



**VILLAGE OF PLAINFIELD
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
RECORD OF MINUTES**

DATE: JANUARY 6, 2009

LOCATION: Village Hall

Chairman Sobkoviak called the meeting of the Plan Commission to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Kachel, Renzi, O'Rourke, Bonuchi, Sanders, Peck; Chairman Sobkoviak; and ex officio Commissioner Fremarek

Absent: Plainfield Fire Protection District, Plainfield School District, Library District, Park District, and Plainfield Police Department

Also Present: Michael Garrigan – Village Planner Village of Plainfield, Sara Javoronok – Planner I Village of Plainfield, and Carol Millan – Secretary Village of Plainfield

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the December 16, 2008 meeting were accepted as presented.

DEVELOPMENT REPORT:

Village Planner Garrigan presented the Development Report. He summarized what had transpired at the last Village Board meeting on Monday, January 5, 2009.

Chairman Sobkoviak mentioned a memo in the Plan Commission Packet regarding the Aux Sable Creek Watershed Plan and notice of some public meetings. He asked that staff keep the Commission updated on the progress and specifics regarding the Watershed Plan. He felt the Plan Commission should, whenever possible, promote and endorse the recommendations from the group that is providing the Watershed Plan for the Aux Sable Creek. It is a good environmental endeavor.

Commissioner Sanders asked staff if there was a comparable organization for the watershed area for the DuPage River, Lily Cache Creek, and Mink Creek. Village Planner Garrigan stated the Conservation Foundation is also very active in the DuPage River Coalition. There has been a long term planning effort for the DuPage River. There is not only extensive trail system planning for the DuPage River, but there is also a watershed coalition of which the Village of Plainfield is a member along with the City of Joliet, Naperville, and a number of other DuPage communities. Commissioner Sanders asked if it would be appropriate at a future Commission meeting to have a report which would incorporate all of these as they relate to planning. Village Planner Garrigan stated staff would be more than happy to bring that as an agenda item to the Commission to highlight the plan with respect to the preservation of the watershed and also some of the recreational aspects, such as biking trails, pedestrian trails, and even equestrian trails. Village Planner Garrigan stated the Village has adopted the Countryside Plan, which incorporates the eastern perimeter of the Aux Sable tributary. This plan calls for 100' buffers and preservation of at least 50% of the open space in the Village's western perimeter. The Village has already made active planning efforts to try to be sensitive to the Aux Sable tributary.

Commissioner Sanders stated he has noticed on the northern end of both the DuPage River and Lily Cache Creek that a lot of the scrub trees are collapsing into the waterways. He was wondering if something was actively being done to look at that in conjunction with what is being looked at on the Aux Sable Watershed. He wanted to get this on the table for a topic for a future meeting. Village Planner Garrigan was not aware of any current plan for restoration along the DuPage River. The Forest Preserve, along with the Park District, is very active in its trail system along the DuPage River. He was not aware of any active, natural native restoration at this point.

Commissioner Kachel asked if there has been any talk about the gravel pits being used for compensatory water storage during flood conditions rather than just filling them in with garbage later on, or building a subdivision around it. Village Planner Garrigan was not aware of any talk of this nature. He further stated most of the active gravel pits are operational at this point. A discussion followed between some of the Commissioners and Village Planner Garrigan.

Commissioner Renzi felt it would be a good idea for the newer Commissioners to be presented with information regarding open spaces.

OLD BUSINESS:

CASE: 1437-112008.SU
Request: Special Use
Location: 12690 S. Rt. 59
NE Section of Wal Mart Lot
Applicant: Illinois Amvets Service Foundation
Len Baumgartner and Kathy Clair

IL AMVETS SERVICE FOUNDATION

TIME: 7:15 p.m.

Planner Javoronok summarized the staff report. She stated the petitioner is seeking approval to move the Amvets Collection center currently located in the southwestern portion of the WalMart parking lot to the northeastern area of the WalMart parking lot to increase the donations. She gave a history of the original approval of the collection center in 2005. She summarized the 2 findings of fact for the Special Use and the 7 additional findings of fact for the PD. She stated staff is proposing denial of the relocation request. Planner Javoronok concluded her staff report.

Chairman Sobkoviak called the petitioner to the podium. Kathleen Clair was sworn in and gave testimony. She stated the Plainfield location has the least amount of donations and believes this is a result of the location. The collection site cannot be easily seen from Rt. 59 or 127th Street. Chairman Sobkoviak asked the petitioner how moving the site to the northeast corner of the parking lot increases the visibility from 127th Street. Petitioner Clair stated it might not increase the visibility from 127th Street, but it would increase its visibility for all customers of the WalMart store and the surrounding stores. She stated right now the site is so far tucked away in the back that even customers of WalMart are unaware of its presence.

Commissioner Kachel asked if Amvets has come up with any better looking trailers or outside surroundings for the trailers. He felt with just a trailer sitting out in the parking lot it distracts from the appearance. He was curious what Amvets has done in other locations. Petitioner Clair stated they have tried to make some improvements for the Plainfield site, specifically buying planters, putting colored flowers in them to make the site a little more attractive. They have white trailers and they have trailers with the red and yellow logo on them. For 2009 they are coming up with a new concept for the trailers where they are going to invest in wraps that go around the trailer. She asked if that was something Plainfield would be interested in. Commissioner Kachel asked what kind of wrap is being talked about. Petitioner Clair stated it is like a shrink wrap. Commissioner Kachel asked if there was anything to cover the wheel area. Petitioner Clair stated in other areas they have tried putting skirts on the bottom to completely enclose and shield the wheels. She also stated they are the only charity that has attendant-manned collection centers. It is important for them to have the attendant on duty to ensure there is nothing left on the ground or around the site. Commissioner Kachel asked if the sites are usually at WalMarts or on major roadways where they are not necessarily in a shopping center. Petitioner Clair stated currently they are in parking lots. Presently, there is one in Wheeling that is not in a parking lot. It is not visible from any roadway and it is tucked way in the back. It has the lowest donation rates. Commissioner Kachel asked if Amvets has every thought of a site within the Industrial Zoning classification.

Commissioner Renzi believed one of the concerns initially was stuff being left outside of the donation boxes during peak times. Village Planner Garrigan stated staff had initially raised concerns about that. Commissioner Renzi's concern with moving the trailer to the northeast section of the parking lot is more an issue of containment. He stated when the site is put in that part of the parking lot there will be a general disregard for traffic lanes. He felt if there is not confinement and demarcation, congestion will be created. He was not in favor of moving the site. He was more inclined to allow some sort of refined signage, or placards that would go out during normally peak donation times. He felt signage and advertising would address the problem as much as moving the site.

Commissioner Fremarek asked the petitioner if there was any kind of data that supports the number of residential pickups in the area. He wondered if the data would really change whether the site remains in the southwest corner or whether it is moved to the northeast corner. Possibly there could be an increased number of residential pickups in this area. Petitioner Clair stated she did not have the numbers on that, but would be happy to get the information.

Commissioner Fremarek echoed Commissioner Renzi's comments and stated he would be more prone to looking at enhanced signage rather than supporting the relocation of the site. Commissioner Fremarek also mentioned that there is a large amount of semi trucks that find the area around the pickup location as a place to park overnight and on week ends. He noted that these were not semi trucks making deliveries to WalMart.

Chairman Sobkoviak asked if there was anyone in the audience that cared to ask a question or make a comment. There was no response.

Commissioner Peck wondered what compromises are available with staff regarding some sort of additional signage to help direct people to the present site. He also told the petitioner that he appreciated her offering to bring the extra shielding to make the trailer look a little better.

Commissioner Renzi highlighted findings that can be used as grounds for denying the petition. Chairman Sobkoviak stated the crux of Commissioner Renzi's argument would be containment and appearance. Commissioner Renzi also concurred with staff that this is not compatible with adjacent uses. Chairman Sobkoviak asked if the other Commissioners agreed with Commissioner Renzi.

Commissioner O'Rourke agreed with staff. Originally when the petitioner came in during 2005 not only the Plan Commission, but also the Village Board agreed with the recommendation that a better site was in the southwest quadrant. He stated there can be a number of reasons for the difference in performance; some might be other competitors picking up in the area, other people having drop boxes in the area etc. He thought possibly the petitioner could look at a second location.

Chairman Sobkoviak was in agreement with Commissioner Renzi's summary and thought the problems involved with people finding the present location can be best solved by additional signage within the parking lot. Perhaps the petitioner can work with staff to discover a way within the sign ordinance, and possibly even a variance within the sign ordinance, to find a way to direct potential donors to Amvet's present location.

Commissioner Kachel did not feel the present location was a bad location. He said it looks nice. He stated when you come in on Industrial Drive, maybe a small sign could be posted in the greenway area directing people to the present site. He further stated the new trailer look could be more of a draw. Chairman Sobkoviak stated possibly something could be worked out with more than one sign.

Commissioner Bonuchi stated this is not an impulse action. People who are going to donate have a plan. She felt the signage is a big thing, but also the notification that this facility exists and that it is manned is important. She would not go to one of those places where you just drop off a bunch of stuff.

Commissioner Renzi stated possibly sandwich boards could be placed in front of WalMart so that everybody who walks to WalMart would see the sign. It could be up for 20 days, or whatever the requirement is. Commissioner Kachel suggested possibly an occasional ad could be placed in the local paper to notify people of the location. He felt before the trailer is moved, it would be good to try a couple of other things first.

Commissioner Sanders suggested a type of directory to be placed on the Village website, water bill, Village Voice, etc. Village Planner Garrigan stated the list would need to contain all charitable organizations.

At 8:00 p.m. Commissioner Renzi made a motion that the Plan Commission recommend DENIAL of the requested amendment to the WalMart Planned Unit Development to permit an Amvets donation collection center in the northeast corner of the WalMart parking lot.

Commissioner Bonuchi seconded the motion.

Chairman Sobkoviak called for a vote by roll call.

Aye: Renzi, O'Rourke, Bonuchi, Sanders, Peck, Kachel, Chairman Sobkoviak
Nay: 0

The motion is carried 7:0

Commissioner Peck also encouraged the petitioner to check with the Township and see if they have a newsletter or anything else where they could possibly include an advertisement with directions to the Amvets site. Commissioner Sanders also added the petitioner should check with Wheatland Township, as well as Plainfield Township.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Kachel suggested the Plan Commission come up with a list of things they would like to see in Plainfield in 2009 to pass on to the Board. The other Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Sanders wants to see more joint meetings with the Board of Trustees. It was identified previously to have quarterly meetings. He thought an ongoing dialogue is essential to the health and growth of Plainfield. Village Planner Garrigan felt it would be appropriate to have a general discussion point, at least some type of format or some type of agenda with regards to topics of discussion. He felt to be a positive meeting there should be some general topics. Village Planner Garrigan stated staff is presenting a 2009 Work Plan to the Village Board at their next workshop meeting, which incorporates a number of really long-term projects. It may behoove both the Plan Commission and the Village Board to have at least some type of specific schedule for joint workshops based on some type of agenda.

Commissioner O'Rourke suggested setting a date and making it an agenda item so the Commission can work toward that date. Village Planner Garrigan asked if the Commission wanted a dedicated meeting for this. The Commissioners said it could just be a line item on the agenda. It was decided this could be included in the January 20th meeting. Village Planner Garrigan stated staff has identified a number of things. Commissioner Fremarek agreed and wanted to see what staff's work plan consists of. He felt some parameters should be wrapped around the discussion. He stated although the Commission may want certain types of businesses to be here, it is an economic reality that wishing and wanting those things is just not going to happen at the present time. A discussion followed among the Commissioners.

Village Planner Garrigan stated there is a certain amount of vision in the work plan. This is an opportunity for some long term planning. Staff has been so busy processing caseloads, being one of the fastest growing communities in the United States, it has not had the opportunity to do some long term planning. The slow down in the economy is a good opportunity for the Planning staff to do this long term planning for the Village's future.

Commissioner O'Rourke again brought up the public notice signs. He felt possibly the verbiage could be limited to the date, phone number, etc. with larger letters so people can read the signs. Village Planner Garrigan stated that can be looked at again, but in the past there has not been support from the Village Board.

Commissioner O'Rourke asked if the Village has a hazardous drop-off facility. Village Planner Garrigan stated not at this point. He believed there was an annual event. Commissioner O'Rourke felt this was a worthwhile thing for the Village of Plainfield. Commissioner Kachel agreed there should be something like this for the Village of Plainfield. Commissioner Peck stated Will County has something like this in the southern tip of Naperville. We could refer our residents to this site. A discussion followed among the Commissioners. Commissioner O'Rourke felt this was something that could be negotiated with Waste Management during the next contract negotiations.

Commissioner O'Rourke also stated sometimes utility companies can slow the process for new development. It could be reinforced with the utility companies that if they can work quicker with the developers to get things open sooner it would be beneficial for all concerned.

Since there was no further business before the Commission, Chairman Sobkoviak adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Carol Millan
Planning Secretary Village of Plainfield