



# VILLAGE · OF · WINNETKA

*Incorporated in 1869*

**Winnetka Plan Commission**

**and**

**Winnetka Zoning Board of Appeals**

**Joint meeting agenda**

**July 24, 2013**

The **Winnetka Plan Commission** will convene a joint meeting with the Zoning Board of Appeals on Wednesday, July 24, 2013, in the Council Chambers of Winnetka Village Hall, 510 Green Bay Road, Winnetka, Illinois, at **7:30 P.M.**

## Agenda

1. Introduction of new Plan Commission members (Chairman Bill Krucks)
2. Adoption of April 24, 2013 meeting minutes;
3. Welcome of Zoning Board of Appeals members;
4. Orientation on rules and procedures by Village Attorney Kathy Janega;

Note: Public comment is permitted on all agenda items.

The Village of Winnetka, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, requests that persons with disabilities, who require certain accommodations to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting or have questions about the accessibility of the meeting facilities, contact the Village ADA Coordinator, at 510 Green Bay Road, Winnetka, Illinois 60093 (telephone: (847) 716-3541; T.T.Y.: (847) 501-6041), no less than 3 working days before the hearing date.

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**WINNETKA PLAN COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 24, 2013**

**Members Present:** Chuck Dowding, Acting Chairman  
Jan Bawden  
Jack Coladarci  
Paul Dunn  
John Golan  
Louise Holland  
Keta McCarthy  
Jeanne Morette  
John Thomas

**Non-voting Members Present:** Scott Myers  
Patrick Corrigan

**Members Absent:** Matt Hulsizer

**Village Staff:** Brian Norkus, Assistant Director of Community  
Development

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dowding at 7:30 p.m.

**Welcome and Introduction of New Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Member, Scott Myers**

The Commission welcomed new Zoning Board of Appeals liaison member, Scott Myers, to the Commission. Each Commission member then introduced themselves to Mr. Myers.

**Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Dowding asked for a motion to adopt the February 28, 2013 meeting minutes with comments and revisions.

A motion was made by Mr. Thomas and seconded by several Commission members to approve the Plan Commission meeting minutes from February 28, 2013, as amended. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**Consideration of Requested Special Use Permit Request by New Trier High School, for Baseball Netting Duke Childs Field, Northwest Corner of Willow and Hibbard Road, for Consistency with Village 2020 Comprehensive Plan (Continued from Previous Meeting)**

Steve Linke introduced himself to the Commission as the Facilities Manager at New Trier High School. He then referred to a letter in the meeting minutes which went into how they reached the decision for the 50 foot net and what the difficulty would be if it were lowered in 5 foot increments. Mr. Linke noted that a 50 foot net would stop 95% of balls and that if it were dropped 10 feet, it would only stop 85% of balls, a 35 foot fence would stop 75% of balls, a 30 foot net would stop 60% of balls and that a 25 foot net would stop 45% of balls. He described it as a sliding scale. He then stated that the way the height was figured was that they took the distance from home plate to the back stop at all different angles, along with the distance to Willow Road which is how they came up with running the netting 100 feet down the first base line. Mr. Linke indicated that there is no need to go further since a ball cannot reach Willow Road at that angle.

Mr. Linke stated that they were also asked if they could shift the angle of the ball field. He informed the Commission that they looked into that alternative and that it would cost \$400,000 and would not solve the problem of balls entering Willow Road. He then stated that instead of a fence at 100 feet in length, it might only run 80 feet in length and that they would still need the structure there. Mr. Linke reiterated that it would be cost prohibitive to shift the field.

Mr. Linke stated that they were asked to provide a landscape plan. He referred the Commission to the first illustration and stated that they are also proposing to take down the chain link backstop fence and putting up a new chain link fence at 8 feet from dugout to dugout in black to blend in with the netting and attach the netting to the top of the fence. Mr. Linke indicated that it would be a big improvement over the existing system, as well as aesthetically and for safety reasons.

Scott Freres of The Lakota Group referred to fencing which is 50 feet tall. He noted that there are no trees which would be 50 feet tall. Mr. Freres informed the Commission that they looked at the idea of how big of a plant would be needed to provide greenery and soften the netting. He stated that they also did a photograph similar to what it would look like coming down Willow Road. Mr. Freres informed the Commission that the illustration identified the location of four large evergreen trees and stated that there would also be bigger shade trees closer to the dugout which is very limited in terms of space and which would not result in the loss of parking. He stated that there would also be another large tree further away.

Mr. Freres stated that there would also be trees on the outfield line away from the spectator areas.

He identified the caliper size of the trees and the 18 foot evergreens. Mr. Freres stated that they do not want trees on top of the benches. He then referred to the visual plan photograph on Willow Road and that they put leaves on the trees [in the rendering]. Mr. Freres stated that the area cannot be screened in the winter. He then identified the trees lining Willow Road in the buffer area, parking, the space along the back of the dugout area and behind the bleachers with the 50 foot screen. Mr. Freres stated that no matter what, you would see the screen. He also identified the massing of evergreen trees behind the bleachers and stated that the area stayed relatively dry in heavy rain. Mr. Freres stated that it would give a sense of utilizing the space there with regard to what they can do in terms of planting. He indicated that while it is not a complete solution, an effort was made.

Mr. Freres then identified two columnar trees which would be Norway maple trees at 30 feet in height. He referred to Mr. Linke's comment with regard to the idea of tilting the baseball diamond and stated that while they did not do an engineering drawing, they did calculations and that with regard to the cost to shift the diamond on an angle of 10%, at the end of the day, he referred to the cost of moving the dugouts, re-grading the field and shifting lines and infield sandbags, etc. which would be significantly more than the approach they are taking. Mr. Freres added that they asked the Plan Commission for their opinions and stated that they wanted to start in the right direction to solve the visual impact.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Commission was told that the cost of the netting would be between \$40,000 and \$50,000. He then asked what is the cost of the landscaping.

Mr. Freres responded that it would be \$30,000, along with additional items.

Mr. Myers asked how big were the evergreens.

Mr. Freres stated that they would be installed at a height of 18 feet and that they would grow to a height of 20 to 25 feet.

Mr. Golan asked why the fence needs to be 50 feet high behind home plate. He referred to an extra 30 to 40 feet to Willow Road for a ball hit behind the batter and that most balls would be caught by a slightly curved fence behind.

Mr. Freres identified the red dashed line as the new fence.

Randy Oberembt, the Athletic Director at New Trier, noted that the existing overhang has a height of 28 feet and that they are taking the chain link fence away. He indicated that based on the previous rendering, it is gone.

Mr. Linke reiterated that there would only be an 8 foot high fence behind that area and that if you looked at it now, it is 28 feet with an overhang. He noted that the overhang would go away and that then they would need a height in the 35 foot range to stop the same amount of balls. Mr. Linke reiterated that they are losing a lot of balls now.

Mr. Golan informed the Commission that he went to a game last week and that in three innings, there were six balls on Willow Road. He described it as a real problem which needed a solution.

Mike Napoleon informed the Commission that there are a lot more right handed hitters and that most balls are hit behind the backstop. He then identified the location where they are going straight over and that they are hit hard and will carry. Mr. Napoleon then identified the area where it would not realistically make sense to be at 50 feet in height and that it would not look good otherwise.

Mr. Myers asked about keeping the angle over home plate the way it is now with a height of 35

feet.

Mr. Napoleon responded that with regard to the overhang, he did not see it catching a lot more balls. He stated that what they should do is move it closer to home plate, but that alternative would take away as to what the rules state with regard to where everything should be which is 50 feet away from home plate for any obstructions.

Mr. Freres added that they want the catchers to play foul balls.

Ms. Holland asked with regard to the poles, would they have a 16 inch diameter on top of the black fence.

Mr. Linke stated that they would not and that they would be in the ground behind the black fence and that the netting would start at the top of the new fence. He also stated that the new chain link fence would sit in front of the poles.

Ms. Holland asked why can they not continue the chain link fence all the way down an area she identified.

Mr. Linke responded that they can only go so high with the chain link fence and that otherwise, it would not be visually appealing.

Ms. Holland stated that she meant for the chain link fence to go all the way down and for it to be painted black so that it would be consistent.

Mr. Linke indicated that they can look into that.

Ms. Holland then referred to a fence installation on I-294 on the east side which she commented is really awful looking. She asked if the proposal would be the same installation as that.

Mike Jacobs, the contractor, informed the Commission that installation was done piecemeal and that it will be changed. He confirmed that the proposal would not look like that.

Ms. Holland stated that she is bothered by the size of the posts.

Mr. Jacobs stated that they have to follow the code of the State of Illinois.

Mr. Golan stated that when he drove by [a similar netting system in] Wilmette, it was not visually unappealing.

Ms. McCarthy stated that in the Design Review Board minutes, they spoke about netting on Willow Road west in Northfield on Wagner and whether they are comparing that. She indicated that it is not clear and asked if that is a smaller system.

Mr. Oberembt confirmed that is the Northfield Park District property and that the system is

smaller. He informed the Commission that it is only a 30 foot fence and that it had no netting.

Mr. Thomas asked if the 16 inch diameter poles were tapered.

Mr. Jacobs confirmed that they are not tapered.

Mr. Linke stated that the black color would blend in.

Ms. Morette stated that with aluminum, you can see through it and that black would blend in.

Mr. Linke then stated that when they talked at the last meeting, they looked at the golf netting shown and that for the netting, black is optimal. He then provided a photograph to the Commission and indicated that everyone used black since it is easier to see through. Mr. Linke also stated that the photograph showed a 50 foot high system with 16 inch poles.

Mr. Myers asked how would the diameter of the poles shrink if the netting had a lower height. He then referred to 40 feet.

Mr. Napoleon stated that it would be 10 3/4 inches and that it would also depend on soil conditions. He indicated that it may work with 12 3/4 poles based on the soil. Mr. Napoleon then stated that from a distance, you would not notice a significant difference. He informed the Commission that they need the diameter for the durability of the poles and to follow the engineering code.

Mr. Golan asked with regard to an alternative for landscaping, there is a big expanse which is unshielded where the poles are and he asked if they could take out a couple of parking spaces and put in placards and additional trees there. He stated that would make the parking lot look better and would also help with screening.

Mr. Linke responded that they can look into that.

Mr. Coladarci asked how many foul balls were there per game.

Mr. Napoleon estimated 7 or 8.

Mr. Coladarci asked if a 35 foot system would stop 75% of the balls.

Mr. Napoleon stated that for those balls making their way out there, they are hit that way over the dugout on the first base side and that a lot of those balls go higher than 30 feet making it that far. He stated that a 40 foot netting system would have a better chance of catching balls.

Mr. Coladarci stated that the request would result in a lifetime change for the face of the Village. He commented that the netting has a certain industrial look and that he would like it if they could avoid it or minimize it if possible. He then asked if they can accomplish most of what they are looking for with a lower net.

Mr. Napoleon responded that at that height, another 10 feet may not matter. He also stated that you will see the big poles whether the netting system is 40 feet or 50 feet. Mr. Napoleon then stated that to him, they would save a lot more balls at 40 feet than with the existing system. He added that they will make it look nice and that it will be appealing. Mr. Napoleon also stated that it is a good idea and that they will make it look more attractive with shrubbery.

Mr. Coladarci then asked why is it necessary to put it up now as opposed to 10 or 15 years ago.

Mr. Napoleon stated that the children are bigger and stronger and that they swing harder. He stated that it also deals with pitcher velocity from the stronger players, as well as different bat construction. Mr. Napoleon noted that there were not this many balls going into the road 15 years ago.

Chairman Dowding asked if there were any other questions or new observations.

Mr. Coladarci stated that he noticed that there still have been no public hearings and that he did not understand why that has not been done yet.

Mr. Thomas stated that the applicant has not even addressed the question and that this is the third time around.

Mr. Linke noted that they went before the Zoning Board of Appeals and that the meeting was posted for a couple weeks. He also stated that it was a public hearing.

Mr. Freres asked if they meant an open house workshop.

Mr. Thomas confirmed that is correct.

Mr. Coladarci stated that he was thinking in terms of what the Park District goes through which is a lot of hearings and community input. He stated that the community usually understands all of the ramifications when the Park District does something. Mr. Coladarci described the request as a 50 to 75 year project which would change the way things look and that they would be making a significant change to part of the Village. He commented that the big ugly structure would fly in the face of the caucus and survey done in the Village which stated that they should pursue and protect green space. Mr. Coladarci also described the request as a visually injury to the Village which is why he is thinking that the applicant should do it the way the Park District does it with public hearings and to get the people who are living with this to comment.

Mr. Golan referred to a posting for that as a white sign on the fence in the corner. He stated that after several meetings, they can make it work after the plans are modified. Mr. Golan then stated that to put up the netting system without Village input would not be a good idea.

Chairman Dowding stated that the applicant looked at a number of alternatives and that to move the parking lot would cost \$200,000. He also referred to the alternative of flipping the softball

and hardball fields which would cost \$400,000. Chairman Dowding stated that the fence is viewed in a skew and that when the photograph was taken from far away, you can see the fencing when you look at it on an angle. He indicated that he appreciated what was done and to bring in Mr. Freres and plantings and trees. Chairman Dowding stated that even more can be done with regard to the poles and referred to the view of the poles from the road which is where his anxiety came in.

Chairman Dowding then stated that with regard to solutions, he informed the Commission that he got a quote from Golf Range Netting for a fiber glass pole which measured 9 inches at the top and 18 inches on the bottom. He indicated that there is not much force at the top so that there is no need for it to be as big in diameter. Chairman Dowding stated that from the second natural manufacturer, they have a pole which measured 4 to 5 inches at the top and 16 inches on the bottom. He also stated that the cost would be lower. Chairman Dowding then identified the 9 inch pole at the top and stated that solutions are possible. He stated that as they move forward with landscaping, the applicant should move forward and hire an engineer to design poles to make it happen. Chairman Dowding reiterated that it can be made far less visually obtrusive than it was before. He referred to the first bid which included retractable netting to be taken down in the winter. Chairman Dowding stated that the applicant should work on the poles more and that they have made great progress with the landscaping. He noted that he wanted that information to be part of the record transmitted.

Chairman Dowding stated that to move forward, they recognize that the Commission is only recommending to the Village Council and that this is their third time here. He indicated that he would like for the request to move forward to the Village Council to deal with.

Mr. Thomas stated that he did not agree and that the Commission has heard nothing three times with regard to a public hearing and that the applicant has not done a complete job. He then stated technically, they are doing great. Mr. Thomas added that unless the applicant says that they are going to schedule a public hearing, the Commission should not ask the Village Council to consider the request.

Mr. Golan suggested that the request go through and pass specific recommendations such as holding a public hearing and tapering the poles. He indicated that he agreed that the request needed to move forward.

Chairman Dowding asked Mr. Norkus if there is a possible way to make a recommendation with a step before the Village Council and that he is hearing there is a consensus that the request should move forward with a more broadly advertised public meeting such as those conducted by the Park District.

Mr. Norkus stated that the Village process for evaluation of Special Use Permit requests include review by three Village boards, with final approval by a fourth, the Village Council. He stated that notice of each lower board meeting has been mailed to the neighboring property owners within 250 feet. Mr. Norkus stated the minutes of the meetings will reflect the discussion regarding broader community input, and explained that while the Plan Commission can comment

regarding the desirability, he stated that making such a hearing a condition of approval would be problematic since it modifies the standard notice procedures in the zoning ordinance.

Chairman Dowding then stated that one way would be to go through the 14 findings and that at the end, have a different resolution than what is there and to add the necessary wording for a public hearing.

Mr. Coladarci stated that he is concerned with the fact that this is the third meeting and that no public hearing has been held not like that which the Park District has done. He indicated that he is afraid that the applicant is not going to do it. Mr. Coladarci referred to the amount of trouble when they do not have public hearings. He stated that if the Commission made that recommendation, the applicant would say that they will look into it. Mr. Coladarci then stated that he felt that not having those meetings even though the Commission recommended it three times struck him as not having good faith.

Mr. Myers stated that one option would be to have the applicant to come back to the Zoning Board of Appeals and that the Zoning Board of Appeals suggested that the applicant ask for a continuance since they had a number of questions. He stated that there is a specific part of that board's approval for a special use which is that that they have to address the question of whether the request would result in a change which is substantially injurious to the surrounding area and enjoyment of property. Mr. Myers stated that to be fair, if they do not have input from the public on that matter, they need to withhold approval. He then stated that when the applicant comes back to the Zoning Board of Appeals, they would have had public hearings which would make them feel more comfortable that they addressed that particular element.

Mr. Coladarci then referred to the bureaucratic necessity to get this done. He stated that if it was not so massive and obvious and long term, it would be okay. Mr. Coladarci stated that he felt that it would be a mistake in that New Trier has not dealt with the broader public perception issue.

Mr. Myers stated that there is another way to hold them accountable.

Chairman Dowding asked who is responsible for advertising the meeting.

Mr. Thomas stated that it would be New Trier.

Chairman Dowding stated that there could be further stipulations for suggestions as to how the meeting is advertised.

Mr. Coladarci stated that it should be whatever internal procedures are in place for having public hearings.

Mr. Oberembt stated that they have heard clearly what the Commission is saying and that he can transmit that message to the superintendent with regard to the public hearing.

Mr. Coladarci stated that it would help the Commission say that they have protected the Village and done their job.

Mr. Golan stated that there are two issues, the first of which is aesthetics and that no one will like it in the Village. He also stated that there is a safety issue. Mr. Golan then stated that to him, safety preempted aesthetics.

Ms. Holland stated that Mr. Golan's idea of a planter is a good idea.

Mr. Coladarci referred to the use of anything which would hide the structure in the winter and summer.

Ms. McCarthy asked if the Commission would be going ahead with the requirement for a public hearing or to continue.

Chairman Dowding indicated that he would be squeamish in meeting again on this. He commented that the applicant should engineer the poles and add trees. Chairman Dowding then indicated that it is his inclination that the Commission move ahead and vote and show their displeasure with the current plans with the vote so that the Village Council knew how they felt. He then stated that it would be up to New Trier to hold a public meeting.

Mr. Freres asked in connection with the discussion, if the Commission could separate out for New Trier their opinions on the two issues which are safety and aesthetics. He also stated that it related to open community dialog and that the discussion at hand is on the safety netting and the aesthetics of the facility. Mr. Freres asked if they were to get community input, what are asking they for.

Chairman Dowding stated that there may be one finding relating to safety, which is finding no. 7. He stated that they can have an extended discussion on item no. 7.

Mr. Norkus stated that the Commission should keep in mind that the findings are not all weighted equally and that the Commission may decide that item no. 7 carried more weight than the others. He stated that what really mattered is the ultimate vote on the motion to find whether the request is consistent or inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman Dowding suggested that the Commission go through the findings and that at the end, the resolution can contain a clause which would require a public, open meeting. He then asked if there were any comments from the audience.

Hal Francke informed the Commission that he is the attorney for the next matter. He stated that he has been in the Village since 1995 and that he found the matter interesting. Mr. Francke stated that he had a few comments and that he is an interested party since his son is on the JV team. He stated that the children do not always listen with regard to way they are hitting the ball. Mr. Francke also stated that he has been to a lot of games and that he saw a lot of balls going back toward Willow Road. He stated that every time it happened, he held his breath.

Mr. Francke then stated that three years ago, his wife was driving down Hibbard Road when something hit the windshield. He agreed that something bad could happen. Mr. Francke also stated that he did not agree that the children and parents are the only interested parties. He then stated that the discussion should not be lowering the height for the net and that if one ball hits, that would be one too many. Mr. Francke also stated that there was a lot of notice in the paper and that he had no problem with a public hearing. He stated that the Village needed to address the issue on a timely basis. Mr. Francke then stated that while he did not know the timetable, he would hate to see something bad happen while the matter continued to be studied. He concluded by stating that safety is paramount to him and encouraged the Commission to move forward.

Gary Frank introduced himself to the Commission as the former Chairman Dowding of the Design Review Board. He commented that the most interesting parts of that board were to make sure that things are aesthetically pleasing to the Village. Mr. Frank stated that this is a case which related to the Willow Road entry to the Village and that it is important. He described the applicant's attempt to provide landscaping as an important feature of the proposal. Mr. Frank stated that when he sees a game going on, he cringes when he passes there. He commented that it is a very important feature for Willow Road and that in connection with the aesthetic part, if they can get past that, he referred to Chairman Dowding's idea that while the hanging pole size is important, the golf course used a height and colors for Tower Road and that there are ways of mitigating aesthetics and the imposition in the landscape. Mr. Frank reiterated that having something there is very important. He referred to the request being presented for a third time and that if something is going to happen, they want to avoid it now. Mr. Frank concluded by stating that it is important that they move forward rapidly.

Carol Fessler of 1314 Trapp Lane introduces herself to the Commission as a non-baseball parent. She stated that this is new to her and that as a first impression, she is concerned with regard to how they are making the decision. Ms. Fessler also referred to how the Commission does it and engaged the community and that there has been some responsiveness by the applicant with regard to landscaping. She stated that while the landscaping is nice, there are issues relating to the pole size and visual aspects which need to be vetted. Ms. Fessler then stated that if there is a public hearing, the case needed to be made as to how to engage the community. She also suggested that they encourage and get everyone to embrace the process of including the community in the process.

Nancy Pred, 1347 Sunview Lane, introduced herself to the Commission as a baseball parent. She stated that she spoke at the meeting last time and encouraged the Commission with regard to looking at the field and attending a game. Ms. Pred then stated that in seeing fields such as the one proposed, she commented that it is not ugly or industrial looking and that they look like baseball fields. She stated that after driving past the ball fields many times, it looks like a ball field and not a wall. Ms. Pred stated that she has also been here for 22 years and in connection with the public hearings she has been to, they were for the major redoing of the playfields and that there have been public forums for projects bigger than this fence. She indicated that they are making this a much bigger deal than it is. Ms. Pred concluded by stating that they would be

saving balls from going into the street and hurting vehicles and would help keep people from running into the road during rush hour. She added that the number one concern is safety.

Tori Wible of Wilmette commented that there is nothing more beautiful than a baseball park. She indicated that she has seen a few where they look ugly. Ms. Wible referred to the children being outside and that safety is very important. She stated that if the Commission members have been at games, the balls come screaming off of the bats at tremendous speeds into the road. Ms. Wible stated that things could be prevented easily and urged the Commission to make safety their first consideration.

Ms. Pred added that the proposal is much better looking and will make the field look better whereas she commented it is ugly now.

Ms. Bawden asked how long is the baseball season.

Mr. Napoleon responded that it went from March to July and that there is some fall baseball on the weekends.

Chairman Dowding suggested that the Commission review the findings and caveat. He noted that the Commission is to vote on the plan which is before the Commission and not something which could be promised.

Ms. Holland asked if the Commission can add an addendum to the vote so it is what the Commission think should happen.

Mr. Norkus confirmed that is correct. He added that it is not uncommon for boards to make conditions. He informed the Commission that his notes include discussion with regard to lowering the height of the netting and poles to 40 feet, discussion with regard to the provision of additional landscaping at the southwest corner of the parking lot with three to four parking spaces being sacrificed to provide additional landscaping to affect the view from the west approach, as well as the discussion with regard to tapering of the poles.

Chairman Dowding stated that the Commission would now review the findings.

**Findings of the Winnetka Plan Commission  
Regarding consistency of the  
New Trier High School Special Use Permit  
With the Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan**

After considering the application, the Commission makes its findings as follows,

Chapter II - Vision, Goals and Objectives

- (1) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the Goal to "Preserve and enhance those public assets, public lands, natural resources and architecturally significant structures that

create the attractive appearance and peaceful, single-family residential character of the Village." [Community Goals: Village Character and Appearance page 2-1].

- (2) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Goal to "Limit commercial, institutional and residential development within the Village to minimize the potentially adverse impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods and to prevent the need for significant increases in infrastructure (streets, parking, utilities, sewers) and other community resources (schools, parks, recreational facilities, etc.)" [Community Goals: Growth Management page 2-2].
- (3) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Ensure that commercial, institutional and residential development is appropriate to the character of its surrounding neighborhood" [Village Character and Appearance: Objective #1; page 2-2].
- (4) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Use high quality design and materials when constructing public improvements. Enhance the beauty of improvements with appropriate decorative details, artwork, or sculpture"; [Village Character and Appearance: Objective #13; page 2-3].
- (5) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Ensure safe and attractive access to educational and community institutions. Pursue improvements that address public safety as well as traffic, congestion and parking": [Educational and Community Institutions: Objective #5; page 2-5].

Ms. McCarthy commented that this is the most important finding.

Chairman Dowding commented that the cheapest solution is not always the best solution.

- (6) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Goal to "Preserve or expand the quantity, quality and distribution of open space and recreational opportunities", and to "protect the Village's natural features and environmental resources". [Open Space Recreation and Environment: Goals page 2-5].
- (7) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "preserve significant trees and encourage new tree planting on public and private properties to the greatest extent possible"; [Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Environment: Objective #4; page 2-6].
- (8) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Support the development of recreational facilities to meet the needs of residents of all ages"; [Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Environment: Objective # 5; page 2-6].
- (9) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the objective to "Engage in a public process that balances institutional goals and minimizes any adverse impact to the character of the adjacent residential neighborhood"; [Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Environment: Objective 6; page 2-6].

- (10) The proposed special use is consistent with the objective to "Encourage the preservation of open space inside and outside the Village"; [Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Environment: Objective #9; page 2-6].

Mr. Thomas noted that there are three potential conditions.

Mr. Dunn stated that if they do this project, it should be done for the right reasons and commented that it should be 50 feet.

Ms. Morette stated that she agreed.

Chairman Dowding added that the halyard design should be considered to lower the net in the winter.

Mr. Myers informed the Commission that there was testimony at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting that when the netting is lowered, it would end up sagging and that there would be gaps opening space where balls can go through. He then stated that with that provision, he referred to whether the safety level would be maintained. Mr. Myers stated that there is some concern with regard to keeping the safety level.

Mr. Golan indicated that the expense of a retractable netting system would make it cost prohibitive. He then stated that the weather is different here than in Florida where Chairman Dowding got the estimate. Mr. Golan stated that the applicant testified strongly that raising the net up and down would not be practical.

Chairman Dowding suggested that the Commission proceed with the three conditions.

Chairman Dowding stated that the first condition related to adding an additional planting area in what is currently the southwest corner of the parking lot. He suggested that with the removal of additional asphalt in this area, additional trees would screen the view from the westerly approach as you enter the Village.

A majority of the Commission agreed that the condition was appropriate and necessary.

Chairman Dowding stated that the second item discussed related to recommending New Trier conduct a broader stakeholder input process. Mr. Norkus stated that the language should note that the Commission encouraged the applicant to conduct a broader public outreach than that provided by the standard public notice by the Village, but that such a public input process not be required as a condition of approval.

A vote was taken and a majority of the Commission agreed to recommend additional stakeholder input.

Chairman Dowding stated that the third condition related to the investigation as to whether the design of the poles can be made smaller and / or tapered at the top. He indicated that based on his conversation with a pole manufacturer, and with his background as an engineer, he felt strongly that they can be tapered and made smaller.

Mr. Golan suggested that the Commission recommend to the Village Council to consider looking at alternatives with regard to pole size.

Mr. Coladarci added that the Commission does not know what New Trier's bid process was in connection with the poles and that the Village Council would need to know the reason why the poles could not be made smaller if they cannot.

Chairman Dowding suggested a stipulation that the Village Council consider design alternatives and seek an explanation as to why. He then suggested that New Trier should be strongly urged to consider the use of a tapered pole and if they chose not to, they should answer why in an engineering description.

A vote was taken and the stipulation was unanimously passed.

Chairman Dowding then stated that with those stipulations, he read the resolution.

Mr. Norkus stated that it would be appropriate at this stage in the meeting for a motion to find the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan based on the findings previously adopted, with the conditions recommending (a) additional landscaping be installed at the southwest section of the existing parking lot to screen the view of the netting from the westerly approach, (b) that the applicant further evaluate the pole size with an emphasis on minimizing the pole diameter and/or use of a tapered design, and (c) that the applicant be encouraged to conduct a broader public outreach effort to seek input from the broader community.

Mr. Thomas moved that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan subject to the conditions previously outlined. Mr. Coladarci seconded the motion.

Chairman Dowding stated that the conditions should include a recommendation that the applicant evaluate further the option of a retractable netting design to allow the netting to be retracted seasonally.

Mr. Norkus stated his notes do not indicate that the Commission included that as a condition, but that a modification could be made to the conditions previously described, through a separate motion to add the condition of a retractable netting system.

Mr. Coladarci asked if the Commission should withdraw the motion to add the additional condition.

Mr. Norkus stated that a motion is to be made for approval with the addition of the fourth stipulation.

Mr. Thomas withdrew his original motion, and Mr. Coladarci withdrew his second.

A motion was made to add a fourth condition, that the applicant further evaluate the use of a retractable netting design which could be removed seasonally.

Mr. Dunn noted that there had been previous testimony and discussion that a retractable netting system would sag, would not look as good, and would allow some balls to get through.

A vote was taken and passed by a vote of 5 in favor and 4 opposed, to recommend further study a retractable design.

Mr. Thomas made a motion to recommend approval subject to; (a) installation of additional landscaping at the southwest section of the existing parking lot to screen the view of the netting from the westerly approach, (b) that the applicant further evaluate the pole size with an emphasis on minimizing the pole diameter and/or use of a tapered design, and (c) that the applicant be encouraged to conduct a broader public outreach effort to seek input from the broader community, and (d) that the applicant strongly consider a retractable netting option.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Coladarci.

A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously passed.

AYES:	Bawden, Coladarci, Dowding, Dunn, Golan, Holland, McCarthy, Morette, Thomas (9)
NAYS:	None (0)
NON-VOTING:	Myers, Corrigan

**Consideration of Requested Special Use Permit Request by Packard Associates LP, for Proposed Forty (40) Space Surface Parking Lot at 929-931 Green Bay Road for Consistency with Village 2020 Comprehensive Plan**

Gary Frank introduced himself to the Commission as the architect, along with Scott Freres of The Lakota group and the attorney, Hal Francke of Meltzer, Purtill & Stell.

Mr. Francke stated that they represent the petitioner, Packard Associates, which is the contract purchaser and also the owner of the building which previously housed The Gap. He stated that the request is for a special use for a parking lot which has an existing building on the property which is now Body and Sole and Bedside Manner. Mr. Francke also stated that there is a parking lot behind that building. He noted that there is an existing curb cut on Green Bay Road with two way traffic.

Mr. Francke stated that everyone should be familiar with the property and appreciate the value which The Gap brought to the Hubbard Woods business district over the last 20 years. He

informed the Commission that The Gap generated \$75 million in tax revenue and created an incredible anchor to the business district. Mr. Francke stated that the lack of adequate parking was discussed recently at the Zoning Board of Appeals and the perception in Hubbard Woods in connection with parking. He then stated that a parking analysis was done by KLOA and that they believe that providing a parking lot for The Gap building would take vehicles off of the street and help with regard to the reality of the lack of parking. Mr. Francke stated that they would walk the Commission through the plan and get input and then answer any questions.

Scott Freres informed the Commission that the discussion focused on the 931 Green Bay Road property. He then identified the building and the parking lot behind it. Mr. Freres stated that the illustration represented a bigger picture of what the parking facility will support. He added that The Gap building is empty and that it was built in 1926 while the building which housed Body and Sole was built in the 1950's.

Mr. Dunn asked if the request is passed, would it be a public parking lot.

Mr. Freres responded that it would not. He stated that in an ideal scenario, there would be multiple walking trips generated out of the open parking experience.

Mr. Thomas asked if they are suggesting that the parking lot not be policed the same way as Walgreen.

Mr. Freres stated that it would not and that issue was brought up at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. He informed the Commission that there was a lot of dialog with regard to turning movements and signage. Mr. Freres noted that the proposal is for the lot on 931 Green Bay Road and that in order to make that happen, he identified a sliver of land on part of the 925 Green Bay Road area. He informed the Commission that the lot measured 10,000 square feet and that the lot measured 3,500 square feet with Bedside Manner and Body and Sole. Mr. Freres stated that the request would result in the loss of the building and retail space. He then stated that with regard to the anchor facility, the property owner is working with relocating those two tenants in Hubbard Woods. Mr. Freres added that he has been at meetings and has been vocal with regard to working with them.

Mr. Frank informed the Commission that the property owner, Larry Hillman, has an agreement with Bedside Manner to stay in Hubbard Woods in another building. He also stated that he has talked to Body and Sole which is reluctant to commit to staying in Hubbard Woods.

Mr. Freres then stated that the proposal is for a 40 space parking lot which would be hidden and screened with screening and an urban component which is consistent with the design guidelines and the standards that the Commission is to evaluate. He noted that there is one curb cut and that there would be a 16 foot single access driveway off of Green Bay Road with one way out on Tower Court. Mr. Freres stated that the 40 parking spaces would house 35 full size vehicles, four compact vehicles and one handicap space.

Mr. Freres described the entrance feature as an important component. He informed the

Commission that the plan to provide the parking resulted in a lot of discussion and referred to Mr. Hillman's desire for the anchor to be a special building and that the second floor contained 20 apartments with 17 parking spaces in the back. Mr. Freres stated that the access for the residential areas would be the same in the rear. He stated that the remainder of the front of the building would keep the beautiful architectural character and that they would be developing a lot and creating a new facade wall. Mr. Freres stated that they planned to activate the wall and have commercial frontage and a public plaza space.

Mr. Freres then referred to the landscaping which he called the landmarked streetscape space. He noted that there is not a lot of streetscape and that the street is located on an IDOT right-of-way. Mr. Freres informed the Commission that they pulled the feature of the arch back and extended the columns of the building across an area which would continue the facade and scale of the buildings and that the Killian access would still be there. He stated that the screen is to hide the view back to Killian. Mr. Freres then stated that there would be a masonry wall and decorative pocket to support the use. He also stated that there would be permeable pavers similar to that in a private courtyard and that it would be fashioned after the Moffat Mall. Mr. Freres stated that with regard to access with signage, they talked to the Design Review Board and would come back to them with signage relative to the arch feature. He commented that the feature would act as a great transition for the continuation of the commercial street front.

Mr. Freres identified two renderings for the Commission, the first of which he described as a head-on version. He then identified The Gap building, the continuation of the lines across and the column elements, the opening into the parking lot with a special plaza, the lane which would feature an open, decorative arch, the signage component which they are not presenting as final yet, the idea of a seating pocket, a fountain and large mature trees to hide the parking lot. Mr. Freres then referred the Commission to an illustration of a 3D view which showed the character of the continuation of the space.

Ms. McCarthy asked if the access for Killian Plumbing's trucks is shown on the drawings. .

Mr. Freres identified another curb cut for the Killian alley. He added that nothing would change with regard to street parking and that there would be no loss of public street parking. Mr. Freres indicated that they would only be adding 40 parking spaces on the property.

Ms. McCarthy stated that the rendering of the street view does not appear to accurately show what the view will be of the Killian property.

Chairman Dowding asked for clarification of the number of proposed parking spaces, compared to the number of spaces which are currently striped behind the existing building.

Mr. Freres responded that all of that would come out and that it would be reoriented. Mr. Freres informed the Commission that there are currently 20 parking spaces, including 12 parking spaces behind Bedside Manor. He mentioned that there is no organized array of parking now and referred the Commission to the illustration of the existing condition with the bumper and parking spaces. Mr. Freres noted that they planned to shift one parking space over to access the area and

reiterated that there would be no loss of on-street parking. He added that the goal is not to take away from the amount of public parking to have private parking.

Ms. Holland stated when the Packard building was developed, her recollection was that there were parking requirements for the residential units in addition to indoor parking at the rear of the building. She asked if any of the parking spaces are to support the residential units.

Mr. Freres responded that those spaces are not required.

Ms. Holland stated that two parking spaces are required per unit for residential.

Mr. Francke noted that the Village approved a lesser count for parking. He stated that the 1992 ordinance granted a variance which approved parking in the building as required parking.

Mr. Freres informed the Commission that the parking spaces shown are not tied to the residential requirement.

Mr. Corrigan asked for clarification of how much of the building is potential retail area and how much is dedicated to parking.

Mr. Francke confirmed that the building measured 12,500 square feet and that the building coverage is 17,500 square feet with 5,000 square feet for indoor parking.

Mr. Corrigan stated that he has heard there are a lot of different potential uses, one which would require a lot of delivery and a lot of trash. He asked where the trash and delivery areas would be located.

Mr. Frank stated that in connection with delivery, that is one of the reasons why they are seeking to attract a single user for the back loading dock. He indicated that he did not know about the trash.

Mr. Corrigan stated that if it is a food use, there will be issues with smell of the trash.

Mr. Freres informed the Commission that the current dumpster is located next to the access for indoor parking. He reiterated that there is no dedicated user yet and that he assumed that the trash would be located off of the alley. Mr. Freres stated that would be discussed at the time that there is a final user and that it would be addressed then.

Mr. Corrigan stated that he would be in favor of bringing more businesses and more parking to Hubbard Woods, the parking stalls are too small and he suggested that they be made wider. He stated that one reason for the suggestion is that there are large vehicles and that there is no way they would be able to make the turns. Mr. Corrigan stated that angling the parking spaces would result in a loss of parking spaces, but that it would be made more user-friendly.

Mr. Freres informed the Commission that the parking count is being driven by the demand from

prospective retailers of what they would need to make it work. He agreed that Mr. Corrigan's suggestion made sense.

Mr. Dunn questioned how many spaces would be lost if they were to switch to angle parking.

Mr. Freres stated that the layout is driven by the economics of the prospective tenant, and explained they would lose 10 parking spaces if the parking spaces were angled.

Mr. Freres referenced the discussion at the Design Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings, both of which had resulted in recommendations to putting in trees within the parking lot, and that all of these factors are working against their goal of getting as close as possible to 40 parking spaces. He also stated that Mr. Corrigan is correct with regard to the assumption that there are large vehicles.

Mr. Corrigan stated that he took a photograph at The Glen which had nine foot parking stalls which he commented are still tight. He also stated that Costco has 10 foot wide stalls. Mr. Corrigan stated that he would rather have a better plan with larger spaces, and possibly find some spaces for employees in a Village owned lot.

Mr. Myers stated that the employees would already park offsite and that the 40 parking spaces would be for the customers of the store.

Ms. Holland asked if the tenant is making parking demands.

Mr. Freres responded that it is the tenant marketplace.

Ms. Holland stated that Green Bay Road is a pedestrian-friendly street with two lanes of traffic. She stated that people walk up and down the sidewalk from Gage Street to Tower Road. Ms. Holland then stated that to cut out 38 feet of retail, making a break in the retail curtain wall would make it less inviting as a shopping destination. She described the plaza design as inviting, but it is not retail. Ms. Holland stated that the recent report from ULI states that Hubbard Woods' future lies with retail. She stated that they would be putting in a 16 foot curb cut and taking away a retail building which would diminish the property tax base of the Village and the sales tax revenue by reducing the retail footprint.

Ms. Holland also stated that the demolition of the commercial building and replacement with a surface parking lot will erode the pedestrian shopping environment, and stated that the request is a terrible mistake to impose on a pedestrian-friendly street and that the parking would only be to the benefit of the Packard Building tenants. She stated that the opposite approach should be taken, to minimize curb cuts on Green Bay Road and to have parking accessed from the rear alley as it is now.

Ms. Holland added that others will park there and that the parking spaces would not work with the size of vehicles.

Ms. Holland also stated that for a vehicle approaching the driveway from the north, traffic would stop since there is one lane of traffic and that there would be a backup into the Gage intersection.

She then stated that the KLOA report was done in February which is not a big retail month.

Ms. Holland indicated that the parking study should have been done on a Saturday in the summer. She commented that this would make it worse.

Ms. Holland then stated that for any tenant needing 40 parking spaces, the lot would serve them well. She stated that her main concern would be the breaking up the curtain wall of retail and that she would much rather see the property owner demolish the building and continue a retail building all the way. Ms. Holland stated that there is plenty of parking in Hubbard Woods and referred to the parking deck located one block north, and the Village parking lots to the south. She stated that you cannot always park adjacent to your destination and that the retail continuity is critical to the charm of Hubbard Woods. Ms. Holland reiterated that it would be a big mistake to break up the retail curtain wall.

Mr. Frank reminded the Commission that the Packard Building in 1926 had a car dealership and at time the property in question was a parking lot. He then stated that in 1950 a building was put there and the design guidelines were written making a parking lot nonconforming. Mr. Frank stated that the request would make the property go back to what it always was. He reiterated that to encourage a major tenant in a building that size, they need parking. Mr. Frank then stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals a question was asked “why not divide the building into several small tenant spaces in order to eliminate the need for parking?” He stated that the building is not designed for multiple, small tenants and that they need a major tenant. Mr. Frank added that with regard to the building streetscape, it was always a big building with a parking lot next to it.

Ms. McCarthy asked if there have been other instances where a building was demolished or a parking lot added in the Village for a tenant.

Mr. Myers stated that nothing like that had been before the Zoning Board of Appeals in five years.

Ms. McCarthy referred to parking at Private Bank at the north end of Hubbard Woods, which has parking in front.

Ms. Holland stated that the building was originally a gas station, and it later turned into a garden center and later a bank.

Ms. McCarthy pointed out that Private Bank has a small number of parking spaces in front, with the majority of parking provided along Scott Avenue to the north.

Mr. Myers questioned whether McDonalds was a comparable situation.

Ms. Holland stated that McDonalds site was previously a Jewel store with its own parking.

Mr. Freres described it as a unique case and building and that there is a lot of history in the

building. He then stated that an important economic development question is what is the right decision for the business district if they want an anchor, although they recognize that the commercial design guidelines and standards of the continuation of streetscape did deserve merit. Mr. Freres described the request as an opportunity to do something different here and which met the objectives of ULI. He added that they need to be more open and address the changing dynamic of the commercial business districts.

Ms. Morette asked if once a tenant is secured, would the applicant come back to the Commission.

Mr. Norkus responded that most tenant users of the space would not require further review or approval, and that there would only be further consideration of a use which itself is a Special Use, such as a non-retail use. He indicated that there would at some point likely be a review of building alterations or signage which would be reviewed by the Design Review Board.

Mr. Thomas stated that the focus of the application is the parking lot. He then stated that although he understood Ms. Holland's comments, the plan sounded unique and that a good, big store would generate traffic. Mr. Thomas then questioned the condition of the alley and whether it would need to be rebuilt.

Mr. Freres stated that it is still being used today the way it is now.

Mr. Myers informed the Commission that with regard to the Zoning Board of Appeals' conversation, one issue they discussed was the size of the parking spaces. He stated that they are not here to design the project and that if they thought there should be 40 parking spaces, the market would figure it out. Mr. Myers also stated that there is a sense of breaking up the street and noted that there are other examples of streetscape breaks on the street. He then stated that although it is a new break in the street face, it is designed in such a way that it would give the feel for continuity. Mr. Myers then stated that there is a general sense that there is a shortage of parking on Green Bay Road and that they need to figure out whether they want to enhance the financial stability of Hubbard Woods by having an anchor tenant which would be advantageous and that if it required having 40 parking spaces, he felt that the price is justified.

Mr. Francke apologized to the Commission that Mr. Hillman is not present. He informed the Commission that Mr. Hillman would say exactly what Mr. Myers stated with regard to the fact that they need to have the parking spaces for the tenant. Mr. Francke then stated that the lack of parking is the major reason why The Gap left. He referred to the history of the value of an anchor in Hubbard Woods. Mr. Francke also stated that he appreciated the concern expressed by Ms. Holland.

Mr. Francke informed the Commission that they have heard at the Design Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings and have talked about the street frontage of buildings in the design guidelines. He stated that the big picture question here is to maintain the vibrancy and health of a major commercial district in the Village and that the proposed improvements would help the facility maintain its pedestrian-orientation as being important to this area. Mr. Francke

then informed the Commission at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, people spoke and those with businesses there are eager to see the project happen. He indicated that the only business which was against the request was Marla Riesman of Body and Sole which is being displaced. Mr. Francke stated that in connection with the testimony with regard to parking, the business owners told stories of customers who would not fight to find a place to park.

Ms. Holland stated that The Gap did not leave because of parking and that the Gap closing was part of a closure of 200 stores nationwide.

Mr. Francke agreed that while that is correct, there was a time that the owner Mr. Hillman was confident that if he had been able to guarantee The Gap parking, they would have stayed.

Ms. Holland stated that the demolition results in the loss of a building which contributes to the property tax base.

Mr. Frank stated that the 12,000 square foot building is not generating taxes. He then stated that according to the matrix, four parking spaces are required per 1,000 square feet which amounted to 50 parking spaces and that they would only be able to provide 40.

Ms. Holland stated that if there was a tenant with a letter of intent, it would be easier for the community to understand the impacts of the request.

Mr. Myers stated that there would be no tenant without the guarantee of parking.

Ms. McCarthy referred to Mr. Saunders' comment on page 41 with regard to the access lot and egress. She then stated Mr. Saunders' review notes that there could be a slight backlog at Merrill and Green Bay with vehicles exiting the parking lot via Tower Court and proceeding north. Ms. McCarthy commented that it would be tricky for one or two vehicles turning left off Green Bay Road at Merrill, particularly with the additional traffic brought by a 40 car parking lot.

Mr. Francke stated that when they first met, the Village had not been studied that intersection. He informed the Commission that Mr. Saunders specifically raised that issue and that they wanted KLOA to do a study on that intersection. Mr. Francke introduced Luay Aboona of KLOA as the traffic consultant.

Mr. Corrigan stated that there is a lot of traffic when the trains arrive at the station. He indicated that while there would not be much of a traffic problem, it will be intermittent. Mr. Corrigan stated that the Village might need to get rid of some of the parking spaces along Tower Court to allow for better sight lines and a better turning radius out heading to Gage.

Mr. Freres noted that it is wider than it looked. He also stated that there are stores back there.

Mr. Corrigan asked if IDOT would allow a left turn into the lot off of Green Bay Road.

Mr. Aboona informed the Commission that the curb cut is existing and allow turns in from both

directions and that it would be consistent with maintaining the existing curb cut. He indicated that they would have to get a permit because of the shifting of 20 feet. Mr. Aboona noted that the design and function would not change and that there would not be an issue with IDOT.

Mr. Corrigan stated that with regard to the entrance to the parking area, there is a nice water feature, but that they are typically difficult to maintain and suggested removing it in favor of a and suggested that they have an area which is more bike friendly instead.

Mr. Freres informed the Commission that they thought about putting in bike parking.

Mr. Corrigan suggested that instead of brick above on the pillar, they use stone.

Mr. Frank stated that they considered different things and that the brick on the existing building has a whitish finish.

Mr. Freres stated that one aspect of the project that is overlooked is that the project will open up the north wall of the Packard building which will activate the north façade. He explained that Green Bay Road is an IDOT road, there is no space for tables and chairs along Green Bay Road. He stated that with the plaza area adjacent to the north elevation, there will be room for activities and features like a café which can activate the street.

Mr. Golan stated that another positive aspect of the project is that it will include a private enterprise which would be paying for streetscape, given that the Village has been unable to pay for it. He commented that the building coming down is not beautiful, or significant.

Ms. Holland commented that commercial vacancies in the Village are only 4 percent.

Mr. Freres stated that the project is a positive indicator regarding economics in the area, and represents a major investment.

Mr. Golan also stated that there is a lot of vacant space in Hubbard Woods and described the proposal as a win-win. He then stated that while the request would change the character of the area, it is not particularly attractive now.

Ms. McCarthy stated that with regard to parking, it would be private for the tenant and asked what about off hours and would the applicant tow cars. She also asked what would happen when the tenant is closed, and how the lot would be managed during the off hours to limit parking.

Mr. Frank informed the Commission that property owner Mr. Hillman would leave the responsibility to the tenant to police parking.

Ms. McCarthy stated that it is possible that they could tow cars then.

Mr. Frank stated that the tenant will probably want to be a good neighbor, and rather than start

towing people out, they would want to have a conversation with people and say that it is a private parking lot. He stated that there was an acknowledgement that people parked in the lot to shop might follow their shopping trip [at the Packard building] with a trip to the children's store across the street, or at Skandal to the south, whereas today people might just drive past if there are no parking spots. Mr. Frank stated that there is probably going to be a lot of give and take.

Mr. Coladarci questioned whether that was the reason for needing 40 spaces, since even the Gap when it was very active did not have 40 parking spaces.

Mr. Frank informed the Commission that Mr. Hillman said that major retailers are requiring 40 parking spaces.

Mr. Coladarci questioned whether they would accept 38 in order to increase the size of the spaces a little bit.

Mr. Frank stated that a similar comment was made by the Design Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals with regard to the stall size and that the Village Council would also comment.

Mr. Thomas questioned whether they contemplate a single tenant or multiple tenants.

Mr. Frank stated that they are looking at a single tenant.

Mr. Coladarci stated that if the parking spaces are too small, there might be a tendency on the part of the Village to say that it's "not our problem". He stated that he felt it ultimately would be the Commission's problem. He then stated that people would complain and may result in the tenant removing some of the landscape features in order to ease the overcrowding.

Mr. Frank indicated that they cannot take out features and that the ordinance with regard to impervious surface, the requirement is 90% and that they added 10% of permeable surface.

Ms. Bawden described the project as a gorgeous design and that she is sad to see how beautiful it is because she had a lot of problems with it. She stated that the applicant is making assumptions about retail which is inconsistent with current trends. Ms. Bawden stated that retail space needs are decreasing with narrower and shorter tenant spaces for smaller retailers. She stated that they are designing a parking lot based on a retail tenant which has not been identified, and for which parking needs are not known. She stated that this is a big problem for her. Ms. Bawden indicated that there may be an empty building and an empty parking lot.

Ms. Bawden stated that next, she is not seeing a problem with parking on the street now, part of which she acknowledged is empty due to the empty Gap building. She indicated that there is so much empty parking today, she would like to see what it would look like on a Saturday. Ms. Bawden agreed that The Gap did not leave because of parking and that in October 2011, The Gap pulled 21% of its stores in an effort to gear up in China. She stated that they also reconfigured stores to deal with internet sales, with retail stores serving as more of a "showroom" and display which complements their online presence, which is happening more often. She stated that this

plan doesn't reflect those trends, and that she is not comfortable making assumptions about what type of tenant may use the parking. She stated that the location of the parking lot within the district results in the creation of a "dead zone", and stated that providing additional visibility to the Killian property is not desirable.

Ms. Bawden then stated that visually, there is a lot going on in this area with the Packard Building, a parking lot, Killian's, retail space and then the openness of the park. She stated that she cannot make peace with this being an interruption to the continuity of storefronts, stating that the impact is that it will decrease the tendency which is now present to move from store to store.

Ms. Bawden then stated that in connection with turning into the parking lot from Green Bay Road, there will hopefully still be pedestrians on the sidewalk, and that this plan would set a bad precedent. She described the plan as tenant driven and that if the Commission made decisions based on tenant driven demands, there would be parking lots on every other property. Ms. Bawden concluded that they cannot do that and that they have to look long range here.

Mr. Frank reiterated that it was always a parking lot.

Mr. Freres indicated that basic retail has changed dramatically and asked if they would rather have a 50 foot store here.

Ms. Bawden suggested two or more smaller stores would make a better use of the space. She then referred to the developer trying to develop the back end and coming back to the Commission. Ms. Bawden stated that they are building one issue on top of another and that it is not very consistent with the Village's long range planning for this area.

Mr. Freres asked what the Village's plan is.

Ms. Bawden stated that it is about the continuity of buildings along the street, it is the retail overlay district, it's the zoning ordinance requiring a building at the street, it's the 2020 Plan. She stated it is about the shoppers experience of being able to shop from storefront to storefront.

Mr. Freres stated that there is no plan. He stated that there is a lot of discussion in the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that Mr. Hillman is putting his money on the line.

Ms. Bawden stated that what he's telling us is that a player to be named later is demanding 40 spaces. She stated that it has been her experience having written three Caucus surveys that the Village has never been able to support big box stores within the confines of its existing pedestrian shopping districts. She stated that if this were at the end of the street, it might not be a problem.

Chairman Dowding asked if there were any other comments.

Mr. Myers stated that the applicants are attempting to retain the Packard Building versus perhaps putting them in a situation where it will be torn down. He then stated that if they were to divide

the space in half, they would need the same amount of parking for those retailers. Mr. Myers noted that the other retailers are in favor of the request and that they need more parking for a big tenant, adding that a 12,000 square foot retailer is not that big. He stated that if they do not do it and they only want small tenants, the building would have to be reconfigured or torn down.

Mr. Dunn indicated that he appreciated Ms. Bawden's comments. He stated that there are not large blocks of space in the community and that this was one of the best large blocks of space that exists, with a history of national tenants there in the Gap. Mr. Dunn then stated that if the owner planned to spend a lot of money to do this in order to draw a potential large anchor tenant, that would be a good thing commercially and for the merchants in Hubbard Woods as well as a sign that the economy is coming back. He stated that they cannot get complacent and that things are looking better even though they have a long way to go. Mr. Dunn stated that they should be grateful and that with regard to tearing down the building and beautifying the streetscape. He stated that would bring hope that a good tenant would occupy the big chunk of empty space.

Ms. Bawden stated that it would set a precedent.

Mr. Myers stated that it would not serve as a precedent given that this is an unusually large building with 12,500 square feet of retail floor space.

Mr. Francke stated that if the request was to be approved by the Village Council, he referred to the legal standpoint because a special use required different sets of facts which are applicable to every property. He then stated that the Village attorney can craft an ordinance to withstand the concern over setting a precedent. Mr. Francke stated that this owner has invested in the property for decades and that there are a lot of facts which would preclude it from becoming a precedent.

Mr. Golan agreed that there are not many others like this and that others are basically two story and are side by side.

Mr. Thomas indicated that he did not see the request as setting a precedent since it is a special use. He commented that he is also amazed that the property owner wanted to spend the time and money to beautify the area and that it is what the merchants want. Mr. Thomas then stated that if they did not do something, they would end up with the dump they have now. He also referred to the Fell development and commented that East Elm looked like a dump. Mr. Thomas described the request as a chance to make it look better.

Mr. Dunn stated that it is important to note that there is a perception that Winnetka is not pro-development or merchant friendly and that the request provided an opportunity to show that is not correct. He then stated that when the applicant found a good tenant, the sales tax revenue would resume and that there would be a spill over benefit.

Ms. Bawden stated that she would want to know what that tenant is.

Ms. Holland stated that it would be easier to make a decision when there is some indication of interest.

Mr. Frank described the request as an opportunity of a lifetime. He also stated that the community needs to think proactively about business. Mr. Frank added that the spillover for the other retailers will be huge.

James Sayegh introduced himself to the Commission and stated that he owned the building at 910 Green Bay Road. He stated that with regard to public comment, he would like to provide an opportunity to change their minds and give a different perspective. Mr. Sayegh then stated that for those who are against the request, he informed the Commission that his father in 1922 owned the Walter Smith furniture store. He described it as the most beautiful stretch of property on the north shore.

Mr. Sayegh stated that with regard to 907 Green Bay Road, it was developed as a labor of love. He stated that the idea was to take the small spaces and convert them into a big space which allowed Waterworks to move in which he described as a great project. Mr. Sayegh then stated that by the time the third project was undertaken, the world had changed. He stated that it is time to react to the fact that people do not want more 50 to 60 feet deep spaces. Mr. Sayegh informed the Commission that he built during the teeth of the recession and that the building is now fully occupied.

Mr. Sayegh stated that although Waterworks and Ann Sachs tiles were tenants, the world changed. He indicated that Hubbard Woods is heavily invested in furniture sales. Mr. Sayegh described the footprint as market friendly and referred to Potbelly. He stated that everyone wanted a place to congregate besides at home and at work and that in Hubbard Woods, it is very difficult to provide that use to the public.

Mr. Sayegh then stated that in first talking to retailers, the problem was that they did not have daytime traffic to support what they want. He also stated that another problem is IDOT and that those retailers who would come cannot have outdoor seating. Mr. Sayegh described the site plan as uncommon and referred to the property owner of this uncommon building and which is an anchor of the business district. He stated that the applicant would be doubling down on this building's potential. Mr. Sayegh also stated that not every building deserved an auxiliary parking lot and that the building can bring in a tenant that they would want.

Mr. Sayegh stated that no one hates it in Hubbard Woods and that it will do good for the block. He indicated that the applicant is taking an entrepreneurial risk. Mr. Sayegh stated that they know why people will not come here and that they should trust that Mr. Hillman knows what he is doing. He described the request as a great plan by a local team which is sensitive to what the community wants. Mr. Sayegh then stated that the curtain wall is not illustrated and that the request will delivery exactly what the business district wanted. He indicated that the tenant may be a very creative dining experience or a high end market.

Mr. Sayegh then stated that the two businesses are not part of the special use and that the community still wanted them here. He indicated that the property owner would find a home for Bedside Manner and that Marla Riesman may not want to stay. Mr. Sayegh also stated that

these two businesses did not generate the same amount of sales tax as a new tenant would. He concluded by stating that this building answered the sales tax equation.

Mr. Coladarci asked Mr. Sayegh if it his impression that the market would not have trouble filling the space.

Mr. Sayegh first referred to the quality of the proposed plan and that the building is top notch. He stated that second, he referred to the quality of the property owner which is how he got The Gap there in the first place. Mr. Sayegh then stated that he had no doubt that they would have a successful tenant.

Chairman Dowding stated that the Commission would now discuss the findings.

**Findings of the Winnetka Plan Commission  
Regarding consistency of the  
929-931 Green Bay Road Special Use Permit  
With the Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan**

After considering the application, the Commission makes its findings as follows,

Chapter 11 - Vision, Goals and Objectives

- (1) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Ensure that commercial, institutional, and residential development is appropriate to the character of and minimizes the adverse impact on its surrounding neighborhood." [Village Character and Appearance: Objective #1 page 2-2];
- (2) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Recognize the critical role of the Village's historic architecture in defining Winnetka's unique character in public, institutional, commercial and residential areas, and encourage its preservation." [Village Character and Appearance: Objective #3 page 2-2];
- (3) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "require the screening and buffering of off street parking lots while considering the safety of pedestrians and motorists." [Village Character and Appearance: Objective #4 page 2- 2];
- (4) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Limit commercial, institutional and residential development within the Village to minimize potentially adverse impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods and to prevent the need for significant increases m infrastructure (streets, parking, utilities, sewers) and other community resources (schools, parks, recreational facilities)". [Growth Management: Goal; page 2-7];
- (5) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Ensure that development

proposals minimize the potential adverse impact they might have on residential neighborhoods, including the impact on pedestrian character, on-site parking, traffic patterns, congestion, open space, storm water management and Village infrastructure." [Growth Management: Objective #1; page 2-7];

- (6) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Goal to "Provide for a wide range of office/service and retail commercial land uses and development within the existing business districts in the Corridor." [Green Bay Road Corridor: Commercial Development and Multiple Family Land Use Goals Objectives and Policies; page 54];
- (7) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Goal to "Promote a strong community identity and opportunities to interact while building a healthy commercial tax base. Provide a broad range of goods and services so that Winnetka residents can satisfy most of their ordinary shopping requirements in the Village and so that nonresidents will come to the Village for specialty goods and services;" [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations; page 5-8];
- (8) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the objective to "Maintain the essential quality, viability and attractiveness of Winnetka's business districts while encouraging new economic development consistent with the character of the Village and the individual business districts"; [Business Districts - Objectives and Recommendations: Economic Vitality; page 5-8];
- (9) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Provide adequate and convenient public parking, assure that longer-term parking needs be met by off-street and underground or deck facilities and that parking is paid for primarily by those who benefit from it." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-9];
- (10) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the Objective to "Retain the policy that requires developers to provide parking for uses above and below the first floor, but not for first floor commercial use (to avoid strip-mall development)." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-9];
- (11) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the Objective to "Encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, safe crossings at major intersections, and convenience safety and amenity in all business districts." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-9];

Chairman Dowding stated that for the following finding, the Commission would take two votes on each portion of the sentence.

- (12a) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the Objective to "Encourage the provision of on-site parking at the rear of buildings." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives

- and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-9];
- (12b) The proposed special use **is** consistent with that portion of the objective to provide parking.. "With access via alleys or private driveways, to reduce demand for on-street parking." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-9];
- (13) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Review Winnetka Zoning regulations to protect the quality of business districts. Promote the compatibility and continuity of retail activities on ground floors. Control and limit drive through businesses, and continue to require retail issues on the ground floor in both the Hubbard Woods and Elm Street business districts. Evaluate special use permit standards for effectiveness." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-10];
- (14) The proposed special use **is not** consistent with the Objective to "Minimize the number of curb cuts to help retain block face continuity in the business districts;" [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-10];
- (15) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Ensure that new development does not decrease public parking supply, particularly on street parking that supports retail use." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-10];
- (16) The proposed special use **is** consistent with the Objective to "Maintain and enhance existing alleys which absorb some parking demand, provide off-street loading and unloading and accommodate refuse storage and pickup. Garage entry should be access from alleys whenever possible. Recognize that alleys area significant business district resource." [Business Districts: Goals and Objectives and Recommendations: Transportation and Parking; page 5-10].

Chairman Dowding referred to the resolution to state that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Thomas moved to state that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously passed.

AYES: Coladarci, Dowding, Dunn, Golan, McCarthy, Morette, Thomas (7)  
 NAYS: Holland, Bawden (2)  
 NON-VOTING: Myers, Corrigan

## **RESOLUTION**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Winnetka Plan Commission finds that the proposed Special Use Permit application for the property at 929 -931 Green Bay Road is consistent with the Village of Winnetka Comprehensive Plan.

**Other Business**

No additional business was discussed by the Commission at this time.

**Public Comment**

No additional public comment was made at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antionette Johnson