

July 23, 2015

To the Members of the Plan Commission, the Design Review Board, the Environmental Commission, and the Village Council:

I attended the Plan Commission meeting on July 22, 2015, in the Village Hall. I have numerous concerns about the proposed One Winnetka development, most of which I expressed in a letter to the Plan Commission dated March 28, 2015, based on the original proposal from Stonestreet. Having reviewed the revised proposal and attended last night's meeting, I am not at all assured that any of my concerns have been addressed. Furthermore, because I have attended two of the meetings and discussed the project with my friends and neighbors in the community, I know that "my" concerns are not mine alone.

To recap in brief before presenting previously-unstated concerns: The One Winnetka design is out of keeping with the aesthetics of Winnetka. Its size and mass are not appropriate for a village of 12,500 people. There has not been any evidence presented of a need for luxury rental units. There has not been any evidence presented that there is a need for more retail space; in fact, it is readily apparent that there is an abundance of available retail space throughout Winnetka's business districts. There is no study on the impact to services (such as schools, police, fire) or utilities, stormwater management, electricity, and the like. Lastly, there has been no attempt to "green" this development beyond putting what appears to be grass on the roof. What about any of the development's systems, such as HVAC, or building materials?

Now on to new business....**I am gravely concerned by the ingress and egress on Elm Street.** This single driveway is to be shared by commuters, shoppers, and residents, as well as waste management trucks, delivery trucks, and semis (assuming there will be large commercial deliveries to the stores in the development and large moving vans for residents). That is a huge amount of traffic on one driveway. That, in and of itself, is problematic, but it is compounded exponentially when considering the fact that the semis and delivery trucks will be reversing in and out of this shared driveway at huge risk to all the drivers as well as pedestrians, including both a significant number of visually-impaired commuters who must walk past this driveway on their way to The Hadley School for the Blind and families with young children headed to the Village Green. While the inherent danger of this setup is the primary concern, there is also a significant and very real issue pertaining to all of this traffic blocking the main East-West street in Winnetka (Elm Street) as the trucks reverse into the loading area. It's the type of congestion one associates with Chicago alleyways, not suburban thoroughfares.

I am very curious about the letter Mr. Javier Millan presented (and referred to during last night's Plan Commission meeting) as part of the revised proposal. On the first pages of his response to concerns, #2 discusses the accident data at nearby intersections between the years 2009-2013, none of which resulted in a fatality. I

fail to see the relevance of the implied extrapolation that there won't, then, be an increased problem presented by the One Winnetka development.

I am also confused by the KLOA claim that there will be a reduction in traffic because of public transportation (the 3rd point in Mr. Millan's letter). Having lived in the north shore my entire life, and in Winnetka for the past 12 years, I have a pretty good grasp of how people get around town, and that's by cars and bikes and walking, and, if it's during peak times before school and work in the morning (say 6:45-9:00 AM) and after school and work in the afternoon and evening (say 2:30-7:00 PM), it's a lot of cars and a lot of people, including teenagers, in a hurry to drive to or from school, work, and activities. I fail to see how One Winnetka alleviates that. In fact, the increased congestion around Elm and Oak Streets are quite probably going to make the traffic worse, and Winnetka will end up with a problem such as we and Northfield have faced with Willow Road for so many years and that is now undergoing a painful fix through widening the road. Is a wider Elm Street going to be included in the Master Plan?

Which brings me to the final issue. The analogy of "putting the cart before the horse" seems so appropriate here. It was quite clear from the first proposal by Stonestreet that this developer has a vision for Winnetka that goes well beyond this sizable project. A project of the magnitude of One Winnetka should not even be considered without a current master plan for the Village. If One Winnetka proceeds before an updated master plan is approved, then One Winnetka, its developer and its partners, will, by its sheer existence, drive all decisions pertaining to the master plan. There will be a new Winnetka, unrecognizable to its current and former residents and that community feeling and a lot of history will be lost.

Respectfully submitted,

Isabel Fiore

July 23, 2015

Re: One Winnetka Project

Having attended the public meeting at the Village Hall last night, I had concerns about some of the points of discussion.

Impact of the project on the surrounding neighborhoods, especially the traffic activity assigned to the north side of the building. As an Arborvitae resident, this decision would greatly change our lives.

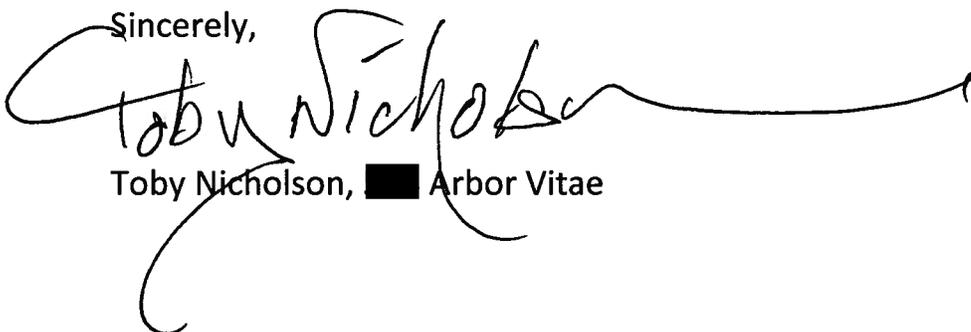
After 100 years New Trier High School has seen the desirableness of being able to drive around the school building. The remodeling going on now will include that ability.

That ability at One Winnetka Project would spread out the traffic patterns. 711 Lincoln complains that any activity at the south end of the project would impact 35 families. Only half of the tenants face the north side. So really, only 17 families would be affected. There are at least 17 families including Arborvitae, the town houses, and the workers at Hadley School for the Blind. It seems that traffic activity should be spread equally between the north and south sides of the project.

Regarding Hadley, I see blind workers and students walking up and down Elm Street every day. Workers and students walking down Elm Street, who go out for lunch, also.

One Winnetka Project is a big building and will have a big impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. Our house will be eclipsed in shadow most of the year. Please make that impact a small as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Toby Nicholson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Toby Nicholson, ■ Arbor Vitae

From: [John](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Subject: onewinnetka@winnetka.org
Date: Friday, July 24, 2015 9:10:37 AM

To Whom It May Concern: I am a ten year resident at 576 Arbor Vitae Road. I am extremely concerned about the detrimental effect the proposed Winnetka One project will have on the quality of life for all residents on our street. My wife and I used to ride our bikes on Arbor Vitae before we purchased our house in 2005. We loved the street, its proximity to shopping, and the low volume of cars due to its one-way traffic flow. The street has a cozy feel and all the neighbors know each other. I'm afraid much of the attractive qualities of our street will be lost if the Winnetka One project proceeds as requested by the builders. Elm St is an extremely busy commercial avenue during shopping hours. It is also a dangerous spot for pedestrians, diagonally parked cars exiting their spots, and for through traffic. If the current plans proceed to locate commercial drop off and pick up and refuse pickup on Elm Street adjacent to the Arbor Vitae/Elm St intersection, the volume of traffic will create additional safety concerns. Additionally, the noise of the large commercial trucks and the loud backup alarms required on these vehicles will create noise pollution that will affect all of us on Arbor Vitae. It would seem much more logical to locate these activities on the Lincoln Avenue side of the project where there are no single family dwellings. The developers of this site purchased their property at the height of the real estate bubble and are stuck with an overpriced property that requires a massive development to recoup their investment. I understand that this is a concern to the developers, but it is equally a concern to local residents who question why the village should allow variances that will result in a deteriorated neighborhood environment for all the homeowners who will be adversely affected. Anyone in the Village who walks or drives on the Elm St commercial district east of Lincoln Ave is aware of the congestion that exists during business hours. It is inconceivable that a massive commercial development like Winnetka One won't have a severe impact on all residents in our neighborhood. Sincerely, J. Monty Corley DDS, Col(ret) USAF, 576 Arbor Vitae Rd, Winnetka IL.

THE HADLEY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

July 24, 2015

Tina Dalman
Chair, Village Plan Commission
Village of Winnetka
510 Green Bay Road
Winnetka, Illinois 60093

Dear Chair Dalman and Members of the Village Plan Commission,

I would like to extend my thanks to the Plan Commission for its work on behalf of our community. However, I have new concerns regarding One Winnetka that I would like addressed prior to any Plan Commission action regarding the construction of One Winnetka.

My comments below are based upon what I learned at last evening's hearing:

It appears that all increased traffic caused by additional parking, truck deliveries and garbage collection will be relocated to the adjoining property of The Hadley School for the Blind. As I explained in an earlier communication, crossing the entrance to the Village parking lot is very dangerous to pedestrians, especially when it is icy, snowing or raining.

The proposed addition of a second level of parking, plus all deliveries and pick-ups for a complex the size of One Winnetka, including three restaurants, will severely impact the area, as there will be newly directed traffic through this proposed entrance/exit to the expanded Village parking lot. In addition to my employees who must cross this driveway to get to/from work and during lunch, there are children crossing the entrance daily to attend middle school in the fall, winter and spring, and to the beach in the summer. Often speeding down the hill, riding their bicycles on the sidewalk. While the developer testified to the screening walls he intends to build to block the parking structure from the view of pedestrians, please realize that this screening also blocks the view of trucks and cars exiting the parking lot. We have experienced many "close calls" regarding pedestrians—often kids racing past this entrance/exit. Nearly doubling the parking spaces and, worse, adding truck deliveries, along with screening walls, could make this situation far more dangerous and congested.

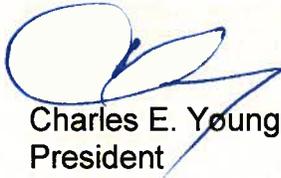


Page 2

Additionally, I am unaware, or did not see or hear, of any provision for set back and separation to accommodate sidewalk dining for the proposed three restaurants and retail sidewalk sales. Pedestrians already have to traverse around a gauntlet of bicycles, strollers, tables, chairs and planter boxes strewn across the Elm Street sidewalk—which was never designed to accommodate sidewalk mechanizing or dining. What design has been incorporated to address sidewalk dining and/or sales and related set back and separation?

I am requesting that these issues be addressed and planned for “upfront,” prior to any building permit considerations.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Young
President

CEY:caw

Copy: E. Gene Greable, President, Winnetka Village Council and
The Winnetka Village Council

From: [Alexandra Nichols](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Subject: Comments on Project
Date: Sunday, July 26, 2015 6:55:20 PM

I live at [REDACTED] Mount Pleasant Street in Winnetka and have attended four meetings by the Planning Commission which have reviewed the original application for this project and the revised application.

Having lived in Winnetka for thirty-four years, I feel strongly that this village has a culture which the residents cherish and which makes it such a desirable location in which to live. This project is counter to the culture in Winnetka for a number of reasons: its foot print is too large, its architecture is wrong for Winnetka and it will cause light, traffic and safety concerns for all the areas surrounding the project. It is insensitive to Conney's Pharmacy which will find it impossible to conduct business with construction, noise and dirt around it on three sides for several years, not to mention the mess in front of Conney's building. Conney's reflects the culture of the town. It is customer focused and responds to the many needs of Winnetka's residents.

The developers of this project seem driven by the financial return they expect from it. That is the primary concern they have.

All of us in Winnetka know that we need to revitalize the business and residential aspects of the downtown. This is not the answer!

Alexandra Nichols

From: [Alexandra Nichols](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Subject: Comments on the project
Date: Sunday, July 26, 2015 7:00:29 PM

I have lived in Winnetka for thirty-four years with my wife, Alexandra.

We have attended all of the public hearings on this project and read the materials which have been disseminated from the developers and the minutes from the meetings. It is clear that the size and scope of this project is inappropriate for Winnetka.

We should maintain and support our current standards without the multiple and non-acceptable variances that this project would require. I think the arrogance of expecting the Village of Winnetka to compromise the existing zoning rules for the financial benefit of the developers is totally unacceptable.

John Nichols
[REDACTED] Mount Pleasant Street
Winnetka, Illinois

**Barbara and James Marran
711 Oak Street
Winnetka, IL 60093-2549**



Phone: 847/446-7473

jmarran@sbcglobal.net

Good evening. My name is James Marran. My wife Barbara and I live at 711 Oak Street, Apartment #402 in Winnetka.

While the developers have made an effort to make modifications to the original One Winnetka Plan proposal, less is still more.

Even with the proposed changes, it remains that a massive structure with rental units, townhouses, commercial space, underground parking, and a public plaza will still occupy a 1.6 acre site. That's the equivalent of one and a half football fields.

Density, scale, congestion and increased traffic volume remain issues that will significantly alter the style, tone, and tempo of the business district. Indeed that is the purpose of Transit Oriented Development (or TOD) that is the model that drives the One Winnetka Project. Since 1990, scores of TOD communities have been built in metropolitan areas across the country, but none in a community as small as Winnetka. As commercially attractive as the TODs might seem, there is no real evidence to date on how a

TOD affects the quality of life in areas where they exist. That means that the very model itself is a gamble at a time when demographics are changing as are shopping patterns and the way people will continue to use traditional business districts such as Winnetka's Elm Street in the wake of big box stores and the internet.

While the new renderings of the Project on display in the Project office on Lincoln are attractive, they raise a question about the aesthetics of the exterior with its imposing grey turret at the corner of Lincoln and Elm and the a brick facing that seems to be orange in color on the building themselves. Such a facing is certainly not complementary to the modified Tudor-style red brick buildings in the business district. The result is not only a clash of architectural styles but a clash of colors as well.

Another concern is Response #4 in Attachment C that affects commuters crossing from the garages in the One Winnetka building to the Green Bay Trail to access the Metra Station. Posting signage as a remedy and proposing that cyclists should yield to pedestrians is as insensitive as it is unrealistic. The Green Bay Trail is a much-used public right-of-way for joggers, bikers, walkers, skaters, stroller pushers, bird watchers and on and on. It

is one of the Village's great assets attracting significant numbers of people daily throughout the year. Implementing the proposed solution raises serious safety concerns.

And one final point of a more general nature. The purpose of any development in any community is the obligation to plan wisely to anticipate future needs. Keeping sustainability as a priority is essential if environmental limits are to be respected. That includes a sense of proportion assuring that the appropriate relationship of one thing to another exists in terms of size, use of space, and the complementarity of all the parts to the whole.

The One Winnetka Project challenges us to make hard choices and difficult decisions. The overarching reality is that once begun, there is no turning back.

Thank you.

Dear



Yikes- I've been moved to Skokie, Evanston, Rogers Park. Who authorized the plans for East Elm. Has anybody looked at the architecture? or on West Elm - I do not want to pay for that behemoth. Please tell us who authorized the plan; I won't vote for them again.

In case you don't understand - I don't like the design & especially the height. Don't we have zoning laws?

B Robertson

From: [Kristin Ziv](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Subject: One Winnetka Comments for Plan Commission
Date: Monday, July 27, 2015 12:26:25 PM

Dear Commissioners:

I attended last week's meeting, and I feel the Plan Commission passed up an opportunity to send the One Winnetka plan back to the developer for further revisions. I hope you vote to do that at the Aug. 26 meeting.

In your straw poll of commissioners, there was an almost even split of those who would approve it and those who wouldn't. Even those who were inclined to let it move forward said they would do so "with conditions." From what I heard from the public and commissioners, objections to height and style remain the major impediments.

I have the same objections. Although David Trandel likes the Beaux Art style, not many people share his view. He is one person among many, and we all will have to live for this for a long time if it's approved. The style would be appropriate for Chicago or Paris -- not Winnetka. While Winnetka is an affluent community, its public spaces are not pretentious. The proposed buildings are pretentious, not-in-keeping with their surroundings, and faux elegant. I think my opinion is shared by the majority.

An architect friend who is familiar with Lagrange's work told me Lagrange is perfectly adept at designing other styles. He just needs to be asked to do by David Trandel. I would urge you to ask Trandel to come up with a fresh, less derivative design that's more to the liking of the community. I'd also like to see a more reasonable scale to the project, but that's secondary to the off-putting style.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kristin Ziv
[REDACTED] Arbor Vitae Rd.
Winnetka

From: [James Torvik](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Cc: [James Torvik](#)
Subject: ONE Winnetka
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2015 12:09:50 PM

Plan Commission Village of Winnetka

As an architect, Winnetka resident and neighbor living in close proximity to the proposed development, I support ONE Winnetka with certain reservations as outlined in comments articulated below.

1. The existing buildings on the site are poorly conceived architecturally, underutilized and do not warrant renovation or preservation. They should be demolished to make space for the proposed new development. It would be terrific if Conney's Pharmacy could participate in the project.
2. Site master planning concepts for the proposed development are extremely well done, They should be applauded and implemented;
 - a. Relocating parking for commuters and residents below ground is efficient, convenient and removes an eyesore;
 - b. Reducing the existing street right-of-way for Lincoln Avenue and creating a "drivable" plaza for the community creates a civic asset. The reduced street area will be a desirable space, bordered by the new development, enhanced landscaping and exhibit better visual proportions than the current amorphous sea of blacktop and on-street parking;
 - c. Master Plan definition of the beautifully landscaped paths and spaces leading from the ONE Plaza to the Rail Station, renovated public park, Village Hall and pedestrian connector to the Post Office site are well defined concepts that should be implemented. The creation of a prominent forecourt for the Village Hall is a tremendous civic improvement.
3. The proposed development program includes two levels of retail. Based on current retail activity in Winnetka and national trends, it seems unlikely [that retail tenants will successfully occupy the second level. I recommend making the second level retail portions of the development residential apartments. This will have the net effect of potentially lowering building height and increasing the opportunity for success at ground level.](#)
4. The proposed building density is appropriate for the site and will have a positive impact on the community. Located adjacent to the Rail Station, the development is an excellent example of "Transit Oriented Development", a concept that successfully transforms communities throughout the country. As outlined in the developer's presentation, many Winnetka residents desire to stay in the community after their

children are grown. Moving to a smaller residence is often desirable and having a choice within the community is another positive aspect of the development.

5. While I am personally not opposed to the 6 - story building height, the proposed building height could be further mitigated by eliminating second level retail. This is an architectural design problem best solved by the architects. I favor some flexibility on the 45' zoning height limitation to foster timely project approval and implementation.

6. Architectural style is subjective; not everyone likes the same style. In my opinion, Winnetka is NOT Paris and the French Second Empire style is best left in France. At the same time, 1920's half timber Tudor architecture is fine for Winnetka in the 1920's, but this is 2015. New buildings should not mimic styles from the past, they should express the best qualities of our time. The revised Elm Street design illustrates a movie-set cacophony of carefully contrived visual chaos. The architects should be challenged to create and submit revised elevations for each of the façades; facades that are current and fresh.

This opportunity for new development in Winnetka should be carefully studied and reviewed. Many residents will make comments – dialogue is good. Everyone should consider ways to positively improve the proposal within a reasonable framework for success for all interested parties.

James A. Torvik

Registered Architect

████████ Arbor Vitae Road

Winnetka, Illinois 60093

From: Thomas Eilers [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2015 2:42 PM

To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@comcast.net;
[REDACTED]@comcast.net; [REDACTED].com; m [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Subject: One Winnetka

Dear Plan Commission Members,

Paul Dunn reached out to the BCDC members for comments on the One Winnetka proposals.

I thought I would share the my observations sent to Paul with the Plan Commission:

Paul,

Sorry I could not respond with comments on One Winnetka before your July 14 request.

It would take a great deal of homework to analyze the initial and revised proposals submitted by the developers. In my trustee days, I would have done that. Since this matter did not come before the BCDC, I have not done that in-depth due diligence.

As the BCDC representative to the Plan Commission, I am sure it was appreciated by all members that you asked our for our comments.

Here are my observations, most of which have to do with process.

1. The Village Council recently approved an increase in building height up to four stories/45 feet.
2. The new One Winnetka proposal is predominately 59 feet with some elements at 70 feet; and some sections 6 stories.
3. The PD provisions provide for modifications to zoning standards based on guidelines which were summarized in Staff's Plan Commission Agenda Report dated March 17, 2015.
4. The PD Ordinance was passed by the Council while I was a trustee. It is an effective tool for promoting quality development, not constrained by arbitrary zoning provisions. The concept is that more intense development is permitted as a trade off for benefits to the Village. Examples of these benefits would be additional height allowance or waiving upper story set back requirements in exchange for more ground level open space, or more creative facade design. I do not see any such trade-off benefits accruing to the Village in the revised proposal. To the contrary, the Village is contributing its open space to the overall development concept including expanding the footprint of the building itself. If the facade as proposed is more extraordinary and costly than typical alternatives, I did not see that quantified as an inducement for Village concessions.
5. The 40,000 square feet of retail space is a significant portion of the development and this component is not clear. It would be helpful for the developer to provide its preliminary notions of how the retail space will be demised, and it's concept of what the retail mix will be in addition to the three proposed restaurants with more detail than contained in the SRS April 7, 2015 memo. Retail components of mixed use developments are typically the weakest use segment. Of course, this ends up being the developers economic problem, but these vacancies become unwelcome eyesores that affect the retail image of the entire district. If second story retail is proposed, an even greater challenge is created.
6. It has been demonstrated in many arenas that underground parking intended for retail customers has more often failed than not. Parking intended for retail customers should be provided above ground. This also applies to transit orientated developments. At certain critical hours, parking in the East Elm District is tight. If the proposed retail development further aggravates this condition, the entire East Elm District retailers will suffer.
7. The discussion needs to be reformulated. This should not be considered a discussion cast in extreme, polarizing positions. This is not an issue of no growth vs. pro growth. The One Winnetka discussion is not "do we accept as proposed" or else we stagnate. This is a legitimate dialogue concerning the impact of development scale and the precedent effect of zoning concessions requested in this PD process. It is the first test of Winnetka's PD process.
8. In fact, many voices in the community - through the Caucus, and already in reaction to the previous One Winnetka proposal, have expressed that density and height are a concern.
9. In its consideration of Post Office proposals, the trustees several years ago conducted a bus tour of neighboring communities that had developed their transit orientated corridors such as Palatine, Arlington Heights, and Des Plaines. This "hands on" experience was very helpful in gaining an appreciation of the relationship between setting, scale and critical mass. Those who have the very serious responsibility to approve, deny or modify the One Winnetka proposals may want to incorporate this experience in their analytical process.
10. Land cost - the developer's call and risk - should not be the force dictating use intensity. The notion that the present proposal is the only way the project is economical is specious.
11. The Village has already "won" because this site has already been assembled and therefore, it will be developed. If the present plan is not accepted, there will be a team that will move forward on a more modest scale. And if the site is developed less intensely than proposed, it will still be a credit to Winnetka, perhaps more so than the proposal now before the Plan Commission.

My hope is that the conversation will continue and not be marred by catastrophic dialogue.

Thanks Paul, for reaching out. I hope the above is helpful.

Tom

From: [Isabel Fiore](#)
To: [OneWinnetka](#)
Subject: commuter parking
Date: Wednesday, July 29, 2015 1:24:50 PM

Isn't there an inherent incongruity, in transit-oriented development, in moving commuter parking AWAY from public transit? Taking spots away from the train station on the east side (along Lincoln Ave.) to a garage a block away is going to be very inconvenient to people using Metra (and also Pace).

-----Original Message-----

From: Contact Us Form [<mailto:noreply@winnetka.org>]

Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2015 9:21 AM

To: Kathie Scanlan

Subject: Contact Us Submission (Village of Winnetka Illinois)

A new contact us submission has been received:

Concerning: Community Development

Contact Type: Other

Name: Brenda Rossini

E-mail: [REDACTED]

E-mail Format: HTML

Address 1: [REDACTED] Elm St.

City: Winnetka

State: Illinois

Zip/Postal Code: 60093

Country: United States

Subject: latest email about "One Village

Comment: Mrs. Holland's objections are outdated. The Village is not candid about the UNINHABITED greater part of town east of Green Bay, and many other residential areas. For Sale signs go up, and then they disappear. Sales also seem to be to straw buyers. Ttake an early morning walk any morning and see for yourselves. Heed what the former owner of Body & Sole said--there aren't any people here! You should have built a pool. You should develop the Fell store. You've got to bring back residents.

Phone: [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Contact Us Form [<mailto:noreply@winnetka.org>]

Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2015 9:21 AM

To: Kathie Scanlan

Subject: Contact Us Submission (Village of Winnetka Illinois)

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Concerning: Community Development

Contact Type: Other

Name: Brenda Rossini

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E-mail Format: HTML

Address 1: [REDACTED] Elm St.

City: Winnetka

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Phone: [REDACTED]

SWANSON, MARTIN & BELL, LLP

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July 30, 2015

Village of Winnetka President
Village of Winnetka Council
Village of Winnetka Plan Commission
510 Green Bay Road
Winnetka, Illinois 60093

Dear all:

I serve as the managing partner of Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP. I have received a copy of a letter dated July 22, 2015 written by Frank Petrek of my office to you concerning the Village of Winnetka Plan Commission and Case Number 15-10P-PD.

I write to clarify that the views expressed in Mr. Petrek's July 22, 2015 letter are the opinions of Mr. Petrek, and not the views of Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP. Our firm has taken no position in the matter.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

SWANSON, MARTIN & BELL, LLP



Timothy G. Nickels
Managing Partner

TGN:cmd



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 Temple Judea Mizpah, Skokie
 Trinity United Church of Christ, Deerfield
 Winnetka Congregational Church

August 19, 2015

VIA EMAIL (dtrandel@stonestreetusa.com) AND REGULAR MAIL

David Trandel, CEO
 Stonestreet Partners
 2920 W. Euclid Ave.
 Arlington Heights, IL 600054

Dear Mr. Trandel:

I am writing to you on behalf of Open Communities. Founded in 1972, Open Communities is dedicated to fostering economically and culturally diverse northern suburbs. The agency educates, advocates and organizes for housing, economic and social justice, working collaboratively with current and prospective residents, local groups and congregations, and municipalities. Open Communities is also the north suburban area's qualified fair housing enforcement organization.

It has come to our attention that a new proposal from Stonestreet Partners and Winnetka Station LLP would redevelop the former Fell property on Lincoln Avenue, two blocks from our office, into a mixed-use building that would include over 70 luxury rental apartments. The proposal is ambitious and it involves Village-owned land, several stores, and affects the Hadley School for the Blind. As I wrote to the Winnetka Plan Commission regarding this proposal on March 25, 2015 (see attached), for a community impact of this magnitude, Winnetka is within its rights – and in fact, would be an appropriate steward of the public good – to demand of the developer a stated community benefit.

I testified before the Winnetka Plan Commission on June 24, 2015 to express my concern on two critical issues:

1. Include at least 15% of all units as affordable under the definition of the Illinois Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act (see the attached [2015 Affordability Chart](#) or click on the hyperlink); and
2. Ensure that in both the marketing and renting of units, Stonestreet Partners complies with the Fair Housing Act.

Affordable housing is not only economically feasible within a larger development but such housing meets a major community need in Winnetka, one which is recognized in its Affordable Housing Plan. Numerous studies that when a community's housing stock accommodates a broad level of



incomes, it is economically and socially healthier. These residents work and shop locally, and are highly vested in the community. Moreover, municipalities generally require fewer parking spaces for the affordable units. Moreover, the data supports the need in Winnetka:

- **Winnetka residents of all ages are more strapped by their own housing costs than ever.** The number of shelter-burdened homeowners today has *more than doubled* to 21%, up from just 10% in 1990. Nearly *half* of Winnetka renters are burdened (47%) compared to 21% in 1990.
- **Winnetka has lost over 40% of its rental stock since 1990**, with just 156 units when the Village had 524 in 1990.
- **Only 2.5% of Winnetka’s housing stock is considered affordable** today by the state of Illinois, compared to 4.1% ten years ago. The goal for a healthy housing market is 10%.
- **94% of Winnetka’s public employees do not live in Winnetka and 73% indicated that lack of affordable housing options in the Village is among the top 3 reasons**, according to a 2007 zip code survey by the Village. According to a survey of 496 public employees conducted by the UIC Voorhees Center for the Winnetka Plan Commission’s housing needs study of (2010), 42% had household incomes of under \$100,000 per year, 39% were families with children. (See pages 54-62 of the study).
- **Winnetka residents have already shown their support for mixed-income housing.** In a well-attended public forum about the Post Office site held by the Village and its planning consultants in 2007, *five out of seven focus groups indicated a preference for some affordable housing* at the site.

Designating at least 15% of the 70 units as affordable – 11 units – would contribute to meeting the needs of long-time residents or local workers who cannot afford market rates but who are nonetheless valuable to the community. As a member of the State Housing Appeals Board that oversees the state’s Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act (AHPAA), this action would also conform to the Act.

Regarding compliance with Fair Housing Act requirements, Open Communities is very disturbed by the language in your Project Narrative document to the Winnetka Plan Commission. Key phrases are reproduced here (emphasis ours):

From Page 5:

“...Winnetka is not immune from broader demographic trends. People are living longer, fuller lives. The senior sector of the housing market has greatly expanded in the span of a single generation. One need look no further than Evanston where senior residences at Three Crowns, Westminster Place and The Matter have greatly expanded. Accompanying the growth in seniors-only communities like these has been the private sector apartment and condominium markets that have provided alternative housing to empty nesters throughout the Chicago region. The aging residents of “bedroom” communities seek to

sustain lifetime activity patterns and social contacts even as the burdens of home ownership become too demanding and alternative options are limited.

At its heart, the intent of the One Winnetka project is intended to respond to these trends and the development context they have created, and reinvigorate the east Elm district by replacing outdated and unattractive structures with high quality architecture and creating an active and sustainable destination for the broader Winnetka community, while providing a residential alternative for long time residents with roots in Winnetka who seek a simpler lifestyle in a town center environment.”

From Page 18:

“Target market is mostly affluent empty-nesters with little burden to schools or other village services.”

In an interview published in *North Shore Weekend* in its May 16-17 edition, you are quoted as saying, “We are targeting the empty-nester market because many residents raise their families in Winnetka and want to simplify their lives and stay here.... We also envision young professionals who want to try living in Winnetka before they choose to buy something.”

With this clear language regarding the target market combined with the fact that more than half of all units are projected to have only one bedroom and the remainder primarily two bedrooms (according to the April 2015 marketing plan from Tracy Cross & Associates, Inc. that projected 113 units), Open Communities can only conclude that the housing here is specifically tailored to families without children which is a violation of familial status provisions of the Fair Housing Act. Indeed, the Cross report only emphasizes the “*excellent* location” (emphasis in the original) with regard to Metra, “regional employment, dining, shopping, healthcare and entertainment” with no mention of proximity to schools.

Exclusionary intent could subject Stonestreet Partners to a legal challenge. In 1998, in response to a fair housing complaint involving properties in Highland Park filed by Open Communities with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (*Interfaith Housing Center vs. Coldwell Banker*, HUD Case Number 05-98-0229-8), Coldwell Banker agreed to stop using the terms “empty nester” and “adult” in their advertising unless the housing they were marketing met all the requirements for senior housing under the Housing for Older Persons Act. In 2009, Open Communities and the Illinois Attorney General settled a fair housing complaint (2007 L 010265, *Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs v. 1630 Sheridan Corporation* and 2007 L 009946, *People ex rel. IDHR et al. v. 1630 Sheridan Corporation*, et al.) against a 104-unit cooperative in Wilmette that discriminated against families with children although it was not a senior building.

Now is the time for Stonestreet Partners and the Village of Winnetka ensure that any new housing is indeed open to all protected classes under all applicable fair housing laws. It can also invite families across a range of income levels by complying with AHPAA. Open Communities is happy to assist you with any fair housing questions, including compliance with design and

construction requirements to accommodate people with disabilities, and to provide you with referrals to resources who can work with you on making affordable housing viable.

Feel free to contact me at (847) 501-5760, ext. 406 or gail@open-communities.org with any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail Schechter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gail Schechter
Executive Director

cc: Brian Norkus, Staff Liaison, and Tina Dalman, Chair, Winnetka Plan Commission