

SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

September 2, 2003

Joint City Council and Plan Commission Meeting **6:00 P.M.**

The Sycamore City Council and Plan Commission will gather in a joint meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 2 in the City Council Chambers. The purpose of the meeting is to consider key planning issues addressed at length in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, adopted on June 2, 2003, namely:

1. What land uses should develop within the mile-and-a-half perimeters of the city?
2. What public policies should shape the development of these uses? How will large areas of agriculturally zoned land on the edge of the City's primary development area be treated?
3. How should the pace of residential development be regulated without adversely affecting interest in local commercial and industrial development?

This discussion is prompted, in part, by the realization that a significant number of farm families in the City's northeast planning area have agreed to sell land options to residential developers, or are considering options or contracts for their land. During the two mid-summer Council meetings (July 21 and August 4) we learned that one of those development firms is B&B Development, Inc., which disclosed its interest in 650 acres of the Wolfenberger holdings. On August 11, Neumann Homes made the Plan Commission aware of their interest in the 118-acre Wallis/Mapes farm. In April 2003, a representative of Insignia Homes made the Commission aware of his firm's interest in the 140-acre Welander farm. Five other large development firms publicly made their interest known in either the Lowe family trust (162-acres), the Bue family trust (249 acres), the Roby farm (88 acres), or the Shimshok trust (192 acres), among others, in Plan Commission meetings in April and May. This eager development interest did not arise overnight. On March 11, 2002 the City Manager asked the Plan Commission to begin the discussion of a sub-area plan for the areas northeast and northwest of the corner of Plank Road, Peace Road, and IL Rt. 23 in the following fashion:

"Recently, large farm parcels in the City's northeast planning area, outside the present corporate limits, have been purchased by firms interested in residential development. Other nearby farms are the focus of increasing interest and may soon be optioned. It is time to develop a long-range plan for this prime development area. . ."

This discussion gained steam later in 2002 and evolved into a complete revision of the Comprehensive Plan of 2000 after a long period of public participation and innovative public discussion. The Plan of 2003 includes a future land use map that portrays significant residential development in the northeast planning area, along with a more detailed sub-regional plan that shows this development area with a permanent limit to the north and east at Whipple Road. The sub-area plan also depicts logical locations for significant retention facilities, major entrance features on Plank Road and IL Rt. 23, interior collector streets, and future school and

park sites. Accompanying the revised maps and text is a new regulatory framework to lessen the impact of new housing starts on local public services.

As the new planning documents and regulations were evolving in 2002 and early 2003, the aforementioned development firms remained in contact with the City staff and representatives attended many of the Plan Commission meetings. With the new planning vision in place, it was expected that the interested development firms that voluntarily deferred a hearing of their concept plans would soon petition for Plan Commission review.

Or so it seemed. For those who have not regularly attended Plan Commission and Council meetings over the past year—a very large number of local residents indeed—the development interest came as a surprise. Recent press accounts with savory headlines have stoked anxiety with less-than-thorough accounts of public meetings, and have led to the reflexive demonizing of some public officials by anonymous callers and writers who prefer to unload their fears without entering the give-and-take of public debate. The joint meeting will hopefully provide a refreshing antidote to this near hysteria about something—uncontrolled and unmanaged growth—that no public official has promoted and no planning documents have supported. To begin the joint discussion, the City Manager offers the following questions and some staff suggestions for further review in response to these questions.

Question #1: What is the development area in question?

In its summary of proposed land uses, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan estimates that there are about 3,006 acres of proposed residential use in the mile-and-a-half planning area outside the present City limits (see Table 22 on page 46). This does not include the rural residential uses already in development under County regulations west of Brickville Road, but this area is not likely to be an annexation focus or threat. It is important to keep in mind that a significant portion of the roughly 3,000 acres dedicated to urban, low-density residential use will never be served by our sewer system. When the interceptor sewer installed by B&B Development as part of its Heron Creek development plan was upsized to 27 inches in diameter to serve future planning areas (before the 2003 plan was completed), City Engineer John Brady assumed that the new capacity would serve only about 2,254 acres, including the already annexed land in the Heron Creek subdivision, the Sycamore Creek subdivision, the DeKalb Clinic parcel, and the former Ward parcel at Peace and IL Rt. 23 plus the area in the North Grove Crossing development. These developments account for the following acres served by the new sewer line:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Heron Creek | 455 acres |
| Sycamore Creek | 220 acres |
| DeKalb Clinic | 21 acres |
| North Grove Crossing | 98 acres |
| Ward property (nw cnr, Peace&IL23) | <u>66 acres</u> |
| Total: | 860 acres |

When these already annexed areas are deducted from the 2,254 acres that can be served by the City’s sewer main extension, approximately **1,400 acres** are left for new residential developments. The exact boundaries of the remaining area are impossible to configure at this point, and would reflect a first-come, first served look unless otherwise directed. One might reasonably conceive the 1,400 acres as a balloon that can be stretched and pulled to cover a wide variety of shapes but which retains the same capacity in any configuration.

In the sizing of the new sanitary sewer, Mr. Brady assumed 10 population equivalents (p.e.) per acre. The actual number in low-density developments such as Heron Creek is closer to about 6 p.e. per acre. Over 1,400 acres, that would result in a maximum of about 8,400 p.e., *assuming a continuing preference for broad open spaces in the northeast planning area*. The projected population for the projects already approved but not built in this quadrant is about 5,000, so the total projected population in the Northeast Sub-Area (all of the yellow area on the land use map plus the annexed developments noted above) is 13,400. If higher densities than the Heron Creek development are permitted in new annexations, that number could grow to as much as 16,000.

Question #2: Do the Commission and Council agree with the Land Use Map’s designation of land uses, particularly in the northeast planning area?

Comprehensive plans are typically reviewed every 3 to 5 years. In most cases, the periodic review extends the planning area in a wider circle around the corporate limits. The City’s new plan took a different approach. It is actually more than a 20-year plan; it is a “final plan” in the sense that it portrays an ultimate limit to future development. The “green belt” that bounds the northeast planning area sets the 2003 Plan apart from any municipal plans in the region. It is an idea that grew out of the charrette of January 2003 and continued to be refined in a series of Plan Commission meetings in the late winter and spring of this year.

The predominant land use within the City’s northeast planning area is low-density residential. In terms of land use, does anyone want higher density residential development? How about industrial development adjacent to \$275,000 homes? The intersection at Plank Road, Peace Road, and IL Rt. 23 offers a significant node of highway business zoning that does not show up on the new land use map because it is already annexed. Would the Commission and Council relocate or rezone this total of 84 acres of commercial zoning?

Question #3: Do the Commission and Council believe the regulatory framework, approved on June 2, adequately restrains new residential growth within limits that local taxing bodies can absorb with projected operating revenues?

Based on comments at the recent Plan Commission and Council meetings, the answer is likely “no.” The present regulatory framework is shown in the table below, with an explanation of its application:

| Number of Dwelling Units on the Preliminary Plan | Dwelling Units Permitted Per Year As A Percentage of the Total Lots on the Preliminary Plan* |
|---|---|
| 0 to 50 dwelling units | No Limit |
| 51 to 100 dwelling units | No More Than 35 Per Year |
| 101-200 dwelling units | 25% or 40, whichever is greater |
| 201-300 dwelling units | 20% or 50, whichever is greater |
| 301 to 400 dwelling units | 18% or 60, whichever is greater |
| 401-500 dwelling units | 15% or 70, whichever is greater |
| Over 500 dwelling units | 10% or 75, whichever is greater |

*excludes unoccupied model homes

“Development Bank

For a year or more following most annexations of undeveloped land, a developer is focused on the preparation of final engineering plans, the approval of those plans by the City Engineer, the bidding of the infrastructure work, the rough grading, and finally the preparation of a final plat for the first phase of development. During this period, lots are not sold but the clock is ticking, so to speak. Communities that impose a limit on annual housing starts typically provide the option of “banking” the number of units that are not permitted, but were allowed, in any given year up to a maximum number of units that could be permitted in a year. For instance, if a developer is allotted 40 lots per year, but only 20 permits are issued due to a number of factors such as the market conditions, an extended period for preliminary development work, etc., then an additional 20 permits—or 60 in all—would be allowed in the following year, which begins on January 1. This would continue year after year so long as the “bank” did not exceed the annual allowance.

In the first year, the developer would only get credit for a pro rata share of the allowance. For instance, if a development area was annexed in late November, the developer would get credit for 1/12th of the allowance for Year One. This regulation is not retroactive to previously approved developments.”

The City staff are most intimately aware of the impact of a high pace of permits and development requests, and would agree that the current pace of single family permits in particular has stretched our plan review, building inspection, and field inspection capabilities. We have also been concerned about the “big picture,” namely, what is the cumulative effect of several major developments growing at the pace allowed in the present regulation on operating resources? The related question is: what would be the cumulative effect of several major developments on the operating resources of the School and Park Districts?

The staff suggest a revision to the regulatory framework approved in June. This recommendation does not arbitrarily conjure a certain number that would reflect the “acceptable” annual total of new permits. This is for several reasons. First, how would any family receive the news in October that they were, for instance, the “two hundred and first” permit application, and would have to wait until the following spring to start their dream house? Or, how would our staff rank the five permit applications received on the same day? By drawing lots?

The City staff suggest a different approach. We suggest the linking of a reasonable reduction in the current inventory of lots on preliminary plans with new housing starts. In effect, a certain number of units in the city’s inventory would have to be permitted, built, and occupied before any final plats in newly annexed developments could be approved and recorded. The table below portrays this relationship. Two key assumptions inform this revised sliding scale: first, the City should never say “no” to development within its planning area, but should manage it carefully. This could mean agreeing to annexation agreements without permitting actual development for a prescribed period of time.

Second, the City should recognize that some inventory is desirable from the standpoint of commercial and industrial interest. Opinions will vary on what this level of inventory should be. The staff suggestion sets the base level at three years, and is based on two factors. First, the recent economic recession—the worst since the depression of the 1930’s—lasted about three years. The next bust cycle may not feature low interest rates. Second, the empirical evidence is that larger developments with significant fiscal impacts in the Sycamore area have tended to feature around 300 units, and that such a threshold represents around three years of single

family home permits. Including the projected total for 2003, the City has averaged about 100 single family detached permits per year since 2001. It should be noted that the staff do not include multiple family permits as equally significant because the trend in multifamily starts is toward townhouses that are not generating school children or significant demands on public resources.

Revised Residential Growth Control Regulation

| Number of Dwelling Units on the Preliminary Plan | Dwelling Units Permitted Per Year as a Percentage of the Total Lots on the Preliminary Plan | Time Limit Before New Building Permits Are Issued Following Annexation |
|---|--|---|
| 0 to 50 dwelling units | No Limit | No Time Limit |
| 51 to 100 dwelling units | No More Than 35 per Year | One Year |
| 101-200 dwelling units | 25% or 40, whichever is lower | Two Years |
| 201-300 dwelling units | 20% or 50, whichever is lower | Three Years |
| 301 to 400 dwelling units | 18% or 60, whichever is lower | Four Years |
| 401-500 dwelling units | 15% or 70, whichever is lower | Five Years |
| Over 500 dwelling units | 10% or 75, whichever is lower | Six Years |

Please note that, in the table above, the word “greater” is replaced with “lower” in the middle column.

Question #4: Do the Commission and Council believe that new or higher developmental exactions are presently necessary?

Based on earlier comments, the answer appears to be “yes.” So far, this has been more of an instinctive than an empirical notion. The staff would like to suggest some revisions to the City’s impact fee structure based on the significant increase in the price of developable acreage since the present impact fee system was adopted in April 2002.

As the Commission and the Council will recall, the School and Park fees are based on an assumption about the fair market value of an acre of improved land. The present value is \$75,000 per acre. The staff recommend increasing this variable to \$110,000 per acre. The average cost of a ¼ acre lot is around \$55,000 at present. If we take the average asking price for a ¼ acre lot, extrapolate the price per acre (\$220,000), then discount that price by 50% for utilities and infrastructure, the effective price is \$110,000. With this in mind, the following School impact fees would be assessed (*present fees are in parentheses*):

| | 2 Bedroom | 3 Bedroom | 4 Bedroom | 5 Bedroom |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Detached Single Family | \$634 (\$431) | \$2,282 (\$1,556) | \$4,210 (\$2,864) | \$3,009 (\$2,047) |
| Attached Single Family | \$831 (\$565) | \$1,264 (\$860) | \$2,489 (\$1,693) | |
| Apartment | \$623 (\$424) | \$1,783 (\$1,213) | | |

The Park impact fees would be revised to include the new assumption about the per acre price of improved land (\$110,000) with respect to neighborhood parks, but the calculation for the

community park contribution would remain unchanged. The current exaction per person is \$262.50. The proposed Park fee is \$315 per person (+20%) and would spread as follows:

Single Family: 4 Bedroom = \$1,260 (presently \$1,050)
 3 Bedroom = \$ 945 (presently \$788)

The City impact fees for water and sewer purposes would likewise be increased, but they are based on actual costs for certain improvements rather than the cost of improved land. These fees would have to be monitored for their fiscal impact as well as their impact on development. As in the annexation agreements of the past four years, the City would reserve the right to periodically revise its system of impact fees, based on rational methods, over the course of any development.

The present water impact fee is based on assumptions about the cost of a new elevated tank and a new well for the northeast quadrant. That fee is presently \$924 per unit. The new fee would be based on the following assumptions:

Well cost = \$2,000,000
 Well capacity = 1,440,000 gals/day
 Cost per gallon = \$1.39
 Cost per 350 gals = \$487/home (EPA standard of 3.5 p.e./house x 100 gals/p.e./day)

Elevated Tank = \$3,200,000
 Capacity = \$2,000,000 gallons
 Cost per gallon = \$1.60
 Cost per 350 gals = \$560 per home
 Total Water Fee = **\$1,047** (presently \$924; an increase of 13.3%)

The present sewer impact fee is \$1,478. The proposed fee would be \$1,750 and would be calculated as follows:

Cost of treatment = \$5/gallon
 Cost per 350 gallons = **\$1,750** (+18.4%)

The combined increases for the School, Park and City are shown in the table below:

| | Present | Proposed |
|-----------------------|---------|----------------|
| 3 Bedroom Detached SF | \$4,912 | \$6,190 (+26%) |
| 4 Bedroom Detached SF | \$6,482 | \$8,433 (+30%) |

By way of comparison, DeKalb's present fees are as follows:

| | School | Park | City Water* | Total |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| 3 Bedroom Detached SF | \$1,187.36 | \$1,232.14 | \$590 | \$3,009.50 |
| 4 Bedroom Detached SF | \$1,928.75 | \$1,570.39 | \$590 | \$4,089.14 |

The City of DeKalb does not operate a wastewater treatment facility.

The City Manager and City staff welcome some hard analysis and direction in advance of the proposed meetings with School District and Park District officials.

Regular City Council Meeting
At the Sycamore Center
7:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **INVOCATION**
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
5. **AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**
6. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting of August 18, 2003;
 - B. Payment of the Bills for September 2, 2003.
7. **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**
8. **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**
9. **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**
10. **PUBLIC HEARINGS--None**
11. **ORDINANCES**
 - A. **Ordinance No. 2003.45—An Ordinance Amending Title 6, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic,” Chapter 3, “Parking Meters and Parking Lots,” Section 1, “Parking Permits,” to Add a New Paragraph D, “City Lot Number One,” in the City Code of the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.**

The attached ordinance would designate the parking aisle on the west side of the Sycamore Center parking lot (Lot #1) for tenant and employee use by permit only. Six tenant spaces are presently reserved for tenant parking. The new section would read as follows:

“D. Parking is allowed by permit only in the diagonal spaces on the west side of the public parking lot (Lot #1) at the northwest corner of Somonauk Street and Elm Street. The Chief of Police or designee shall issue permits for display in the permittee’s vehicle.”

City Council approval is recommended.

12. **RESOLUTIONS**

A. Resolution No. 440—Authorizing the Mayor to Sign a Preliminary Engineering Services Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation For the Dedication of Motor Fuel Tax Funds for the Phase II Engineering to Be Performed by Hampton, Lenzini & Renwick for the Bethany Road Reconstruction Project.

The attached resolution would authorize the allocation of motor fuel tax funds for the second and final phase of the engineering for the Bethany Road reconstruction project. City Council approval is recommended.

B. Resolution No. 441—Authorizing the Mayor to Sign an Agreement with Hampton, Lenzini & Renwick to Prepare Right-of-Way Plats for the Bethany Road Project.

As its title suggests, the attached resolution authorizes the consulting engineer working on the Bethany Road project for the City to prepare right-of-way plats prior to negotiating easements for the widening of Bethany Road. City Council approval is recommended.

13. **CONSIDERATIONS**

A. Consideration of a Public Works Department Recommendation to Award the Contract for the Purchase of a One-Ton Dump to Sycamore Ford Mazda in the Amount of \$27,615.

In the FY2004 budget, funds were allocated in the Capital Assistance Fund (Fund 6) for a number of small capital purchases. One was the purchase of a one-ton dump truck. The budgeted amount was \$55,000 for the truck with spreader and plow (06-8521). Bids were invited for this truck and the lowest bid was received from Sycamore Ford Mazda in the amount of \$27,615. Public Works superintendent Fred Busse recommends the award of the contract to Sycamore Ford Mazda.

City Council approval of this recommendation is requested.

B. Consideration of a Public Works Department Recommendation to Award the Contract for the Purchase of a 10-Foot Snowplow and Spreader to Mark's Machine Shop in the Amount of \$23,275.

Separate bids were solicited for the snowplow and spreader for the new one-ton dump truck. The lowest bid was received from Monroe Truck Center. However, as Fred Busse writes in the attached memorandum, the Monroe bid listed a 9-foot plow instead of the specified 10-foot plow, and a hydraulic-operated salt spreader. The next lowest bid from Mark's Machine Shop included the 10-foot plow and an electronically-controlled spreader that would eliminate the hydraulic oil lines from the truck cab. Fred Busse recommends the award of the contract to Mark's Machine Shop in the amount of \$23,275. Combined with the low bid for the truck, the total allocation would be \$50,890 or \$4,110 below the budgeted allocation.

City Council approval of the Public Works department recommendation is requested.

C. Consideration of a Public Works Department Recommendation to Award the Contract for a Cold Planer Attachment to CSR Bobcat in the Amount of \$10,990.

The FY04 Budget also included an allocation of \$18,000 from the Capital Assistance Fund for a cold planer (06-8540) for minor street repairs. Bids were recently solicited and the lowest responsible bid was received from CSR Bobcat in the amount of \$10,990. The Public Works superintendent recommends the award of the contract to CSR Bobcat.

City Council approval of the Public Works department recommendation is requested.

D. Consideration of an Administration Request for a Closed Session to Discuss Pending Litigation.

14. APPOINTMENTS

15. ADJOURNMENT