

**AGENDA**  
**PARK FOREST PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**Park Forest Village Hall**  
**Board Room**

**7:00 P.M.**

**TUESDAY**  
**April 11, 2023**

1. Planning and Zoning Commission Call to Order
2. Review of Minutes
  - a. March 14, 2023 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
3. Petitions - None
4. Audience to Visitors
5. New Business
  - a. 2023 Goals and Objectives & 2022 Accomplishments Review
6. Old Business – None
7. Communications
  - a. Member Communications
  - b. Trustee Comments
  - c. Staff Communications
8. Adjournment

Any individual with a disability requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a public meeting should contact the Village Manager's Office at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Village Manager's Office can be reached via telephone at 708-283-5605 or via email at [athurston@vopf.com](mailto:athurston@vopf.com). Every effort will be made to allow for meeting participation.

**Park Forest  
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes  
Park Forest Board Room  
Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

**Present:** Chair Vernita Wickliffe Lewis; Commissioners Samuel Brooks, Cynthia Burton-Prete, Doug Price; Trustee Liaison Maya Hardy

**Staff:** Andrew Brown, Planner

**Absent:** Vice Chair Marguerite Hutchins; Commissioner Denise Poston

**Visitors:** Phillip Perkins, Trustee Joseph Woods, Lane Cameron, Joseph Van Dyke, Margaret Decker, Alejandro Lugo, Lanie Knights

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

**A motion was made to move to new Business was made by Burton-Prete. Seconded by Brooks. All in favor.**

**Review of Minutes February 14, 2023:**

On page one, under review of minutes, in the third paragraph, the last sentence should be retyped as "...referenced as the consultant" instead of "...references the consultant."

On page four in the second paragraph where it states, "Hussain then spoke about restoration." "The" between "about" and "restoration" should be added. In the third paragraph of page four, where it states "Price asked if that was the whole clearing." The part "...that was..." should be removed. In the second sentence of the eighth paragraph on page four, it states "Husain stated that every year they do an assessment for their priorities are for funding." The words "are for" should be removed and the word "funding" should precede the word "priorities."

On page five under staff communications it states "The HRAP will be eligible for residents with an income below the area median income of 80 percent." This should be rewritten to state "The HRAP will be available to residents with an income below the area median income of 80 percent."

A motion was made to approve the minutes with corrections was made by Price. Seconded by Burton-Prete. All in favor.

**Petitions:** None

**Audience to Visitors:** None

**New Business:**

### **a. South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority Presentation**

Brown reviewed the purpose of the South Suburban Land Bank and Development Authority (SSLBDA) and the timeliness of the discussion given the current banking environment. Brown then introduced Van Dyke and Decker from the SSLBDA to present on their operations and connection to Park Forest.

Van Dyke stated that they want to reduce the residential building vacancies in Park Forest, stabilize the tax base, and enhance economic activity within the Village.

Van Dyke presented his presentation on the projector and provided handouts to the audience. One of his slides included the property at 362 Neola Street which was acquired in 2022. The SSLBDA coordinated with the Village to complete inspections at the property and went through the judicial system to acquire the property through legal means. After acquiring and fixing up the property, the SSLBDA sold the 362 Neola Street property to a family. Van Dyke stated that a majority of the properties sold in 2022 from the SSLBDA portfolio were from Park Forest and totaled 14 properties.

The SSLBDA currently has 153 properties in their inventory across all of the jurisdictions they partner with and 11 are located in Park Forest. The SSLBDA acquired nine (9) properties in Park Forest in 2023 and one of those properties has already sold. How they acquire properties is through abandonment proceedings, deed-in-lieu of foreclosure on tax delinquent properties, and donations from third parties.

Van Dyke said that when the SSLBDA was established in 2012, it was the first of its kind in Illinois. Their goal is to develop a defined mission and function with a full team to implement that mission. Another goal is to have a robust set of operating policies, procedures, and project management tools to carry out their mission.

Brooks asked how many properties the SSLBDA owns in Park Forest. Van Dyke stated they currently own 11 properties.

Cameron asked how long a property has to be abandoned before the SSLBDA can go to court to acquire it. Van Dyke stated that the property has to be abandoned for at least two (2) years.

Cameron then asked if the SSLBDA is responsible for proving no one owns or lives at the property. Van Dyke stated that it was the responsibility of their attorney to prove the property is abandoned.

Hardy asked how the SSLBDA procures their realtors for the properties. Van Dyke stated that the SSLBDA has a current contract with realtors that should expire soon. When it does, the contract will be rebid and they are interested in using local realtors again.

Decker stated that they want to focus on hiring local for rehab work because they know the space and they are giving back to the community. Van Dyke then stated that all of their vendors are local.

Trustee Woods asked for clarification on what Van dyke stated about the contracts. Van Dyke stated that the contracts were already in place prior to Van Dyke or Decker joining the SSLBDA.

Price asked what the SSLBDAs relationship with the Cook County Land Bank was like. Van Dyke stated that they are two sides of the same coin. The SSLBDA is a membership organization and they work on behalf of their partner jurisdictions to reclaim vacant properties. The Cook County Land Bank is a repository of properties. The Cook County Land Bank has a statutory authority through the state which makes them the go between for vacant and abandoned properties. The SSLBDA is not connected to the system that the Cook County Land Bank is a part of. The SSLBDA identifies vacant or abandoned properties and then works with their local partners to get the properties back on the tax rolls through their acquisition and sale.

Price then asked what allows the SSLBDA to be the Land Bank for a local jurisdiction verses the Cook County Land Bank. Van Dyke stated what allows them to do this is the intergovernmental agreement the SSLBDA has with local communities whereas the Cook County Land Bank has state law.

Price asked if the way each land bank is composed could put them in competition with each other. Van Dyke stated yes and acknowledged that has led to a lack of communication between the two agencies in the past.

Price wanted to confirm that the Village made it easier to foreclose or move through the process and allow the SSLBDA to get around the two (2) year wait to proceed in judicially abandoning a property. Brown stated that in January of 2022, state law changed to where the property does not have to go to the municipality first. Instead, the land bank can be the receiver instead. This change removed unnecessary costs and fees and reduced the time the property needed to stay in limbo. The property no longer has to be deeded to the Village and then transferred to the SSLBDA.

Perkins stated that he is glad to see that the SSLBDA has taken steps to help ensure properties are not sold nefariously. He then asked what has been the average sale price for properties in Park Forest. Van Dyke stated that he did not have those numbers but the most recent sale on Marquette Street sold for \$38,000.

Perkins stated that the homes in Park Forest have been devalued over the years and they are seeing a lot of houses sold for under the regional market value which means the tax rate must increase. Currently, the taxes are up to 43 percent from 37 percent.

Perkins asked when the SSLBDA takes over a rehab property if the previous taxes are absolved. Van Dyke stated yes. Removing past unpaid taxes is usually completed through the closing process or abandonment process.

Brown stated that last year - when the rehab market was good – the SSLBDA would market to developers and about eight (8) to 10 proposals could be received. The number and variety of proposals would allow the SSLBDA to see who the developer was and what their scope of work was going to be. This process allowed the SSLBDA and Village to be able to potentially avoid an outside developer who may invest money into a property and then rent it out which doesn't help the Village's homeownership rate. Van Dyke state that this is also a real opportunity of local vendors.

Price asked what the two main goals are for the SSLBDA for the next year. Van Dyke stated that he would like to get consistent funding. Currently, the market does not support their work since they are not a business even though it is run like one. Most states have land banking legislation that provides land banks more authority and some consistency in their source of funding. Van Dyke wants to explore a funding stream.

Trustee Woods asked what the SSLBDAs greatest challenge in meeting their goals would be. Van Dyke stated that making sure that they are able to communicate with all of their partners. Decker added on by saying they wanted to bring a lot more transparency to the process and to the disposition of the properties in Park Forest.

Trustee Woods then stated that Park Forest has a history of competition between investors and owners who want to purchase a single family home. There have been a lot of people concerned with how investors are buying up large amount of properties within the Village. He asked how the SSLBDA would prevent a large investor from buying up a lot of properties. Van Dyke stated that they would make sure that properties end up in the hands of responsible agents. Decker went on to state that when they are looking at proposals, they are not always looking to sell to the highest bidder. Brown stated that last year when they would get proposals and one was from someone that live out of state, they would look at how they would invest in the community.

**A motion was made to move to regular agenda by Burton-Prete. Seconded by Brooks. All in favor.**

**Old Business:**

**a. Draft DownTown Master Plan Discussion & Board Recommendation.**

Brown stated that he sent the latest DownTown Master Plan draft with corrections to the Planning and Zoning Commission. He believes it will be scheduled for the Village Board meeting on May 22, 2023. However, if there are still some changes that need to be made, they can complete it during the next two meetings between now and the Village Board meeting in May.

**A motion was made by Price that the current draft of the DownTown Master Plan will be recommended to the Board. Seconded by Burton-Prete. All in favor.**

Burton-Prete stated that she did find minor typos in the DownTown Master Plan on three separate pages. On page 19, under the header "Lack of Foot and Vehicular Traffic through

DownTown,” the sentence that reads "The participants noted that while DownTown is the center of Park Forest, it seems to have little foot and vehicle traffic." Here “vehicle traffic” should be changed to “vehicular traffic.” On page 27 under the Office header, the first sentence says “...DownTown Park Forest has is a single...” The word “is” should be removed. On page 92, under Organization of the CIP, the word “sevens” should be changed to “seven.”

**Price amended his motion to approve the plan with the three additional revisions included. Seconded by Brooks. All in favor.**

#### **Communications:**

- a. Member Communications:** Burton-Prete asked Brown if Park Forest has any resources for people who are homeless. Brown stated that it depends on what kind of help they are looking to receive. For example, if they are looking for warming places, they can go to either the police station, fire station, or the Village Hall when it is open. Aside from that, they can contact agencies like Respond Now. Hardy stated that they can contact Respond Now too. They can also go to [www.hudrelief.gov](http://www.hudrelief.gov) or call 708-966-9648.
- b. Trustee Comments:** The next Park Forest Business Breakfast will be at 7:45 am, on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, at Dining on the Green. Randy Simmons passed away earlier this year. The Environment Commission is going to be presenting the 2022 Sustainability Awards at the March 20<sup>th</sup> Village Board Meeting.
- c. Staff Communications:** There will be seven (7) Earth Month events happening in April. The information will be in the water bill. The first one will be on April 1<sup>st</sup> and that will be the annual community clean-up. The Environment Commission is looking for people to volunteer. The electric aggregation is going on through the company MC2. That is an opt-out program. If you stay in the program, you will get a lower rate on your energy supply. There are no strings attached. In addition to electric aggregation, there is an Illinois Solar for All program for those who are income qualified. A resident can get 50 percent off their energy supply and a \$100 gift card. If you are not income eligible, you can still get 20% off. Lastly, looking to wrapping up the Home Repair and Accessibility Program (HRAP). HRAP is a partnership with Illinois Housing and Development Authority. The Village is looking to finish the resolution this coming Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup> and on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the Village should close with the funding from IHDA. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the information should be up on the Village website. On April 5<sup>th</sup>, there will be an open house from 6 to 8:30 pm in the Board Room to ask any questions about the program and get more information to the residents. The week of April 17<sup>th</sup> will be the sign-up period. Sign-up will occur on a first come, first serve basis.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Price. Seconded by Brooks. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
2023 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES & 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**GOAL #1**

Review and act expeditiously to make recommendations on existing and new development proposals.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Review all development proposals and other land use requests as submitted throughout the year.

**TIMELINE**

This is an ongoing goal that will be implemented throughout the year as development proposals are submitted.

**2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Planning and Zoning Commission considered a Special Use Permit for a 44 unit multifamily development at the corner of Orchard Drive and Indianwood Drive. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended the Special Use Permit for approval with conditions, which was accepted by the Village Board and the Special Use Permit was granted to the developer.

**GOAL #2**

Amend Village’s Unified Development Ordinance as needed.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Pending review of the draft ordinance by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, conduct public meetings and formal public hearings as needed to ensure full public awareness of the impacts of the new storm water management ordinance.
- Amend the Unified Development Ordinance as needed to

**TIMELINE**

This is an ongoing goal that will be implemented throughout the year as requests to amend the UDO are submitted.

**2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The PZC considered two text amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance. The first text amendment was a change to the Use Table, Use Standards, and Definition of Terms for Retail Tobacco and Smoking Lounges. The second text amendment considered was to allow for the combination of a Drive-Through Facility with a Gas Station. Both text amendments were recommended for approval to the Board with amendments and were subsequently approved by the Village Board.

### **GOAL #3**

Implement the Priority #2 actions of the *Strategic Plan for Land Use and Economic Development* regarding the Plan for South Western Avenue Annexation.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- Recognize the high importance of preparing for development in this area because it is one of the limited areas for new development in Will County, and it has the potential for attracting development resulting from the South Suburban Airport and the Illiana Expressway.
- Promote new development along South Western Avenue.

#### **TIMELINE**

These Objectives should be pursued in the order listed.

#### **2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Planning and Zoning Commission supported the potential development along Western Avenue through the expeditious approval of a Text Amendment to the definition of Drive-Throughs as noted above under Goal #2.

### **GOAL #4**

Implement the Priority #2 actions of the *Strategic Plan for Land Use and Economic Development* regarding the Plans for the Eastgate Neighborhood

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- Continue to seek grant funds for additional demolition/deconstruction and redevelopment activities.
- Continue to explore with Cook County and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County the ability to develop improved access to the Sauk Trail Woods from 26<sup>th</sup> Street.
- At the time potential development partners are identified, conduct a planning workshop to update the concept plan in the *Strategic Plan for Land Use and Economic Development*.
- Conduct a redevelopment workshop for commercial and/or residential redevelopment, especially as redevelopment relates to the Village of Park Forest.

#### **TIMELINE**

These activities will occur throughout 2023 and continue into the foreseeable future.

#### **2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The PZC continued its coordination with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) that started in 2021. The PZC supported a FPDCC workshop held in the Village of Park Forest in March 2022, held a regular PZC meeting with the FPDCC in July, and reviewed a report from the FPDCC to better understand changes to restoration, infrastructure, and programming at Sauk Trail Woods Forest Preserve.

## **GOAL #5**

Implement the Priority #2 actions of the *Strategic Plan for Land Use and Economic Development* regarding the Plans for DownTown Park Forest

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Continually market the 2.25 acres of Village-owned land along Main Street for development consistent with the DownTown Gateway Mixed Use Concept.
- Continually market the vacant parking lots and the property at 350 Main Street for development consistent with the DownTown Master Plan.

### **TIMELINE**

These Objectives should be pursued as opportunities arise.

### **2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

PZC Commissioners reviewed the Aging-in-Community Strategic Guide and supported the development of the DownTown Master Plan.

## **GOAL #6**

Pursue opportunities for training of Planning and Zoning Commission members.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Encourage all Planning and Zoning Commissioners to attend the American Planning Association – Illinois Chapter conference.
- Take the required State of Illinois sexual harassment prevention training.

### **TIMELINE**

These Objectives will occur throughout 2023.

### **2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

No training took place during 2022.