

**VILLAGE OF ALGONQUIN  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes  
Algonquin Village Hall Board Room  
February 18, 2013**

**AGENDA ITEM 1:** Roll Call to Establish a Quorum

Present: Chairperson Patrician; Commissioners Hoferle, Neuhalfen, Sabatine, Sturznickel, and Szpekowski.

Absent: Commissioner Zaplatynsky.

Staff Members Present: Russ Farnum, Community Development Director and Ben Mason, Senior Planner.

**AGENDA ITEM 2:** Review and Consideration of Draft Downtown Algonquin Planning Study

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING AND ESTABLISH QUORUM**

Mr. Ben Mason, Senior Planner called roll to verify a quorum. Present: Chairperson Patrician; Commissioners Hoferle, Neuhalfen, Sabatine, Sturznickel, and Szpekowski. Absent: Commissioner Zaplatynsky.

**PRESENTATION BY LAND VISION, INC.**

Mr. Mason verified that proper notice of the meeting had been posted. Representing the Land Vision consultant team were: Ron Lanz, Land Vision; Bridget Lane, Business Districts, Inc.; and Stacey Meekins, Sam Schwartz Engineering.

Mr. Ron Lanz, Land Vision provided an overview of the planning process and draft recommendations of the downtown study. He noted the study included an analysis of existing conditions, consideration of public preferences for downtown improvements, and preparation of a comprehensive package of recommended enhancements. Mr. Lanz summarized various recommendations for each of four geographic sub-areas downtown, categorized by: land use; historic preservation; economic development, traffic, parking, signage; bicycling; and waterfront recreation. He explained that any redevelopment of property downtown would be privately-driven and require a willing property owner.

Ms. Bridget Lane, BDI mentioned that a market analysis done as part of the planning study revealed a need for an increase in residential and office uses in close proximity to downtown, in order to help support the economic viability of the core commercial district. She noted that a survey performed at the beginning of the planning process showed that a large percentage of the public associates downtown with traffic congestion, and that the new IL Route 31 Bypass should significantly alleviate that concern.

Ms. Stacey Meekins, Sam Schwartz Engineering stated that improved connectivity is one of the primary objectives of the transportation recommendations outlined in the planning study. She explained that there are opportunities to provide bike/pedestrian linkages from surrounding neighborhoods to downtown, as well as, create a bicycle-friendly environment downtown with bike lanes and amenities.

## **STAFF AND COMMISSION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Mr. Mason stated that the planning study includes recommendations at a minimum (Min) and maximum (Max) scale, to serve as guidelines for enhancements both short- and long-term. He emphasized that land use redevelopment in the future would be dependent on market conditions and a willing property owner. Mr. Mason also explained that the planning study strives to promote a balance between historic preservation and new development; in particular, he noted that redevelopment sites referenced in the study were strategically selected, and consist primarily of under-utilized properties or buildings that contribute in a limited way to the existing architectural fabric of downtown.

*Commissioner Hoferle* recommended that specific consideration be given to implementation of the planning study's recommendations. Mr. Lanz explained that the study includes improvements that the village could begin pursuing in the short-term, as well as, more long-term enhancements that can be implemented, for example, when Main Street is transferred to local jurisdiction and/or there is renewed private interest in redeveloping property downtown. Mr. Lanz underscored the fact that the village has prepared this new planning study and the importance of assembling a new Downtown Planning Task Force to promote the plan's vision to the development community and prospective commercial tenants. Mr. Mason also noted that the village has begun preliminary discussions at a Staff level, to start prioritizing improvements and identify potential funding sources.

*Commissioner Szpekowski* stated that she was pleased that on-street parking will continue to be available on Main Street. She also inquired about the plan's recommendations for gateway entrance signs in downtown, to which Mr. Lanz explained that the study identified some general locations for consideration, however further evaluation is needed with regard to design and suitable sites. She also asked about attracting new business tenants for downtown, to which Mr. Lanz noted the planning study includes a general marketing flyer that the village should use to promote downtown and Ms. Lane elaborated that the plan itself is a very important signal to the business and development community that Algonquin has a strong vision for downtown. Ms. Lane also suggested the village seek to publicize the plan and goals for downtown through the real estate trade press.

*Commissioner Neuhaufen* asked whether the vision of the downtown plan is compatible with historic preservation. Mr. Lanz stated that the recommended sites for redevelopment were carefully selected based on their current state and the potential for transforming those parcels into compatible development with the numerous historically-significant and contributing structures already existing downtown. *Commissioner Neuhaufen* also inquired about the

Min/Max recommendations and whether a property owner is required to conform to the specific improvements outlined in the planning study, to which Mr. Mason explained that improvements to property downtown will ultimately require consent and a willingness on the part of the property owner to initiate. Mr. Lanz further explained that one of the primary goals of the study is to provide property owners and developers with a general vision for how the village would like to see land use and economic development proceed downtown, to supply the development community with a reference point as they do their due diligence.

*Commissioner Sturznickel* asked about truck traffic on existing IL Route 31 and whether Main Street would dead-end at the north and south termini of the new Western Bypass Corridor. Village Staff stated that Main Street will indeed connect to the Rt. 31 Bypass at signalized intersections on both the north and south ends, and that regional truck traffic will be directed to use the new Rt. 31 Bypass either via weight restrictions or due to the design of the signalized intersections.

*Chairperson Patrician* asked if there were other examples of similar communities to Algonquin, specifically that lack a downtown train station, that have undertaken a similar downtown revitalization strategy. Mr. Lanz suggested St. Charles may be considered a comparable example, without a train station, but noted that the presence of a train station only increases retail sales by 3-5 percent however it may result in more residential rooftops nearby. Mr. Lanz suggested Algonquin look to promote its' natural features and recent park improvements downtown, as a way to encourage downtown visitors.

*Chairperson Patrician* inquired about the possibility of angled parking, to which Ms. Meekins stated that the additional width required to accommodate angle parking would reduce sidewalk width and limit, for example, outdoor dining opportunities. *Chairperson Patrician* suggested a sports complex or cultural arts center could serve as a destination point for downtown. *Chairperson Patrician* also asked whether some IDOT property adjacent to the new Rt. 31 Bypass corridor and north of Algonquin Road might be available for either private development or open space in the future. Mr. Lanz explained that further study would be required with regard to whether the land and soil composition could support development and how access might be provided, given the significant topography in the area.

*Chairperson Patrician* asked whether consideration had been given to extending the scope of downtown improvements to the east side of the Fox River, to which Mr. Lanz noted that the village had recently undertaken a separate plan for the east bank of the Fox River and this new planning study was intended to be compatible with but not duplicate those earlier plans.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairperson Patrician called for public comments. There was no one wishing to make any comments. Chairperson Patrician closed the public comments.

## **COMMISSION MOTION ON DOWNTOWN STUDY**

Chairperson Patrician entertained a motion to recommend adoption of the Village of Algonquin Downtown Planning Study, to serve as a guideline for downtown improvements and redevelopment. Commissioner Szpekowski moved and Commissioner Hoferle seconded a motion to recommend adoption of the Village of Algonquin Downtown Planning Study, to serve as a guideline for downtown improvements and redevelopment. The Roll Call noted the following: Ayes: Chairperson Patrician; Commissioners Hoferle, Neuhalfen, Sabatine, Sturznickel, and Szpekowski. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Zaplatynsky. Motioned carried.

### **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

#### ***AGENDA ITEM 3:*** Adjournment

Chairperson Patrician entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Neuhalfen motioned and Commissioner Sabatine seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The voice vote noted all ayes. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Mason", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Ben Mason  
Senior Planner/Recording Secretary