

MINUTES

VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
Village Hall Auditorium
53 South La Grange Road
La Grange, IL 60525

Monday, March 10, 2008 - 7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Board of Trustees of the Village of La Grange regular meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by President Asperger. On roll call, as read by Village Clerk Robert Milne, the following were present:

PRESENT: Trustees Langan, Horvath, Kuchler, Livingston, and Palermo

ABSENT: Trustee Wolf

OTHERS: Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn
Assistant Village Manager Andrianna Peterson
Village Attorney Mark Burkland
Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin
Assistant Community Development Director / Planner Angela Mesaros
Finance Director Lou Cipparrone
Public Works Director Ken Watkins
Police Chief Mike Holub
Fire Chief David Fleege
Doings Reporter Ken Knutson

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Asperger expressed condolences to the family of Lorraine Burkey at her recent passing. Mrs. Burkey served the public in numerous volunteer capacities.

The Budget Workshop was conducted on Saturday, March 8 and President Asperger encouraged the public to view the proposed budget on the Village website particularly the Village Manager's Message which summarizes the Village's financial condition. The budget is to be adopted on April 14 after a Public Hearing.

The Village's new five-year solid waste contract will include a Spring Clean-Up day scheduled with regular pick-up the week of April 14. Detailed information will be forthcoming in the next edition of the Village Spokesman and posted on the Village website.

The regular Village Board meeting scheduled for Monday, March 24 is canceled and the next regular Village Board meeting will be held on Monday, April 14.

Lastly, President Asperger noted that the RTA will begin its free ride service to seniors on March 17 and announced contact information for those interested.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS

President Asperger requested that public comments be limited to the items on the omnibus agenda and comments regarding the proposed YMCA Redevelopment Project would be heard after that item was presented. There were no comments related to the omnibus agenda.

4. OMNIBUS AGENDA AND VOTE

- A. Professional Services Agreement / Phase I – Renovation of the Stone Avenue Train Station (Legat Architects, Oak Brook, Illinois - \$49,400)
- B. Purchase – Trash Receptacles for the Central Business District and West End Business District (Nu-Toys, La Grange, Illinois \$68,704)
- C. Consolidated Voucher 080310 (\$551,365.87)
- D. Minutes of the Village of La Grange Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, Monday, February 25, 2008

It was moved by Trustee Langan to approve items A, B, C, and D of the Omnibus Agenda, seconded by Trustee Horvath. Approved by roll call vote.

Ayes: Trustees Horvath, Kuchler, Langan, Livingston, Palermo, and President Asperger
Nays: None
Absent: Trustee Wolf

President Asperger noted the beginning of the renovation of the Stone Avenue Train Station will greatly enhance and preserve this historic structure. Due to METRA funding and coordination issues with other station projects, renovation most likely will not begin until 2009.

5. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. Ordinance – (1) Zoning Map Amendment, (2) Amendment to Comprehensive Plan, (3) Design Review Permit, (4) Special Use Permit, (5) Planned Development Concept/Final Plan, (6) Site Plan Approval and Elevations to Authorize a Mixed Retail and Multiple Family Residential Development, 31 E. Ogden Avenue, Atlantic Realty Partners, Inc.: Referred to Trustee Livingston

Trustee Langan stated that he would recuse himself from this item due to his employment with the YMCA Metropolitan Chicago. Trustee Langan noted he would remain present in the audience.

Trustee Livingston noted the details of the last meeting regarding this item. Trustee Livingston explained the options for this item are (i) to accept it with the safe guards that are place; (ii) make suggestions to the developer and see if the developer agrees or disagrees to the suggested changes; (iii) remand it back to the Plan Commission with direction; or (iv) come back to the Board for final approval or denial. Although Trustee Livingston did not believe a vote would take place this evening, he requested his colleagues move forward.

Trustee Livingston believes that residents, Village Board, Village staff, and various commissions have worked hard to ensure this project has the safeguards and measures to address resident concerns. Trustee Livingston feels the proposed project adds stability to the site and it is in the best interest of the community to act.

Trustee Livingston moved to approve the ordinance inclusive of items 1 through 6 as introduced for purposes of discussion, seconded by Trustee Horvath.

President Asperger thanked Trustee Livingston for his introduction. After giving a brief yet thorough review of the historical events and previous Village Board discussions and explaining the role of the Village, President Asperger opened the floor for audience comments.

1. Kenneth Costill, 331 Blackstone believes this is a great opportunity for the Village and the YMCA to improve this corner and encourages a quick decision.
2. Rob Metzger, 234 S. Leitch as President of the Park District is extremely excited about this project which allows for the immediate development of Gordon Park and the ability for the Park District to replenish their reserve fund. Mr. Metzger invited the audience to attend a Park District planning session on Wednesday, March 12 at the Recreational Center.
3. Rose Naseef, 911 S. Stone expressed concerns related to environmental issues with the demolition of the former YMCA building. Ms. Naseef encouraged the Board to ensure that recycling and salvaging items from the building be instituted in order to avoid land fills and thereby conserve natural resources. Mr. Richard Aaronson of Atlantic Realty Partners advised Ms. Naseef that they would salvage as much scrap material as possible, soil remediation will occur at the former gas station site, and that Atlantic would be seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for this project.

4. Chris Walsh, 31 S. Spring is in favor of this project and believes La Grange is a unique walk-able community. Mr. Walsh hopes the Board seizes the opportunity for this project rather than allowing a big box development at this site.
5. Ralph Gutekunst, believes this project is aesthetically pleasing and economically viable for all concerned and encourages Board approval.
6. Mark Lannan, 200 S. 7th Avenue urged the Board to follow the recommendation of the Plan Commission and approve the project.
7. John Conroyd, 404 S. Catherine supports the development and urged the Board to consider both short-term and long-term benefits as well as revenue benefits for local schools.
8. Mike LaPidus, President of the La Grange Business Association and on behalf of the business community encouraged the Board to vote in favor of this project.
9. Karen Deane, 139 Malden is in favor of the project and excited to learn of the Park District's plans to have a splash park; tot lot; and walking trail. President Asperger suggested Ms. Deane attend the upcoming Park District planning session to express her interests.
10. Cindy Bronars and her daughter expressed their favor of the project and hoped it would move forward quickly.
11. Ken Eastman, 66 S. Bluff commended the Board for the steps taken in the process to redevelop this portion of the Village for the good of the community. Mr. Eastman believes the developer is a great partner and has been exceedingly cooperative in the expectations set forth.
12. Dave Bier, 340 S. 7th Avenue expressed concerns regarding traffic and appearance but overall feels the Plan Commission has done a great job and is in favor of the development.
13. Joan Smothers, 201 S. Stone is in favor of the project and believes the Park District's efforts are positive. Ms. Smothers does believe there should be more two-bedroom rental units.
14. Kate Townsend, 126 N. Ashland expressed concerns with pedestrian safety and asked the Board to move slowly and consider improvements to the intersection of Ogden Avenue and Ashland Avenue prior to the start of the development.
15. Alice Hanna, 109 N. Ashland is in agreement with Ms. Townsend regarding pedestrian safety.

16. Tim Kelpsas, 67 N. Brainard favors the project, and noted his observations that traffic congestion on eastbound Ogden Avenue is due to vehicles blocking the intersection on La Grange Road, which can be addressed by enforcement.
17. Sandy Strauss, 212 S. 7th Avenue supports the project and believes the congestion at Ogden Avenue and La Grange Road could be resolved by having a Police Officer at that intersection to enforce violators blocking the intersection. Ms. Strauss feels this project is well planned; will enhance schools; and urged the Board's approval.
18. Steve Palmer, 1010 – 41st Street applauds the fact that the developer is seeking to make the area safer and supports the Plan Commission's unanimous recommendation to approve this project.
19. Kevin Shields, 45 N. Drexel, although not opposed to the redevelopment project, is adamantly opposed to the sale of Park District real estate. Mr. Shields noted his concerns of money approved via a referendum in 2005 to improve parks. Mr. Shields feels that a pedestrian bridge would help to maintain pedestrian safety and that the development project should be remanded back to the Plan Commission.

President Asperger opened the discussion to the Village Board of Trustees.

Trustee Palermo thanked residents for their comments and expressed concerns with density and conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. President Asperger noted that the Comprehensive Plan is meant to provide guidelines.

Trustee Horvath is supportive of the mixed use development, however continues to have concerns with pedestrian safety and would like to further research a pedestrian bridge. Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn noted that because of the financial impact, further discussion would be necessary with the developer.

Trustee Kuchler expressed concerns relating to tandem parking and does not believe this development project is in the best interest of the community. Trustee Kuchler believes that Gordon Park could be developed without the apartment project and feels other sources should be utilized. President Asperger noted that the redevelopment agreement would incorporate restrictions and standards of protection for the Village.

President Asperger requested Mr. Richard Aaronson of Atlantic Realty Partners to address some of the concerns brought forward. Mr. Aaronson commented on several concerns and indicated he would be available to return on April 14 to further clarify issues the Board may have and to address specifics.

President Asperger noted that continued discussion will resume at the next regularly scheduled Village Board meeting on April 14, 2008.

6. MANAGER'S REPORT

None

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT ON AGENDA

None

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

9. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Livingston invited the audience to attend the League of Women Voters "Cool Cities Forum" on April 19.

Trustee Palermo expressed his thanks to staff for placing the proposed Village budget on the Village website.

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:25 p.m. it was moved by Trustee Horvath to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Livingston. Approved by unanimous voice vote.

Elizabeth M. Asperger, Village President

ATTEST:

Robert N. Milne, Village Clerk

Approved Date