

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
JOINT PLAN COMMISSION & ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING**

APRIL 3, 2018

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Kraus called to order the regular meeting of the Joint Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA) of the Village of Lake Bluff on Wednesday, April 18, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue).

The following members were present:

Members: Sam Badger (arrived at 6:15 p.m.)
David Burns
Mary Collins
Elliot Miller
Gary Peters
Steven Kraus, Chair

Absent: Leslie Bishop

Also Present: Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)
John Scopelliti, Administrative Intern (AI)

2. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment Time)

Chair Kraus stated the PCZBA allocates 15 minutes during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the PCZBA on any matter not listed on the agenda. Each person addressing the PCZBA is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three minutes.

There were no request to address the PCZBA.

3. Approval of the March 19, 2018 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes

Member Elliott moved to approve the March 19, 2018 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Member Peters seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

4. Comprehensive Plan Workshop – Open Space, Parks, and Recreation

Chair Kraus introduced the workshop, which starts by further review of draft policies for Open Space, Parks, and Recreation. Chair Kraus and Member Burns discussed the organization of this section of the Comprehensive Plan and a desire to discuss and possibly integrate the Park District’s Public Land Use Advisory Committee (“PLUAC”) recommendations into this section as the recommendations dealt with individual parcels.

Member Burns discussed individual PLUAC recommendations including their intent as it concerned buying or exchanging property; the disposition of land near Lillian Dells, the wooded ravine west and north of Mountain Road; and the tension between public ownership and tax revenues generated from private land. Member Badger stated that he believes the Village should not dispose of this land as “once it’s gone, it’s gone.” Returning to the idea of purchase or

exchange of property, Chair Kraus said that PLUAC made a general recommendation to do so when it did not involve substantial acquisition or legal expenses.

5. Comprehensive Plan Workshop – Economic Development

Chair Kraus introduced the workshop and provided a general overview of the current plan, prior Central Business District studies, and other related information. AVA Cole provided an overview of business statistics as well as opinions he heard from others during interviews done in preparation for this workshop.

Chair Kraus stated that the Central Business District has evolved from being conceptualized as a tax generator to being a service center for residents.

The consensus of the PCZBA was that there was a need for a refreshed inventory of businesses throughout the Village.

AVA Cole provided a review of assessed property values throughout the Village as classified by use, as well as the geographical location of sales tax. He noted that most sales tax in the Village is generated west of Route 41.

Chair Kraus began a review of the policies from the current adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Central Business District. Chair Kraus noted that there had been a discussion about the balance of local resident use of the Central Business District as compared to traffic by visitors, and that this balance had changed substantially since the last plan was adopted. He discussed some of the individual components of this policy. Member Collins noted that, in her research of tourist towns, there was a propensity to prefer unique restaurants; she also noted that some communities have created zoning regulations to discourage or prohibit chain restaurants. Chair Kraus stated that, whether by planning or happenstance, places become destinations. He discussed his travels in California to similar small, destination towns and asked the group's opinion of what they envision the Central Business District becoming.

Member Burns stated that he typically leaves Lake Bluff for things like groceries, restaurants, sporting goods, and ice cream. Member Miller stated that those things have been here and have not been successful. Member Burns stated that part of the problem is resistance to some businesses that could be successful in Lake Bluff. Chair Kraus noted that he would like to buy things like newspapers and gifts for his children in town. Member Badger said that, growing up in Glencoe, he remembers a sports shop and two pharmacies that are no longer feasible. These businesses now need much more volume. He noted that restaurants can bring people in, and that he misses the atmosphere of the Village Market.

Member Burns asked how the Village can influence that reality of a market economy with the levers it has. Member Collins stated that the zoning code is a lever; that the Central Business District is mixed use; and that the zoning code may be too strict on special uses and the classification of uses. The group discussed recent zoning relief in the CBD, including for coffee shops and yoga studios. Member Burns noted that restaurant expansion may be controversial due to additional parking demand. Chair Kraus stated that the code can encourage as well as discourage uses. Member Miller stated that the market will govern many of these uses, and that the Village's ability to control it is limited.

Chair Kraus stated that they can encourage creative use of Village facilities and bring more customers to the Central Business District, just as the Village's expansion of special events has revitalized the district in the last 20 years. Member Collins asked how some of these events happen. Member Miller stated that this strategy is only effective nine months out of the year due to the weather. Member Badger stated he believed that the language of this section was close.

Member Collins asked the group's opinions of parking. Member Badger stated that he believes it is only a problem at peak times, and that opening the Metra parking lot for free starting at 2 p.m. or so would solve many problems. Member Collins stated that the Village could pave the northern section of the lot to add capacity.

Chair Kraus discussed innovative events he's seen such as a murder mystery in California that can help bring others into the Village. Member Burns noted that, in urban Chicago, people are using activities like parklets to encourage new thinking about public spaces. Member Collins discussed her experiences walking home from her train commute.

Chair Kraus summarized the consensus of the group as being to revisit permitted uses and to support the Central Business District as a resident service center and as a lifestyle amenity. The group briefly discussed other Central Business District policies, and progressed to discussions of the industrial and commercial corridor (Waukegan Road Corridor / Business Park).

Waukegan Road Corridor / Business Park. Chair Kraus asked if the PCZBA should encourage demolition and rebuild here. Member Collins expressed her belief that developers will start to demolish and seek higher and better uses in this area up to the highest use the roadways will support especially as Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital continues to influence surrounding land use patterns. Member Miller stated that he has observed doctors being displaced due to the Hospital's expanding office footprint locally.

Member Collins stated she believed it was time for a new study of the Waukegan Road Corridor. Disagreeing, Member Badger stated that the most recent study is very recent and that the former Comprehensive Plan's language is close to the mark. Member Collins stated that the PCZBA should be more proactive in defining a streetscape that is ideal including its form, height, and relationship to the street. She stated the PCZBA should discourage loading parking in the front as well as strip mall style development, and that this area is an opportunity for retail development and diverse residential development. She stated that the Village is losing an opportunity to pursue the missing middle in this area. Chair Kraus said that study may be a possibility and drew a parallel between this situation and the special study area that led to the Knauz Auto Park. Member Collins stated that the plan needs more conceptual statements and noted her issues with the current Waukegan Road Corridor Study including the unworkability of its suggestions.

6. RIO (Institutional) Zoning Workshop

AVA Cole led a discussion and overview of a draft of zoning regulations for the proposed / future RIO District. Member Badger said he believed the draft was too complicated, and that only the Park District may ever use the process properly. Member Collins disagreed strongly with the draft's mechanism of sending some development directly to the ABR for review, as she believes the PCZBA should continue to review in-depth as it does today. She disagreed with the idea that the PCZBA's process is a burden and emphasized that it adds value to developments.

AVA Cole discussed next steps for this proposal. He stated that the consensus of the group appears to be that this may not be a viable proposal in its current form and that alternatives may be necessary. Member Burns volunteered to work with Staff on producing flowcharts and other explanatory aides for discussion prior to the PCZBA's regular meeting to facilitate further discussion.

7. **Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the PCZBA, Member Burns moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Collins seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole
Assistant to the Village Administrator