed with, so that could be passed onto the consultants.

Ms. Lee stated she refers to Niles as having "Everything you need, but nothing you want". She believes Niles needs more streetscaping/landscaping. She also believes that continuity amongst facades would be beneficial, as well as continuity with signage. She would also like somewhere younger people can go to spend money in town. She likes talking about the arts, but she cautioned making it Niles' identity because of Skokie and Evanston's strength in this area. She believes Niles could play off of sports, like what Trustee Niedermaier suggested (regarding being a sports-mecca for tournaments, etc.). Trustee McCreery talked

about landscaped medians in Skokie and how that transforms the look from a drivers-eye view. She mentioned that IDOT's control of Niles' roads has impacted the walkability, the pedestrian nature of the streets and landscaping abilities in Niles. She also pointed out the landscaped medians on Oakton Street in Skokie.

Trustee Niedermaier talked about the Village-owned buildings and how they are not designed similarly yet they were built around the same time. He talked about the human scale of the street lights along Howard St. has completely changed the feeling of the street. He also mentioned the concern about the bridges in town and how the design hasn't captured any architectural interest.

Mr. O'Brien talked about community involvement and that it is paramount to the plan's success. He would like to see some of the ideas suggested at the last meeting regarding community involvement come to fruition. He referenced a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. He also mentioned building facades and maintenance are important to review. He referenced that Trustee Niedermaier's presentation which outlined the necessity to think outside of the box. He also stressed the importance of bridging business and other taxing bodies to work together with the Village on events, etc. Lastly, Niles' community diversity must be embraced.

Trustee McCreery noted the duplication across taxing bodies could be minimized if the entities could work together more efficiently.

Trustee Niedermaier emphasized that the hardest thing in transitioning to something new is getting people to say "no". He also reiterated that the plan should establish guidelines. He also reiterated that we need to figure out "who we are and what we want to be when we grow up."

Identity was discussed. Trustee Niedermaier discussed establishing a collective mission and vision. He suggested town tenets: future forward, culturally adventurous, on the move, we are family, and diver-city and discussed each of the suggested tenets in detail. He also talked about perception verses reality exercise he had completed within the Bunker Hill neighborhood.

Trustee McCreery moved onto Economic Development and stressed how important it would be to rely on the prior plans that have been created, referring to the South Milwaukee Plan.

Ms. Lockerby outlined the one existing goal in the existing plan regarding Image and Identity and the fact that there are 22 objectives. Trustee McCreery assigned reviewing the goals/objectives as homework to see what is still pertinent. For instance, we need to keep things clear based on images from last time. She suggested including the five tenets that Trustee Niedermaier raised in the section on Identity. Ms. Lockerby stated that the bulk of the objectives can't be achieved/"checked-off" because they are items that are on-going. She also pointed out that there are a number of objectives regarding streetscaping, per Ms. Lee's comments. Trustee McCreery suggested that the Committee review the goals and objectives, circle what goals they believe to be still important/pertinent to this new plan and add any new goals that they think are important. This will provide a good foundation to work on. Ms. Lockerby reminded the Committee that the information that we discuss will be passed onto The Lakota Group who can use that as a foundation for when we enter into phase 2 and that one of the most important things that we get out of phase 2 is hearing from the public on topics such as this.

Ms. Lockerby stated the same homework should be completed for Economic Development and she went through the two goals within the current 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Trustee McCreery talked about Golf Mill and how there may be some pain allowing it to sit until the proper plan comes along. There was discussion about the controls the Village has on the redevelopment of Golf Mill.

There was discussion about the May 5 agenda. It was agreed that the focus of the next meeting would be on Image and Identity and Economic Development and the Committee would go through each item one by one. It was also agreed that the information regarding Residential, Commercial, and Industrial areas would be sent out as homework as well, but it would likely not be discussed at the May 5 meeting. Trustee Niedermaier asked that the committee provide feedback on his tenets that he suggested, using his ideas as a “jumping off point”.

Ms. Lockerby noted that the Lakota Group will start going through the data gathered through the online surveys and will try to have that to us for distribution at the May 5 meeting. This may help steer the conversation regarding the important tenets.

Ms. Lockerby noted that no public comments were received before or during the course of the meeting.

Trustee McCreery asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kanelos made a motion and Trustee Niedermaier seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.