

VILLAGE OF GLENCOE
PLAN COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Plan Commission of the Village of Glencoe, Cook County was called to order by Chairman Thomas in the Village Hall Council Chamber at 7:05 p.m. on the 9th day of November 2016.

2. ROLL CALL

The following were present:

Caren Thomas, Chairman, Public-at-Large Representative
Barbara Miller, Vice-Chairman, Village Board Representative
Louis Goldman, Glencoe Public Library Representative
Ed Goodale, Public-at-Large Representative
Bruce Huvad, Public-at-Large Representative (*Arrived 7:25 p.m.*)
Marya Morris, Public-at-Large Representative
Dudley Onderdonk, Glencoe Park District Representative
Gary Ruben, School District #35 Representative
Tom Scheckelhoff, Historic Preservation Commission Representative

The following were absent:

None

The following were also present:

Philip Kiraly, Village Manager
Cary Lewandowski, Director of Public Safety
David Mau, Director of Public Works
Sharon Tanner, Assistant Village Manager
Nathan Parch, Planning & Development Administrator
Lee Brown, Village Planner

3. CONSIDER THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2016 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the September 28, 2016 Plan Commission meeting were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

None

5. PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE VILLAGE OF GLENCOE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, SPECIFICALLY CHAPTER 10 OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONCERNING THE DOWNTOWN SUBAREA

Chairman Caren Thomas and Village Planner Lee Brown presented to attendees a summary of the planning process and the findings and recommendations included in the Draft Downtown Plan (Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan).

Chairman Thomas reviewed the three-year planning process that began with studying the history of downtown. Additional steps included: walking the downtown area; identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT); visioning; hosting seven expert panels; providing various opportunities for public engagement; preparing white papers on economic sustainability, parking, and urban form; evaluating aspirational concepts and models for possible redevelopment of Village-owned properties; and hosting two community open houses. Part of the public engagement program included the development of a project website and companion mobile app for the community to follow along and participate in the planning process. Chairman Thomas shared that the project website had 16,300 page views and 4,800 unique visitors.

Chairman Thomas stated that the Plan Commission concluded its planning process on July 27, 2016 and presented the Draft Downtown Plan to the Village Board at a workshop meeting on August 31, 2016, at which time the Village Board was supportive of the plan with no changes. The Village Board determined that the Plan Commission should host the public hearing to receive public comment on the draft plan and to decide if additional amendments were necessary based on feedback received from the community. Chairman Thomas stated that Trustee Mulvaney asked for the draft plan to be reviewed by the Public Safety Department, the Public Works Department, and the Historic Preservation Commission and for their comments to be shared as part of the public hearing.

Village Planner Lee Brown summarized the five sections of the draft plan:

- 1) Section One: Economic Sustainability
- 2) Section Two: A Strong Sense of Place
- 3) Section Three: Publicly Owned Property
- 4) Section Four: Public Infrastructure Supporting Downtown
- 5) Section Five: The Village's Role in Downtown

Mr. Brown commented that the planning process was a journey. The anticipated plan - a traditional land use plan - was different from the final product.

Mr. Brown noted that the Plan Commission concluded early in the planning process that the downtown was not broken and not in need of wholesale change, thus the scope of work was a "tuneup".

Mr. Brown reviewed the following Plan Commission recommendations included in the Draft Downtown Plan:

- Downtown is right-sized in terms of offering the character and sense of place found to be most important. The Plan Commission supported the current boundaries of downtown and determined that bigger is not better.
- Downtown has a comfortable scale, particularly those blocks on Park Avenue from Vernon to the east. The proportion of street width to building height creates the sense of an "outdoor room" that should be replicated to other areas downtown.

- Downtown is not just a commercial district. There is a long tradition of bringing culture to the community started by Woman’s Library Club. There is a connection between the support for the arts and other uses. Restaurants are a form of entertainment.
- Downtown functions as its own economic ecosystem and can’t compete with big boxes like Target or Costco. However, downtown Glencoe sets itself apart from other areas with its unique stores, services provided, and the character of the district.
- Downtown should be accessible, visible, and walkable. Wayfinding signage is needed, but should be done in a coordinated way that does not create visual clutter.
- Parking will always be a concern in a successful downtown. The Village should be vigilant in terms of understanding parking issues and working to address them. More can be done to maximize the convenience of existing parking resources within and adjacent to downtown.
- Improvements to public spaces (Wyman Green and Tudor Court) will enhance community character and reinforce the strong sense of place.
- The area South of Hazel (“SOHA”) feels disconnected from the rest of downtown. The area is unattractive and at the same time, it serves as the southern gateway into downtown.

Mr. Brown explained that the Plan Commission explored the potential integration of SOHA more successfully and appropriately into the rest of downtown should there ever be a proposal to develop all or any portion of the area. This exercise was done by studying prototypes of hypothetical development scenarios and preparing planning guidelines to manage any future changes to these properties. Mr. Brown reviewed the 11 planning guidelines prepared by the Plan Commission as part of this process. Mr. Brown stated that, following the open houses, the Plan Commission concluded the planning guidelines should apply to all of downtown, and not be limited only to SOHA.

Chairman Thomas noted that the Plan Commissioners developed a strong consensus during the planning process in terms of priorities. Each of the priorities was explained as follows:

- 1) Tudor Court – Create a special sense of place through streetscape improvements. The north end of downtown should be special.
- 2) Wyman Green – Provide for more active, multi-purpose enjoyment of the space.
- 3) Strengthen the pedestrian connection between Park Avenue and Tudor Court.
- 4) Review existing regulations to ensure they are not overly cumbersome and that they are current with the way business is conducted today. Be business friendly.
- 5) Adopt a comprehensive wayfinding plan.

Chairman Thomas asked for staff to share their comments on the Draft Downtown Plan.

Mr. Brown stated that he met with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on October 4, 2016 to review the Draft Downtown Plan. Mr. Brown highlighted two suggested corrections to the text as a result of that meeting:

- Page 8, Rearrange first sentence of third paragraph and add the text “historically significant architecture”:

“The plan presents a strategy that capitalizes on Glencoe’s unique character, location, and local resources, particularly its historically significant architecture, and its strength in arts and culture, in support of businesses that effectively capitalize on four primary markets.”

- Page 12, Add the text “The historically significant architecture in Glencoe” to the fourth sentence of the first paragraph:

“The historically significant architecture in Glencoe, the Chicago Botanic Garden, Ravinia, exceptional golf courses and other amenities nearby contribute to the regional draw of Downtown as a destination.”

Members of the Plan Commission were supportive of the corrections recommended by the HPC and agreed they should be incorporated into the final text.

Mr. Brown briefly commented on a recent meeting with property owner Kevin Campbell, 341 Hazel Avenue, regarding Mr. Campbell’s question about the graphic of the screening wall shown on page 25 of the plan. It was clarified that illustrations in the plan are aspirational and conceptual and intended to illustrate certain principles and values.

Village Manager Philip Kiraly read a statement noting his support of the plan (*see attached*). Mr. Kiraly introduced Public Works Director David Mau and Public Safety Director Cary Lewandowski.

Mr. Mau read a statement noting his support of the plan and remarking that current service levels provided by the Public Works Department will not be impacted by the plan’s recommendations (*see attached*).

Mr. Lewandowski read a statement noting his support of the plan and remarking that current service levels provided by the Public Safety Department will not be impacted by the plan’s recommendations (*see attached*).

Chairman Thomas asked Commissioners to highlight a priority or an element of the plan that particularly resonated with them.

Commissioner Onderdonk – Citizens want a plan that reflects the quality of the rest of the Village. Change is happening now – new businesses, restaurants, etc. Highlights are the concepts for underutilized resources – Public Works Garage/Village properties, walkable design, and opportunity to transform Tudor Court.

Commissioner Ruben – This group has gone quite a ways to study the south end of downtown in development of guidelines. A priority is the walkway next to the bank drive-through, which is becoming more and more traveled. The existing conditions are not attractive or inviting.

Commissioner Goodale – As long as we have a perception of a parking problem, we have a parking problem. Need to work on changing this impression. Priorities include improvement to Hazel Avenue/Green Bay Trail crossing in the future and an expansion of public art.

Commissioner Goldman – Wyman Green is an untapped resource. It is plain and doesn't attract people. A priority is improvement to Wyman Green in a "Glencoe-specific" way with coordination between the Village and Library on a plan. Secondary gateways could be improved, specifically at Green Bay Road and Temple Court.

Vice-Chairman Miller – Economic sustainability - a lot of strategy included there. The plan doesn't overthink or out plan the business district in terms of economic sustainability. A highlight is the concept of sustainability is woven throughout the document. Has a vision of leveraging all cultural and experiential attractions in terms of sustainability.

Commissioner Huvad – Highlights include the analysis about scale of the Village, steps taken to understand what makes retail area successful, and the "outdoor room" concept. The Plan Commission now has a new tool – the Downtown Plan – in reviewing proposed developments. Hopes to improve walkability score.

Commissioner Morris – Reinforced the importance of the planning guidelines, which are central to the work of the Commission, particularly in terms of any future development. A highlight is the recommendation for wayfinding signage, specifically for new visitors to Glencoe. Supports review of existing sign regulations. Use park district as role model for implementation guidelines.

Commissioner Scheckelhoff – A priority is to improve the appearance of the Temple Court parking lot (both short-term and long-term improvements). Attractive wayfinding signage will help in terms of finding parking.

Chairman Thomas asked for comments from the Public.

Peter Van Vechten, 1023 Meadow Road, read a letter of support on behalf of the Glencoe Historical Society (*see attached*).

Vice-Chairman Miller read a statement in support of the plan from Sally Sprowl, Executive Director of the Glencoe Chamber of Commerce (*see attached*).

Chairman Thomas stated that an email was received from former Village Trustee Joe Keefe, 411 Randolph Street, strongly supporting the initiatives included in the plan, specifically the establishment of guidelines for potential development and prototype site plans for the Village-owned properties at the southern end of downtown.

Chairman Thomas stated that a letter was received from Joseph Chmiel, 757 Greenleaf Avenue, who wanted the proposed planning guidelines in the plan to apply to the new Writers Theatre building. Chairman Thomas clarified that Writers Theatre is located within a residential zoning district and is thereby not required to go through the design review process.

Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to refer the Draft Downtown Plan back to the Village Board for adoption with the addition of the suggested corrections

from the Historic Preservation Commission and with the inclusion of the letters of support to the public record. The motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Goldman, Goodale, Huvad, Miller, Morris, Onderdonk, Ruben,
Scheckelhoff, and Thomas
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

6. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Ruben stated that the School and Park Districts were partnering on a plan for West Park.

Commissioner Onderdonk shared the details for the rededication of Liza's Gazebo at Kalk Park.

7. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING OF THE PLAN COMMISSION

The Plan Commission agreed to cancel the December meeting unless there was new business to discuss.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Parch
Planning & Development Administrator

Comments from Village Manager Philip Kiraly 11-9-16

My name is Phil Kiraly and I serve as Glencoe's Village Manager. This evening, I am pleased to introduce two of the Village's staff members – Director of Public Works Dave Mau and Director of Public Safety Cary Lewandowski – who will each provide their expert commentary regarding the downtown plan. Before they present their comments, I would like to take a moment to thank the members of the Plan Commission, particularly Chairman Caren Thomas and Vice-Chair Barbara Miller for your thoughtful, deliberate and considerate work to arrive at this draft plan. The priorities outlined in it will help to guide future decisions that will preserve, yet enhance our one-of-a-kind downtown and are already providing thoughtful guidance to staff as we consider recommendations to the Village Board on critical infrastructure improvements in the downtown area, as well as ways to align the priorities to other policy directives of the Village Board. Thank you also to the staff that has been engaged in the development of this plan from its outset. Collecting the data, distilling it and providing it to the Commission for its review and discussion has helped to deliver a very strong set of guidelines that will be an asset to any future improvements to the Downtown.

Finally, I would also like to thank the residents, business owners and community leaders that commented, shared pictures, downloaded our app, attended meetings and open houses, and offered their thoughts on the future of our downtown. This plan, once approved, belongs to this community, and I look forward to seeing the priorities of the plan put into place.

Comments from Public Works Director David Mau 11-9-16

I have been asked to comment on the draft plan tonight from the vantage point of the Public Works Department. For clarification to those present tonight, the Public Works Department includes the Planning & Development, Building & Zoning and Engineering & Infrastructure Management functions.

The draft plan completed over these 3 short years represents the significant efforts of the Plan Commission, together with the assistance of staff, to engage all potentially interested parties in an extensive public process that ultimately produced a plan to enhance the character of the downtown into the foreseeable future.

The plan represents concepts & guidelines without being overly specific, and does not include any radical changes in its recommendations, but rather enhancements to existing features and strengths.

The plan speaks of continues enhancement of public spaces, streetscape and public infrastructure & strengthening wayfinding in the downtown with strategically placed signage and gateway features for the benefit of both pedestrians and drivers. Simply put, these proposed improvements are long overdue and Public Works welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the design and implementation.

With the Public Works Garage operations located at ground zero of the Temple Court gateway into downtown, we are open to potential redevelopment discussions should they rise up at any point in the future. From an engineering and infrastructure management perspective we are intrigued by the concepts presented for Wyman Green & Tudor Court, including opportunities to potentially include storm water best management practices and other environmentally sustainable practices into future infrastructure improvements there and elsewhere in the downtown.

In summary, understanding the purpose and use of a downtown plan as a planning tool for the future, the Public Works Department has no issues or concerns with the concepts presented in the plan, and looks forward to working together with the Village Board, Plan Commission and the community at large in pursuing and implementing improvements & enhancements to downtown Glencoe.

Comments from Public Safety Director Cary Lewandowski 11-9-16

I looked at the plan in relation to public safety and the proposed plan does not include any proposals that would inhibit our ability to provide emergency services – police/fire/EMS. In fact, some aspects may enhance our abilities. I specifically considered the following:

1. Life Safety and Crime Prevention – As proposed, the concepts would not limit Public Safety access or create barriers to officers and/or vehicles. Some of the proposed street improvements will likely enhance access to some areas, thereby increasing our visibility and the feeling of safety among those visiting downtown.
2. Traffic and Parking – Always a concern, especially in light of recent development. Some proposals would create greater traffic flow and reduce congestion in the downtown. Parking will continue to be a challenge, mainly due to the perception that there is not enough parking to support the downtown. There is ample parking available, but many of the spaces are not as “convenient” as some would prefer. The plan includes parking solutions to serve any new development while balancing the needs of employees, patrons, and visitors.
3. New Development – None of the contemplated ideas include large-scale buildings, which would have a great impact on our emergency services capabilities. For example, structures over three stories would create a need for a ladder fire truck, which we do not presently own and would be very costly to obtain. Conversely, the contemplated small scale buildings are more consistent with existing structures and our existing emergency service delivery procedures.

As the plan moves forward and specific elements are presented for approval, Public Safety and Village staff will conduct extensive review and seek to identify and eliminate any aspects that have a negative impact on the Village and/or our daily services and operations.

As a whole, the plan appears to be a positive and forward-looking set of proposals designed to enhance downtown and make it a more attractive, accessible, and safe destination.



Glencoe Historical Society

375 Park Avenue, Glencoe, IL 60022

www.glencoehistory.org

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November 9, 2016

Ms. Caren Thomas, Chair
Glencoe Plan Commission
675 Village Court
Glencoe, IL 60022

**Re: Downtown Tune-Up Plan and Proposed Amendments to
the Village of Glencoe Comprehensive Plan**

Dear Ms. Thomas and Members of the Plan Commission:

The Glencoe Historical Society commends the Plan Commission for its work on the Glencoe Downtown Tune-up Plan and Proposed Amendments to the Village of Glencoe Comprehensive Plan. The Commission's thoughtful and inclusive process engaged the community in a variety of ways to build consensus and to help create a plan that is driven by residents' ideas, observations and concerns. Perhaps one of the most successful aspects of the Plan is that it builds on what is already successful and identifies a select number of implementable strategies. We have confidence that as these ideas are developed and executed, the Village will become even more attractive visually, functionally, and economically.

Over the past year, the Glencoe Historical Society has had the opportunity to present its research to the Plan Commission on a number of topics, including early planning efforts by Jens Jensen, Frank Lloyd Wright, George Maher and others; the origins of the Plan Commission together with the stories of the first Commissioners; and histories of individual buildings and places. We are extremely pleased that our research was used by the Commission to inform their thinking and discussions. We believe that the respect and knowledge of history leads to a better understanding of the concept of "Tradition and Innovation". We hope that these collaborations will set a precedent for future planning studies.

The desire to continually assess and guide the quality of the built environment in the Village began with the planning and initial foresight of the founders. Civic planning became more formalized with the establishment of the Park District in 1912 and the Plan Commission in 1920. While numerous planning efforts have been conducted over the past 100 years, the visual aspects of the business district have been a continuous concern, and remain so, even today.

Ms. Caren Thomas

November 9, 2016

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In 1867, Doctor Alexander Hammond purchased the Walter Gurnee farm upon which the Village of Glencoe was built. As a principle founder of the Village, he returned for a visit in 1903 and subsequently penned the following letter titled "Unaesthetic Glencoe" to the Village leaders, excerpting:

"In my visit to Glencoe, I was astonished at the toleration of unsightly objects disfiguring the scenes about the depot, where the first impressions are made on both the visitors and the passerby, all showing a lamentable lack of civic aesthetics in the people, who neglect to pick up the pearls cast before them and so set them that they can be displayed before admirers.

People fail to see the utility of beauty; for utility is the basis of all that is beautiful, whether in matter or spirit; and the most useful effort that could be put forth in Glencoe would be to make a display of some out-door art, for the admiration of themselves and the public – useful in a material sense in increasing the demand for and the value of property, and, in a higher sense, in exalting and ennobling the best qualities of the soul. The neatness of well-kept private grounds is in good degree very commendable; but the view shown to the public is shabby and mars the whole aspect of the town.

The good people of Glencoe seem to be in the enduring stage of this degenerating process; but it is to be hoped they will never come to the embracing of these public deformities."

While this letter sounds quite harsh, to its credit, the Village, and in particular the Plan Commission, has worked hard over the last 100 years to address Hammond's aesthetic concerns. The current plan also identifies unattractive areas along with ideas and opportunities for improvement.

The Glencoe Historical Society occupies what are most likely the oldest buildings in the Downtown area. Built in 1889, the 375 Park Avenue building was originally a butcher shop, and later a furniture showroom. Sally Eklund donated the buildings and garden to the Society in 2001 as a conscious effort to establish a bookend to the western edge of the business district. Other buildings and spaces have similar stories to tell. We are grateful that the Plan Commission made a conscious effort not only to learn and to acknowledge this history, but also to make it part of this new Downtown Tune-Up Plan. There is an opportunity to leverage our history as part of the Plan's goal of enhancing the walkability of downtown.

In addition, the all-volunteer Glencoe Historical Society would like to recognize and thank the all-volunteer Glencoe Plan Commission for its committed efforts on this Downtown Tune-Up Plan including both the process and the product, and we look forward to additional opportunities for collaboration. Finally, we would like the record to reflect our endorsement of both the Plan itself and the dedicated work of the commissioners.

Cordially,



Peter Van Vechten

President

Glencoe Historical Society

STATEMENT TO PLAN COMMISSION
AT PUBLIC HEARING ON DOWNTOWN TUNEUP
NOV. 9, 2016
BY SALLY SPROWL, PRESIDENT
GLENCOE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

I have been gratified to be able to attend many of the Plan Commission's meetings over the past 2 years, during which their members researched and deliberated on number of important topics impacting our business community. I only regret that, due to a long-standing commitment, I am unable to attend this evening. However, I would like to share some thoughts garnered from these past 2 years. I have been very impressed with the thoroughness of the investigation of ideas and concepts the Commissioners have considered, bringing in city planning experts to provide objective analysis. One of the most important findings they put forth is that Glencoe has a model downtown; we need to be justifiably proud that what we already have is good, though there are areas wherein improvement is needed--but that such improvements should be in keeping with the scale and atmosphere of the Village.

As an example, signage is one area the Commissioners discussed and felt we needed additional signage/way-finding to help people know where the downtown commercial district is.

Such signage on Sheridan Road at Park Avenue, on Green Bay at Temple Court and on the Green Bay Trail would be beneficial to draw visitors to our downtown. While we are fortunate in Glencoe, unlike some neighboring towns, that we are not bisected by Green Bay Road, we have few visible commercial structures to alert people to our downtown.

Parking is a continuing concern, as well. The Plan Commission brought in a parking consultant to do studies of parking patterns

at various times of day and days of the week. The overall finding was that there is always available parking but not necessarily in spaces that are close to where people want to go. The Village is already working with employees to improve use of employee parking, in order to free up on-street parking spots. Here, again, signage will be helpful in alerting visitors to our parking areas and educating people about the availability of free parking in the commuter lots.

Another factor that impressed me in the Plan Commission's conversations is that the Village staff and the Board of Trustees are focused on making Glencoe a town that is welcoming to new businesses. The Village is working to make the regulatory and permitting processes as streamlined as possible and to have staff members available to work with businesses that are interested in coming to Glencoe.

A theme I want to stress to our businesses is that the Village is very interested in and invested in maintaining and enhancing the vitality of our business community. I think the Plan Commission's work on the Downtown Tune-Up is testimony to the value placed on our businesses and what they bring to the quality of life in Glencoe.