



## **“CBD-Norhtown-Parking Task Force”**

Twelfth Meeting: Monday, January 14, 2008 @ 7:30 p.m.

**Members in Attendance:** Kevin Augustyn, Ardie Baroni, Julie Crnovich, Chuck Foster, Dave Friedman, Jeanie Janes, Jeff Keller, Gary Peart, and Karl Weber

**Staff in Attendance:** Timothy Scott, AICP, Community Development Strategist

**Others in Attendance:** Michael Meissner, Hinsdale resident and registered architect, Vic Orlor, Village Trustee, and Joyce Wixson, resident

### Opening Remarks

Chairman Friedman opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and stated that items for the evening would focus on land uses in the study area and potential for visualization services for the commuter lot and block. He informed the group about a guest attendee that would offer some commentary that may be of interest to the group.

### Minutes

Copies of the December 17, 2007 meeting were passed out, and Chairman Friedman requested that members review in advance of the next meeting so that they could be approved by the group.

### Guest Presentation

Ms. Joyce Wixson introduced herself as a resident of the Village since 1983, as an active participant in the Hinsdale Theater Foundation, a 501(c)3 that raised \$4 million in their attempt to save the Hinsdale Theater, and as an involved volunteer for the Hinsdale Center for the Arts (HCA)

Ms. Wixson presented to the Task Force the research she conducted on behalf of HCA and their exploratory interest in a location in downtown Hinsdale, and specifically, on the site of the commuter parking lot. She shared their preliminary concept for a three-level above-grade mixed-use facility that included two major

components: a performing arts center on the east half and structured, automated parking on the west half.

Ms. Wixson mentioned several specifics regarding their preliminary concept, including: a theater size of 800 seats (500 on the main level and 300 on the balcony), two cinemas, studios, classrooms, and even a kiln. She added that the main stage would be large enough to handle the DuPage Symphony Orchestra and the Salt Creek Ballet and also cited the Beverly Arts Center as a community model.

Ms. Wixson highlighted the notion that such a facility could really complement the campus-like feel of the Memorial Building and Burlington Park and added that restaurants that would overlook Burlington Park could be incorporated into the plan. She concluded by underscoring the great potential of the facility to be additive to the community both as a cultural presence and as a destination that could provide spillover economic benefits for downtown.

Since the components of the plan dovetailed previous discussions by the Task Force, members reacted very favorably to the concept and the level of detail presented.

#### Consideration of Draft Land Use Plan

Chairman Friedman passed out a spreadsheet of land uses that tied to a map of the study area broken out by numbered sub-areas. Ms. Crnovich commented that she believed the study area had expanded, and Chairman Friedman replied that the overall charge of the Task Force had not changed since its inception and that the only difference was that sub-areas 10, 11, and 12 used to be one large area.

#### *Study Areas Reviewed – Table and Map*

Chairman Friedman walked the group through a review of the table. By sub-area, commentary included: (1) potential for attached single-family in the surface parking area similar to the residences along the west side of Clay; consideration of Fire Department since commuter trains would not prohibit emergency vehicles from crossing; (2) potential to redevelop in a traditional fashion like downtown; (3) commuter block discussed separately; (4) housing and offices with preference for neighborhood scale; (5) emphasis on linking the open spaces and consideration of an expanded library if village offices were to relocate; (6) re-use of Post Office, including idea of Village Hall; potential for attached single-family row homes if Police & Fire were relocated; (7) medical offices that would link with the hospital campus; (8) Adventist Hinsdale Hospital's own master planning efforts for their campus; (9) core of mixed-use buildings with retail bases and condominium residences or offices on upper floor(s); (10) residential-scale structures for living or offices uses rather than office building surrounded by surface parking such as northeast corner of First and Garfield; Ms. Crnovich again expressed that she believed the sub-area had grown and emphasized that more development may detract from the charm of the neighborhood; (11) Trustee Orler briefly explained the

exploratory task forces for school relocation and land planning at the existing site; he noted that work would begin in early February; Chairman Friedman mentioned that ongoing consideration of the area by the CBD-Northtown-Parking Task Force would permit a more holistic approach to its recommendations; and (12) the group recommended correcting the boundary so that it ended at Second Street and suggested excluding existing single-family homes; consideration of the area as a buffer with attached single-family housing to provide transition or perhaps scale appropriate mixed-use.

### Final Report

For consideration by members of the Task Force, Chairman Friedman passed out a rough draft of the framework for the group's final report. Key items discussed included: (1) support for a centrally-located cultural anchor in a mixed-use facility with integrated parking; (2) consideration for additional rooftops in and around downtown to generate additional foot traffic and consequently support for the CBD, address a community need for empty-nester housing, and provide scale-appropriate transition from the mixed-use core to detached single-family neighborhoods; (3) adoption of a plan that identifies permitted land uses; (4) inclusion of imagery that provides visual support and reflects the Village's established, historic character to best communicate community expectations should redevelopment be proposed; and (5) any assumptions or related research used in the plan.

### Visualization Services for Village-owned Commuter Lot & Surrounding Area

Mr. Michael Meissner, Hinsdale resident since 1955 and registered architect, addressed the members of the Task Force. He offered to provide, pro bono, conceptual design services for a mixed-use facility at the site of the commuter parking area (and potentially into other portions of the block bounded by Washington, Lincoln, Chicago, and the railroad tracks). Mr. Meissner stressed his knowledge of the community and the sensitivity he would show to its surroundings by employing strong vernacular architecture, as well as forms and details characteristic of downtown.

### Next Meeting

Chairman Friedman announced that the next meeting of the Central Business District-Northtown-Parking Task Force would be held on Monday, February 4, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Old Board Room located on the second floor of the Hinsdale Memorial Building, 19 East Chicago Avenue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Timothy Scott, AICP