

The City of Lake Forest
Plan Commission
Proceedings of the January 8, 2020 Meeting

A meeting of the Lake Forest Plan Commission was held on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., at City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Commission members present: Chairman Kehr and Commissioners Michael Freeman, Jamie Moorhead, Monica Artmann Ruggles, Stephen Douglass and Susan Athenson

Commissioners absent: Commissioner John Dixon

Staff present: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

1. Introduction of Commissioners and staff and review of meeting procedures.

Chairman Kehr asked the members of the Commission and staff to introduce themselves and reviewed the meeting procedures followed by the Commission.

2. Consideration of the minutes of the November 14, 2019 and December 11, 2019 Plan Commission meetings.

The minutes of the November 14, 2019 meeting of the Plan Commission were approved with corrections as requested by Chairman Kehr.

The minutes of the December 11, 2019 meeting of the Plan Commission were approved with corrections as requested by Chairman Kehr.

3. Public Hearing and Action: Comprehensive Plan Update – Route 60 Entrance Corridor Chapter

Chairman Kehr introduced the agenda item and asked the Commission to declare any conflicts of interest or Ex Parte contacts. She noted that the Commission heard an initial presentation on this agenda item at the December meeting. She noted that the draft document is available on the City's website and at the back of the room. She invited comments by the City Staff.

Ms. Czerniak noted that this agenda item is not a development petition and does not relate to the details of any specific development proposal. She stated that this agenda item is part of the ongoing update of the City's Comprehensive Plan. She pointed out that several months ago, the Commission completed its review of an update to the chapter of the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to the Waukegan Road/Settler's Square Business District. She stated that a draft of the chapter relating to the Route 60 Entrance Corridor, the chapter currently under review, was distributed to the Commission prior to the December meeting. She stated that the

draft was developed through a process similar to the process used for the Waukegan Road/Settler's Square Business District. She noted that at the Commission's meeting in December, Scott Goldstein of Teska Associates, Inc., the consultants assisting the City on the Comprehensive Plan update, provided an overview of the process that led to development of the draft, reviewed market data and demographic information, and spoke to changes that have occurred in the area and in general since this chapter was last updated in 2001. She stated that at this meeting, staff and the consultants will walk through the draft; present the themes that came out of the discussions to date and discuss the vision for the limited opportunity areas in the Corridor. She reminded the Commission that the Comprehensive Plan describes a vision for the future, 10 to 20 years out. She emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan is not zoning and does not mandate any particular type of development but instead, is intended to describe a desired future state for the benefit of developers, residents, property owners and the City. She noted that ideally, development plans that achieve the desired vision should move through the approval process more quickly than those that do not align with the intended vision. She noted that since the Route 60 Entrance Corridor is nearly built out, it is important to get the remaining development right and to assure that appropriate uses are accommodated in the area. She introduced Scott Goldstein to review the draft chapter.

Mr. Goldstein, Teska Associates, Inc., reviewed the process to date noting that two community input sessions were held along with several Working Group meetings. He stated that throughout the discussions to date, the importance of the vitality of Conway Park to the larger community was continually raised. He noted that suburban office parks have changed since the Comprehensive Plan chapter relating to this area was last updated in 2001. He stated that today, employers and employees of office parks desire amenities that were not have been important 20 years ago when the office park was developed. He noted that in discussions to date, it was recognized that to keep Conway Park vital, to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses, it is important to provide the desired supporting amenities, facilities and services nearby. He stated that during the public input process to date, people expressed interest in seeing restaurants and small retail businesses locate in the area to complement businesses in the City's two other business districts and meet the needs of the immediate area. He stated that employees of the area, Lake Forest residents and visitors, and others traveling through the area will benefit from the addition of these types of uses in the Corridor. He noted that a full interchange with the Tollway is located at the west end of the Corridor. He noted that a hotel is under construction in Conway Park adding that employers in the office park have continuously expressed interest in hotels, conference space and supporting amenities. He reviewed the key themes of the vision for the area noting that the City has worked hard to create an attractive entrance to the City in this location. He stated that the vision is for the area to appear distinctly Lake Forest, with well-designed buildings, high quality landscaping and landscape dominant streetscapes. He stated that the vision is

that the Corridor will look and feel distinctly different from other areas near interchanges along the Tollway. He noted that Conway Park is already a first class office park with global businesses. He stated that the challenge identified in the draft update is how to keep Conway Park competitive and attractive to existing and new businesses in the future and attractive to employees, visitors and nearby residents. He noted that the vision speaks to the need for appropriate transitions between the high intensity office uses and the existing and future residential development to the east and south. He noted that today, many people bike and walk in the area adding that the recently completed bicycle bridge over the railroad tracks has made the area more accessible than it was in the past. He noted that the draft document includes strategies for how to achieve the vision. He noted that most of the Corridor is built out and the challenge is how to use the remaining sites in a way that directly supports and enhances the area. He noted that one hotel may not be sufficient to meet future demand in the area. He reiterated that conference space, meeting space and small scale retail stores are all needed in the area to keep people in Lake Forest. He noted that a shuttle service is currently provided between the local train stations and Conway Park, an important amenity for employees. He stated that continuing to consider transportation options is important to maintaining the desirability of Conway Park. He noted that the draft document suggests a strategy that offers flexibility with respect to parking standards to allow the City to respond to changes in transportation habits in the future. He noted that signage standards should also respond to future needs, balancing high quality appearances with the need to adequately identify businesses. He noted that the draft document identifies preferred uses for the area and sites that present opportunities for the preferred uses. He reiterated that the Comprehensive Plan is not zoning, but could lead to consideration of amendments to the Zoning Code in the future. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan signals to developers a predictable process and an understanding of what the community desires. He noted that a strategy for keeping the area vibrant is to consider variety in housing options. He noted that residential options have recently been constructed near the City's Central Business District and have been successful. He stated that the Corridor may be able to accommodate housing types that younger households are seeking. He stated that discussions leading to the draft plan recognized that providing the option for rental units in the area may allow people to get to know Lake Forest and later decide to purchase a home in the community and stay for the long term. He stated that providing desired amenities in the Corridor may help to fuel the housing market in Lake Forest. He stated that moderate to high end rental housing is missing in the Lake Forest and the larger region. He stated that significant interest was expressed in providing more walking and bike paths in the area with a particular interest in providing connections between existing paths both inside and outside of the City. He noted that there are currently a number of destinations and unique uses within the Corridor including preserved open space owned by the Forest Preserves District, Townline Park, the Chicago Bears' facility and the City's Municipal Services facility. He stated that interest was expressed in a

performing arts venue and in response, a potential location is identified in the plan with the acknowledgement that private financing for construction and ongoing support would be likely be necessary. He stated that such a venue would need to be appropriately scaled and fit within the context of the Corridor. He noted that the vision is to build upon the existing conditions in the Entrance Corridor with consideration given to extending the existing landscaped median to the east, and constructing a bicycle path west from Academy Drive to infill a missing link. He noted that a bike path could take advantage of the wide setbacks along Route 60 and provide an enjoyable experience for riders of all kinds and visual interest along the roadway. He stated that the draft update recognizes the wide setbacks along Route 60. He noted that there has been considerable effort to preserve the setbacks as the area has developed. He noted that in order to achieve the desired land uses, the update suggests that some flexibility in the width of the setback be provided in limited areas high quality projects that provide the desired land uses. He noted that the draft document suggests that berms, trees, landscaping and wetlands be considered as ways to create appropriate transitions between higher intensity uses and nearby residential developments. He noted that there is interest in exploring ways to enhance the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing Route 60 adding that surprisingly, many people said that they regularly cross the road. He stated that the discussions recognized that Route 60 is a major transportation corridor and the traffic needs to move efficiently through the area making the concepts of an overpass or underpass inviting. He stated that the update supports terminating Amberley Court at the west end to separate commercial and office traffic from the residential neighborhood. He stated that the challenge is to balance interconnectivity with efficient access. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan suggests strategies for achieving the desired vision and provides a framework for future decisions but does not mandate or limit future any specific actions.

Lee Brown, Teska Associates, Inc., reviewed the portions of the draft document pertaining to land use designation descriptions and preferred land uses for opportunity areas. He reviewed the office use designation (pink) noting that no significant change is proposed for the office parcels but the opportunity to enhance these areas is provided for in the land use description. He stated that the land use description recognizes that the suburban office market is changing. He noted that the office designation recognizes the desire for amenities including walking trails, outdoor amenities, high quality lighting and signage, restaurants, on-site parking and other features to enhance the marketability of parcels designated for office use. He reviewed the mixed use areas (red) noting that these areas are intended to support a variety of uses in a planned setting. He noted that uses in these areas could include hotels, restaurants, specialty food stores, small scale retail businesses, residential units and other similar uses. He explained that the goal is to allow people to do more than one activity without getting into their car and driving to another location. He stated that mixed use developments are attractive to employees. He stated that residential

environments that allow people to work, live, eat, shop and recreate all in close proximity are in demand. He noted currently, there are no restaurants close to the office park creating somewhat of an isolated area. He stated that adding amenities in the Corridor will be supportive of and complementary to the other business districts, meeting a need that is not currently met by other businesses in Lake Forest and overall drawing people into the area. He reviewed the residential land use (yellow and orange) noting that considerable residential development is located in the area including attached homes, single family homes and condominiums. He stated that currently, residential developments of varying densities exist and noted the opportunity to add residential units to the area, perhaps as part of a mixed use development. He described the transitional land use area (brown) noting parcels in this area have some limitations that can best be addressed through comprehensive planning and development. He noted that access is a challenge for these parcels adding that the area features unique natural features. He noted that the future use of this area is flexible however the use should provide an appropriate transition between higher intensity uses to the west and the uses on the Lake Forest Academy Campus to the north and east. He noted that the Lake Forest Academy Campus is identified for educational use (light blue) and recognizes that the Academy is a residential campus with a variety of education related uses. He noted that one-of-a-kind uses (dark blue), the City's Municipal Services Facility and the Chicago Bears Campus have unique facilities to support specific activities. He noted that these uses are for the most part isolated from other areas in the Corridor and are adjacent to preserved open land. He noted that no changes are anticipated in these areas. He noted that preserved open space, public and private, is identified on the land use map (green). He noted that features such as wetlands and woodlands define much of these areas. He reviewed the Opportunity Areas identified in the plan. He noted that these areas are called out because they have high potential for future development. He noted that Opportunity Area #1 is the location of the new hotel that is currently under construction. He noted that the site offers additional land that could support a second hotel, meeting space, restaurant or a stand along office building in the future. He noted that Opportunity Area #2 is the transition parcel previously referred to as having the potential for a variety of uses once the access issue is resolved and with comprehensive planning of the site. He noted that potentially, the site could meet a community need with a combination of open space and some type of venue. He added that the west campus of the high school, located outside of the Entrance Corridor, could also provide a location for a community venue. He noted that Opportunity Area #3 is an important site given its location on Route 60, adjacent to the office park and the Tollway interchange. He stated this parcel, at the gateway to the Corridor presents a prime opportunity for a mix of uses to provide the desired amenities. He noted that commercial use will require visibility into the site and some flexibility with respect to the extensive setback along the Route 60 frontage. He reviewed Opportunity Area #4 noting that the area is approved for additional single family homes but could potentially support increased residential density or an alternate

residential unit type. He reviewed Opportunity Area #5 noting that this area is comprised of a number of five acre parcels. He noted that consideration could be given to increased density or a variety of residential products in this area, configured in a way that mitigates the impact of the wetlands and the Tollway on the development.

Mr. Goldstein reviewed the circulation plan and identified existing and potential pedestrian and bicycle paths. He reiterated that in response to input received, the draft document encourages efforts to make the pedestrian crossings safer, more comfortable and more visible. He noted that the long term goal is to provide an overpass or underpass near the east end of the Entrance Corridor. He noted that much of the open space in the Corridor is impacted by flood plain or wetlands and therefore, is appropriate for preserved open space.

Ms. Czerniak noted that the Comprehensive Plan sets out a vision and strategies for achieving the vision in the long term. She reiterated that the Comprehensive Plan is not zoning. She added that ideally, the Comprehensive Plan is a tool used by developers to understand the community's vision for land uses in specific areas. She invited input from the Commission and members of the public on the draft document and on the vision and proposed strategies for achieving the vision.

Chairman Kehr invited questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Douglass stated that he agreed with the vision, strategies and with the specific recommendations presented in the updated chapter. He stated that he has some broad comments to offer later in the meeting.

Commissioner Athenson commended the process and the efforts to get public input early. She noted that in general there is a movement toward mixed use development noting the recent Vernon Hills development. She stated that to be successful, Conway Park needs to move in that direction. She noted that high density residential options are missing in the area. She noted that many younger employees choose to live in the City, within walking distance to restaurants and grocery stores, and commute to work by train. She noted that many of the office buildings in Conway Park are occupied by a single user and questioned how the City could encourage more multi-tenant buildings in the park. She agreed with the concept of making the overall area less auto-dependent and more walkable. She noted that installing sidewalks on both sides of Route 60 would improve walkability. She stated support for the concept of an overpass over the railroad tracks connecting Townline Park with the high school campus.

In response to comments from Commissioner Athenson, Mr. Brown made the point that the office park is strong and has a unique mix of pharma, packaging and insurance businesses as well as other businesses. He stated that care needs to be taken to avoid diluting the concentration of businesses in the park because part of

the success is that together, they draw an employment base. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan should not propose a mix of uses in the park that could undermine the value and uniqueness of the business park. He noted however that providing amenities, including higher density residential options, close to the office park is desirable. He pointed out that the plan encourages the broadening of uses in the park by opening the door for development of some outlots with restaurants or small scale retail or service businesses. He stated that generally, the mix of uses in office parks does not include residential uses. He noted that residential uses are more successful in areas with more of a residential character, near smaller scale restaurant and retail uses. He noted that the area around Conway Park is unlike the Central Business District in that it is not served directly by a railroad line. He noted however that the Conway Park businesses, on their own, provide shuttle service to the City's two train stations for employees. He stated that providing connectivity to the train stations is important since the stations are not within walking distance to the office buildings. He noted that in the future, fewer employees may be driving their individual vehicles to work resulting in less demand for parking potentially freeing up land for future outlots. He noted that a bus rapid transit system requires less investment than a light rail system.

In response to questions from Commissioner Freeman, Ms. Czerniak stated that the current zoning of Opportunity Area 4 is R-3, residential, one acre minimum lot size with the ability to cluster residential units consistent with the underlying zoning. She stated that the zoning recognizes the wetlands and Tollway located in and near that area and provides for some flexibility. She noted that multi-family use or an institutional use would require a change from the current zoning in the area. She confirmed that after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted, the City or property owners could initiate changes in zoning consistent with the vision established in the Plan.

Commissioner Freeman commented that in considering land use designations, consideration should be given to the long term cost of delivering City services, such as public safety services, and the potential for imposing the cost of those services on the rest of the City. He emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan does not change the zoning on any property adding that would most likely be considered at the time a property owner or developer comes forward with a development proposal.

In response to questions from Commissioner Ruggles, Mr. Goldstein clarified that Opportunity Area 2 is designated for a mix of uses including, but not limited to, residential, open space, or a community use. He stated that the area is identified as a transitional area and could be appropriate for a variety of uses. He noted however that the area has some challenges and limited frontage on a public street so it may not be the best site for a retail use.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Mr. Brown noted that there may be an opportunity to locate an over pass parallel to the existing rail road bridge to connect the north and south sides of Route 60 with a pedestrian/bicycle trail. He acknowledged that would require cooperation from the railroad. He agreed that there are pros and cons to both underpasses and overpasses. He stated that an overpass requires extensive ramps to provide accessibility and underpasses can be susceptible to flooding seasonally. He noted that in the public discussions there was interest in a second east/west bridge over the railroad tracks, in addition to the bridge that was recently constructed, to provide a connection between Townline Park and the west high school campus. He stated that the specific routes for connecting existing paths to a new overpass or underpass would need to be determined as part of a future project. He stated that based on input received, it is clear that pedestrians are crossing Route 60 today. He stated that some of the existing crosswalks at Route 60 have pedestrian crossing signals however, the width of the roadway makes crossing difficult particularly for people with limitations or children. He clarified that the proposed update does not call for the elimination of the 150 foot setback along Route 60 but recognizes the need for a reduction of the setback in a limited area to provide for visibility for commercial businesses.

Commissioner Athenson suggested that a sidewalk be reflected on the south side of Route 60 as well as on the north side. She suggested that consideration be given to providing a bike lane on Route 60.

In response to questions from Commissioner Athenson, Mr. Goldstein noted that a path for pedestrians and bicycles close to, but off of Route 60 would give most users greater comfort. He stated that when there is space for an off-site trail, separation of vehicles from pedestrians and bicycles is preferred. He noted that off street paths need to be wide enough to support both pedestrian and bicycle use.

In response to comments from Commissioner Athenson, Mr. Brown acknowledged that "racers" and bicycle clubs will likely still ride on the street even if an off street trail is provided.

Commissioner Douglass reiterated his agreement with the vision but noted that a certain residential density is needed to attract the types of amenities described in the plan. He stated that a key incentive for restaurant and retail uses is residential density. He acknowledged that the dilemma is which comes first, the increased residential density or the commercial amenities. He stated that often the two occur together through a planned development but noted that given the limited amount of land available in the Route 60 Corridor, that approach is not feasible.

In response to questions and comments from Commissioner Douglass, Mr. Goldstein noted that there is a significant density of employees in the area during the week and stated that a well designed mixed use development will attract

employees before and after work and during the lunch hour. He stated that although the Corridor does not have the characteristics of a "downtown" area, it offers a different set of economics and can be made more walkable. He noted that highway oriented business corridors with rental residential units and a mix of other uses can be successful. He stated that based on data, most people are willing to travel 10 to 15 minutes for a restaurant on a regular basis. He noted that throughout the public input process and in discussions with employers in the office park, there were consistent requests for restaurants, off site meeting space, retail businesses and hotels.

In response to questions from Commissioner Athenson, Ms. Czerniak stated that the proposed update recognizes the opportunity for adaptive reuse of the existing residence on the Amberley Woods parcel, but does not mandate that the residence be preserved.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Kehr invited public comment.

Mr. Messervey, 1640 W. Kennedy Road, noted that his property is site number two on the map. He thanked the members of the Commission for their service. He stated that he is optimistic that he can finally get through what has been a frustrating experience noting that his property has been for sale for development for more than 25 years. He stated that he owns a nine acre parcel that is one of the most beautiful sites in Lake County. He stated that he and his wife have rights as the property owners and they intend to enforce them. He stated that he and his wife are probably some of the longest residents of west Lake Forest adding that for many years, they had homes on both the west and east sides of Lake Forest. He stated that they have been involved in the community for many years. He stated that they left Illinois for ten years and are now back to settle issues with the property. He stated that the house is 3,200 square feet, sited in the middle of nine acres. He stated that the house was constructed in 1955 and is not energy efficient. He questioned why one of the most attractive parcels in the area has not received consideration for development. He stated that in 1990, his property was forcibly annexed by the City of Lake Forest and zoned R-5, the most restrictive zoning district. He stated that he was promised a change in zoning when he was ready to develop the property. He stated that through the years, he has lived next to the Buker train club, an alpaca farm, the Willow Lake development and is surrounded by properties owned by Lake Forest Open Lands' Association, Lake Forest Academy and properties in Conway office park. He stated that in the 1950's his property was accessed from Route 60 which at that time was a two-lane gravel road, Route 59A. He noted that historically, the area was part of the Armour Estate, later Marshall Field's summer home, and then the Fitzmorris Estate. He spoke about the Buker property noting that the train club is run by a group of old men who are not Lake Forest residents. He stated that the club is a difficult neighbor adding that he has requested that the train operations cease and desist.

He stated that the property is zoned R-5 and noted that the train club operates an uninspected, unregulated metal shop on the property. He stated that his attorney says that the use is an attractive nuisance. He noted that people ride the trains and that on occasion, there have been fires, steam releases and derailments on the site and noted that there are no sanitation facilities at the site. He stated that gravel and coal are delivered to the site. He stated that in the past, Mr. Buker removed water from the lakes to irrigate an illegal tree farm to avoid property taxes. He stated that his site and the Buker site do not have separate water meters because the City has refused to give him a separate water meter. He stated that in the past, the train buildings have appeared on his property tax bill. He stated that he has not been reimbursed for driveway maintenance or snow removal on the driveway since he purchased the property in 1990. He stated that train club members and people associated with the Lake Forest Academy have trespassed on his property in the past creating the need for him to erect a seven foot fence around his property. He stated that there is a dumpster on the train club property and environmental concerns due to the metal shop. He stated that there have been grass fires and other damage to the site from the train activities and ongoing noise violations as a result of the trains operating in the summer. He questioned who would want to live next to the train club and questioned why the use is permitted to exist. He stated that the property owner, Lake Forest Open Lands does not respond to his contacts. He stated that his property is missing basic services like cable service, secondary access and AT&T service. He stated that his last attempt to resolve the issues with his property was at a meeting with Bob Kiely, the City Attorney Julie Tappendorf, and Cathy Czerniak in October, 2018 at which time he tried to secure access for his property across the properties to the west; across portions of the PCA and Willow Lakes properties. He noted that the same route is now being proposed as a walking trail in the plan. He stated that it is time to settle the various issues he has outlined and stated his hope that the City will bring the parties together including the Academy and Lake Forest Open Lands Association, to reach resolution. He stated that in his opinion, the Academy has other issues that need to be addressed including the lack of an emergency access and speeding on Academy Drive. He stated that the Academy's lakes are poor quality, filled with decomposing leaves. He stated that his current driveway is unsafe noting that he has almost been rear ended when slowing on Route 60 to turn into his driveway.

Chairman Kehr asked Mr. Messervey to focus his comments on the matters before the Plan Commission.

Mr. Messervey stated that it appears to him that the Comprehensive Plan as presented, proposes four possible uses for his property including apartments, senior housing, a mix of uses and a museum. He stated that no one has ever contacted him with interest in building a museum on his property. He questioned why assisted living and continuing care facilities are not among the uses envisioned.

Commissioner Freeman left the meeting at 8:10 due to family matters.

Mr. Messervey stated that in 2013, Bob Kiely told him that no additional assisted living units or senior housing would be built in Lake Forest. He questioned whether there is an agreement to that effect. He stated that he has received dozens of calls from developers interested in locating assisted living or age limited facilities on this property. He stated that there is a need for all parties to work together to facilitate development of his property. He stated that retail is not dead, noting that smaller stores are taking the place of large stores. He stated that restaurants are the worst business models. He stated that five minutes west of the Tollway, there are eight restaurants in Vernon Hills adding that is where Conway Farms employees go for lunch. He noted that employees who work in Conway Park do not live in Lake Forest and he suggested that some of them may want to live here if options are made available. He requested that the City fully respond to the Freedom of Information Request that he submitted in 2018. He stated that there should be full transparency. He stated that the State would like to close off his driveway access for safety reasons. He stated that safety, land use and zoning issues related to the train club need to be addressed. He stated that there needs to be a fair and open process to permit the highest and best economic development opportunity for his property. He stated that all parties need to work together in this effort. He stated that he is highly supportive of Conway Park and bicycle and walking paths in the area. He stated that no additional single family homes are needed in Lake Forest and stated that people do not want to drive cars. He stated his appreciation for the opportunity to speak.

Keith Krebs, 1815 Amberley Court, thanked the Commission for its work. He stated that it makes sense to develop the area consistently and synergistically with Conway Park. He stated that Conway Park is a great asset to the community and offers support to the community through property taxes. He commented that the uses described for Opportunity Area 1 make sense given its location in the office park. He stated that the same is true for Opportunity Area 2 which is also located on the north side of Route 60. He stated that it is not easy or safe to cross Route 60 on foot or on bicycle. He stated that Opportunity Area 3 is difficult to develop because it is on the south side of Route 60, separated from the office park. He noted that the office buildings on the south side of Route 60 may not be doing well and noted that the intersection of Route 60 and Saunders Road is congested. He stated that the plan may be trying to solve too many issues at the same time; increasing residential density, creating a successful office park and making the Corridor vital. He stated that the Corridor is not the Central Business District and is not Lincoln Park. He stated that if more residential density is desired in Lake Forest, rental apartments could be located near the two train stations which would support restaurants in those areas. He stated that a restaurant in the office park may be successful during the lunch hour, but he questioned the viability of a restaurant in the evening noting that as a result, a restaurant in the area might go out of business. He stated that his biggest concern is Opportunity Area 5, the

Amberley Court area. He stated that he was the first owner and resident of the Courtyard homes noting that he and his wife have lived on Amberley Court for seven and a half years. He stated that in his opinion, the area has not developed because of the cut through traffic on Amberley Court and because of the uncertainty of how the commercial parcel will be developed. He stated that if those two issues are solved, and the homes are priced right and designed to meet the needs of empty nesters with a smaller footprint and a first floor master, the remaining Courtyard homes will sell.

In response to a question from Chairman Kehr, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the draft update recommends that Amberley Court be terminated at the west end.

Wayne Urbanek, 2025 Amberley Woods Court, thanked the Commission for its work noting the importance of this plan. He stated that he has spoken with staff and the consultants. He stated agreement with Mr. Krebs that if the commercial parcel on the Amberley Woods site is developed correctly, the Courtyard homes will sell. He stated that he has lived on Amberley Court for three years. He agreed that Amberley Court should be terminated on the west end. He stated support for proper development of the commercial parcel. He stated that development in the Saunders Road area, to the south of Route 60, will be difficult and agreed that the office buildings on the south side of Route 60 do not appear to be successful. He agreed that something should be done to stimulate the area. He agreed that Opportunity Area 2 should be developed.

Peter Tremulis, Deerfield, stated that he is a real estate professional working with Mr. Messervey on development opportunities for his property. He noted that he got to know Mr. Messervey about eight years ago when he worked for a National home builder and explored combining the property then owned by the Bukers, the Lake Forest Academy property located east of Academy Drive, and the Messervey property for a mixed use development of multi-family residential, retail and professional offices. He stated that if the access issues are addressed, such a development would be possible in that area. He suggested that a public road could be extended from the Messervey property to the west, through property owned by PCA in the office park. He stated that an apartment building could be configured to hide the parking, which is the objectionable part of the apartment buildings, from view. He stated that he looks forward to working with Mr. Messervey and the other parties in the area and bringing forward developers who are interested in the area.

Rommy Lopat, 410 Woodland Road, asked that the first page of the proposed chapter be rewritten noting that it is the most important part of the document. She stated that the chapter should describe where the Route 60 Corridor is located, the problems that exist, what prompted the study and should describe the vision. She noted that key features; the Lake Forest Academy and Townline Park are not mentioned and should be. She questioned why the update is so

quick to dismiss the established setback along Route 60 particularly since the landscape dominant streetscape, a direct result of the setback, is mentioned. She questioned whether residential development is intended within the office park. She asked that the extent of the area covered be clarified. She stated that the document does not address the train club as a problem to be solved. She agreed that the office buildings on the south side of Route 60 appear to be underutilized and may present an opportunity for an alternate use. She added that Townline Park and the City's compost center may also present opportunities for alternate uses. She stated that there should be out of the box thinking on these parcels. She added that the Messervey and Open Lands property also present opportunities. She expressed concern that the proposed update suggests streamlining the City review processes and reducing the required setback along Route 60. She noted that during the Whole Foods discussion many community members spoke in favor of preserving the setback. She stated that by stating support for a reduction in the setback in the update, the Commission and staff will lose the ability in the future to effectively review development proposals. She suggested that the plan should speak to initiatives that are being explored throughout the Country; trams, green roofs and the use of gray water for instance.

J.P. Graciano, 1800 Amberley Court, stated that he is on the Condo Association Board at Amberley Woods. He stated that the update as presented is comprehensive and visionary. He noted however that noise impacts are not mentioned. He stated that Route 60 and the Tollway generate noise in the area. He noted that Route 60 is a concrete street with ridges and as a result, there is more traffic noise than there would be if the pavement was asphalt. He stated that the noise is disturbing. He stated that IDOT can easily fix the situation.

In response to a questions from Chairman Kehr, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that Route 60 is an IDOT, not a City road.

Linda Liang, 75 Asbury Court, stated that she lives in the Stonebridge Subdivision, along Route 60. She stated support for preserving the visual character of Lake Forest and expressed concern that the City is giving away the ability to protect the visual character going forward. She stated that traffic on Route 60 is already a concern. She stated that drainage is also a concern noting that three years ago, the Stonebridge area flooded. She stated that drainage needs to be considered as part of any future development. She noted that outdoor living spaces, restaurants and spaces for children to play are all important to the vibrancy of Lake Forest.

Kurt Kalousek, 1165 Mount Vernon, stated that he is interested in opening a business and the Route 60 Corridor offers the perfect opportunity. He stated that he wants to establish a brick and mortar store to offer coffee, breakfast, beer and office space to work-at-home and stay-at-home people and the employees of the office park.

In response to questions from Commissioner Athenson, Ms. Czerniak stated that the current zoning in Conway Park provides for office use, hotels, restaurants as part of a hotel and childcare uses. She stated that the zoning does not limit the buildings to single tenants noting that several buildings in the office park are currently occupied by multiple tenants. She confirmed that the development of Conway Park has proceeded consistent with the earlier vision as established in the Comprehensive Plan. She noted that the focus of the current update is how to build on the successes of the past.

Commissioner Ruggles noted that a great deal of information was presented and she stated that it would be helpful to have additional time to think about the draft update. She stated support for providing flexibility for mixed uses in the areas that remain available for development in the entrance corridor. She stated that Conway Park is an asset to the community and she agreed that employees in the park want an opportunity to go off site during the day. She stated that office parks are changing. She noted that Opportunity Area 3 is small and noted that Opportunity Area 2 could also offer some opportunity for commercial uses if the access issue is solved. She stated that the update provides an exciting opportunity for the city to consider additional housing options and to enhance and support the businesses and inspire growth in the area.

Commissioner Moorhead agreed that a significant amount of information was presented and more time to consider the information would be helpful. He asked that staff review the comments presented and refine the document as appropriate.

Commissioner Athenson agreed that the Commission's consideration of the draft should be continued to allow for refinements based on the input received. She stated that the update appears to be on the right path. She stated that there should be continued focus on walkability of the area with sidewalks recommended on both sides of Route 60 and a connection over the railroad tracks between Townline Park and the high school campus. She stated that multi-tenant use should be encouraged in Conway Park along with residential development including affordable units to attract employees. She stated that in her opinion, a consistent wooded setback should be maintained along Route 60 and the landscaped median should be extended to the east. She stated that developers should not be allowed to put as much as possible on a parcel. She stated that the vision and the character of the area should dictate future development. She stated support for adaptive reuse of the historic home on the Amberley Woods property. She reiterated that going forward, the Comprehensive Plan should be used actively as a planning tool by the various Boards and Commissions. She encouraged development of a process for referencing the plan in various discussions and a process for periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that continued focus should be placed on options for public

transportation to and through the area. She stated that as parcels develop, efforts should be made to minimize the visibility of parking lots from off of the sites.

Commissioner Douglass commended the work to date and stated his appreciation for the feedback received from the public. He stated that it would be helpful for the Commission to see a map of the existing zoning for the area to better understand the changes being proposed by the update. He observed that currently, Conway Park is not densely developed pointing out that there is the opportunity to increase the intensity of development by making property owners aware that opportunities to do so exist. He agreed that the opportunity to develop portions of existing parking lots should be provided.

Chairman Kehr commented that the Commission is always dealing within an envelope of privately owned property that is already developed with the goal of opening up opportunities for future develop and redevelopment. She too stated support for encouraging development of excess parking fields with appropriate uses to support the office employees. She noted that there are limited undeveloped sites in the corridor and reuse of portions of parking lots that may not be needed in the future represents an opportunity. She stated that wetlands impact the development potential for some of the remaining properties in the Corridor as well as noise from Route 60 and the Tollway. She stated support for making the area more walkable with connections to off site trails through overpasses or underpasses and sidewalks setback from the busy traffic lanes. She stated that she is focused on what is possible over the next five or ten years and areas where the Plan Commission can have influence. She stated support for working with various parties to resolve access issues.

Commissioner Athenson encouraged the Commission to think 20 years out and opportunities that may exist in the future, even for properties that are already developed. She asked that the opening pages be reviewed to incorporate refinements as suggested by members of the public.

Chairman Kehr noted that as drafted, the update provides more options for land uses beyond what exists today. She invited a motion to continue the Commission's consideration of the update to the chapter of the Comprehensive Plan relating to the Route 60 Corridor.

Commissioner Douglass made a motion to continue the matter.

Commissioner Athenson seconded the motion and was approved by the Commission by a 5 to 0 vote.

3. Additional public comment on non-agenda items

There was no testimony presented on non-agenda items.

4. Additional information from staff.

There was no additional information from staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Czerniak
Director of Community Development