

VILLAGE OF ORLAND PARK

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

7:00 PM

Village Hall

Plan Commission

Louis Stephens, Chairman

*Commissioners: Judith Jacobs, Paul Aubin, Steve Dzierwa,
Patricia Thompson, Nick Parisi and John J. Paul*

CALLED TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The December 8, 2009 meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order by Chairman Stephens at 7:01 p.m.

Present: 5 - Commissioner Dzierwa; Commissioner Aubin; Commissioner Stephens; Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Paul

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Jacobs, Commissioner Parisi

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Stephens entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2009 Plan Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Paul Aubin, seconded by Commissioner Patricia Thompson, that this matter be APPROVED with the following corrections:

The motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Commissioner Dzierwa, Commissioner Aubin, Commissioner Stephens, Commissioner Thompson and Commissioner Paul

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Jacobs and Commissioner Parisi

PUBLIC HEARINGS**2009-0446 Dairy Queen Outdoor Patio Seating**

STEPHENS: Entertained a motion for continuance.

I move to continue the public hearing for file number 2004-0446, Dairy Queen Outdoor Patio Seating, to the January 26, 2010 Plan Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Steve Dzierwa, seconded by Commissioner Patricia Thompson, that this matter be CONTINUED to the Plan Commission, due back on 1/26/2010. The motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Commissioner Dzierwa, Commissioner Aubin, Commissioner Stephens, Commissioner Thompson and Commissioner Paul

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Jacobs and Commissioner Parisi

NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS**2009-0534 LaGrange Road Transportation Plan**

Jim Considine, T.Y. Lin International

Tim Gustafson, T.Y. Lin International

TURLEY: Presented staff's report dated December 8, 2009

Introduced Jim Considine and Tim Gustafson from T.Y. Lin International.

CONSIDINE: Explained that the attached document is very long and that they would be discussing a lot of different issues and recommendations tonight. Will present some of the more important features of the planning effort and give an overview rather than going into all of the different details of the project itself. Will talk about 4 categories and will go through the goals and the purpose of the project and that will lead into discussion about a concept or policy initiative known as complete streets, and will give a little background on the planning process or planning effort and then go specifically into some of the issues and recommendations that came out of the planning process.

STEPHENS: Asked Mr. Gustafson what company he is with.

CONSIDINE: T. Y. Lin International.

STEPHENS: Thanked Mr. Gustafson and asked him to proceed.

CONSIDINE: We started off as a goal for this project coming more from the Village but it had to do with what I call quality of life. How do we improve the quality of life in the corridor? I think it has a lot to do with not only safety, but also with economic development, how to improve the community overall in general. Not only traffic flow, but how do we make the corridor more safe? What do we do in relation to land use and transportation? As we got into the project and we developed some of the goals and further refined the objectives, it turned into a purpose for this project of a concept or a policy that we call "Complete Streets." When I talk about a complete street it's really about making a street or a roadway more acceptable for all types of people and for all modes of transportation. As you can see by the pictures, it's a pretty good example up in Cary where you just had a roadway and it didn't make any certain provisions for pedestrians or bicycles. That's where we're getting at when we're dealing with complete streets. The concept of complete streets is a national movement. It's not something that is just happening in Orland Park, it's not just a Chicago thing, it's a national movement that has been encouraged over the past couple of years. What it's dealing with is an issue of roadways being built for specifically vehicles without any consideration for cyclists or pedestrians. That trend is beginning to change. It also has a lot to do with as we get older and our generation there's a need or consideration more for giving to walking or using bicycles. There's a movement that's going on not only nationally, it's happening in this region, in Chicago, it's happening in Orland Park. How do we start giving some consideration for alternative modes of transportation? It's also starting to develop into a concept that you will start hearing about. It's transforming into a concept called livability. We are starting to see that

at the national or federal level where the Federal Trade Administration and the Highway Administration are starting to talk about livability. That's starting to connect housing with roadways, with jobs; it's trying to find more balance. You're going to be reading more about that in the coming years. Some of the things that we would like to express especially with all ages, it's almost a third of our population that can't use vehicles. They don't drive. You might question that a little bit but you think about the younger people, the older people, disabled people that really can't use a car. So how do we accommodate them? I think it is an important consideration. The objectives do not only deal with complete streets, but they are also objectives that were formulated through the public and state goal involvement process as part of this project. Some of these things I've already talked about, but it's not only accommodating traffic, but other modes of transportation. Most importantly in doing this how do we give consideration for economic development in the community which is an important driving factor. Also safety - how do we consider in terms of our transportation improvements especially when we're going from a four-lane to a six-lane road, how do we make it safe for all users? Finally, how do we couple this with some of the transportation improvements? There is going to be some funding that will come from the State but how do we couple that with other things that can occur to improve the transportation environment? So that's giving you a little bit of a background from a regional and national prospective focusing into what the Village of Orland Park is looking for. With that I am going to turn it over to Tim who is going to give some background on the project and then start going into some of the issues and recommendations.

GUSTAFSON: How long has this been going on? I'm going to give you a little background. This started as far back as 2003 when the Village began working with IDOT to initiate the process for expanding LaGrange Road. They knew they had a need for it. These things do take quite a while and have a bit of background. That's when it began and then in 2005 they were granted design approval to widen it. The planning began and that's when the actual drawings were commissioned to get started. And then in 2007/2008 the bridge improvements to get ready for this expansion actually began. You may recall parts of Southwest Highway bridge construction. Some intersections are being done - 143rd Street is in progress, 159th recently was done. Those are the kinds of things they did to get ready for it. We have this window time that we consider our window of opportunity for the LaGrange Road Corridor planning process. So that's where we are right now. Phase two is the next major step, we wanted to make sure we had something that helps feed into that, that is complimenting it and provides a little bit of design guidance and development guidance for how to achieve the kinds of things that Jim just touched on that were objectives for the plan to help make it a complete street. A quick overview of the corridor - we are covering seven miles of it from 131st Street to I-80. It goes through Orland Park, Tinley Park and Orland Hills. It's known as a strategic regional arterial and this is somewhat unique as part of the charge that our Metropolitan Planning Organization has as well as IDOT, recognizing that we need a network of streets to compliment our interstate system. So the strategic regional arterial or SRA as it's called, was what was

used and this is a map showing how many SRAs we have in the region, and Orland Park is in southwestern Cook County and (indicating on the map) you can see that Orland Park is in this portion. When people said in the meeting that LaGrange Road acts like an expressway some days, there is a reason behind that, unfortunately. And this is intended to provide this regional network. This kind of gives you a sense of why this is behaving in a way that is contrary to what you want in your community center - what's the Village's main street supposed to be like? The entirety of LaGrange Road is under IDOT jurisdiction for design, improvements, maintenance and all that. Part of this process, we wanted to make sure we understood what the concerns were from the community's perspective. Public involvement is a big portion of this kind of a plan. We want to know what's important, what are the issues now. So there is a three-prong approach. We had a public meeting a while back where we asked them to actually mark up the maps themselves and say show me where the problems are. What are your issues? We had a lot of people that came to that, some of whom are here tonight, still interested in this process. I want to thank them for coming out. They got to point out - they are familiar with this neighborhood, they are familiar with this street - they wanted to communicate that and we wanted to know from them what was important. (Showed some slides from that public meeting). The project steering committee met frequently in order to review the deliverables of the plan, to make sure we got everything right to address these issues. That consisted of the public, Village staff, other representatives from Metra, representatives from PACE, Cook County Forest Preserve District, we wanted to make sure that we were hitting all the points that we needed to cover all the bases about what are the issues of the corridor, what is it affect when you say you want to do something you want to improve connectivity or you want to increase the ability to get to transit - you need to talk to the people that provide those kinds of things. So that was the other portion. And then the Citizens Advisory Committee - they are certain individuals who wanted to make sure we addressed and asked them specifically, as a bicycle enthusiast, what are the major issues when it comes to crossing LaGrange Road. We wanted to approach the community and individuals who have sight impairments, mobility impairments, what are their issues with getting around on LaGrange Road? Do you have enough time to cross the street? Is it even worth considering? Those are the kinds of questions we wanted to ask. So that's what the Citizens Advisory Committee was helpful in providing. We also wanted to make sure we knew what existing plans and projects were ongoing. What's happening now that we don't want to step on any toes and undo anything that is in the works and also compliment the kinds of things that are already important and being pursued by the Village. The roadway expansion plans are the clearest example of that - we have some pretty specific design guidance about what is going to happen with respect to the roadway lanes. There's some recent work done as far as medians and landscape design from Land Design Collaborative. We wanted to make sure that we didn't undo any of that and we were also aware of what types of things were being recommended. Some of the stuff that the Village has considered already in the past and what they might want to continue to pursue. There are two bicycle plans. Orland Park has one and Tinley Park has one

- the recommended bikeways map is the map that Orland Park is using. Those are the kinds of things they wish to pursue and if the opportunity arises we wanted to make sure that we could facilitate that as well. The bicycle and pedestrian bridge is a pretty concrete example of one of those recommendations that is moving forward. We have some images of that, even though that is not our work. We wanted to make sure we recognized that it is underway. We can still tie in with that. And then the Main Street Triangle which is a planning development that you are all familiar with at 143rd Street Metra Station. This ties in with that and makes sure that what happens there also helps improve the corridor. We are all interested in seeing that happen. So those are the things that we wanted to make sure we understood before we moved forward and decided "what's our role? What's the reason for this plan then, why do we need another one?" The roadway expansion we know full well we're throwing two more lanes down the middle of Orland Park and Tinley Park - it's going to affect traffic volume - there's going to be more cars, we have no doubt. This is also intended to improve traffic flow and with improved flow there will be increased speed in some conditions and if we are increasing speed, that's going to introduce pedestrian accessibility and it also affects the amount of space left over for other things like landscaping, trees, sidewalks, the stuff that's left over on the side of the road in many conditions is not less important and we want to make sure we don't lose sight of that. All of these affect the quality of life. You're not just the motorist along LaGrange Road, these other things come up whether you walk two feet or two hundred feet or even across the entire corridor, or if you take the bus to work. All of these things affect the quality of life. So what we did is we split the plan up in a series of recommendations and we are going to touch on examples of each tonight. We're not going to cover all of the recommendations that Jane hinted at, we don't have enough time, but we wanted to give you a good example of the types of things we encountered as issues, how we approach to solve them and address them as recommendations and most valuable, what we mean when we say that and what it actually looks like. I am going to go through an example of each of these and I encourage you if you do need further explanation please let me know.

SEE POWER POINT PRESENTATION ATTACHED.

GUSTAFSON: Invited questions from the Plan Commission.

AUBIN: Regarding the landscaped median proposed down LaGrange Road say from 131st to 159th Street, as an example, how is that going to affect businesses here that will have only one-way entrances into their businesses, some have two-way entrances - north and south off of LaGrange Road, but once the median is in they'll only have one way into their businesses? Is that going to be something that is going to deter businesses from coming to Orland Park?

SULLIVAN: First of all, the State is going to allow U-turns when you come to an intersection and go past the median you will be able to make a U-turn and go back to go in. It won't be as convenient as people are used to now. But as Tim pointed

out, especially in that area, there are so many driveways, it is dangerous and there are a lot of conflicts in turning movements. So this is going to help in making it much safer. You'll still be able to get in there, it's just a matter of learning to change how you're going to get in. Some people won't like that but the State is going to insist on a non-mountable median whether it's a landscaped median or not. They are going to insist on that barrier.

AUBIN: So you don't perceive it will cause a problem in terms of economic development?

SULLIVAN: We haven't seen it in other places and I'd also like to mention that we are trying to expand that finer grid system so you have other alternatives to get in. Two examples are, if you're at Lowe's, you can't get to Orland Park Place to the north but we do have a plan to install a bridge over the creek so that next year you will be able to go from Target to Lowe's to Orland Park Place all the way through.

CONSIDINE: I'd like to add to that because we have run into these kinds of issues. I think it has to do with finding a balance between transportation, economic development and land use. You have to keep in mind with the roadway that there is going to be future growth, which means more cars, more vehicles and also winds up being more safety problems. I think the expansion is going to be an economic development issue that will be better for retail. We understand your problems with transportation. The median is necessary in order to improve safety. You can understand the safety issues with left-turn lanes. So I think it's a balance issue and it's all part of the overall process of making sure that transportation and economic development is balanced accordingly.

SULLIVAN: The area that I mentioned is 95th Avenue, that's what we're calling it - it's between 94th and LaGrange Road is 96th so it just makes it easier. At 143rd Street there's a light that goes into Orland Crossing and we are working with the property owners there to extend that south so you would be able to go south into future development and it's also going to be 95th Avenue. Lastly, we're working on 156th Street to connect Ravinia with LaGrange there so you would be able to go from Ravinia east to LaGrange and then east into Lowe's and continue to connect all over. So those are the kinds of things we're talking about.

GUSTAFSON: It's interesting - in several instances when we were identifying existing conditions and what was not working, in talking with Bob and Jane we said what would really work is if you had the following and then we would come up with something and they would say, "Oh, we have a graphic for that, actually. This is something we've wanted to pursue," and this is the vehicle that gets us to put this all in one place and say this is the recommended course of action. This is a great example of it as well that business owners, when we've had our Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, one of the meetings touched on some of the issues that came up. One of the very real ones was, 'you can turn left and right into my office now, now you're only going to be able to turn right although I recognize

that congestion is also a very big issue,” and I think there are many people who do recognize that it’s a trade off, that it’s a deterrent if it is too congested to even get to Orland Park to bother shopping or if you have to make a u-turn in order to get there what’s the trade off? Is it a turn, is it a success. Like Bob said, we’re not seeing it much elsewhere. One of the communities that we were able to draw on for similarity in post expansion design was Bloomington, Illinois. If any of you are familiar with Veteran’s Parkway, it’s six lanes and they have some things that they did well and some things that could use improvement but it is still a very, very active commercial corridor. That’s a good example of yes we didn’t get everything we wanted but we do know what is possible with the economic climate and that’s not even in the Chicago metropolitan area. So that was an example that we drew on to see what we could improve if we had that one to do over again, now we can translate it over into LaGrange Road recommendations.

THOMPSON: Stated a bit of confusion over the sidewalk issue. In looking at the massive plan here, in section 3 page 10, the only section you’re not going to have the sidewalk in is between 179th and about 167th. Is that correct?

GUSTAFSON: That is the portion that you are referring to for the Forest Preserve District, yes?

THOMPSON: Correct.

GUSTAFSON: That is also something that is in the works. We met with the Forest Preserve District and asked how this is going to work. We want to get a sidewalk, we want it to be continuous. They said they were pursuing a ring trail around the perimeter of the property. IDOT and FPDC are in a position that they can’t acquire right-of-way from the Forest Preserve for transportation use. But the Village can, if they so chose. The Village then said that the better course of action would be to let them build their trail and make sure it is as connected to our sidewalk system as possible. We say let them pursue their trail and make it behave like a sidewalk and connect to either end so that everybody gets it and we don’t have to acquire property in order to do it and make sure it is still a connected network. So that was actually a discussion that we had to have to make sure that it would be close enough to be used as a sidewalk, can it be successful and will you be pursuing it concurrent with these improvements so that we get a connected network.

THOMPSON: Asked how it was proposed to put a sidewalk along McGinnis Slough especially if you’re going to widen to six lanes?

GUSTAFSON: That’s a section that we saw in the IDOT plans that showed that most of the widening would actually happen to the west and so there are some retaining wall sections to keep you out of the wetlands as you walk along there. But their plans do show room for a sidewalk along that entirety. That was something that we did see as an option. That’s a tricky spot where you’re already up against

a natural area that you don't want to infringe upon. But the plans did actually show a sidewalk in that location.

THOMPSON: Okay.

SULLIVAN: Addressing Commissioner Thompson: If you notice the Southwest Highway bridge when it was built, current LaGrange only goes through the west half so if you picture the east half will be under that part of the bridge, as Tim referenced, it's going to be shoved all the way over to the east and those plans did have sidewalks on both sides. It will be nice. As you know, Sandburg kids who just scare everybody walking along the curb and plans are definitely to correct that.

THOMPSON: That's all I have. Thank you.

DZIERWA: First of all I'm glad to see the raised pavement as I was a big advocate of that a long time ago. As far as I'm concerned, we can lose half of those driveways and make everything right in/right out. As I see things right now, I see people standing on the median making a left turn into a right in/right out talking on a cell phone. It drives me crazy so as soon as this can happen that's great. One question that I have as far as your extended medians and crosswalks. Asked to go to that slide. I'm wondering the green space there between the designated crosswalk and the bus stop. Wouldn't that just connect to the sidewalk? And my next question for that particular spot is would it help to move the bus stop over and lose that little bit of green space, or do you want to keep it in a lane and stop traffic and not have to negotiate the traffic?

GUSTAFSON: That triangle of green space you're referring to - this is a conceptual drawing and it doesn't actually communicate all of the things needed to make that happen. When you build a median with a median refuge island, the median is depressed at that location for the refuge island and then goes back up. This is done to a relative scale to make sure that there is enough space to accommodate these and we checked the turning radii for left turns to make sure that trucks can actually do this. This does not communicate that final design - it's got to be much more specific to communicate that but it did show us that space is available so that would all be one continuous piece of poured concrete with the depressed area for the refuge island to accommodate that. It is all connected. Something like that that would be hanging out there would be knocked to pieces the first time a snow plow hits it by accident. So it would have to be designed in such a way to accommodate that.

DZIERWA: Would it be more difficult to make a u-turn there because of that, even though it's depressed?

GUSTAFSON: Yes, that would make it difficult to make a u-turn, but if you have three lanes of traffic in which to enter, there's enough room to make the u-turn because what we're thinking of in terms of design now is when making a u-turn on

two lanes is kind of difficult, but if you have twelve extra feet that you didn't have previously that median nose is of little consequence when compared to what you have now.

DZIERWA: Okay.

GUSTAFSON: And then to answer your other question about where does the bus stop go, this isn't an issue that we touched on in this image for the presentation, but we do address it in the plan, is the idea of the far side bus stop where instead of the front side of the intersection, it's on the other side of signal. So, traditionally, a bus would be waiting here (indicating on the plan), picking up passengers and then getting back into the lane of traffic. But anyone wanting to make a right hand turn has to wait for the bus to finish its business before they can do that because it is illegal to turn right in front of a bus. Put it on the other side of the intersection you get rid of that issue and then someone is less likely to need to enter the stream of traffic because what often happens the bus crosses through the intersection either at the beginning of the signal or at the end of the signal and they can wait here if this light turns red and there's no oncoming traffic they don't have to jockey their way back into traffic. It has a couple of benefits. We recommend that kind of approach. It's very traffic engineering in its approach but that's why it's put there. If you keep them in the street and don't have a pull off lane, you don't have to sacrifice as much sidewalk space. Traffic engineering can help you get into the other side of the road, you don't take any more space, everything's a little more efficient and it works a little bit better.

DZIERWA: Okay. I think as far as people in town, they can probably get an education once this is all done and know that u-turns are allowed and then it won't be that big of a deal. Obviously people who don't live here would have a more difficult time. I did notice in my travels in the past - as an example, when I was down in Cancun, I noticed they have return - left-turn lanes and basically all it is is a u-turn, but it lets people know. There's a sign there that says return. I think once people have been exposed to that, it will be a little bit easier to navigate. As far as what Mr. Sullivan talked about earlier about getting connectivity, at Lowe's it should have happened a long time ago and I've always been an advocate about that. So if that's going to happen, that's a good thing. It's going to make things better as far as getting traffic off LaGrange Road. As far as key locations for gateways, you mentioned that earlier, it seems like we have a lot of signage that says "Village of Orland Park," not that I'm against that, but can you tell me what you consider a true gateway?

GUSTAFSON: Two examples we cited were when you actually have an overpass of some sort that breaks your visual view of LaGrange Road. It kind of brings the scale down. Some of the designs that we recommended instead of sign is landscaping. You can do a lot more with greenery and landscaping than you can with a sign. Often times you can do it within the right-of-way, let it pay for itself and maintain itself rather inexpensively. So we recommended it in a couple of

locations. At Southwest Highway was landscaping closer to the road that brings it in. We also had a recommendation that was put in the plan for something across the façade of the bridge. Those are a little more difficult to pursue but if you're already breaking the view of the drive visually, do something to what is breaking that view and you don't even have to say the words "Village of Orland Park" to do that. If you wish to, though, that is still an option. So that's one example. Interstate 80, just beyond 179th Street, or Orland Parkway as you get closer to the on ramp, you almost always have large swaths of real estate that are usually set aside for on ramps and things like that. We're all familiar with the big circles inside of a cloverleaf that usually go unchanged and undecorated because IDOT has to pay for them and they'd rather mow the grass than let a community take ownership of it. But that's another example that we identified where we said if you do want to do that, you could plant trees on a berm and put landscaping in the low-lying areas because those low-lying areas develop a lot of salt spray. We had a designer on this project that has some history and experience in this type of treatment. There are plants that pop up naturally along roadsides that are salt tolerant and actually produce a golden color. Some people don't like them, some people do, but they actually thrive in areas where other things do not and if they are planted in such a way, you don't even have to mow them. So then you get an extra benefit back. If you do it in the correct design, it gives you a good aesthetic. That's another idea that we approached. We did get into this during the planning process. This isn't a design solution that we're saying has to be pursued here. But this is the type of thing that would be beneficial.

DZIERWA: There is going to be a part of LaGrange road that is going to go through the triangle area. Some people view this as our downtown area and I was reading in this planning magazine great streets. What's the difference between a great street and a complete street?

GUSTAFSON: It seems that a great street is a complete street that got everything it wanted. If you get your way on all these design elements and you can actually pursue this design to completion, and have a good working relationship with IDOT, or your engineering provider, and you can implement all these latest best practices, the land use is coordinated right up to the edge of the road where it should be placed and the streetscape is done and you create a place where people want to be, very vibrant street life. We had some examples that we put in the plan that said if you achieve all of these your complete street isn't only complete but it becomes a great public space. I think that the planning magazine does a really good job of celebrating those really successful examples because it is something to which communities aspire when they're redoing their roadways, just like we are here in Orland Park.

DZIERWA: I think the one common word in all examples of a great street are that they are downtown. It's kind of hard to picture LaGrange Road being six lanes and then two left-turn lanes as a downtown street. So I am thinking how can a complete street become a great street in just that particular section at 143rd which most of

us envision that to be our downtown area.

GUSTAFSON: It's definitely a challenge. I would say that we look for best practices where we could but would be a persuasive precedent for this kind of stuff. A previous issue actually pointed out areas of the D.C. metro area in Virginia is two boulevards that actually produced a one-way couplet for a downtown area and they were able to successfully negotiate how to provide that design which is actually two sets of three-lane segments separated by some real estate that allowed a great street to be created. Each situation is different so it's definitely a challenge to move forward and get a great street out of a six-lane cross section. We hope we have put the tools in place that can help pursue that.

DZIERWA: Thank you. That's all I have.

PAUL: This is pretty impressive. How long will it actually take to implement this? And what kind of provisions are going to be made to keep things moving while this is all going on, keep businesses from folding while streets are being blocked and LaGrange is being torn up?

GUSTAFSON: I think Bob and Jane are very glad you asked that. They want to make sure that this is a commitment that continues as well. A lot of our recommendations are contingent on redevelopment and turnover in some of the existing areas. We showed some examples of business owners that have no intention of going anywhere but don't have the kind of landscape they're really hoping for. Some of that will be triggered when some of that property is broken up for roadway construction. So in the next five years you can say if it moves forward to construction, that stuff will be given back. The roadway expansions that are already underway for 159th, 143rd, Southwest Highway, we're seeing right now. But a plan of this nature has about a ten-year horizon to talk about what's the kind of stuff you can pursue over the course of redevelopment in Orland Park. Jim and I were commenting when we were down here just before tonight's meeting there are not a lot of vacant storefronts, there are not a lot of empty businesses. Orland Park is doing quite well in that respect with respect to economic development. The things that are contingent on land use decisions by the Village certainly will move at the pace that redevelopment occurs. But this plan by being in place always provides you a fall back and says, well, we have a plan to pursue the following options. That's your best bet for moving forward so I don't have a better more specific answer for how long something of that nature takes, but the parts that are contingent on roadway reconstruction will happen when the roadway is redone. The things that are contingent on Village negotiated land use decisions with developers will happen as they come forward.

SULLIVAN: When 159th & LaGrange was done, IDOT took great pains to make sure they had two lanes going in each direction and people were surprised by how they could still actually get through there reasonably well considering what was going on. So the idea here is you're going to six but you have four now so if they

can keep four going to one side of the right-of-way, while they are doing the other side, that's the general idea so that you can still get around reasonably well and it doesn't just shut things down. We also hope to have a couple of these other connections we mentioned earlier - 156th Street, 95th Avenue - so people will have other ways to get around too. And then timing wise, this is in the State capital budget but you know the State's financial situation right now, so unless we get some stimulus funds or something, we're hoping that the fund will kick in in a couple of years, but we really don't know.

STEPHENS: Have you identified or has staff identified any areas along LaGrange Road where you would consider putting these plazas?

GUSTAFSON: Right now, we have not identified those locations.

STEPHENS: How about staff? Do you have any idea? Because if plans come before us, we at least want to start weaving that into the plans on what properties we are going to be dealing with coming on LaGrange Road.

SULLIVAN: Over the years we have talked about different things, one being Orland Square. If there was some redevelopment between the existing building and LaGrange Road, there could be a visual and functional linkage between LaGrange Road and that complex with something like Tim was showing in Lincolnshire and the other place where they could have that type of space and build some new commercial around that space that links to the existing Orland Square. This is something we have talked to Simon about and we are going to try to push to go towards a bit of a hybrid there. That was one major point. Other areas as they are redeveloped - we will look at each one and see what makes the most sense. That's the biggest one we thought would make a lot of sense because you have such a generator of activity around it, it could become a really important space.

STEPHENS: Isn't that part of the Metra Triangle plan to put a large plaza there?

SULLIVAN: That's Crescent Park that exists by the train station right now. That's the space that will be activated by all the residents and stores that go in there.

STEPHENS: Asked to see the slide with the bus stop shelters. Is that the safest place - after the stop light to put the bus stop or before the stop light? That can also create traffic problems as well. If it's Christmastime and you've got all kinds of shopping, the bus stops there and waiting to load people, you're going to be backing up to that intersection blocking east and westbound traffic. Would it be better to push it up to the middle of the block so you don't have the kind of back up traffic that we currently have?

GUSTAFSON: There are a couple of different ways and I'll explain a couple of examples. The first is the existing treatment of the nearside bus stop which

vehicles back up behind it but can't make a right hand turn - before you cross the street. By moving it to the other side of the street, you do raise the issue of backing up behind the bus. A couple of different things will happen. One of the things that is the most common is if the bus moves in the direction it does it's already stopping somewhere on the road so people are used to a bus stopping somewhere whether it's nearside or far side. You did suggest the idea of pushing it up stream, maybe another 20 some odd feet, so that an approaching car can see that the bus is stopped and negotiate to go around it in that middle lane. This again is meant to show the ability that space is available if the traffic engineer decides or the Pace bus stop planner decides it needs to go another 20 feet ahead so you get a full car length to go around that certainly is doable and definitely recommended. The far side treatment is just as safe as far as traffic engineering is concerned as the near side stop. That has been addressed which is how these gained in popularity. This treatment although not to scale is about two car lengths beyond the intersection, even though it doesn't necessarily appear that it is. It could be pushed further beyond. What is important to consider though, is that you don't get too far away from where pedestrians are crossing. And that's one of the other things you want to make sure you're relatively close where pedestrians are going to cross the street because if you put it too far up stream, and a pedestrian gets off the bus they're going to want to cross right there whether they should or not. So you want to be somewhat cognizant of where the pedestrian crossing is either just before or just beyond. Most communities that have pursued these far side bus stops in busy areas with a lot of commercial traffic, will still experience the kinds of things that you experience in most roadways. This attempts to minimize that as much as possible.

STEPHENS: It's kind of a balance of trying to push that bus further up and keep the pedestrian crossings safe.

DZIERWA: I think I know where Mr. Chairman is coming from. Am I correct that in the State of Illinois it is illegal to change lanes while passing through an intersection?

GUSTAFSON: That is a pretty common law, yes.

DZIERWA: Would two car lengths be enough behind that bus the way it is now or would Mr. Chairman's suggestion of pushing it up a little bit further so a person can travel through the intersection and then legally change lanes?

GUSTAFSON: This doesn't identify the exact location of the far side bus stop. The key point to remember is it is beyond the traffic signal and not before. And the other thing that we included in the plan that also helps to address this is the concept of transit signal priority. Most of you are familiar with the flashing beacon that goes on when an ambulance goes through the intersection. That same technology can be used for buses in the event that it becomes necessary. Not necessarily because they're running late, for example, but if they're approaching a

light that has just turned yellow they can have technology on board that will hold the yellow so that they get through the intersection and can board passengers on a red light so that no one is following behind them attempting to clear the intersection. In addition to pushing the bus to the other side of the street, we also make sure that the signal technology is there to accommodate that. Pace is interested in pursuing these options already and would like to make sure that if the Village is interested, they would at least have a plan saying here's how it would work.

STEPHENS: You may have a situation where someone wants to put a bike on the bike rack on the front of the bus and he's having a hard time doing it and backs up about 5 or 6 cars and now the traffic at the light that wants to move westbound cannot move westbound because the traffic going north can move because the guy's having a problem getting his bike on the rack.

GUSTAFSON: We are very hopeful that bus travel becomes that popular.

STEPHENS: Well even if it doesn't, if you've got buses stopping down LaGrange Road, you're going to have a back up. So my concern is you need to push it up further. You have to find a balance between where it's going to go and where the pedestrian is going to cross. The community identity thing in your presentation, you talk about putting different things along LaGrange Road as well as doing something on the façade of the bridge before coming into Orland Park. Is that a consideration with staff? Could we come up with a standard like that (referenced the Walgreen's plaza).

SULLIVAN: We are trying to do that. We have the concave sign right here at 147th and we have one at the new Walgreen's at Will-Cook Road and 143rd, and there is also one at 131st and LaGrange at Southmoor Commons. So that is one approach that we use to try to have some identity but there are a lot of ideas and it's just a matter of which one do we land on that everybody likes.

STEPHENS: Could we develop one? Or have staff look into developing something like that and then bring it up to the Plan Commission and the Board, and say this is the identity we are going to use and this is what we are going to require.

SULLIVAN: There are a lot of ideas. We have gotten a few out of this report and there are other ones out there that we can bring forward.

STEPHENS: Okay. Thank you. Those are my questions.

AUBIN: Is the underground thing at Darwin - is that still on the map?

SULLIVAN: Well, it's on the map but we were denied two grant applications in the past on that one. So we're going with an above grade crossing to address that

when 156th Street is built leaving it set up, though, later on if we ever come back to it.

STEPHENS: Your presentation brought up a great point about the fact that currently our pedestrian crossings - the markings are pretty much gone and if this plan doesn't move along as quickly as we'd like, is there any way we could move forward to get some better markings on the existing pedestrian crossings?

SULLIVAN: Actually we were working on the one across from Sandburg just south of 131st to improve that one because that one was also fading away and there are new attractions across the street and we wanted to address that scary crossing that people are making. I believe Public Works was going to go out and upgrade that one. Now that the cold weather is here, we'll have to wait for the spring.

STEPHENS: Do we have to get permission from IDOT to mark the street?

SULLIVAN: I think so.

STEPHENS: Do we have to get a permit?

SULLIVAN: I don't know about that.

GUSTAFSON: I can do a quick follow up on that. I can't speak directly to IDOT but in my experience in doing something of that nature, you can fill out a permit to perform work within public right-of-way and then provide them with awareness that you wish to do pavement marking. But that's a separate issue from pressuring them to do that as well, which is another issue entirely. Which is really how it should be happening, but there are definitely options to encourage that kind of stuff.

STEPHENS: So they'll let us spend the money.

GUSTAFSON: I'm sure they would be comfortable letting you spend the money.

STEPHENS: Does that conclude your presentation?

GUSTAFSON: Yes, it does.

STEPHENS: This does not require a motion/recommendation. Are there any other questions/comments from staff?

TURLEY: Even though this is not a public hearing, I think it would be appropriate to see if the public has any comment/questions.

PETER KOCHINSKI, 9137 Sandpiper Court. In regard to bicycling/walking in the Village, I think if you concentrate on building and making public spaces that the

center of the Village will find itself. You won't have to build it, but if people are encouraged to walk, I think they'll probably find the area that they will gravitate to. For lack of better explanation, if you look around Orland Mall and you see some of the facilities there, there's an eatery that has been abandoned for some time. People don't drive there because there is nothing there. But people don't walk there either because there are no public accessible paths for walking or bicycles to get there. So I think if you framed the area in a way that people could bike or walk and you encouraged that and made it more inviting, and it also has to do with planting trees and things like that, then people would naturally want to go there.

STEPHENS: Mr. Gustafson, is that part of our proposal here?

GUSTAFSON: Tonight's charge was not to do that. We involved these kinds of discussions when we had our public Citizens Advisory Committee meetings, but we can certainly take a record of these comments and incorporate them, and Jane and Bob will want to make sure they are on record as well.

BRAD McGinnis, 16816 Spicebush Lane. In reviewing the documents as well as in the presentation tonight, nothing was mentioned about lighting, the street lighting at all. I know in Tinley Park they have off 80th Avenue and 171st Street, at that intersection they have street lights that are decorative black and they also have a secondary light that shines over generally the sidewalk section. So that's something to consider and I did not see that addressed at all along with stop lights and how they are going to be utilized in addition to the traffic light cameras that have become so popular along the way. In addition to the turn lane we talked about and the bus and the u-turn, how would the back up affect the use of a traffic light camera in intersections like that? Also, working with the Forest Preserve District and trying to obtain the land necessary for the widening along 167th to 179th Street I know that 143rd Street, if I'm not mistaken, is one of the corners we're trying to get the Forest Preserve to give up some of the land there so that the roadway could be expanded and not infringe upon the property owners whose homes would be pretty much at the street. So obviously working in close coordination with that. We talked about reducing the lane usage to accommodate for sidewalks and traffic patterns, but how does that impact the use of bikes in this regard? We're already reducing it so is there enough delineation for a bike to actually pass without causing additional hazards and risks? We also talked about connectivity between the existing businesses and potentially reducing the number of inlets and outlets from various businesses. Also some of the hesitation has been probably from a number of those business owners - the risk associated with creating almost inner streets of frontage road so to speak, and who's going to maintain it and what happens with ownership rights and improvements? We need to consider that as well. I like your suggestions about creating the identity. I think the Village's planning department needs to come up with what is considered identifiable traits or logos or a theme that is going to be consistent and is not going to wear out in 10 years - something we can be proud of and incorporate into the design either at the street entrances at the main intersections or on light posts.

Those are some of the things that I identified just from today's presentation.

GUSTAFSON: There are some good issues that were raised. We definitely have heard a lot of these types of discussions as part of the planning process. Some of this stuff has come up. Some of it is definitely beyond what this plan can achieve with respect to things of which IDOT has jurisdiction. There are good points that were raised.

STEPHENS: In Tinley Park on Oak Park Avenue, they have a certain kind of street lights there. And he's right - there hasn't been anything addressed. Is that part of what you address in this or is that part of what we, as a community, look at, as far as identifiable street lighting?

GUSTAFSON: That type of street lighting I think is definitely appropriate to roll into the recommendation of a streetscape manual. The types of things that are included are street lights as well as pedestrian illumination and that's a very good example of that type of thing that Orland Park would like to influence as far as design is concerned. The street lights are very commonly incorporated in streetscape manuals.

STEPHENS: Because it's a SRA, do we have to go with what the requirements are for street lights that IDOT sets up or can we as a community say - these are the types of street lights we want because they are identifiable?

GUSTAFSON: That type of a design is always on the table when it comes to working with IDOT. They have a basic set of infrastructure that they pursue when they maintain and build their own roads. But they certainly have had success in the past working with communities that wish to influence that. A good example that's just as close as Tinley Park that has also pursued that also on LaGrange Road is LaGrange, Illinois. They have their own street lights and we had an example in the plan that places pedestrian illumination along something that is an SRA. So that's a very good example of it. That can certainly be contained within this plan. We've given you the recommendation to pursue that option and it definitely sounds like that's a course of action that a lot of people in the Village wish to pursue.

STEPHENS: That will help identify the community as you're driving through.

GUSTAFSON: That's a really good element and the communities that you think of that have that - that's one of the things they do with great success. It's a repeating element that you see over and over again that definitely communicates a unique identity.

KOCHINSKI: Some communities have traffic lights that incorporate the street lights. There is a design element associated with them. They have that design element in Cary, N.C.

GUSTAFSON: This plan also helps provide you with the opportunity to know what else is out there. There is a standard that IDOT uses for just about everything that they build. But there's almost always something out there that can be made to modify or enhance or improve upon that. What we try to do in this plan is to point out each of the examples where a community can exert some influence as far as the design is concerned. Recognizing, of course, that is above and beyond what IDOT does normally because their mission is still to provide transportation facilities. When they meet with communities that are interested in enhancing that, all of those options are available. The specifics of making those happen and getting those from IDOT is a negotiation that happens separate from this effort. There are always options out there that can be pursued.

STEPHENS: So I would say that staff will look into it. What we are trying to do here is to create a community identity along LaGrange Road. And if we weave all these things into it, it will give us a sense of community.

SULLIVAN: Just for your information, IDOT requires the height and the throw of the light to get across all lanes of traffic which the small ones don't do. In the Village Center District and the Old Orland area you're going to have the large mast lights along LaGrange Road, but you can intersperse them with the rhythm of lower pedestrian lights and that gives you the nice light for the pedestrian as well as the identity that Mr. McGinnis referred to. That's the kind of lights we already have in Old Orland and in Orland Crossing. That's going to be the prototype pedestrian that we'll use for the whole village center and that does lend itself to that rhythm of lighting along LaGrange Road. It might not be appropriate for the whole way but village center is marked by that kind of a light and would make sense.

STEPHENS: Thank you. Do we have anyone else who would like to make a comment?

GINA KENNY, 8300 138th Place. I just wanted to say thank you. I was on the Citizens Advisory Committee. I sat in on the meetings and I was the one that e-mailed comments after receiving the draft. I am the bicyclist and I was interested in that end, I use Ravinia and I use 94th Avenue. But it is hard to get across. I am also a parent of a 3-year old so I am very interested in that end. There's the library, this area, the pool and there's places where it is hard for us to get to now if we don't want to take a car and once he's old enough, he's going to want to go on his own. I am hoping this will be a lot safer. The one comment that I had e-mailed was that it is still not terribly bike friendly. What I would love to see is one side of the sidewalk be wider and a more multi-use path like we have around here and was recently put in around 139th Street, further east that connects to the Forest Preserve trail where the ComEd easement is. That's been very popular since it was put in. I also wanted to point out if you do make it more friendly to bicycles and people walking that you are going to get a lot more people shopping locally. They'll go to the library and then they'll walk to the Walgreen's or somewhere to eat. I think it would help economically as well. I was very happy to be able to be part of the

process.

STEPHENS: Thank you. Good comments.

DIANE NORRIS, 9137 Sandpiper Court. I was also on the Committee, the first original planning committee. I am the mother of three children. I raised my children here in Orland Park for the last 10 years. You're right to be concerned. My youngest who is a student at Jerling Jr. High, who walks to school, he's 14 now, he'll be starting at Sandburg. Often times he had difficulty walking to school because nobody maintained the sidewalks for him to get there. My middle child is a Sandburg student and God forbid she should miss the bus to school and I'm out of town with work. She's not going to get to school because there's no way for her to get there. My oldest is already in college. My concern is the bike trails. When we ride our bikes together to work, we're not talking about bike trails that are asphalt that we want to take for the weekend, for leisure, we want to take them to work because we work and reside in the Village. And we want to do it safely. When we're together, we go in the street. When I'm alone, I go on the sidewalk and was almost decapitated by a tree branch. So there are issues - we are going to put sidewalks in - but are they going to be maintained? There is a problem with the people who make right hand turns on red lights. They are not aware of pedestrians or bikers who are crossing the street. That's another hazard. I hope those things are also considered when adding the sidewalks and that they are going to be maintained and that motorists are more aware of pedestrians on the street because it's dangerous for us if they are not.

KENNY: Something else I wanted to mention besides the possible multi-use paths, is just putting up a shared use sign like was on one of the slides. I think that would be great. That might make motorists more aware that there could be other traffic besides cars and they may look more carefully for pedestrians.

STEPHENS: So more markings?

KENNY: Yes.

STEPHENS: Anyone else?

DZIERWA: I am not a big fan of right turn on red, especially people who pull off east-west streets onto LaGrange Road. It's a big problem at Sandburg, it's a big problem on 143rd Street, 151st Street and 159th Street. Two lanes of traffic move pretty good and people turning from the right turn lane just run right through. I pride myself on being a courteous driver and when I see stuff like this it just drives me crazy. I think a consideration has been put into the busier areas - busier intersections where right turn on red could be eliminated.

STEPHENS: One last question. When I read through this, did I understand that there is going to be one speed limit across all of LaGrange Road at 45 mph?

GUSTAFSON: Their Phase I plan showed that the proposed posted speed would be 45 mph. to normalize everything to the same speed. We acknowledged that early in the plan and recognized that you can't go any faster than they had already proposed. We are also pushing to reduce the speed in the area where we expect the most activity to as low as we're willing to go as low as would be reasonable to expect down to 35 in the most intensely developed sections of the corridor.

STEPHENS: So it would be 35 mph and then south of 167th what is that 55?

GUSTAFSON: The posted speed is 45 and then beyond the Forest Preserve it's 55.

STEPHENS: So is that what your recommendation is, to keep it at 55?

GUSTAFSON: Our recommendation is what IDOT concurred - a posted speed of 45 everywhere but even down to 35 in the center of town - from 143rd Street to 159th Street.

As a follow up to that. One of the things we sought to make clear in the plan was the issue of design speed vs. posted speed. That's an issue that engineers use to say at what speed is the road designed to accommodate traffic naturally as opposed to what does the Village say people should travel. The issue with lane widths is a very clear example. An 11-foot lane vs. a 12-foot lane. 12-foot lanes are designed for expressway and interstate travel. So they are designed for 70 mph travel speed. If you put it in the middle of town, and do nothing else to convince people to move more slowly than that, there's incentive to decrease your speed until you're imposed by a police officer or a traffic signal or a right turning vehicle. So we stated in our recommendation in our plan was when the Village is negotiating the design of this refers specifically to the design speed so that they don't think that you're talking about putting up whatever sign you like when you're done because that's only the posted speed. What engineering practice has shown is that if you really want to affect driver behavior, you affect the design.

STEPHENS: So by narrowing the lanes, you lower the speed limit.

GUSTAFSON: Narrowing the lanes is one of the clearest examples of slowing down traffic.

STEPHENS: Any further comments? We do not need a recommendation or motion for this discussion.

STEPHENS: There being no further questions or comments Chairman Stephens went on to other business.

No motion.

This matter was NO ACTION

OTHER BUSINESS

STEPHENS: In looking at my calendar, I understand that our next meeting would be the 22nd of December, but that meeting has been cancelled.

SULLIVAN: That's correct.

STEPHENS: So this is our last meeting for this year?

SULLIVAN: Yes.

DZIERWA: Mr. Chairman, our Planning Commission ornament is proudly displayed on the Christmas tree facing east at the very top, if you're looking for it.

STEPHENS: Thank you for that information.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before this Plan Commission, Chairman Stephens entertained a motion for adjournment at 8:35 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Steve Dzierwa, seconded by Commissioner Paul Aubin, that this matter be ADJOURNED. The motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Commissioner Dzierwa, Commissioner Aubin, Commissioner Stephens, Commissioner Thompson and Commissioner Paul

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Jacobs and Commissioner Parisi