

TO: Sycamore Plan Commission

FROM: Bill Nicklas
City Manager

DATE: May 5, 2010

RE: May 10, 2010 Plan Commission Meeting

The Plan Commission has one action item and one workshop item.

I Action Items

A. Consideration of the Vacation of a Portion of Chauncey Street.

Upstaging, Inc. has requested the vacation of a one-block section of Chauncey Street immediately west of Park Avenue, along what used to be Driv-Lok's original factory building. This block is a "deadend" and serves no other properties than the present Upstaging complex and the former Driv-Lok building. Upstaging has purchased the former Driv-Lok property and would like to incorporate the street right-of-way into a plan for better truck access and parking. Since the street right-of-way has underground public utilities, the City would need to retain easements for servicing such utilities and would prohibit any building in this area. The plat indicates the primacy of the easements.

A favorable Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

II. Workshop Items

A. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation for a Sub Area Plan for the Northwest Quadrant of the City of Sycamore, Illinois.

At the last Plan Commission meeting on April 12, the Commission considered the prospect of a sub-area plan for the northwest quadrant of the Sycamore planning area. The impetus for this session lay in a unique development concept for the former Fowler Farm and other landowner interest in low density conservation-style development between the former Fowler farm and the City's present corporate limits at Brickville and Motel Roads.

One issue the Commission wanted to address was the potential public cost for preparing a sub area plan. Working with Chuck Hanlon of Land Vision, who has assisted the City in each of its three comprehensive plans in the last ten years as well as three sub-area plans, a very provisional budget has been developed. The components of that budget are as follows:

1. **Preliminary Engineering.** Each agricultural sub area has unique topographical features, soils, limitations for septic systems, wetlands, and patterns of stormwater drainage, etc. that have to be considered. The roughly 630-acre area depicted in the conceptual sub area presented at the Plan Commission meeting of April 12 is no exception. The City would likely contract with the firm that has performed much of this preliminary analysis in the Sycamore planning area: Wills-Burke-Kelsey Associates. The principal engineer with this firm—John Wills—has appeared before the Commission on a number of occasions in the past.
2. **Professional Mapping and Planning.** The mapping, like the engineering, will be based on certain key assumptions regarding land use. If, for instance, residential development was permitted on five-acre or larger plots, and if the overwhelming acreage within the plan was reserved for agricultural uses with roads designed to rural rather than urban standards, then the set-asides for roads, storm water detention, etc. would be markedly different than those in conventional city subdivisions. To simulate layouts in color renderings that reflect topographical and engineering realities, the services of a professional planner would be sought. Chuck Hanlon of Land Vision has worked on all of the City's comprehensive plan maps and sub area maps in the past ten years, and knows the City's planning area well.

Estimated Cost of Engineering and Mapping: \$7,500.00.

3. **Printing Costs.** Large, poster-sized renderings would eventually be needed for public meetings. Smaller 11-inch x 17-inch renderings would be distributed to Commission members, City staff, and interested participants in any ensuing workshop meetings. The electronic layers of detail on these renderings are significant, and would reflect many hours in building electronic files. **Estimated Cost: \$200.00.**
4. **City Staff Costs.** The City's staff costs are included in regular salaries and would not be "value-added." The value would be in the staff time devoted to meetings with the consulting professionals, the review of plans and other documents, and the drafting of the text for the sub area plan. The preparation and drafting of the Airport Road sub-area plan involved about 26 hours of City staff time.
5. **Public Notices and Miscellaneous Costs.** These costs would be negligible and allowances are built into the FY11 Budget to deal with them.

On the basis of our experience with the Airport Road Sub Area Plan (675 acres), the Bethany Road Sub Area Plan (700 acres) and Northeast Sub Area Plan (3,100 acres), the costs estimated above should be considered reliable. The City's FY2010-2011 Budget which runs from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 has an allocation of \$15,000 for any and all developmental services (06-8331). Such funds are available for the annual revisions of the City's zoning maps, consultation on downtown redevelopment projects, reproduction of comprehensive plans and the UDO for interested citizens and businesses, special maps or plans to accompany federal grant requests (e.g. the Bethany Road corridor), and conceptual planning of the type contemplated herein. Monies which are not spent in this fiscal year would remain in the Capital Assistance Fund reserve. The City Manager considers the proposed allocation an appropriate use of this budget allocation.

