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**Village of Gurnee
Planning and Zoning Board Minutes
July 7, 2021**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Board Members Present: Chairman James Sula, Brian Baugh, Tim Garrity, Edwin Paff, and Josh Pejsach

Planning and Zoning Members Absent: R. Todd Campbell and David Nordentoft

Other Officials Present: Tracy Velkover, Planning Manager; Clara Gable, and Bryan Winter, Village Attorney

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of the Planning & Zoning Board Meeting Minutes for June 16, 2021

Mr. Baugh motioned, seconded by Mr. Garrity, to approve the minutes for the PZB meeting of June 16, 2021.

Voice vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion carried: 5-0-0

4. Informal Review: Bridge Development

Bridge Development is seeking informal review of a plan for approximately 516,000 square feet of industrial/warehousing and 9-acres of commercial/retail on property located south of Washington Street, west of Rt. 21, and east of the I-94 Tollway. The property consists of a total of 44-acres and is called out on the Village's Comprehensive Land Use Plan as a Community Character area due to its size, location, and proximity to key transportation access and other community assets. The Comprehensive Plan concept for this parcel reflects Commercial Core/Mixed-Use Development consisting of Commercial, Hospitality and Residential.

Mr. Sula stated that an informal review offers the chance for a potential applicant to present ideas so as to receive feedback from the Board. He noted that such proceedings are not binding in any way. He then turned the floor over to those presenting.

Jerry Callaghan, with the law firm of O'Donnell Callaghan, LLC, in Green Oaks, began the presentation, noting that he had not been at the last Informal Review given by Bridge earlier in the year regarding this proposal. Mr. Callaghan offered that he has been involved in

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development for over 40 years, the last 10 here in Chicagoland for Bridge. Having reviewed the video of the last Informal, and acknowledging that Bridge's plans were not previously well-received, he attributed the negative response (to the proposal) to the Village's new Comprehensive Plan. Though, he did offer that Bridge has altered its plans to address some of the concerns shared at the previous Informal.

After giving a brief overview of proposed changes—including a change in setbacks (the hotel from Washington Street and one of the industrial buildings from Milwaukee Avenue), inclusion of architectural features, increased landscaping (including a vegetative "green wall" to serve as a buffer), a reduction in the size of industrial buildings, and an increase in retail space from 4 acres to 10, Mr. Callaghan began to opine what he sees as unrealistic in the Village's expectations, and the Comprehensive Plan itself, based on his personal experiences while working in land use law, primarily citing cases in which he happened to be involved in. Mr. Callahan questioned the future of retail and office development due to changes related to e-commerce, working from home, and COVID19.

Mr. Callaghan questioned the "concept plan" for the subject site, stating that having such a plan in a Comprehensive Land Use plan was "unusual" and seems to have resulted in a preconceived notion on the part of the Village as to specifically how this property would develop. He argued that a comprehensive plan as such should be more of a guide, and claimed his assertion to be validated by legal and professional entities. Returning his focus to Bridge's proposal, he claimed that it does fulfill the criteria of the Comprehensive Plan, as it includes some retail and office space.

Mr. Callaghan then brought the owner of this property into the discussion, questioning whether or not he was consulted in any way on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and suggested that the owner's willingness to sell at this time should be considered. Mr. Callaghan ended his presentation on the note that the Village should rethink its own expectations for this site, and thereby reconsider his client's proposal.

Mr. Sula then asked if there were any questions/comments from members of the Board.

Mr. Garrity took exception to the speculation that there is any preconception by the Village, and asserted that his concern—and, based on his attendance at the previous Informal as well as the Village Board meeting, the concern of others—is the heavy truck traffic to and from the industrial (warehouses) use, likely on local roads in order to avoid tolls, and the incompatibility of this given the other surrounding land uses.

Mr. Paff expressed that there was no real motivation for him to change his mind about this proposal, suggesting, in particular, that a proposed increase in retail space without a potential tenant to occupy such space is no assurance that any such plans for retail will even come to fruition. Like Mr. Garrity, he expressed concern over potential traffic from trucks, and added that it could lead to back-ups in traffic that could affect other busy roads in the Village. Also, he noted the lack of turn lanes within a proposed development that is to be on such a busy road.

Mr. Pejsach basically concurred with other Board members, but placed further emphasis on the general consensus of the Board that it is the industrial use, the warehouses, that remains the

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focal point (primary use) of this proposal, and that is not within the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan in regards to the area in which this type of development is being proposed.

Mr. Baugh also concurred with other Board members, stressing that the use in this proposal is just not in character with the Village's long-term vision for this area. He insisted that accepting such easy development as it is proposed does not fulfill such vision in the long run. He noted that the Village spent a lot of time putting together the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and that he cannot support the current proposal.

Mr. Sula also concurred with his fellow Board members, and pointed out that the addition of the retail use within these plans only accounts for about 20 percent of planned use, which renders the suggestion that these plans now fulfill the criteria for development in that particular area to be questionable. In summary, Mr. Sula expressed that—as this site has high visibility within the Village—he does not wish for warehouses to be the first thing people view when driving down the tollway and seeing Gurnee for the first time.

Mr. Nick Siegel, with Bridge Development, aimed to address the concerns over truck traffic and potential routes to the site. He disagreed with Mr. Garrity's claim that the patterns of truck traffic are subject to the possibility of the truck drivers dodging toll charges. He also claimed there is a lack of direction by the Village as to whether or not any industrial development would be allowed on this property and, if it is not allowed, stated that the land would remain "a farm". He stated that the Village's plans for the land to be used as a town center are not realistic. He noted that about 5% retail is probably more realistic for this site but that they are pushing the site to 20% retail in order to be flexible.

Mr. Garrity questioned Mr. Siegel on whether the 20% of the site dedicated to retail would remain mostly empty.

Dan Riedel, the property owner, questioned what else should be done with the property, as he asserted there is a market demand for this type of development. He proceeded to compare this proposal to other such projects (such as Great Wolf Lodge) on the basis of its size, and questioned whether or not a Costco would face such obstacles. In summary, he asked what was wrong with this proposal—insisting that the "positives" of this project have been ignored—and, whether or not the Village should wait until the kind of development it wants is proposed.

Mr. Paff responded that it's not unusual for communities to discourage certain types of development in particular areas based on surrounding land uses; he pointed out that, even in these plans, there is an apparent attempt to hide the industrial use of this land with other uses. He also questioned some of the comparisons Mr. Riedel made to other projects, particularly in regard to the amount of truck traffic generated.

Mr. Riedel then asked what changes the Board would like to see in regards to the plans.

Mr. Garrity, noted that he does not intent to tell Mr. Riedel what to do with his property, but suggested that, since the proposed use is largely industrial, warehouse/distribution, which is not consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan or compatible with the area, it be scaled down by reducing the amount warehouse/docks.

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Mr. Riedel responded that Mr. Garrity is telling him what to do with his property and explained the amount of work that went into the proposal.

Mr. Garrity stated that he was responding to Mr. Riedel's request for suggestions to maybe make the proposed development more acceptable. He asked if he, as a resident and as a PZB member, should just simply accept any proposal for any property.

Mr. Riedel stated that he did not plan to scale down the warehouse use.

Mr. Sula questioned whether the proposed warehouse buildings on site would support/be feasible with retail. He noted that the proposed hotel may be difficult to attract next to two large industrial buildings.

Mr. Riedel expressed interest in possibly amending the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Winter reminded Mr. Riedel and the Board that not all of this property is currently in the Village; part of it is located in unincorporated Lake County. As such, it requires annexation, which is a legislative matter for the Village Board.

Mr. Riedel asked if there was anything his team could do to modify the plans to gain the support of the Planning & Zoning Board.

Mr. Paff stated that he thought there was supposed to be a traffic study for the proposed development.

Ms. Velkover stated that an abbreviated traffic study was conducted for the applicant and that it was provided to the Board in their packet. The study was conducted by KLOA.

As the discussion came to somewhat of a standstill, Mr. Sula made the call to bring it to an end at this time.

5. Next Meeting Date: July 21, 2021

Ms. Sula confirmed with staff that there are no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

6. Public Comment

There were no public comments at this meeting.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Baugh motioned, seconded by Mr. Garrity, to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion Carried: 5-0-0

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Metzger,
Recording Secretary, Planning and Zoning Board