

## **Village of La Grange Special Board Meeting**

Date: Monday, May 18, 2009

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: Village Hall Auditorium

Minutes of the Meeting  
MINUTES

VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Village Hall Auditorium  
53 South La Grange Road  
La Grange, IL 60525

Monday, May 18, 2009 – 7:30 p.m.

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Board of Trustees of the Village of La Grange special 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 Holder, Horvath, Kuchler, Langan, Livingston, and Palermo

**ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS:** Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn  
Assistant Village Manager Andrianna Peterson  
Village Attorney Paul Kirlin  
Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin  
Assistant Community Development Director Angela Mesaros  
Finance Director Lou Cipparrone  
Fire Chief David Fleege

Prior to beginning the meeting, President Asperger publicly congratulated Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin for his 20 years of public service with the Village.

### 2. Economic Development / Business District Proposal

#### A. Overview

President Asperger opened that one of the main strategic priorities for the Village Board is economic development. President Asperger explained that a Business District is an economic development tool available to the Village as a means to continue to support local businesses. State Statute provides the legislative framework for establishing a business district.

On a parallel line, the Village Board will also be discussing ways to support the La Grange Business Association (LGBA).

## B. Presentation

President Asperger requested Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn and Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin to comment on the proposed Business District.

Village Manager Pilipiszyn indicated that a Business District designation is being proposed in order to create the underlying authority which would enable the Village to continue to use public funds for business development and economic development purposes. Mr. Pilipiszyn further reasoned that the goals of the Business District would be to: maintain the Village's current vitality through enhanced marketing and promotional activities; conduct further business development within the proposed district boundaries through programmed retention and reinvestment activities (e.g. – façade renovation loans); and to position the Village to effectively respond to redevelopment opportunities and proposals in the future.

Mr. Pilipiszyn noted that staff is seeking direction and/or concurrence from the Village Board not only to move forward on establishing a Business District, but also on the following and more specific planning elements: boundaries of the district; general objectives stated within the vision plan; funding; and management and administration of the district.

Mr. Pilipiszyn noted the statutory process for establishing a district and that further input, consent and authorization would be sought from the Village Board before any programs or activities are implemented.

Finally, Mr. Pilipiszyn noted that budgeting restrictions severely limit what the Village can do for the time being, which is why the Village needs to identify a reliable revenue source over the long term.

Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin explained the statutory criteria for establishing a Business District and described how it could function in La Grange.

## C. Discussion

President Asperger invited comments from the audience.

Bernard Martin, 122 Sunset expressed concerns regarding taxing authority. Mr. Pilipiszyn indicated it is not the intention to create a taxable district as provided in the Business District Statute. Mr. Benjamin displayed the proposed Business District boundaries which could encompass the Central Business District; the West End Business District; East Avenue area; and the YMCA property. These boundaries are consistent with the sub-area plan for the BNSF railroad corridor as contained in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Trustee Holder inquired if the areas noted might also cover residential areas and Mr. Benjamin indicated that the areas previously determined by the TIF District were utilized as a guide and may also include some multi-family residences. The proposed boundaries are staff's best opinion.

Trustee Kuchler questioned the goal of forming a Business District and inquired why it could not encompass the industrial area and the Village as a whole. Village Attorney Paula Kirlin noted that State Statute would not permit the entire Village to be declared as a Business District. Mr. Pilipiszyn noted that requests for Village services or support have come from businesses within the proposed boundaries, not in other areas of the Village.

Trustee Kuchler expressed concerns of equity and limiting development and expansion within the Village. Trustee Kuchler noted that some areas outside of the proposed Business District are in need of renovation. Mr. Pilipiszyn explained that businesses in those other areas of the Village have not approached the Village about small business assistance opportunities; many are professional or personal services; and that the Village would have to be the catalyst for reinvestment.

Trustee Horvath concurred with Trustee Kuchler about equity among all businesses.

Trustee Kuchler inquired what priorities would be derived by forming a Business District and is the goal to increase sales tax revenue. Mr. Pilipiszyn indicated the hope is to maintain vitality in the business community and to facilitate business development through marketing and promotional events. Preserving sales tax revenue via business retention was noted as an important consideration.

Trustee Kuchler stated he continues to have concerns with the exclusion of certain areas. Trustee Langan noted his support for the proposed boundaries. Further, the concentrated approach is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Benjamin stated that this is a starting point and the suggested boundaries are mirrored after what is currently in place (Design Overlay District).

Trustee Kuchler felt that the proposed boundaries were too large and not focused. He does not necessarily agree with the boundaries of the design overlay district.

President Asperger disagreed and in her opinion, there was tremendous joinder between the Central Business District and the West End Business District.

Trustee Kuchler inquired if the Village was targeting major retailers. Mr. Pilipiszyn responded that the Comprehensive Plan envisions retail in-fill and mixed use / transit-oriented developments such as Spring Avenue Station and Beacon Place.

Trustee Horvath asked if a business district was needed for marketing and promotion. Mr. Pilipiszyn responded not necessarily, but that a Business District would resolve any question about appropriate use of public funds.

Trustee Livingston believes that this is the right discussion and good timing of the discussion. However, the Village needs to move on marketing and partnership aspects with the LGBA and that perhaps these items should be separated from the Business District discussion.

Trustee Palermo inquired as to the parameters of eminent domain as a result of the Kelo decision. Village Attorney Kirlin indicated that it would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The legal threshold in a condemnation proceeding would be pursuant to Illinois Statute.

Trustee Palermo asked if the Village could opt out of eminent domain in establishing the Business District and Village Attorney Kirlin responded affirmatively. Trustee Horvath expressed his support for this concept.

Trustee Horvath believes that given limited program dollars and his desire for no tax increases, he would prefer a community wide economic development program to promote local businesses for the entire community.

At this point, President Asperger suggested a bifurcated discussion, noting that there was an emerging consensus for marketing and promoting La Grange businesses, while opinions differed on establishing a Business District. President Asperger requested that the Business District discussion be set-aside.

President Asperger proceeded to invite LGBA President Michael LaPidus to present the business association's vision for marketing and promotion, and how and to what degree the Village can support the LGBA.

Mr. LaPidus explained the vision of the LGBA is to have a staffed centralized office to plan and execute special events, and to conduct retention and recruitment of businesses. The LGBA is seeking financial assistance from the Village to perform these functions.

Village Board discussion ensued. Concerns expressed by the Village Board included: the use of public funds in the LGBA's charitable donation efforts; the complication in roles and competing interests between the Village and the LGBA

as it relates to recruitment and branding; and details on how much financial assistance is needed and for what purposes.

It was the consensus of the Village Board that Village staff assist the LGBA in preparing a specific proposal, with among other things clarification as to roles, internal controls, and recognition of limited program funds.

President Asperger noted that the Village Board would re-visit the business district proposal at a later date.

### 3. Adjournment

At 9:50 p.m. it was moved by Trustee Langan to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Livingston. Approved by unanimous voice vote. President Asperger noted the next regular meeting would be on June 8.

Approved: June 22, 2009