

Date: April 5, 2005

Subject: Clarendon Hills Community Meeting Summary

From: Jewell Littles, Associate

To: Rob Bahan, Village Manager, Village of Clarendon Hills
Mike Brown, Director of Community Development, Village of Clarendon Hills

The purpose of this memo is to summarize the results of the community meeting held on March 9, 2005. The main objective of the community meeting was to obtain input from the community at large to help reinforce the strengths and reduce the weaknesses of Downtown Clarendon Hills. The meeting also served as a listening session for Village officials, the Downtown Steering Committee, Village staff, and the consultant team.

A number of community residents and stakeholders were present, including Village trustees, businesspeople, and civic leaders. A three-hour community meeting was conducted and led by the consultant team of *S.B. Friedman & Company*, The Lakota Group, and Metro Transportation Group.

The consultant team displayed various figures depicting the existing conditions of the Downtown including existing land use, business inventory, and parking and traffic patterns. After a short presentation on Downtown's existing conditions, the attendees were asked to break out into groups of eight to ten to participate in an open discussion regarding their likes, dislikes, and improvements/ideas for Downtown. Ideas were discussed at each table and recorded on large flip chart sheets. After 45 minutes of open discussion at individual tables, a representative from each group was asked to share their table's ideas with the larger group.

There were a number of ideas presented by each group. However, we summarized the recurring themes from many of the participants. For full details, please see the attached worksheets.

Participants generally identified the following as "likes" or the most positive aspects of Downtown:

- Convenience, Walkability, and Accessibility of Downtown
- Small Town Character/Appeal
- Low Traffic Volumes
- Streetscape and Landscaping
- Area Demographics

Dislikes or the negative aspects of the Downtown as described generally by participants are identified below:

- Inaccessibility from Ogden Avenue
- Parking Problems/Lack of Parking, particularly at peak hours
- Lack of Nighttime Activity
- Views from Metra train

The convenience and accessibility of Downtown was noted as one of the strongest advantages of Downtown. The Downtown is walkable, and parking is fairly accessible during most times of the day. Participants also enjoy the small town appeal of the Downtown, mainly because it reflects the quaint character of the Village. Although the convenience and the character of the Downtown are considered strengths, participants expressed the need for better vehicular access (particularly from Ogden Avenue) and better parking availability during peak traffic hours. Lack of access and parking limits Downtown's ability to attract people from outside of the community.

As a mechanism to reinforce Downtown's strengths and diminish its weaknesses, participants were asked to suggest a number of ideas to make Downtown Clarendon Hills more vibrant. The most popular or important project ideas that were identified are listed below:

- Signage and Wayfinding at Ogden Avenue
- More Casual Dining and Family Restaurants
- Specialty Grocery store
- Better Mix of Business Uses (more retail/restaurants and less personal services)
- Develop Metra Parking to include a Parking Deck with Ground-floor Retail

Overall, participants emphasized the need for better access for people who reside outside of the community as well as the importance of maintaining a strong mix of retail, restaurants, and services that make up a well-balanced Downtown.

**Village of Clarendon Hills
Community Meeting: March 9, 2005**

Likes
Convenience/Walkability/Accessibility of Downtown
Reflective of the character of the community/Small town feel
Low Traffic/Encourages local shoppers
Demographics
Art Gallery
Downtown Condominiums (add character)
Presence of Train Station
Presence of Police Station
Streetscape
Downtown is a lost cost operation for the Village
Beautification Committee
The Prospect Triangle
Good residential access
Good mix of public and private services
Wooded area at Walker and Park

Dislikes
Inaccessible from Ogden Avenue
Parking problems (at peak hours)
Lack of businesses
Residents not supporting local businesses
Views from Train
Corner Businesses (too small, need sprucing up)
Tired look
Some businesses are hurt by festivals
Not utilizing Chicago Avenue
Downtown Vacancies & business turnover
Too many Doctors/Dentist offices
Lack of private investment
Lack of signage
Height/Density
Businesses not working together
Too many home improvement stores
Too many beauty/barber shops

Improvements
Signs for Ogden
More Good/Family Restaurants
Grocery store
Redeveloped Metra lot with parking deck and ground floor retail
Better mix of uses
Secondary railroad crossing
Burlington Avenue Improvements (narrow entrance, etc)
Convenience Store
Daytime and Nighttime Shopping
Fix alley parking
More events
55th Street signs to Downtown
Consumer Friendly Businesses
Night Events
Spruce up facades of businesses
More Business Events
Renovations
Identification/Look of Downtown/Wayfinding
New Uses (Food, Toys, Books, Bakery, Kids Gift Store)
Anchor Store/Parking Deck
Balance density and height (max of 2 stories)
Utilize Metra Parking for Downtown uses (open earlier than 6pm)
Businesses catering to children/families
Better access from Ogden
More access to Walker
Enforce design guidelines
Improve and better identify Burlington Avenue
Employee parking
Pedestrian overpass at Metra Station
Encourage youth Downtown
Access east of Lyons Park
Two stories around Prospect, three stories elsewhere
Better tenants/lower turnover
Fix configuration of parking at Triangle
Upgrade of Post Office
Bury utility lines
Continue Prospect Avenue through to Ogden Avenue
Zone up
Continued development with appropriate transitions
Expand east side of Prospect
More residential development
Move train station to current police station
Walker businesses need upgrades