

**City of Highland Park
Central District Plan Update**

Revising the Vision!

Roundtable Meeting Set #2

October 14, 2009

Promoting Commerce and Service (7:00 p.m.)
Assuring a Well Functioning Downtown (8:15 p.m.)

October 15, 2009

Creating a Vibrant Downtown (7:00 p.m.)
Advancing a Sustainable Downtown (8:15 p.m.)

- 1) Introductions and Agenda Review (Meeting Chair) (5 mins.)
- 2) Presentation of Draft Vision Sentences (staff) (10 mins.)
- 3) Group Discussion re: Draft Vision sentences (30 mins.)
- 4) Discussion of “Questions for further discussion” which will lead to development of strategies and objectives to achieve the vision (Meeting Chair) (25 mins)
- 5) Information needed for next meeting and feedback/questions/concerns (Group discussion) (5 mins.)

Upcoming Dates

- **November 10:** Creating a Vibrant Downtown (7 p.m.), Assuring a Well Functioning Downtown (8:15 p.m.)
- **November 12:** Promoting Commerce and Service (7:00 p.m.), Advancing a Sustainable Downtown (8:15 p.m.)

Note: depending upon how the process is going, and overlap between roundtable issues, these roundtable meetings may be collapsed into one or two larger group meetings. For more information call the Department of Community Development Planning Division at 847 432-0867.

Creating a Vibrant Downtown

Roundtable Focus Issues:

- Land use and zoning
- Preservation and new development
- Building form and design
- Pedestrian experience
- Public spaces, community activities, and the visual and performing arts
- Activities for different times of day and throughout the seasons

Draft Vision Sentences:

- The Downtown will be an inviting, interesting place that offers a diversity of experiences and activities.
- Building form and design will engage the pedestrian at ground level, honor the community's historic character, and establish a visually rich and well-functioning environment.
- The Downtown will have places for affordable and distinctive cultural events which draw diverse ages, animate public spaces, and encourage the visual and performing arts throughout the year.
- The Downtown will knit the pedestrian commercial core to Sunset Woods Park, a civic campus that includes City Hall and the Library, and an arts campus that includes the Art Center of Highland Park and the Highland Park Community House through a vibrant pedestrian experience.

Questions for Further Consideration

1. Are there other vision elements that we need to include?
2. How do you want to feel when you are walking Downtown? Where's the nicest streetscape in Downtown?
3. In general, what creates an inviting destination?
4. How can we encourage people to use the Downtown throughout the entire day?
5. What impediments do we have to assuring a vibrant Downtown?

Commerce and Service

Roundtable Focus Issues:

- Development regulation and process
- Land use and zoning; a mix of uses to supply consumers and convenience
- Parking supply and traffic/parking regulation and enforcement
- Central district identification and way-finding
- Economic Development- recruitment, retention, employment, tax revenue

Draft Vision Sentences:

- The Pedestrian Commercial Core will be an urbane place that is regionally known as a destination with distinctive style and many opportunities: high fashion, dining, cultural arts, and upscale pedestrian aesthetic.
- Leisure visitors, employees, and residents will be able to conveniently find and access the Downtown District using integrated modes of transportation: transit, bus, automobile, bicycle, and walking.
- Downtown businesses and the City will be partners in ongoing economic development that is necessary to sustain the economic vitality of the Downtown.
- Land Use in the Downtown District will be a dense and intense mix of uses that provides a steady volume and variety of consumers of goods and services

Questions for Further Consideration:

- 1) Are there other vision elements that we need to include?
- 2) If the Pedestrian Commercial Core is the desired destination for visitors, residents, and employees, which land uses are best located immediately adjacent to the Core, and which land uses further beyond (fringe)?
- 3) Should the mix of land uses allow more evening/night time use of the Downtown?
- 4) What locations are best for an increase in building height and development intensity so that the number of downtown customers will also increase?
- 5) What business sectors could be recruited to locate in Highland Park to add to its economic vitality?
- 6) Is it possible to construct too much automobile parking in the Downtown? Are there conveniences missing for users of other transportation modes?

10-09-09

Advancing a Sustainable Downtown

Roundtable Focus Issues:

- Resource conserving and energy efficient building and public improvements
- Bicycle & pedestrian facilities
- Open space
- Public Transportation

Draft Vision Sentences:

- The Downtown will promote a compact, mixed-use urban village built on sustainable practices.
- The Downtown will be highly accessible through an integrated transit, pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular system.
- Public and private improvements in the Downtown will reflect sustainable design, energy and resources conservation.

Questions for Further Consideration:

1. Are there other vision elements that we need to include?
2. Should the City “incentivize” LEED construction in the CBD and what might some of those incentives be?
3. What best management practices related to a sustainable Downtown should be included?
4. While high intensity is a more sustainable form of development, is it appropriate for Downtown Highland Park?
5. If energy conservation is an important goal, how proactive should the City be in getting people out of cars to get into and around Downtown?

Assuring a Well Functioning Downtown

Roundtable Focus Issues:

- Infrastructure including parking facilities, streets and sidewalks
- Streetscape elements including lighting, benches, trashcans and plantings
- Traffic and vehicle/pedestrian safety

Draft Vision Statements:

- Downtown land use and activities will be balanced with a built environment that honors the human scale and preserves and enhances the pedestrian experience.
- Downtown users will have access to a variety of inviting off-street parking facilities that meet demand, are strategically located and appropriately emphasized.
- Downtown will feature “complete streets” that safely and efficiently accommodate various modes of transportation and do not impede circulation.

Questions for Further Consideration:

1. Are there other vision elements that we need to include?
2. Should the construction of future parking facilities be a responsibility shared between the City and private developers, or should it be funded by private developers and constructed by the City? (on-site vs. clustered parking facilities)
3. What should be done to enhance safety and the pedestrian experience?
4. Are there are activities or uses that could be located in appropriate areas of the Downtown that may merit a reconsideration of the existing character?

Theme: Creating a Vibrant Downtown

09-24-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Unsorted

- City should have a better downtown senior center with parking –Northfield is a good model. Daytime vibrancy
- Character is too subdued. Need more graphics, signage, color
- Build up Buhai Plaza – as a central focal point
- Attractions for high school students all year round
- Diversity in all respects
- Activities for alter at night
- Need to get live theater
- Housing downtown for the local workforce
- Utilize the higher densities
- Ice seating in Buhai Plaza
- Why Vibrant?
- E.g. Port Clinton & Taste = Commercial events
- Late Nite is non-commercial event
- More year round activities
- Water feature in downtown
- Look at Old Orchard – Flowers, Sculptures
- Limited destinations
- European style needed
- More locations for gathering the public
- Link downtown to Sunset Park
- It needs to be a destination
- Arts -burgeoning art location at Art Center, Billy Work
- Affordable studio space for artists
- Get the arts into downtown
- Many practicing artists in HP
- Look at Youth Center
- HP movie theater & HPHS Students
- Filmmakers – Student Films
- Need to support local theater talent
- HP City Gallery
- City incubator fund for the arts
- Get Arts groups to donate events to the City Highland Park
- Need quality 1st run movie theater
- POA input form Rick Nelson
- B4 is not dense enough for residential – needs RO density
- Need people & people oriented places
- Something for everyone
- RO on Laurel and 1st street – let zoning reflect retail uses
- Don't need to add people, but correct uses
- Allow more height for peaked roofs

- Look at Wilmette Theater as a model multi-use all times of the day
- Need housing for families downtown
- Downtown Milwaukee – Incubator space full year farmers’ market
- Update urban design of downtown
- Downtown is too big – not enough people frequenting it
- Missed opportunities – civic campus, arts campus
- Need to knit it together
- Need reworking of urban design
- Need more mixed use
- Need more input from people outside downtown
- Vision Statement –HP is not unique on North Shore
- Vibrancy in people
- Need an east side destination/gathering place
- Too dispersed in geography
- Expanding RO
- North end town house development attract young families
- In 70’s arches connected east & west side
- Arts campus –music school part of community house)
- Cohesive architecture of Lake Forest – e.g. green awnings
- Buhai Plaza – on Saturdays: create carnival atmosphere, food, vendors
- Business owners –restaurants decreased revenue during art fair – be careful of competition with vendors
- European image streets – useful
- Focus on profitable downtown – plant zoning seeds now
- Too big – too much retail space –consider revising POSO, shrink it or build it taller
- 28 empty stores 2 years ago
- Not bigger redevelopment areas in B5
- Focus on a couple of spines – Central and Renaissance Place and Civic -Not necessarily 1st floor retail
- Visual eclecticism good
- Whether good mix of stores – too many high end stores
- Dominick’s – other transferred retail to periphery

Theme: Creating a Vibrant Downtown

09-24-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Sorted

Conditions

- Why Vibrant?
- E.g. Port Clinton & Taste = Commercial events
- Late Nite is non-commercial event
- Limited destinations
- Arts -burgeoning art location at Art Center, Billy Hork
- Many practicing artists in HP
- Look at Youth Center
- HP City Gallery
- POA input from Rick Nelson
- Downtown is too big – not enough people frequenting it
- Too dispersed in geography
- North end town house development attract young families
- In 70's arches connected east & west side
- Cohesive architecture of Lake Forest – e.g. green awnings
- Buhai Plaza – on Saturdays: create carnival atmosphere, food, vendors
- Business owners –restaurants decreased revenue during art fair – be careful of competition with vendors
- 28 empty stores 2 years ago
- Not bigger redevelopment areas in B5
- Visual eclecticism good
- Whether good mix of stores – too many high end stores
- Dominick's – other transferred retail to periphery

Overall Vision Components

- Diversity in all respects
- It needs to be a destination
- European style needed
- Need people & people oriented places
- Something for everyone
- Vision Statement –HP is not unique on North Shore
- Vibrancy in people
- European image streets – useful
- Focus on profitable downtown – plant zoning seeds now
- Missed opportunities – civic campus, arts campus

Strategies

- Character is too subdued. Need more graphics, signage, color
- Build up Buhai Plaza – as a central focal point
- Attractions for high school students all year round

- Activities for later in the night
- Housing downtown for the local workforce
- Utilize the higher densities
- More year round activities
- More locations for gathering the public
- Link downtown to Sunset Park
- Get the arts into downtown
- Need housing for families downtown
- Don't need to add people, but correct uses
- Theater as a model multi-use all times of the day
- Update urban design of downtown
- Need to knit it together
- Need reworking of urban design
- Need more mixed use
- Need more input from people outside downtown
- Need an east side destination/gathering place
- Focus on a couple of spines – Central and Renaissance Place and Civic -Not necessarily 1st floor retail
- Too big – too much retail space –consider revising POSO, shrink it or build it taller

Actions

- City should have a better downtown senior center with parking
- Need to get live theater
- Ice seating in Buhai Plaza
- Water feature in downtown
- Look at Old Orchard – Flowers, Sculptures
- HP movie theater & HPHS Students
- Filmmakers – Student Films
- Need to support local theater talent
- Affordable studio space for artists
- City incubator fund for the arts
- Get Arts groups to donate events to the City Highland Park
- Need quality 1st run movie theater
- Allow more height for peaked roofs
- Incubator space full year farmers' market
- RO on Laurel and 1st street – let zoning support retail uses
- B4 is not dense enough for residential – needs RO density
- Expanding RO density through downtown
- Arts campus –music school part of community house

Theme: Promoting Commerce and Service
09-23-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Unsorted

- Highland Park-small town but urbane character
- Need to keep branding/promoting
- Cultural Arts adds to downtown
- Family Friendly
- Old Market Study is not useful
- Land uses should not exacerbate traffic issues
- Keep it realistic
- Property Owners
- Trends facing Highland Park in the future
- Four tenets: convenience, prize, size, unique
- Focus on unique, boutique & independent
- Make it easy to start a business
- Need consumer friendliness
- Accommodate more building H+ Based on topography
- City should be agent to create parking
- Limit traffic on business streets and parking on the periphery
- Difficult access to downtown
- No pedestrian mall
- Underground parking doesn't work for developers
- Customers are scared of structured parking
- Vision is the start
- What do we want
- Highland Park not a location, a destination
- Need to anticipate trends
- Evanston-not necessarily a good example
- Office use could enhance/strengthen downtown Highland Park
- Well positioned to utilize public transit
- Property Owners-give B4 (RO) density assn.
- Utilize topography
- B4 District populate the fringe
- B5-City should build more parking
- B5 needs to be resilient
- Need more population
- Need short term solutions and long term solutions
- Lower wage (restaurant) employees are not shoppers
- People won't walk to parking
- Cannot change people's behavior patterns
- People need a reason to walk from place to place

Theme: Promoting Commerce and Service

09-23-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Sorted

Conditions

- Vision is the start
- Keep it realistic
- Need to anticipate trends facing Highland Park in the future
- Old Market Study is not useful
- Difficult access to downtown
- Lower wage (restaurant) employees are not shoppers
- People won't walk to parking
- Underground parking doesn't work for developers
- Customers are scared of structured parking
- Cannot change people's behavior patterns

Overall Vision Components

- Highland Park-small town but urbane.
- Highland Park Central District should be a destination, not just a location
- Cultural Arts adds to downtown
- Family Friendly
- Four tenets to keeping a business district successful: convenience, price, size, unique
- Focus on unique, boutique & independent uses
- Need consumer friendliness
- Well positioned to utilize public transit – *convenient – locationally efficient*

Strategies

- Need short term solutions and long term solutions
- Land uses should not exacerbate traffic issues
- Make it easy to start a business
- Need to keep branding/promoting the Central District
- Accommodate more building H+ Based on topography
- No pedestrian mall
- Limit traffic on business streets and parking on the periphery
- Office use could enhance/strengthen downtown Highland Park
- B4 District populate the fringe
- B5 needs to be resilient
- Need more population
- People need a reason to walk from place to place
- City should be agent to create parking

Actions

- Amend Zoning – POA - give B4 (RO) density
- Change zoning to allow greater building height at locations with topography is low
- B5-City should build more parking

Theme: Advancing a Sustainable Downtown
09-24-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Unsorted

- Downtown is a small, well contained urban village
- Plans need to consider the infrastructure needed for future vehicles
- Replace hardscape with green space
- Plant more trees for carbon sequestration
- Provide development incentives (additional building height) for green roofs
- What are the sustainable places
- Connect bike lanes north & south of downtown
- Banks detract from downtown experience
- Encourage bus use to town & around town
- Develop/establish shared bike stations
- Bike lanes on Deerfield & Laurel
- Every building should be LEED
- Replacement pavers should be permeable
- Combination garbage/recycle cans - San Francisco's design
- Recycling cans might have advertising to reduce costs
- More public transit needed
- Retrofit buildings for energy conservation
- Downtown not sustainable unless successful
- More transit oriented development
- Water features utilizing storm water
- LED streetlighting
- Multi-use structures for bike parking
- Hard to change drivers/parkers behavior
- LEED has economic advantages & saves money
- Change building code to incorporate LEED design elements
- Need not be LEED – could use LEED elements and incorporate in building codes
- LEED is a good brand – helps marketing
- “Incentivize” LEED
- Code effectively limits development in B5 to single story or large multi-story
- Get rid of parking on Central Avenue
- Mixed use buildings should be promoted
- City should buy land as it becomes available in the B4-B5 and solicit bids from developers to develop property as a larger block - thus will be comprehensively planned and can adhere to sustainable vision
- More residential downtown
- Need multi-generational housing
- Bike bridge over 41 is a great pleasure
- Impossible to rent a bike
- Winter lighting is a disgraceful use of energy
- All downtown development should be mixed
- Increase residential density

Theme: Advancing a Sustainable Downtown

09-24-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Sorted

Conditions

- What are the sustainable places
- Banks detract from downtown experience
- Hard to change behavior
- LEED has economic advantages & saves money
- LEED “like” buildings
- Bike bridge over 41 is a great pleasure
- Impossible to rent a bike
- Winter lighting is a disgraceful use of energy
- Incredible residential density

Vision

- Small, well contained urban village
- Infrastructure for future vehicles
- LEED is a good brand – helps marketing
- Downtown not sustainable unless successful

Strategy

- Replacement of hardscape for green space
- Plant more trees for carbon sequestration
- Trade-offs for green roofs for Building Height
- Encourage bus use to town & around town
- Every building should be LEED
- Replacement pavers should be permeable
- More public transit
- More transit oriented development
- Water features utilizing storm water
- LED streetlighting
- Multi-use structures for bike parking
- “Incentivize” LEED
- More residential downtown
- Need multi-generational housing
- All downtown development should be mixed
- Mixed use buildings

Action

- Connect bike lanes north & south of downtown
- Bike lanes on Deerfield & Laurel
- Combination garbage cans - San Francisco’s design
- Shared bike stations
- Recycling with advertising to reduce costs

- Retrofit buildings
- Change code to incorporate LEED design
- Code limits development in B5 to single story or large multi-story
- Get rid of parking on Central
- Change zoning so it encourages more residential
- City should buy land in the B4-B5 & lease land to private sector & require green development

Theme: Assuring a Well Functioning Downtown
09-23-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Unsorted

- B4 zoning district not fully developed due to zoning, bulk, height limitations (must park on site.)
- Property Owners Association (POA) – additional density and height could be permitted in the B4 district where topography is low (what would population be in fully built out B4)
- Need to anticipate parking demand for future uses
- Pedestrian Oriented Shopping Overlay district-reconsider overlay on particular sites
- POA in B5 on small lots, replacement space need not provide parking
- Need modest improvements to improve pedestrianism & increase walking in B5.
- Think about getting around in Central District – where are the bad/difficult locations
- Strength of downtown is human scale
- Need holistic approach to development process
- Increasing density will have impacts – traffic, parking
- Cars have to go somewhere
- Make non-surface parking more inviting
- How do we use/promote the existing parking better
- Consider the qualitative aspect of parking surface as better than underground, maybe a ration of 1 surface space is = to 1.5 and 1.5 underground spaces = 1 space.
- Look at hours for free parking spaces (Renaissance Place)
- Inter-connectibility of parking tunnels-cut thru from 1st to 2nd.
- Monday-Friday shopper has a suburban mentality
- Uncomfortable to be a pedestrian in Central District
- Need enforcement of traffic violations – illegal u turns for parking
- Human Relations Commission wants to improve pedestrianism by promoting driver civility
- Impediments to underground parking is perceived concern for safety. Also underground spaces are not inviting.
- Need better lighting, call boxes, way finding in underground parking structures
- How to move non-shopper cars around and past downtown
- Need to consider the fee for parking
- Promote downtown from Route 41
- No H.S. Parking in downtown
- 2nd & Central-difficult to be a pedestrian
- Dangerous places-by Michaels & Once Upon a Bagel
- One way pairs for Central, Elm, Laurel to direct traffic to around & through downtown

Theme: Assuring a Well Functioning Downtown
09-23-09 Roundtable Meeting Notes – Citizen Comments - Sorted

Comment that Describe an Existing Condition

- B4 zoning district not fully developed due to zoning, bulk, height limitations (must park on site.)
- Property Owners Association (POA) – additional density and height could be permitted in the B4 district where topography is low (what would population be in fully built out B4)
- Increasing density will have impacts – traffic, parking
- Cars have to go somewhere
- How do we use the existing parking better
- Monday-Friday shopper has a suburban mentality
- Uncomfortable to be a pedestrian
- Impediments to underground parking is concern for safety. Also not inviting.
- Dangerous places-by Michaels & Once Upon a Bagel

Comment that Describe a Vision

- Think about getting around.
- Strength of downtown is human scale
- Holistic approach to process
- Make non-surface parking more inviting
- HRC-want to improve pedestrianism

Comment that Describe a Strategy

- Need to anticipate parking demand
- POA in B5 on small lots, replacement space need not provide parking
- How to move non-shopper cars around and past downtown
- Need to consider the fee for parking
- Promote downtown from Route 41
- Need modest improvements to improve pedestrianism & increase walking in B5

Comment that Describe an Action

- No H.S. Parking in downtown
- 2nd & Central-difficult to be a pedestrian
- One way pairs for Central, Elm, Laurel to direct traffic to around & through downtown
- Need enforcement of traffic violations
- Qualitative aspect of parking surface = 1.5 / Underground = 1.0
- Look at hours for parking spaces (Renaissance Place)
- Promote the existing parking
- Inter-connectibility of parking tunnels-cut thru from 1st to 2nd
- POSO district-reconsider on particular sites
- Better lighting, call boxes, way finding