CITY OF EVANSTON

JOINT CITY COUNCIL/PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

RE: REVIEW OF 2007 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DOWNTOWN

Transcribed Report of Proceedings of a public hearing on the above captioned matter, held June 7, 2007 at the Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Evanston, Illinois, at 7:08 p.m. and presided over by Mayor L. Morton.

PRESENT:

L. MORTON, Chair
A. RAINEY
E. TISDAHL
E. MORAN
C. WOLLIN
S. OPDYCKE
D. GALLOWAY

L. JEAN-BAPTISTE
A. HANSEN
D. HOLMES
A. HANSEN
J. WOODS
A. REBECHINI

STAFF:
M. PRESS
J. AIELLO
D. MARINO

CONSULTANT TEAM:
K. BISHOP
J. LAMOTTE
C. WILLIAMS
K. KLINKENBERG
L. GOODMAN
N. KOENIG

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MAYOR MORTON: Well, tonight, this is a joint meeting of the Council and the Plan Commission, and I'm going to call on Judy Aiello to get us started. Oh, just a moment, Judy. I think we'd better get a Council roll call.

MS. PRESS: Okay. Alderman Wollin.

ALDERMAN WOLLIN: Here.

MS. PRESS: Alderman Jean-Baptiste.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Here.

MS. PRESS: Alderman Wynne.

(No response.)

MS. PRESS: Alderman Bernstein.

(No response.)

MS. PRESS: Alderman Holmes.

ALDERMAN HOLMES: Here.

MS. PRESS: Alderman Moran.

(No response.)

MS. PRESS: Alderman Tisdahl.

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Here.

MS. PRESS: Alderman Rainey.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Here.

MS. PRESS: Alderman Hansen.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Here.
MAYOR MORTON: Thank you. The Council has a quorum. Would you need to call a roll for the Plan Commission? If not, we'll --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Where did Tracy go?

Dennis, do we need to officially call a roll?

MR. MARINO: Just maybe if members would self introduce themselves, I think that would be fine.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Okay. David, want to start?

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Dave Galloway.

COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: Stu Opdycke.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: And Jim Woods.

MAYOR MORTON: All right, thank you. Now, Judy?

MS. AIELLO: Thank you, Madam Mayor. Members of the City Council, Plan Commissioners and City Manager, tonight we are most excited to be joining you, the policy makers, for the first focus group of the update of the -- it feels like we've been doing this a lot, the 1989 Downtown Plan. This is not a focus group for the general public, a particular neighborhood or any property owners. This is for you, the policy makers.

All the other constituencies will have the
opportunities in the coming weeks to participate in community meetings, design charettes, discussions, and the reviews of any proposed plans. But this focus group is for you who represent all of the City and all of the downtown which is everyone's neighborhood.

Evanston has been most fortunate that our downtown is alive and well, and each of you should take credit for this. Staff presented a vision in 1989 and you, the Council and the Plan Commission, embraced it and adopted the policies and projects which has resulted in a new street scape, new anchors, 24/7 activities, and a vibrant residential community.

All of this has made Evanston an example for all folks from around the country to come and see, most recently members of the Urban Land Institute. But that was then and now we must move forward and the need for a new vision and a new plan built upon sound planning which has been a long and valued tradition in this community and public involvement. And that brings us to tonight.

But we didn't get here tonight in a vacuum. I think all of you have remembered and participated that in 2004 we realized that the goals of the '89 Plan had
been met and that we needed to bring in a thoughtful and
deliberate process to establish the plan for the next 20
years. We began in 2004 with a visioning session with
the downtown stakeholders and that was followed in 2005
with the retail market study where we learned that our
market really did extend well beyond Evanston.

We also had a parking and traffic study which
set the foundation for future studies and
recommendations for modifications to some of our
infrastructure. Design Evanston assisted with us at a
streetscape audit and those recommendations have been
incorporated into our five-year capital plan. And the
Plan Commission established a subcommittee to begin to
develop the framework and guidelines for the new
Downtown Plan.

As Staff indicated to the Planning &
Development Committee and the City Council when the
consultant team was selected, the proposed process is a
comprehensive one in its scope. It is very aggressive
in its schedule and will be both visionary and
educational for the Council, the Plan Commission and the
public. Throughout the process, the public is going to
be asked to be active participants. From all walks of
Evanston, we hope that people will come to our community meetings and come downtown when we have our design charette which we'll go into later on tonight.

The Plan Commission as we mentioned formed a subcommittee. And their public meetings addressed many of the issues that will build upon the plan. Most recently, they developed the guiding principles which were presented to the Planning & Development Committee. Those guiding principles, the copies are outside for those folks who have not received them, and that's where we want to start tonight.

We would like Jim Woods who is the Chair of the Plan Commission to review those guiding principles for us. Then the consultants are going to be introduced. And then, you all will be asked to roll up your sleeves, put on your thinking caps, and we begin this process for everyone's downtown. Thank you. Mr. Woods?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Thank you. First of all, I'd like to note the members of the Downtown Plan, Subcommittee of the Plan Commission for the Downtown Plan. Those members are David Galloway, Stuart Opdycke, Diane Williams from Evmark, and Larry Widmayer who is
the former Chair of the Plan Commission, and Larry has also been the Chair of the Downtown Plan Committee, and myself.

In terms of the guiding principles, we looked at a number of categories of things. The first one that we looked at is physical planning and policy. We designated sub-areas for physical planning and policy.

There are three primary areas that we looked at in terms of defining the areas of downtown. One is traditional, kind of the more old time Evanston scale street presence of buildings in terms of retail, those kinds of things. Transitional areas which are those areas that are at the edges of downtown as they meet up with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. And then, the core which makes up the largest proportion of the downtown area.

And in the diagram that you can see up there, the red designates traditional areas. The green represents transitional areas. And the blue designates the downtown core areas in the view of the Downtown Subcommittee.

We talked about considering shifting development review emphasis from the case by case
planned development process review to form based code. As our consultant team I'm sure is going to talk about, that's part of the effort that they're going to be involved with in terms of piloting some efforts. We believe that the design guidelines that the Plan Commission and then ultimately adopted by City Council that have been implemented over the last year need to continue to be used. We want to encourage adoptive reuse of buildings, and also in correlation with the City Strategic Plan an emphasis placed on sustainable or green or LEED rated buildings, as well as maintain protection for historic landmarks.

We've had a tremendous involvement from the Preservation Commission. They've done a tremendous amount of work that's led up to kind of where we are today. And we believe that that needs to be carried forward as well.

In terms of public participation and stakeholder outreach, obviously Evanston is a place of strong public participation, and we want to continue that tradition. There also needs to be private sector involvement in this as well. And the public sector obviously has played a major role in terms of a lot of
the things that have happened in downtown over the last
ten years and will continue to do so.

We want collaboration amongst all of the
stakeholders, those who work downtown, those who live
downtown, people from outside of downtown who shop and
go to entertainment venues and restaurants in downtown.
So, we really believe that the participation of
everybody is critical.

In terms of the business and retail
environment, we want to retain and attract employers,
provide enhanced employment opportunities, recruit
Evanston residents for Evanston jobs. One of the things
that's been a big subject of discussion amongst the
Downtown Plan Subcommittee has been the issue of office
space in downtown. And some of the certain kinds of
spaces, the B or C level spaces, are kind of being
winnowed away at, and the need to retain that so that
the traditional kinds of businesses that have occupied
those spaces still have a place to be.

We want to look at maintaining and enhancing a
diverse mix of residential, office, retail,
entertainment and service uses. Clearly that is one of
the huge success factors in downtown over the last ten
years and we want to continue that. Maintain balance of local independence and regional and national in terms of retail. It's great to have some of the big stores downtown. They're nice little anchors. But it helps foster kind of the local businesses, local retailers within that. And continue to support Evmark in their efforts to market and keep downtown looking great.

In terms of public transit and parking supply management and access, clearly the way downtown has been developing is kind of on a TOD or transit oriented development policy. We want to continue that. As Larry Widmayer is very fond of saying, if you go down to the train in the morning, you can see almost as many people getting off the train coming from downtown or other places south into Downtown Evanston or north into Downtown Evanston as are getting on the train going elsewhere.

Maintain and enhance the multi-mobile opportunities. We have truly one of the unique situations where we have so many different kinds of public transportation coming together within downtown, and take advantage of that. Study the parking supply and utilization in residential developments. Obviously
all these residential developments that's occurred,
there's been a lot of supposition and kind of guesswork
that's gone on in terms of what the parking situation is
with those things. And part of the consultant effort
will be to really more thoroughly analyze all that.

With regard to physical conditions,
street, parks, open space, connectivity, way-
finding and environment concerns, which is a lot of
stuff, we want to create active public spaces for
downtown for the Evanston residents and Evanston
visitors to use such as a new fountain square, new
plazas with greeneries that enhance the quality of life
and balance density. We want to preserve and enhance
access and ambience through capital improvements. We
want to improve cleanliness, maintenance and
beautification, and enhance downtown way-finding for
Evanston residents and visitors.

Now, obviously if you go to a mall, there's
great signage. It's really easy to find things. You
know where parking is, all those kinds of things. We'd
like downtown to be as easy to find your way around.

In terms of public art and culture and
recreational programming, we want to promote and install
public art at appropriate locations, really develop a
master plan for public art for the community, and
encourage more cultural and recreational programming of
outdoor spaces and maybe even indoor spaces in downtown.

I think that's that. Dennis?

MR. MARINO: Thank you, Jim. It's my pleasure
to introduce Kirk Bishop who is the principal lead
consultant here in this project. Kirk is a principal
with Duncan Associates which is based in Chicago, but
also Duncan has offices throughout the country. It is
very much a national firm with a great deal of expertise
in downtown planning, land use and zoning, managing
growth. And they've worked in many downtowns throughout
the country.

Some of the larger cities they've worked in
have included Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis.
They've also worked in smaller university communities
such as Lawrence, Kansas and others. They have also
worked in many smaller cities and towns throughout the
country.

Kirk in particular along with Tom Smith from
his firm were very involved and Kirk was the lead
consultant for the rewrite of the Chicago Zoning
Ordinance, a herculean task in many ways, and one that reportedly was very well done. So, Staff is truly pleased to have the opportunity to work with Kirk and his team. They survived an extremely competitive process. And without any further ado, let me introduce Kirk to introduce the team.

MR. BISHOP: Thank you, Dennis, and good evening, Mayor, members of the City Council, Planning Commissioners and everyone here tonight. Let me state and echo a comment about how happy we are to be here with our team partners tonight to begin with you a journey that we hope and fully expect to be very exciting, productive and fast paced in many ways, a journey leading us ultimately to the preparation of a strategic update of the 1989 Downtown Plan and the development of some key implementation tools, chiefly in the form of form-based and conventional zoning amendments to the City's existing ordinance and zoning map.

The purpose of tonight of course is really to hear from you all, the purpose of this formal kickoff event and we want to get to that right away. But if you'll indulge us for just a second and for the benefit
of everyone who is here tonight, I thought I'd spend
just a bit telling you about who we are as a team and
about the process that's beginning to unfold as with	onight. (If you'll go to the team slide?)

We're very confident that we have assembled a
team that can bring this project to a successful
completion. The team, probably the most important
members of the team are not the consultants but the
leadership at the dais tonight, the folks in the room	onight and the folks that we'll be meeting with over
the next days and weeks to begin to drill down and get
to goal setting with regard to Downtown Planning.

Duncan Associates, the firm that I represent
with my colleague Tom Smith, is the prime consultant.
We are, as Dennis mentioned, a planning, zoning and
growth management firm with offices in Chicago and
Austin. We'll be responsible for project oversight,
quality control and coordination of a number of
activities that are going to be occurring at once. But
one of the great things about our team is that these are
successful consultants in their own right who've got
stable and very successful projects and they'll be
working independently at times on a parallel track
basis.

We're pleased to be joined by the Lakota Group represented tonight by John Lamotte. I know many of your know John and Lakota from the work on the Central Street planning effort that is still ongoing. Also, we're very happy to be joined by Kevin Klinkenburg from 180 Degree Design Studio, a Kansas City based firm that focuses on urban design architecture with a particular emphasis on form-based coding, new urbanism design principles, pedestrian oriented design principles.

The Goodman-Williams Group is a key member of our team, Goodman-Williams Group, a real estate analyst represented tonight by Linda Goodman. You'll also be seeing her partner, Christine Williams, from time to time, and we're very fortunate to have Linda and Christine working with us on this project. It's not the first time that we've worked with her nor Lakota.

Rounding out the team, KLOA Transportation Planners and Engineers, Neil Koenig is here representing KLOA tonight. I'm probably going to get in trouble with Tim Doren who you'll also be seeing as part of this project because I thought I had his name listed first but apparently I've corrected that because Neil is in
Okay. Just now that I've got the team out of the way, you're going to be hearing from various team members as they talk about their particular emphasis as part of this project. I'm going to describe very generally the work plan that's unfolding with tonight's formal kickoff event.

There are really four key phases of work involved in this project that's going to unfold over the next two and a half, three months. It begins tonight with, and it's began a couple of weeks ago really with some internal meetings among the consultant and staff team. As we begin to get a better understanding of the context in which we're working, the context in terms of the planning history of the place from 1989, the context in terms of the physical lay of the land as we tour downtown and endeavor to learn more about development and the various resources that we know to exist within the downtown.

Starting almost concurrently with that and really again kicking off tonight the Downtown Planning effort itself which provides the vital foundation for everything else that will occur. This fact finding
mission that we're on during the background and context stage, the Downtown Planning effort is key to the final two phases which are the design charette and zoning implementation phase. I'm going to have Kevin talk to you a bit about the design charette which is very collaborative, very focused, very hands on effort geared at coming up with the types of design principles for specific sites within downtown that can be carried out through revisions to the City's zoning regulations.

And then, finally, the fourth and final phase of the project will be as we prepare recommended zoning strategies, amendments to the existing text and map of the ordinance that may be necessary to carry out the planning principles and goals that emanate from the Downtown Planning process and actual form-based code, the kind of new way of looking at how zoning works for some specific identified areas within downtown.

As I say, the background and context stage really begins tonight with this meeting where we hear from you. We have begun and will continue to pore through various planning documents and studies that have been prepared, the field surveys that I talked about before. The Goodman-Williams Group will begin its key
MR. LAMOTTE: Again, I'm John Lamotte. I'm just going to take a minute and talk now about the components of the actual Downtown Plan update. It's been several years since we've had the plan and 1989 has gone by fast, and it's good to update these documents. So, we're not only going to update the document from a goal and policy standpoint, but in this case, we're going to drill down into the physical form and shape of downtown in the future: things that you're doing good, things that you like, things that you want to harness and direct in the right location.

So, we will be looking at what you did back in '89 to what is the downtown today, and that's what we're going to talk more in a minute, and then where do we work in helping us to gain better understanding of the real estate market, the real estate market dynamics with a particular focus on residential and office inasmuch as the Goodman-Williams Group did a fairly thorough study of the retail market context back in 2005. And KLOA will begin their work in assisting us in understanding parking trends by performing some actual parking utilization surveys from some newer residential mixed use type buildings in town.
take it in the future. You can use us to really test these things. Lakota will lead that effort. We're going to be massing out sizes and depths and bulk and massing on these test sites. We're going to be looking at land use, what land use could be there, what should be there, what is something we want to be encourage. We'll be looking at shape and scale and bulk and density, things that I think you've been struggling with on some of the newer developments. We'll be looking at the design aspects both from the streetscape and the building. And then, we're also going to take a look at the market.

And if Linda can take a minute just with the mike there and just tell us a little bit more about what we're going to be doing there from the market standpoint?

MS. GOODMAN: Thank you, John. Is this on?

As Commissioner Woods mentioned, we've heard a lot about the need to really understand the office market as well as to understand the depth of the residential demand in Downtown Evanston. And I think those are the two land uses we're really going to focus
on. As John mentioned, we did, our firm teamed with Mid
America Real Estate and looked pretty extensively at the
retail market in Downtown Evanston in 2005 and we don't
want to reinvent the wheel or spend a lot of additional
time and effort on the retail.

But focusing on the office for a moment, I
think everybody recognizes how important the employment
base is, not just for the taxes but the workers who
support the restaurants, that that's really a vital
component of any healthy downtown. And I think that's
one area where there isn't a lot of good data. There
are a lot of anecdotal stories and you get some
secondary data about what the vacancy rate is. But I'd
really like to take some time in the next, in the coming
weeks to really understand who's working in Downtown
Evanston, where are they located, what kinds of
businesses, what kind of rents, and where are those
buildings threatened, and really to see if I can pull
together some meaningful data that shows where we are
now, perhaps how it's changed and where the trends are
moving forward.

Briefly, on the residential front, I think the
real question is how deep is the residential market. I
think oftentimes developers see a good thing, the market
has been very accepting of the new condominiums in
Downtown Evanston. So, do you expect that to continue
the same in perpetuity? Well, that's a little bit
naive. So, I think to really try and understand the
depth and a little bit more about the market segments,
feeling the residential interest in Downtown Evanston.

MR. LAMOTTE: Now, I think Kirk mentioned that
Neil and Tim will be looking the traffic just from when
we look at the projected potential development downtown
in the future, and also the parking and the mixed use
multi-family buildings as to what the situation is
there. So, I think for the sake of time, we can turn
over to Kevin and he can talk more now about the next
component, the design charrette.

MR. KLINKENBERG: Thanks, John. I get to talk
about the touchy feely stuff, it's my role which is a
fun one. Thanks, Mayor and members of the City Council
and the Plan Commission. It's a pleasure to be here.
And I think it's a pleasure to be in a place where in
the realm of issues that downtowns have all over the
country, you're far, far ahead of the game. And as we
go into this master plan, I think it's always important
to perhaps take a minute and take a deep breath and pat you
yourself on the back for all that you've done over the last
decade or two because you really do have a wonderful community and much to be very proud of.

And so, our issue here now is what do we do now? Where do we take it from here? You've got a really good downtown, how do we make it great? And one of the processes that we're going to use is this funny sounding thing called the design charette. And this will, we've got a few dates blocked off in the middle of July about five consecutive days where we will take our team and we will hole up in a space in the downtown and we will actually all be working there together at the same time. As John and Kirk mentioned, it's a very collaborative effort. It's going to look a little bit like organized chaos, but that is our opportunity to really get to the nuts and bolts of the issues that are going on on various sites within downtown.

And we always refer to it as a bit of community therapy except we're not handing out Xanax in this case. We're doing it with pens and pencils and computers and the language of design. And so, I encourage everybody, everybody in the room and please
tell your neighbors and others to come and attend. The
charette process itself succeeds the more people
actually participate in it. And so, we really look
forward to everybody's participation as a part of it.

But the goal obviously of that charette is to
identify the specific issues and needs that could lead
to some of the implementation items that Kirk alluded
to, the form-based zoning codes, some of the specific
urban design issues and concerns as well. And one thing
that you will talk a lot about form-based zoning codes
over the course of the next two or three months and I
know you've already had Paul Crawford come here and give
you an outstanding presentation, I've seen where he does
a great job, and we'll talk more about how that actually
gets implemented then and some of the codes that we've
written, how that will happen.

The important thing is it's not just a set of
standards. We often think of these as just a set of
standards, maybe a different way to look at standards.
But it's also about the process, the application review
and approval process and how are the ways to use that
code as a mechanism to achieve greater precision in what
you want and also benefit those on the private sector
side as well. So, we try to look at that as a win-win for both the public and the private sector for everybody to achieve more precision and predictability.

And then, the other thing as part of this, too, is that doing a master plan is something that really only happens every 15 to 20 years. And you're right on schedule for that given that yours was in 1989. And it's important to always take a step back when you have a chance like this and to begin to think about some of the bigger picture issues that you don't normally get a chance to deal with.

And I certainly know, having been to many of these types of meetings, that we spend a lot of time talking about the details of a particular application or project and where the entries are and where the trash goes and how tall it is and what the windows look like. And those are all very important things and we have to do that, but every so often it's important to take a step back and to say, well, you know, what is the bigger picture? What are we really looking for in the future? What do we want to be 10, 15 or 20 years from now?

And there are a number of what we call urban design issues that really play to that and get beyond
the individual building issue. Things like what are the views that you're setting up, what's the complete pedestrian experience from street to street and block to block, what's the enclosure of a particular street feel like, how is the street itself designed? I always like to think of a good street, for example, as one that you feel comfortable jaywalking on and you feel safe. And you have some streets that are excellent for that and others that maybe fall a little bit short in that regard.

But all those kinds of things, all the bigger picture principles are important to keep in your head as you talk about tonight what interests you and over the course of the next few months. And the reason I reiterate that is because this body or these two bodies and the public input at large, you are the developers or the City. And we all know that it's basically private developers that build the City but it's the leadership of the City who sets the tone and is charged with thinking of the longer term. And I say this as somebody who does most of our work with private sector developers.

Fortunately, none of them are here tonight so
I can say as much as I want about that. But it is your charge to think of the longer term. And we don't often get a chance to really take that step to really do so and what's in the best interest of the community, and then how do those individual short-term efforts and projects fit into that.

So, that's, I think that's enough for now and the next person up is Kirk again.

MR. BISHOP: Two more slides, I promise, and then I'll make good on that promise to give you your opportunity to talk.

The fourth and final stage again is really the implementation stage, bringing together all that's gone before in terms of some recommendations that you can actually get your arms around and consider for formal adoption. One, in the form of these prototype form-based codes for specific sites within the downtown, and two, in terms of just some general recommendations for amendments to the existing downtown zoning scheme, whether in the form of substantive provisions regarding height, bulk, scale, orientation of buildings, but as Kevin mentioned, in terms of the process used to get to the window of yes, whether that's the planned unit
development process or a movement towards a by-right more predictable process.

And as throughout this process, there will be opportunities for public involvement and input in the implementation phase as well as the phases before it, throughout the process building on Commissioner Woods' commitment in the guiding principles for continuing the strong tradition of public involvement and input throughout that process. At the very beginning of the stage, we'll do some training so that any recommended new strategies are well grounded in understanding at the administrative and staff level as well as at the elected and appointed official level as you work with these, perhaps these new regulations and procedures.

MR. LAMOTTE: I'm going to start wrapping it up with really a starting point. We call this a chart or a graphic or a shish kabob chart, and you want to either follow along on the screen or if you want to follow along on the chart. We thought it was important for all of us, the team, for the elected/appointed officials, for our audience members to kind of see where we've been and where we are. And I think all of us have touched on this so I'm not going to go into much detail.
If you look at the left, this is where we've been. We've got the 1989 Plan that many of you worked hard on as our grounding, as our base. And I think as Kirk mentioned, there's a lot of patting on the back to be done because you have accomplished a lot, more than many communities we've seen.

Then, things were moving along and all of a sudden your growth spurt started. In 2004, we had the visioning sessions. Many of you in the room were part of that. We kind of revisited the plan, tested the goals, checked things out. There was a lot of consensus that there were some great things happening. You had a lot of the goals hit but some things still needed to be dealt with.

And that's really why we're here today, that the physical form, the physical shape, some of the design regulations needed to be addressed. So, that came out, if you look at the bottom of the chart, you can see who worked on that first round. The City Staff was heavily involved, Evmark who is here tonight, Design Evanston's Group put a lot of volunteer effort in that with their designers, and then we were the consultants.

Then the next step, because a lot of these

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steps you've taken, you might not be clear yet on how they're building to today, and they are, is 2005. As Linda said, she did the retail market study, following the visioning session to see what's strong, what's weak, what can we do to mix the retail up. Also, KLOA built a traffic model, something that most communities lust for but don't do. But you have a traffic model for downtown. The folks involved, City Staff, Evmark, Design Evanston, Goodman-Williams and KLOA.

Then, 2006, last year, an issues list was put together, kind of combing up the latest issues. Staff kind of put it down as a checklist. Then, the PD or the planned unit development design guidelines were formed because you saw you needed to have more design criteria and tools there, so you started the process there. Our firm did a quick streetscape audit of what the conditions were downtown, what was the good and the bad and things that needed to be fixed. That was an outgrowth of the visioning session to kind of say we've done some great streetscape but now what are some of the gaps and things we need to do.

And then, last but not least which I think is one of the key things is the Downtown Planning Committee
(DPC) was formed. You all and the Commissioners said we need to get people with eyes on this really focused to start the ball rolling. So, that was all the different folks involved, 2006. And then in the yellow down here, the Downtown Planning Committee took off with City Staff and Evmark. The guiding principles that you see tonight that Jim presented earlier were provided and then a little zoning assessment has been done as the next step by Staff, basically saying here is our zoning today, what are potential changes we now need the consultant team to get into that and guide us there.

So, this is the line of today. We're really into the next steps of a real Downtown Plan update. So, in May, we started off with a very intensive half-day meeting with Staff, collected a lot of data. Staff has done an amazing job of collecting retail data and building heights and scales, things that we need in the process.

We then just recently met with the DPC to kick that off. Our Commissioners really gave us a good insight as to where the principles came from and what they were doing. And they basically said now is the time to hand it to the next step but they're going to be

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involved guiding us. So, that's May.

Tonight is June 7th. We really see this as a focus group. I think as Judy alluded to earlier, we're trying to get you all together so you give us the guidance together because downtown is everybody's downtown, everybody's neighborhood commercial area, everybody's center, civic center and social center. So, we wanted you to guide us from the beginning through the process.

If you then look next, this is actually the wrong date, June 21st, for those of you watching on TV, will be our first community outreach meeting, another community focus group meeting. We're going to have that at the Civic Center. Anybody in the community can come, whether you live downtown or you live in the outer edge of town. The idea here is to keep reinforcing that downtown is everybody's and we want everybody invited. So, after we got done tonight with your input, we'll be put in the community in a couple of weeks on June 21st.

Then in July, we're going to have two more community meetings at two of your community centers. They will be held concurrently in July 12th. We will have team members at each one. And the same thing, if
somebody missed one, they can go to those. Or in the case of Central Street, we had people coming to all the meetings. They wanted to come to the meetings, they loved coming to the meetings. So, everybody is invited all the way through the process.

And then, as Kevin said, the big one here is July 17th through the 21st. It's where we're going to open up a space downtown and everybody can come in. We'll have set things going on. We might be doing interviews with businesses and landowners. We might have little focus groups but we would have a lot of design action going on with all our designers.

Then, the Downtown Planning Committee is guiding us along. Our team is down below doing the work. In August, we then get together and start, while you're on vacation, putting the plan together, shaping up these pilot area studies for the zoning, really sketching up and writing up the strategies in these concepts. Then come September, we're going to pull everybody back together into a giant workshop and we're going to put a lot of concepts and ideas out there, a lot of goals and objectives, things that we need direction from you and the community further on. We'll
roll up the sleeves, very similar to what you're doing in the West Planning and the North Planning and the Central Street Planning, getting everybody's input and shaping the direction. And then we'll have DPC meetings guiding us through the summer, making sure we're on track and we're going in the right direction.

And then October is our target date. We will have a joint workshop with these two groups so we can roll up the sleeves and see the technical aspects of the plan, get into the details. And then we're shooting for November for the plan approval and the zoning recommendations that Kirk had talked about.

So, that's both where we've been and where we're going as a process. And really tonight we want to open up with two last set of question slides here as to things we want to talk about tonight to get everybody thinking. What do you like about downtown? And you might have liked it five years but not today, or what do you like today? What are the past successes? And I think as Kirk and Kevin and Linda have been saying, you've got a lot and we want to talk about that. What are your past challenges? Things that you still have as a challenge or you overcame.
What should be improved? It could be a micro thing, the crack in the sidewalk -- bugs you everyday and you want us to look at that. Or it could be a big macro policy issue that you want us to discuss. Where do we want to be in ten years, as Kevin was alluding to? Today, we have a downtown that is X, it's this type of downtown. It means this to me, but what do we want to be in five or ten years? What's that vision statement that we've got to start shaping over the next five months? What public policies do you want us to look at? What are the big picture things? Big picture issues, big picture directions?

And if you go to the next slide, we're going to start honing in on the physical form, the shape, the density, the height, the bulk, the urban design things that Kevin and I were talking about earlier. What should it be? Leave it go, let it go, or shape it, or get into these districts or sub-areas that the Commissioners put together? Should we have three sub-areas? Should we have four? Are we in the right zones and boundaries?

What goes on in a traditional area? If it's the smaller old world downtown feel, what does that mean
to you? What about transition, when you're transitioning from height to another height or you're transitioning from use to use, or edge to the next neighborhood, what does that mean? And then, what is that core area, that bigger downtown core area, what does that mean?

So, this is really the kickoff for tonight. We'll turn the lights back on in a minute. And what we'd like to do is just think through those questions, you saw the map a little while ago, and what we want to see, what we want to do, what we want the downtown to be in the future.

So, if we can open up the lights so we get everybody going? And then, the way we're going to do it is I'll just facilitate from here. But Tom Smith, again to reintroduce everybody, is Duncan Associates' project manager. He's available as part of the discussion. Linda is, Kevin, Kirk, my colleague Kevin Clark is over here, and Neil Koenig is right over here.

So, we want to have this interactive. It's with you folks. Throw things at us. We'll ask you questions. We'll take a lot of notes. I think all of you have been in these processes and we should have a
good dialogue and some fun for the next couple of hours.  

   One quick question maybe, is there any 
clarification of process for anybody? I see you looking 
at your charts. Dave?

   COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Perhaps. I was 
   wondering how and when the data that is going to be 
collected with regards to the office and residential 
market and the traffic becomes available to you planners 
to use and for us, Plan Commissioners and the public, to 
review and digest.

   MR. LAMOTTE: I'll try and help Neil answer 
the question on traffic and parking. They've got the 
model already, so we need to get them densities for the 
traffic model. And then, their folks are going to go 
out into the parking garages of the multi-family housing 
buildings, the residential buildings, and actually count 
spaces that are used or not, actually send people in at 
2:00 or 3:00 in the morning and check things out. And 
so, that's going to be happening in the next month 
because that has to come together by the time we hit 
August.

   And then, Linda, do you want to talk about 
your research?
MS. GOODMAN: We've begun. I've been talking
to Diane Williams, for example, at Evmark, and she's set
up a list of some of the office owners that we need to
talk to. So, we're off and running on gathering the
data. We don't have a date specific yet for issuing a
report because I see this much more as an iterative
communal process, that we're going to come up with some
eye on directions and some conclusions. And then I
suspect others at the various community meetings and
working with the planners, they're going to say, wait,
this issue came up, can you go back and really deal with
that?

So, rather than saying we're going to deliver
a report in six weeks that is static, there will be a
report that will be bound and presented at some point.
But I really see as the planners and designers are
working on this that we will be presenting information
as we gather it but really working together. And I
think that's the real value of having the market analyst
work with the planners.

MR. LAMOTTE: And as we start to unroll the
strategies and concepts, they have to answer the
question, is there an infrastructure there for it, is
there a market there for it? If we move this use to here, what will it mean to the office folks? So, you're right, we've got to bring all that together towards the end of the summer. Okay?

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: The reason I was asking was, I think these are questions, this is data that many of us and many of the citizens had expressed a great interest in. So, as it's developed, I agree, as you develop it, it becomes available whether it's in a room-for-addition draft or --

MR. LAMOTTE: Right.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Or through some other medium so that we're all sort of walking along with you, so that as we start to address the form, there is some logic and substantiated data that backs up why we are doing, investigating the various scenarios we're investigating.

MR. LAMOTTE: We're on the same technical page, right. Great point. Any other quick questions on process that you saw from the chart? No? Well, then let's open it up. Let's start with some of those questions. Where are we as a downtown? What do you see it today, yesterday, tomorrow? Where do you want us to
go? How do you want us to do it? Madam Mayor?

MAYOR MORTON: Why don't I start while everybody else is thinking? What do you consider a successful downtown venture?

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay. I think I'll take a crack on it and then we'll open it up. What do we consider a successful downtown?

MAYOR MORTON: Venture.

MR. LAMOTTE: Venture.

MAYOR MORTON: Whatever is going up, yes.

MR. LAMOTTE: All the different types of ventures?

MAYOR MORTON: -- raises a lot of taxes, something that will satisfy the services of people who live there? What do you, as an expert in this --

MR. LAMOTTE: Well, ideally what we find is that it should be meeting a multiple set of goals and objectives for a town, whether small or large like you. We find that the downtown needs to be a social center where you get to know your neighbors and you can see people and you know the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker. That is a powerful trend that we find in almost all our communities where you've got to
go there and see people and hang out and do things.

It's got to be a civic center because there are civic uses usually there. Your library is your centerpiece now. It's got to be some form of a business center, and in some communities it's just a little bit of retail, and other communities like yours which as Linda was alluding to, it's got to have a lot of different business. For your size downtown, it's office, it's service, it's commercial. It's got to be a retail center to a point depending on the market, at the minimum, for folks that are within the service area of the downtown. Sometimes people forget people live closer to the downtown than other commercial areas and the convenience level needs to be that.

It's got to be a fun place, entertaining place, a place for everybody of all ages. It's got to have, I think as Kevin was alluding to, green spaces and open spaces where you want to hang out. It might not be a giant park but small spaces.

And it's got to provide a balance of parking. We're always struggling with modern parking ratios and needs as well as the need to not have cars dominate everything. And traffic has to move but not that good.
It's got to have enough traffic to serve the shops. When you can add an institutional use like Northwestern in the equation which of course is very rare around the country. Then you've got other things, your educational events.

And then last is, in my mind and I'm doing this quick, is the special events aspect. Things you can do as a community often happen downtown, a festival, an art show. And that goes to the big quality of life issue. I move into a town because all these cool things are going on, because I can get services, I can go shopping, I can meet my neighbor, and I can see the Mayor and walk around the streets.

So, that's a quick broad brush. And I think the question for you all is are we hitting all those pieces knowing the size of your downtown? And are you comfortable with where we are and what are the things we need to do better as Kevin said? What do we need to polish up on this diamond?

MS. GOODMAN: John, if I can add to that, one of the interesting sort of conflicts or issues that I think we will address is, is Downtown Evanston the downtown for the residents of the City of Evanston? Or
if it's going to be a vital, successful business center
and entertainment center and retail center? Does it
really serve a much larger area? And is there a
conflict or are those two constituents that really turn
to Downtown Evanston? Is that compatible?

And I think that's one thing that we're going
to be addressing as we look at this. It became clear to
me as we did our retail market analysis that Downtown
Evanston was really downtown for much of the north side
of Chicago and some of the communities around. And
while that is terrific for a lot of the businesses and
institutions in Downtown Evanston, does that meet the
needs of the residents?

MR. LAMOTTE: And I would add one thing
because I think I missed this in my kind of flying
through it, and that is the residential aspect. Because
some downtowns are just purely business and
entertainment and non-residential uses because they
don't have the land or they haven't started with
downtown. But a true mixed use downtown has residential
weaved in there: apartments, condominiums, townhouses, a
range of housing products.

And that's another powerful trend we're
finding in our downtown planning projects is that folks want to have other product in the city than the traditional single family home for whatever age level. We find that young professionals, young people coming out of college or maybe not going to college want to live in town, maybe can't afford or don't want a house. Or someone retiring or an empty nester who don't want to mow the lawn anymore can be in their town without having to move out. We're seeing some communities where people are moving out because they don't have product to stay in town and they're moving away from their churches and friends.

So, that adds that component of living in a downtown, living above a store so to speak. And you're getting that now, and that's another one of the questions for you, if that trend is good for you or are we riding that wave the right way. And Linda will get into that later in the process, but that's something we want you to comment on to.

MAYOR MORTON: Well, a follow up question. How do you envision the competition between all of the things that you have identified as being the signs of success between the downtown and the outlying commercial
areas that we have, commercial districts we have? We have a Main Street area, Dempster Street area. We're developing Church and Dodge area. Is the downtown to provide all of these things without thinking about which things should go to the various other parts of the City?

MR. LAMOTTE: That's a great question especially when you have many, or several commercial areas. The idea is not necessarily to compete but to support. And we planning design types are always looking at, first, the neighborhood level of shopping, the convenience level that you may not be able to come downtown for a loaf of bread or an ice cream cone, you can do that in your neighborhood shopping areas like Central Street as a great example. At the minimum, you can get there easily and get those day-to-day services, and that serves that area.

Now, there is a big population right around downtown, so like I said earlier, that also is a convenience, shops and things needed downtown. Some of the bigger, more specialty shops, you often don't get into those commercial areas. So, that's a reason to come downtown because you can do more multiple shopping trips, you can see different things.
Most downtown's were in, whether it's small town or large town are not going to be back in the day with the big department stores because you can't really compete all the time with the malls, but they can have the unique and fun specialty shops that maybe your neighborhood shopping center streets won't get. So, they'll get the smaller or more convenient, might have the unique, there are some really unique shops and services on Central, but the bigger and more varied things will happen downtown. And some of that is market driven. They may say I want to be on Central Street because it has this character. Or I want to be downtown because there's more people.

And your town is very accessible. A lot of people can get around it easily. And it's not like I'm so far out I can't do any shopping downtown. But it is a delicate balance, and one that we will talk about is the office uses. If someone had a site downtown that's being redeveloped, can they stay in downtown or they should be on your other commercial streets, a doctor, a dentist, an attorney, that kind of thing? But for the most part, the mix and the more active and the more variety is in your downtown.
MAYOR MORTON: Well, one other thing. You know, you're stimulating my thinking. Let's just take the area of entertainment. Is it essential that the downtown area have the entertainment? Or could some of the entertainment be spread to other places? Could there be some type of a collegial agreement out of this plan that certain aspects of these 'successful' things be relegated to some other section of the City?

MR. LAMOTTE: Another good question because every town we're in they always want the entertainment. They want the theaters, the bowling alleys, the pubs with the bands and the folk bars and things and jazz places. But a lot of times the neighborhood streets don't have the size or the noise issues or the parking issues are going to come back and not make it a good spot. If you can get a small pub or the quiet little area for a band in the neighborhood, that's fine if the neighbors are fine with it. But for the most part, you want that in your downtown.

And your theater is a good example. Every town we're in, they all want a theater. They want multiple theaters. The pub in Palatine that has regular dinner and the dinner hour and then the music afterwards
like an Irish pub, everybody wants one of those, but it's got to be away from the residential areas.

So, I think the most part is you've got that downtown. If a few small venues wanted to come out to the neighborhoods, as long as they fit a Central Street plan or it fit one of your other plans. It's kind of hard though with the parking and the noise.

Now, bowling alleys and fun zones for the kids and stuff, those are great but again need bigger buildings. So, they're more downtown. Good question.

Others? What you like, what you don't like?

Where do we go from here? What are things you want us to work on in the next six months?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Moran?

ALDERMAN MORAN: I think some of the things that are running through my mind, I mean it's a pretty broad palette, but I don't see all of the things that you are describing, John, as necessarily being conflicting. I see a lot of confluence of a lot of these elements coming together in Evanston. I think we should be proud of the fact that we are sort of the downtown not just for Evanston but for other communities surrounding us. And I think there's the potential for
expanding on that.

I see us as being far, far and away from a classic suburban bedroom community. I mean, we are, I think, a very interesting urban-suburban mix. And I don't think that we should neglect either side of that, whether, you know, whether we're focusing on urban for some purposes and suburban for other purposes. But I think we can be both.

I see over the course of time, you know, we've continued to expand dramatically on the residential side downtown, and I think there is some more to go there. But ultimately we're going to have to have our vision shifted slightly, and with the construction of all the new multi-unit buildings downtown, there's going to be a demand both for service and commercial as you said. And I think that's something that we need to focus on in developing this plan.

I think the intellectual employment force, I think was Northwestern here. Some of the historical things that have happened, there was a company that started in the Research Park called IDO which ultimately found itself in the Chandlers Building and where we had this kind of albatross in the downtown, you know, we're
kind of forgetting about it now but there were
scaffolding over the walk and it was ugly and it was,
you know, things were falling down onto the sidewalk and
was horrible. And ultimately, we had Davis Street Land
Company come in and figure out a different way and they
took the notch out and they created an open space and
IDO shifted from the Research Park over there and they
have three floors and it's a very, it's an exciting
business. So, I think more of that.

I see the hospitality trade as continuing to
be an important component.

MR. LAMOTTE: Hospitality trade?

ALDERMAN MORAN: Hospitality. I see the arts
is an ever expanding aspect of this. Years ago, we
talked about, we actually developed some tentative plans
for a civic performing arts center in Evanston. I still
think that that is something that we should ultimately
address. I think we can expand on our own, you know, we
have some music. I think we should do more.

I see a continuing, growing interest in public
art as impacting the downtown area. We have a new,
what's going to be a very great art piece at Sherman and
Davis. We have more. We have to fix Fountain Square.
We have to also, I think to some degree I like the idea of developing some of these districts where we go to the transitional notion and some of the traditional districts where I think we do have areas in the downtown area that I don't like to use the term sacrosanct but they do bring to mind some of the village feel that a lot of people in Evanston valued over the course of time.

I look forward to looking at the form-based code approach and how it might be applied not just to downtown but ultimately to other areas in Evanston. But I think this will be a good Petrie dish for that. The presentation that we had several months ago I thought was dramatic and encouraging, very hopeful. And I look forward to bringing that forward.

I think there's a lot of things that we have to discuss here. I think those are some of them. We have to look at our infrastructure and what it can support. If we have visions that are grander than what it can support, we have to start thinking about what that means for us in terms of investment or capital. There are a lot of people who have concerns about traffic and parking and we have to continue to stay
focused on those.

You know, we have some micro things that I think we need to think or rethink. Years ago we changed the parking meter time frames for days where we extended them into the evening. And it was controversial and I think it's still controversial and we need to think about what that means for us as a city, whether we did the right thing or not, and if we didn't, what we need to do to respond to that.

So, those are some of the things that I'm thinking about. I do think, just to kind of conclude, I am encouraged by, I mean, these larger proposals that we've received in recent times have been, you know, they've been a catalyst for a lot of discussion amongst Evanstonians about, you know, where we're going with the downtown. But I'll say this, I am excited and encouraged by the fact that over the course of the last, really since John Bodkin came in and did the Park Evanston in whenever that was, '92 or '93 to now, and we've had 15 years of significant investors and developers coming and saying Evanston is a place we want to invest in.

And I'm extremely encouraged by that
development. I find it exciting. Where a lot of cities around the country are scrambling to find an identity, you know, I think we have created an identity. It's a complex identity right now and we're all trying to keep up with it in our own minds about where we're going. But for sure, there is a dynamism to Evanston that I think is dramatic and hopeful. And I think we need to find a course of conduct where we can encourage that dynamism but be able to hang on to the things that over the course of, you know, many decades are dear to Evanstonian and how to sort of wed some of these modern trends to some of our traditional value systems.

MR. LAMOTTE: I was in a community yesterday that will remain nameless with Kevin, and one of the leaders said we really need to have more things to do in downtown. And we're struggling with this, they're nowhere near where you are. And they have a theater, and this gentleman and his wife planned on going to the theater and they missed the 7:15 and they were going to go to the 9:15, but there was nothing for them to do. They didn't feel comfortable walking on the streets. They didn't have the coffee shop. They didn't have the pub. They didn't have the restaurant. So, they waited
until the exact time of the movie, went to the theater, got out and went home.

So, you can think of where they are compared to where you are and some of the positives. I think as you say, we got a lot of things we can build up from rather than struggling with some of these things.

But where are others as far as we in good shape, bad shape, we're doing good but we need to correct some things? What are the corrective actions that we need to all be looking at in the next five, six months here? Physical form is one of the things we keep hearing. That's our mission with all of us planner, designer, thinker types here. How about a little bit of that? Where do you think we're at with that?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Tisdahl?

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Evanston has changed a lot and much of it has been good. But over the past years, we've lost rental buildings. And I'd like to know as you study Evanston what percentage of our buildings used to be rental and what aren't now because that's been an important tradition in Evanston is to have a number of people who rent. So, I'd appreciate you looking at that. And also, I am concerned, I would like to know
how many condos is too many condos for Evanston.

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay.

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Because I think eventually five years from now, if that's all we build, we will have made a mistake.

MR. LAMOTTE: And why is that? You think a mistake as in?

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: I think we need a mix. I think we need office space. I think we need rental. I think we need more diversity than just condos.

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay. If the pendulum swung that everything new was residential versus office or rentals, okay.

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Rainey?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Well, to continue on Liz's track, does it really matter what we think in terms of mix or where we should build office space? I mean, you don't build office space and they will come. You build office space if there is a demand for office space.

So, I'm very concerned about the focus on office space at this moment because, number one, I don't know if we're talking about corporate office space. I don't know if we're talking about small practice office
space. What are we -- are we talking about large buildings with, you know, floor after floor? What are we talking about office space?

MR. LAMOTTE: Linda, do you want to --

ALDERMAN RAINEY: And what have we heard from people other than the small demand maybe for an individual office space is? What do we know about the demand right now for office space in Evanston? And I think about around the country office space that was built and nobody came to it, you know.

MS. GOODMAN: Office space, just like residential space, is not one thing as you pointed out, that there are lots of different kinds of office space. The real estate industry tends to divide it into class A, B and C which is based on the quality of the space, it also affects the rents. But I think what we're going to drill down to is to really look at what kinds of companies, big, small, what kinds of industries are they in, and is there space to meet the current and forecasted demand for those kinds of workers. And that's the way I'm going to try and approach it.

MR. LAMOTTE: And also, I think, too, as we've been talking to the team and with Staff is that it's a
big component, your downtown. Many times we don't even find even a few doctor's offices in some downtowns. But you have a wide mix. Linda is going to identify that mix from the smallest person up to the bigger. And then, because Northwestern is here and some of your headquarters and Rotary and others, you also have that mix.

And you mentioned the research guys, the high tech guys, we just need to understand that mix more and what their needs are. One of the things we're going to look at is the walking flow off the train so we can design a little bit closer as to where our potential office workers that are coming to Evanston are walking to. And not just getting off the train but what is the best path for them and what are some blocks that may be encouraged more for office. That phenomenon was being discussed at the Central Street process, you know, what do we do with that if we're losing those kind of folks.

But ideally the mix is there as the Mayor had indicated and we've got it, we just need to identify it so you see it better.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Another thing that I wanted to comment on that Liz said is that you mentioned
something about how we're changing. And I know you've
been around a long time, several of us have been here
way too long, but I see a lot of what's happening in
Evanston as going back to what we had before.

We had over 3,000 theater seats, movie theater
seats in this town. We had four operating theaters, one
on Central Street, one on Chicago Avenue, and the
Varsity and the Valencia in Downtown Evanston on Sherman
Avenue. And we had a tremendous amount of retail. And
that retail, while we think about the boutique and the
small independents, most of that retail that we had was
big time retail. It was Marshall Fields, it was
Wiebolts, it was the big guys. We did have plenty of
small that mixed in but we had Joseph's and Peck & Peck,
we had national retailers in Downtown Evanston.

So, I'd be very -- and I think we had more
people 20 or 30 years ago than we do now. They went
downtown, that's for sure, but they sure did come
downtown. I'd be interested in knowing if there is any
way to determine this, what the difference in retail in
our downtown area is today compared to let's say 30
years ago.

MR. LAMOTTE: You mean, the amount of retail
and the type of retail?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Yes. And, you know, is there something in common today with the demands of way back then? I know Old Orchard wasn't the draw, but I think people would prefer to shop locally than to go to Old Orchard.

MR. LAMOTTE: Than globally, right?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: I think if they had a choice.

MR. LAMOTTE: Well, one of the things Linda wants to do is when we do get some of the planning meetings going, the strategies, is refresh us all on the retail market study because before, if you think about years ago, Evanston was the place to go, Downtown Chicago the place, Downtown Oak Park, Aurora, all the bigger cities. And then of course the malls started coming in, the little malls started coming in, the power centers started coming in. And Linda has got a lot of that documented.

And you're right, the phenomenon swung over to those malls. We're getting a little bit of a swing-back, not necessarily on big market but the swing-back to we want to go somewhere where it's nicer, it's more
fun, it's greener, it's a nicer place to shop. We might
do our heavy lifting when we're going to go for
Christmas shopping at the mall but we want to do things
in Downtown Evanston. Will we ever return, I don't
think so.

I mean, Linda has been in many of these towns
who are not going to have three, four, five department
stores. Oak Park has struggled with that. We're not.
But you're getting a phenomena of people coming down not
necessarily for the shopping but a lot of the
entertainment and things that are fun to do in your
downtown. When you hear about all the folks from the
North Shore coming down and North Chicago coming up,
that's great.

So, we've got to keep rolling with that but I
think we need to refreshen that for everybody as we get
through the process.

ALDERMAN RAINLEY: One last thing, and that is
when we talk among ourselves, I know Anjana and I and
several others have said, you know, we've got to have a
bowling alley in this town. It makes no sense that the
City of Evanston has no bowling alley. But you can't
get the bowling alley people to return our calls. I
mean, it just, if you could explain that phenomenon to
me.

We had a perfect location for a Trader Joe's
on several occasions. I mean, we have several sites.
They have said things to us such as, oh, we would never
go into a neighborhood like that. Or that we drove by
it, you know, after months of studying it, one person
finally drove by it and said I don't like the
neighborhood, you know, I don't like it. And if you
could teach us or explain to us how those decisions are
made, the things we really, really want here, they're
out there, they're going in other neighborhoods, they're
going in other places but they're not coming here.

MR. LAMOTTE: Well, a couple of things, and
again, Linda is going to refresh us all on the retail
because some of that was part of the study of how do we
catch those folks and who are they and with helping Evmark
out identifying them and going after them.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: That's what I want to know.

MR. LAMOTTE: But one of the things that we're
finding is when you do a downtown plan, you've done the
homework for the businesses and the developers. So,
you're not only using it as a guide for yourselves to
look at projects, but the whole show is right there. And it shows the developer, a business owner, an investor the strengths, the weaknesses, things you're going to start programming, the capital improvements, where the development opportunities are. And sometimes in this busy world, we see the retailers got everybody coming at them but when they see a new approved plan by this group with ideas and numbers and things in that plan, it's a lot better.

We have many developers say show me the homework, I can't research all this stuff out. I don't even know if they approve these kind of things. Well, you'll have those things on paper. It's the same philosophy on Central Street. Now we will have a guide, you can show people this is what we'd like up and down the street. Don't put Sears Tower on this corner. We want Trader Joe's over here.

Bowling alley, we had our little company spring outing at a bowling alley the other night and everybody was in this thing from A to Z. And it was fun and they had a billiards thing going and it was not that big. And that would fit here, you're right. But we've got to show what the right sites are.
MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Holmes?

ALDERMAN HOLMES: I'll say ditto on the bowling alley. That's been my thing for the last ten years, trying to get one here.

But I want a downtown that's for everyone and I don't want us to forget the young people, the pre-adolescents, the adolescents. They have lots of money and they get on the bus and go to North Brook and down to Lincoln Mall. And you know, we need something like a Dave & Buster's or, you know, some kind of fun zone for them that they can get to easily, they can walk down downtown. So, I would certainly hope that we would be looking at that market as we develop.

MR. LAMOTTE: Can I clarify that for a minute? Because we've heard I think back when we did the earlier study that some teens, the older teens are coming down on the trains on their own or driving because their parents feel comfortable with your downtown. But you're taking it one more step into the junior high kids to have more things for them to do?

ALDERMAN HOLMES: Absolutely. Absolutely.

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay, thank you.

MAYOR MORTON: Dave?
COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Yes, I'd like to echo the remarks of Alderman Rainey and Alderman Tisdahl and now Alderman Holmes. I think it's important to keep a perspective on where Evanston was and what happened with the advent of the cancerous retail malls that sucked the life out of many, many cities in our country.

MAYOR MORTON: Tell us how you really feel.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Yes. I grew up in Park Forest and the same thing happened there.

MR. LAMOTTE: Oh, that story, yes.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: But one thing that's close to my heart and one of the reasons that I'm sitting here tonight is I moved from Chicago to Evanston because there was affordable and abundant apartments that I could rent. So, I'm wondering is the rental market as strong or as desirable or as appropriate during present day as it was when I moved here back in 1983? Or is it really dead and are most of these young professionals just simply leaping into a condo?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Jean-Baptiste?

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: I would just hear from Linda Goodman as to what trends she has observed.

MS. GOODMAN: We will be looking at the rental
market. It's interesting now because there have been some articles recently, for example in Downtown Chicago, as the condo market has begun to slow, all of a sudden the developers are saying, well, I can do a rental building because the rents now support the cost of new construction and I always have the option of converting into a condo in a few years. So, all of a sudden, there is a new supply of rental buildings that are being proposed in Downtown Chicago or in the Central area.

So, one of the things that we'll be looking at when we look at the residential market, we will be looking at both sides and some of the factors that affect the rental market as well as the condominium market because as with almost all of these land uses, what you want is a healthy mix. And the market is volatile, every few years you get new changes and demand, interest rates, the job market. There are lots of things that can affect the residential market.

But I think understanding the trends and the understanding how, especially as we look at form-based code and some of the planning issues, the physical issues, is that going to make it more or less attractive for smaller buildings? For larger buildings? Does that
affect the mix between rental and for sale product? Or is it really just depending on current economic trends?

So, we'll be addressing both the rental and the for sale components of the residential market.

MR. LAMOTTE: And if you could think through the questions we asked tonight and then as we go into more and more sessions with Linda? We were in another community where they actually laid out about eight or nine different people that would go into this apartment development that they were proposing and it was really pretty interesting.

Again, like there was the young people coming back to town from college or training or they just didn't want to get in a house or couldn't afford a house, who weren't ready for a house but they wanted to be near the folks, near the family. There were transferees coming to all our corporations and our Northwestern, new people coming in that weren't ready. They needed a transition, use the transition district into the community and then they could look for a house. There were divorcees, folks that needed to be near the kids. There were secretaries and technicians and folks needing affordable housing. They're serving all of us
in all our businesses. There was about eight or nine
different kind of people there that said they are good
market for apartments and what's the right mix.

    So, it's a great question and we've got to
look at it through the whole show. Kirk, do you want to
add to that?

    MR. BISHOP: No.

    MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Wollin? Oh, are you
through?

    ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: I wanted to just
raise just a couple or share with the rest of you one of
the questions that I hear all the time when we talk
about development downtown is whether or not we are
changing the character of the City. And you know, my
response to some of my friends who have raised that is
that we're changing the character of downtown. And I
think that we have to sort of keep that focus, that's my
sense, because the outlying areas of neighborhoods in
the City have basically remained stable.

    So, if there are some impacts that downtown
further development will have, we need to identify those
impacts on the rest of the City. But I think for the
most part, we're changing the character of the downtown
to better serve the entire community and those who see it as a destination. And I think the fear that people have often is tied to their perception that if you become very active in your downtown area, you create a lot of burden to the local neighborhoods.

And so, to the extent that your experience have shown, can answer those things, I think people would need to get some feedback to those questions. And particularly as you reach out to the various new residents downtown, I think they have to have a sense that there is an entire city, there's downtown but there's an entire city and the entire city has the need for downtown. And so, there's got to be some degree of compatibility and some tolerance.

In that context, too, I want to see if we can really pay attention to including the youth as Alderman Holmes indicated in the thinking that we are doing. We have two meetings scheduled for local, for neighborhood community centers. I don't know whether that's enough in terms of really reaching the neighborhoods. But I think for the youth, we need a special kind of effort to reach out to them because there is a clash going on between the style of the youth, their MO, and the uses
And so, as we plan, we should take that into account, what are their needs, what's the best way to fulfill those needs, and what is the best way to maintain compatibility between the youth and, you know, the adult population who use downtown. Because ultimately, you could really lose all that you've built if there is no accommodation.

MR. LAMOTTE: And if I could just say, there's actually several other points in the process that folks can come to. There's going to be the first community outreach kind of focus group discussion here at the Civic Center on June 21st, and there will be two concurrent in the communities. And then the workshop in September is a whole full community workshop.

But on that note, I've talked to Dennis and Judy about, you know, what we can do to encourage the young people, mostly the high school students because they can get into what we're doing. We've had good luck, when the students come, they give us great input. And we actually, in some of our workshop tables, they actually get up and pour their hearts out about their community. So, obviously we're going into the summer
but if you can encourage the kids, especially who don't have anything to do, come to the design charrette, come to the meetings in September when they're back in school, maybe some of the classes in school the teachers could tie this planning thing in with what they're doing, and they've got great ideas.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: And on top of that, we've already conducted a survey as part of our own youth engagement work. So, I think it will be good to try to access that survey so you can see what they're thinking about the City of Evanston.

MR. LAMOTTE: That would be great.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: And it's a recent survey, too.

MR. LAMOTTE: We'd actually like to encourage some of the young people to become city planners, architects, landscape architects, real estate analysts, so we'll recruit as well. Mayor?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Wollin?

MR. LAMOTTE: And traffic engineers, sorry, Neil.

ALDERMAN WOLLIN: Yes, that's an exciting job. They'll be lining up for that one, right? But we do
have the beginnings of a Youth Commission and a Youth Council, and those are students who are already involved and they should be encouraged to come. That's a great idea. Mine are kind of scattered.

The small office space, and that seems to be, I hear a lot about that. I'm wondering if there is an office-condo market, in other words, that if that is a trend for smaller offices where somebody might buy office space. I know in different parts of the country that's been done and I don't know if it's prevalent in Evanston or not, but I think not.

MR. LAMOTTE: Great question.

ALDERMAN WOLLIN: All of the things we've been talking about, a third of the new condos are being purchased by Evanstonians which I think is a great sign meaning that they want to stay in Evanston. You know, they may have given up the big house but they still want to be downtown.

In my ward, there have been some minor conflicts between residences and restaurants and outdoor cafes that, you know, that do impinge on. It's very interesting because people who have moved to Evanston from the city think it's very quiet here and very, you
know. And then people who move from the northern
suburbs into Evanston say, my God, it's like Chicago
down here. There's all this stuff going on and think
don't ever people go to sleep and they're in the streets
at night.

    MAYOR MORTON: And they're both right.
    ALDERMAN WOLLIN: And they're both right,
right. Exactly. So, it is, but when you live downtown
I think that is something that you have to, if you're
going to be a resident of downtown, it is a lively
downtown and we like that, I mean, but at the same time,
you have to realize that's what you're buying into.

    Workforce housing I think is really important.
And you know, we're still going to have to keep working
on how we achieve affordable housing and diverse housing
for people that work in Evanston that are teachers and
firemen and policemen that they can afford to live here.

    And then just to piggyback on something that
Alderman Moran said earlier, I would love to see a live
theater some place downtown. We have the parking
garages for it. We have restaurants for it. We have
small theaters in Evanston that would love to expand to
a bigger space.
And you know, I think we have to look at how do we encourage developers to look at that as a possibility of a use in a larger building to move into that area because I do think, and I think the Tribune, some of you may have seen the article under grants today in the paper. Rod Joy was talking about, who used to be in Evanston his office, the Illinois Arts Alliance now he's the executive director, what a huge economic impact it has on a community whether we're talking about the creative class or, you know, whatever, that that in fact draws people to Evanston to want to work here if we have those kinds of amenities. And it's a very positive effect on the whole economy of the town.

MR. LAMOTTE: Great.

MAYOR MORTON: Okay, thank you. Alderman Hansen?

ALDERMAN HANSEN: I was just going to start out with saying I enjoy our downtown. I think it's become very vibrant. I enjoy driving or walking through our downtown area at 9:00 o'clock and seeing people walking through, you know, the shops aren't closed and, you know, everyone is inside their homes. People are out there and enjoying our downtown.
Some of the concerns I have about moving forward in a downtown plan is, you know, how much is too much in this one area. In terms of our infrastructure, and we already talked about traffic but things such as garbage, sanitation, sewer and water, those are things that I'm concerned about. How much of our infrastructure can sustain more in our downtown area.

Some of my next comments are going to go to the character of downtown. The new is wonderful but we have so many unique, independent shops in Downtown Evanston and I think people enjoy that. People enjoy, you know, being able to shop at a big store like Ann Taylor Loft or Pier 1 or Barnes and Noble but they also like to go to the smaller stores that are dispersed throughout our downtown area. And I'd like to see us in this downtown plan keep that in mind in terms of the ability to enable these stores and these business owners to stay here. I think that goes to our character, that character of being some type of village.

What I would also like to see when we're talking about the core area which is a discussion that we've been having more recently is how high is too high. And I went Downtown Chicago the other night to see a
play, and as I was walking to the parking garage, I mean, you have these buildings in Downtown Chicago that are, you know, right on the same block, across the street from each other that are really high. And I understand there are ways to make it more pedestrian friendly even if you have a high rise, but I just don't know and I suspect that most Evanstonians don't want our downtown to be that, to be the downtown of high rises. I mean, if you want that, I think in my opinion, go to Downtown Chicago. You know, it's not that far away.

I do enjoy what we have already and we're approving or we have approved height in downtown already. I see that there is still room for it. I just am concerned about how much we're going to fit into this core area.

I want to see more open space. Raymond Park is just on the transitional end on that southeast end of our downtown area. We need more open space to accommodate the density that we're talking about in terms of the future of a downtown plan. So, I'd like to see more open space in this plan as well.

MR. LAMOTTE: You know, it's interesting. I think, Madam Mayor, we've got everybody, I think. Did
we miss anybody? Oh, we've got one more here. But
you're helping us transition into the physical form and
the density question. That's the good ending there to
kind of say, okay, we've talked about the big picture
things but let's now get into some of the physical
format. Maybe we could ask our Commissioner to put a --
COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: I live a couple of
blocks from the periphery of the downtown area, and I
find the downtown to be very, very exciting. Dare I say
Evanston, I think, the downtown area is at the top of
its game.

The downtown is abuzz. The question is, and I
think the focus of the public debate is going to be how
much more buzz do we need? Where do we draw the line?
Is it 30 stories, is it 40 stories, is it 50 stories?
It's going to be interesting to see.

Frankly, I think the core area can tolerate
some more height but I think we're nearing the end in my
personal opinion. I think we're getting to the end of
the height question. But in the months ahead, we will
be visiting certainly those questions.

But I think Evanston is a great place to live.
I've lived here all of my life, almost 65 years, and
I've seen tremendous changes throughout the City and especially in the downtown area. And I'm not leaving Evanston because there is no place in my opinion that's any better than this place right here.

MR. LAMOTTE: Now, that's a great, great segue. Let's go back to Alderman Hansen and then our Commissioner, kind of shaping that discussion. And the good things we've got, the buzz we've got, the mix we've got, and many, many things we've got here that many other towns don't have. The local attraction, the regional attraction, North Shore, North Chicago, the buzz on the street. But let's now start talking about what is that height? What is that depth?

So, when we planner, designer, analyst and traffic engineer types talk about the physical situation, it's what is the form of downtown, how high are buildings, how wide are buildings, are they located right on the street, well into the corners, where are the open spaces? As Kevin said, what's the pedestrian environment? Whether it's ten stories or a hundred stories, you're on the same sidewalk, what does that mean to you? How do you want that to feel? What's the feel as you're going up and down the whole street as
People often ask us, well, what do you mean by building height? You've got to help us define that because some people say I don't like it or it's icky or something, you know, they just don't feel good about it. And we really break it into three things. When you talk about building height, there's a visual. Some think that a tall building is a great visual, an icon or a beacon, or it's ugly, either or. Some think visual frames streets and visual frames the end of streets, if you go back to the future of some of our planning forefathers of putting the iconic City Hall or courthouse at the end of the street, the visual, whether it's height or depth.

The second thing is then down at the bottom again, the pedestrian environment. You can make a gorgeous building that looks like a spire from Lake Michigan but what's it going to be like down at the base of the building when you're walking around it? And you're going there to see grandma or your friend or going shopping, what is it like in the environment? And then the third thing which I think some folks react to when it comes to building height is
density. You know, it's ten units or it's 20 units or 30 units. Can my sidewalk handle it? Can my street handle it? Can my sewer and water? Can my power or everything else handle it?

So, let's get into more of the discussion of the physical form, what you like or don't like. What does it mean to you? What is the height? What's the magic height, some of you might ask. And I think as Kirk had said, what about our little sub-areas? What can we do in those sub-areas?

So, Jim, do you want to lead here?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Sure, I'd love to start.

MR. LAMOTTE: Being the Chair and the architect.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: You know, I think the discussion about height is one that has to be carefully looked at because there is the issue of a sort of overall height, and then there's the issue of what is the perceived height on the street at the pedestrian level. And I think for most people, three, four or five stories is kind of what people think of as Evanston. But that isn't to say that you can't have setbacks that create considerably additional height within the City.
And from at least my reading and my observation of things, density is a critical factor in the success of retail and in the success of downtowns to create the vibrancy. I mean, part of what has made Downtown Chicago and other cities around the nation, Pittsburgh, Seattle, that have become alive and successful, Portland, is the amount of housing that has been built in downtown over the last 10 to 15 years. And without those things, all those other things go away. You don't have the restaurants, you don't have the entertainment. So, there needs to be that mix.

Someone said earlier about downtown being sort of the economic engine for the community. And you know, unless every resident of Evanston wants to see their taxes go up enormously, we need to think about downtown and how it does service the economic engine to support the community.

So, you know, maybe it's because I'm an architect or whatever, but I'm not afraid of height at all in an overall sense. What I'm concerned about is the height as it eats the street, how it gets detailed as it meets your pedestrian experience moving down the street, and this kind of scale nature of things. And
there are projects that have been very successful in doing it in the last ten years, but there are also some other projects that have scalar issues in terms of your experience.

And so, which sort of segues into, you know, I think the talk earlier. So, in terms of something that ought to be improved, I think overall the quality of architecture should be improved and that we should push to have a higher and higher quality of architecture both in terms of physical buildings but also in terms of the open space within the community. Whether it's fountain square, whether it's street scape, whether it's new open space that's created within downtown, that we should strive to have that be first class, world class space for the community.

MR. LAMOTTE: Take it to the next level.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Yes.

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Rainey?

MR. LAMOTTE: And if I could just clarify, you're saying that density when it's done right, if I got you right, then it brings more energy to more folks there. Obviously it's got to be balanced with infrastructure.
COMMISSIONER WOODS: Absolutely.

MR. LAMOTTE: But it's not to be afraid of if it's done right.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Right.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, that's the question. Kevin, do you want to jump in on that?

MR. KLINKENBERG: A question. What do you mean by better quality of architecture? Help me understand what you mean when you say that.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: When I say that, I think of things that have a little bit higher level of detail, a better sense of proportion and scale than some of the development that has occurred. I mean, you know, from my perspective, nothing necessarily is terrible, terrible, terrible. I mean, there are some examples of things that we all know and are referred to constantly as very bad examples within the City. But for the most part, the development has been of very good quality.

What I would like to see is that we improve that, that when you look at a street facade, the first four or five stories of the building, there is additional detail, there's additional scale. That it's not just almost the mall moved to downtown in terms of
the appearance of things. And that we continue to
develop that pedestrian environment and the relationship
of the building to it.

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Rainey, you wanted to
come at on that?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: I don't have anything smart
to add to this because I'm not an architect or an
engineer. But I can say that one of the things that
appears to generate a lot of comments regarding being
ugly are those things that are short in our town that
have been built in response to outcry regarding height.
They are ugly and they sprawl all over the place.

And I just think we ought to keep that in mind
when we indicate that -- I mean, I have heard comments
lately and I don't want to be too disjointed in what I'm
saying but tall is ugly. I mean that's the way it's
coming off in our community lately. Tall is ugly, high
is ugly. And I think we need to really look at that and
examine it, and maybe in the charettes have some
examples of where, in your professional opinions and I
know it's very subjective, this is tall and it is not
ugly, this is short and it is ugly.

And I'd also like to know in the paperwork
that we received, there were comments made regarding mid rise. I don't have any idea what that is. Can you give me some idea of what you mean by that?

MR. LAMOTTE: That is a very good question and that's subjective in many cases because there's no official from X to Y as low rise in Y. But it's usually geared up to the city or the town, what is mid rise to you. So, short --

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Well, I was wondering if it meant compared to the tallest building and, you know, is that what mid rise is?

MR. LAMOTTE: It's off of the tallest building in your town type of thing.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Geared to that.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, if you're three, four, five stories and you've got a ten or 20-story building, what's kind of in the middle.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Okay.

MR. LAMOTTE: And it's just kind of giving us all kind of steps of, you know, mentally where are we with the scale of the buildings. And I think you're asking a good one because we've seen sometimes that either the architect, landscape architect, planner,
engineer and developer didn't get it right. Or they try to do the right thing and they got squished down by some regulations or some reaction.

Now, we were in one project where the community made the developer take two stories off this building and now it's squatty, almost down below grade on the side of the hill. You can't see it. It's in an area that affects no single family homes. But they just didn't want those extra two stories there and there was no technical reason. And actually it's an uglier building as you say than if it would have had two more and it would have held the corner a little bit and it would have had some visibility. Not necessarily for the businesses but for the architecture.

So, that's one of the things I think in talking with Staff and others that how do we get our arms around doing even better physical form. That's why we're here and you hit it right and we're going to explore these things in the charette. We just talked about it earlier. We're going to build a model of downtown, a 3D model of downtown with what you would allow by zoning today. And then we're going to put in all the existing buildings now, all the new ones so you
can see where those changes have been made and that will
help us discuss what it should be.

   So, this is a great discussion, Alderman
Rainey, it really is. And you're looking at it, you
shouldn't worry whether as architect or planner or
whatever, it's you as a citizen walking down that street
and you see that building everyday and the developer is
gone. For the next 50 years you're going to see that
building. Or you as a shopper, what do I see when I go
along that dead wall, that blank wall.

   So, any others? This is the discussion we
need to hear. I mean, Kevin and I were talking about we
really need to hear more about what you like or what you
struggle with as a decision maker. Staff struggles with
some of these decisions. You do as Commissioners and
Council. You're tired of getting the same thing
everyday through these projects being submitted.
Developers aren't getting it or you don't want it from
the developers, what are those things? Others?

   MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Jean-Baptiste?

   ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: I think that the
planning process should take into account some of the
concerns that existing downtown residents raise when it
comes to new buildings, okay, because there is something
to be considered if you're already downtown, you have
certain expectation as to what your surroundings will be
like, what your views will be. And then, you know,
there are two or three other buildings sprouting up that
will block your views. So, I think we need to discuss
that as openly as possible so people could have an
expectation as to what is it they should expect.

MR. LAMOTTE: Settle that argument, right.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Yes, settle that
argument because, you know, with developers coming in
town and submitting proposals, it's not, you know,
preconditioned on whether or not, you know, they feel
that they will block somebody else's building or views.
And so, I think this is the time for that discussion to
take place and to really hear from the downtown
residents because it is one of the concerns that's
raised by people. And it may come in different forms.
I mean, people may really be concerned about their views
being blocked but they don't want to say so, so they
attack a particular project from many different
perspectives. And so, often you don't have a real
honest discussion but it becomes very subjective and it
masks what the real concerns are.

MR. LAMOTTE: Well, let's ask you and the others then. I mean, in this discussion we had at dinner tonight was the, and you raised it earlier, the predictability of your zoning. If you move in to Site X and you know on Site Y next door it's zoned for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, then you know what you're getting into. If you don't know what it's going to be and you kind of are going along, then you're fighting the view issue everyday.

So, let's talk about that because I think some of this is process, regulation, things that you have to struggle with every time and whether you should be struggling with it. And form-based code will help take some of that predictability up.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: All I was going to say was that clearly one of the big issues that exists is that the people who complain the most about another new building is somebody who is in a recently built building, usually that was the benefit of a PUD process that greatly exceeded the zoning envelope. So, it's kind of an interesting dynamic in and of itself. But I agree entirely that making our zoning more predictable
with, in my view, clear allowances in terms of what your
expectations can be for real public benefits, not just,
well, it's going to mean X more tax dollars for the
community, but things like public space, things like
quality of architecture, things like quality of public
interior spaces. My gosh, why would we do that?
MR. LAMOTTE: That's another subject.
COMMISSIONER WOODS: Are the things that ought
to be part of our new downtown plan.
MR. LAMOTTE: Anybody else on that? On the
physical process of what you all go through on every
single project, whether it's on Central Street or
downtown?
MAYOR MORTON: I have --
COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Go ahead, Mayor.
MAYOR MORTON: I have your name, and so I was
calling on you.
COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Okay, thank you. I
share many of Jim's feelings and opinions with regards
to height. We need to pay more attention to the nature
and the character and the proportion of the tall and not
just the matter of it being tall. But one of the, I
think one of the reasons that so many citizens and so
many of our Commissioners are upset over some of the
height recently is the unpredictability and the
incoherent nature of what we can expect. Oftentimes,
the planned development ordinance has allowed some
buildings to be significantly higher than anyone could
have imagined a number of years ago. And that kind of
unexpected occurrence can cause alarm in any citizen.

So, I think one of the benefits of you
investigating form-based code is that in the end we will
have a form that will be coherent, understandable and
perceivable by developers, by the public. And I think
its, in addition, its intent should be to establish a
greater visual coherence of what the downtown is, where
it is, where the center of downtown is, and where the
periphery of downtown is.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, having the plan and the
zoning more predictable, working together, and then
having the more predictable make our lives easier, it
makes the process easier, if I got you right, and then
hopefully getting to this form of real good buildings,
real good spaces. Is that -- okay.

MAYOR MORTON: So, you're asking for
specifics. Cheryl?
ALDERMAN WOLLIN: Yes, I have a couple. I think unless you live next to the cemetery or right on the lake, you're not guaranteed a view. I mean, I just, I really, I'm not so sure that, and I agree, the people that just bought in their condo, they want their view protected. But I do agree with that predictability.

I'm also concerned about transitional space. And I'm looking at Emerson because I was not happy with the 18-story building on Emerson. I voted against it. And I think that it's, and when I look at this map it's exactly in the wrong place for an 18-story building. I'm looking at Chicago and Davis and that has to fit into that neighborhood.

There is, you know, there are some taller buildings. There is one taller building on Davis. To me that sets the limit of that area. I don't want it any higher than that anywhere on that block.

So, I think we have to look at it, when I look at Emerson, it's right across the street from homes. It's a whole, you know, and so both of those areas to me are very vulnerable. And they're in transitional areas but we didn't really transition very well I don't think. In my personal opinion, we didn't transition very well
there. And I think that we have to be very careful in
these green areas, and it would be nice if they stayed
green actually, too. But in fact, those are areas that
we need to be extraordinarily sensitive about, I think,
because it is the edge of the downtown.

And Emerson is going to take an enormous
amount of infrastructure and traffic reconstruction to
be able to make that street workable in the future, even
with the one project that's been approved. So, you
know, there are consequences to our decision. And, you
know, as a Council, I think we have to remember that as
well.

MR. LAMOTTE: And Alderman, you're hitting the
classic thing we find in transition. Are we
transitioning from the core downtown down? Are we also
watching what we're doing on the other side of the
street or the other side of the block? So, it's also
transitioning to the adjacent smaller neighborhoods.

So, we have to look at that. Okay?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Hansen?

ALDERMAN HANSEN: My comments were going to
pretty much mirror what Commissioner Woods and
Commissioner Galloway said in terms of predictability
because, and this is a question that I raised at the Central Street Planning Committee meeting that we all had together was, well, what about the PUD process. Because people, the public come to the Plan Commission and then it comes to P&D and they still don't understand why a building can be as high as the developer is asking. So, I think in terms of our PUD process and switching over to a form-based code for more predictability is a key idea.

MR. LAMOTTE: Especially when you think about all the minutes and time we've spent on these projects, you know, a little predictability wouldn't be bad. Anything else on some of the process?

ALDERMAN MORAN: In relation to this predictability, the PUD process as we've structured it right now allows for some unpredictability. But the way it's playing out is that there is a huge amount of unpredictability. And by that, I mean that in order to get a better project, we say in our PUD statute we can give breaks to people, maybe a little bit higher or maybe a little bit bigger, but we're going to give those, we're going to make those concessions because you've got four things that are going to make this a
really nice project. So, we have these allowances that are built in to the PUD statute.

But what we have done, I think perhaps more frequently than we should, is that rather than going with the allowances, we just smash through the allowances. And where the PD ordinance says give me a great project and I'll let you go there, you end up being there times two. And thus, you know, the end of predictability, the end of planning, the end of design, the end of expectations that to give this we'll get that, now it's we'll give this and then we'll get, you know, a wild project in relation to what seems to be allowed.

So, you know, perhaps part of your examination of these issues might entail some rethinking about how the PUD statute is structured now, what reasonable expectations arise from it, why we're not meeting those expectations, and what we should do to re-tailor that process so that those expectations will be more easily met. And maybe to go outside the allowances, if it's a two-thirds vote, maybe it needs to be more than a two-thirds vote. I mean, maybe it has to be a unanimous vote. Maybe it has to be so compelling that everybody
agrees. And if it's not that compelling, maybe we shouldn't do it. And thus, all of this works back to the theme of predictability.

The other thing is that, you know, there has been a discussion in the downtown for a long time about the wedding cake approach. In other words, you know, the tallest tier is in the epicenter and then you cascade down from it. And lately, people have been asking me, so where does that come from? Where, you know, what ordinance uses the term wedding cake? And I've been struggling to find that particular phraseology.

I think it's a useful concept, but as part of, you know, our work, I think we need to look at it, again tailoring it to the notion of predictability. And these ideas of blocked views and so on and so forth, in other words, if you're here, you can expect that, you know, there is going to be height. And if you're here, there is going to be two-thirds of that, and when you shift over another three blocks, there is going to be a third of that, and so on and so on.

So, again you have predictability. Again, you have less disruption to the, you know, the current
regime. And you have a greater anticipation of people who are going to invest in a place to live or to office or whatever it is. They're going to have a better expectation of what they're going to get over the next several decades with that predictability.

MR. LAMOTTE: And you're hitting it right on the head, that it's predictable for all the decision makers, planner, designer types and it's predictable for the one that buys the unit and is looking out the window and saying, whoops, I didn't know that was coming. Now, if it was all set in your plan and they didn't look at your plan, then that's the problem. Buyer beware, right.

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Jean-Baptiste, and then I will ask a question.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: I know I raised the predictability issue but I don't want it to be a dogma either because I imagine that 15 years ago when the City Council along with the Plan Commission began to think of trying to excite development in the downtown area, you know, the Council at that time thought about its needs and the City's needs. It thought about revenue. It thought about not only property tax but also the kind of
sales tax that might be generated by the density
downtown, by new businesses. And I think that it's
legitimate that we now having succeeded, we're looking
back in trying to say, okay, where do we go from here?

But I think that we've not moved from that
kind of frame of operation that we started 15 years ago.
I mean, we're moving to that from observation of
successes and failures and concerns. But when we talk
about, you know, the next steps, they're still governed
to a certain extent by the interest of the developers in
this town. So, as we look at downtown and we look at,
you know, the debate over Fountain Square, the debate
that we'll have over other buildings that are being
proposed, and whatever we do, whatever plan we have, it
will be driven by what developers come and say, okay,
I'm willing to build.

And the City still has to maintain some degree
of flexibility so that our plan is not constraining the
kind of dynamism that we have come to now enjoy and
feel, you know, that we're victorious over the last 15
years. So, I think it's real important that we really
balance the issues and try to still make the analysis
that where are we, what are the real needs? I mean,
there may be some visual needs, there may be some
particular pedestrian experiences, green space, et
cetera, et cetera. But you know, do we still have the
fundamental need to generate revenue? And I think we
have to keep that in its proper perspective so that we
don't get caught up in, you know, what things look like
only but also what are the needs as we operate the City.

MAYOR MORTON: I wanted to ask, John, I see
you have a lot of staff here.

MR. LAMOTTE: All the firms do, yes.

MAYOR MORTON: Did you have a time limit?

MR. LAMOTTE: We were shooting, Dennis, I
think for 9:30?

MR. MARINO: 9:30.

MR. LAMOTTE: 9:30.

MAYOR MORTON: 9:30, okay. All right, thank
you.

MR. LAMOTTE: Let's --

MAYOR MORTON: I have a couple of names here.

Alderman Rainey?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Yes. First of all, Cheryl,
thank you very much for the advertisement for the Howard
Street, 17-story apartment building. Its views will
never be blocked because it does overlook a cemetery.
So, we should start taking applications.

   Anyway, your comment, Cheryl, on Emerson. I
have to challenge you on that because it's not all
little single family homes there. First of all, first
of all, while it's down the street a bit, Sherman
Gardens is seven stories. It's always been on the
outside of downtown. So, I think that, I mean and that
was done many, many years ago. I wasn't around when
that was built. But I'm certain that probably was
controversial.

Then, there is the senior housing. Then --
no, before that, the one across the street. Then
there's graduate student housing. It is extremely
dense. And there is also Primm Towers, 1001 Emerson,
which is very, very dense. So, it isn't like there's a
building going up on Emerson that is completely unlike
anything else. There is plenty of multi-family over
there. And I'd be curious to know exactly how many
units I have just indicated. I'll bet close to 700
maybe, I'm not sure.

But one of the things that is going to happen
is there is going to be rental housing there. And it's
going to be luxury rental housing, granted, but I think probably the vacancy rate in luxury rental housing is very, very low. And I think we should all keep in mind that even though things are starting to change, the tax rate of rental housing is higher than it is for single family homes. So, it's a much more lucrative project to have a multi-family rental built today. It still is more lucrative. So, I just wanted to comment on that because I thought that was an interesting remark you made.

What I would like to know, and since we have all these resource people here, is in the course of your studies, could you come up with the vacancy rate for rentals in downtown?

MR. LAMOTTE: Linda, do you want to answer that?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: We have a given amount of rentals that are easily identifiable, the big buildings in downtown.

MS. GOODMAN: That's harder to do than you might think but --

ALDERMAN RAINEY: All right. If I give you the names of the buildings, it shouldn't be so hard.
MS. GOODMAN: Then it shouldn't be so hard. What we can do is get a basic inventory of how many rental buildings there are or rental units there are. But since there is a lot of turnover, it does involve actually calling the building management and --

ALDERMAN RAINNEY: I'm thinking about ten buildings. That shouldn't, you know, given all the resources you have, that shouldn't be so hard. And also, there are different researchers and marketing companies around who do that. And so, I'm serious, I want to know that. I mean, if we're spending $225,000, I want to have that piece of information.

MAYOR MORTON: Back to you.

MR. LAMOTTE: Back to me, okay. Let's go dig a little deeper now. If we start to think about what the Plan Commission and the Downtown Planning Committee have just done, they've done some good thinking. They've shaped these districts. They've got us thinking in those three terms, the core or the downtown so to speak, transitional, and traditional. What do we think about each one of those? What could go in there? What are some of the physical forms in there? Is it the one-story hotdog stand or is it Sears Tower? What's in
there?
So, think about those. And I'll just kind of
go around the room and hear a little bit more. Do you
like the way the districts are formed? Is there a core-
core or is it one big core? What about the densities
and heights in there? What do you envision in there?

Anybody want to start? Just quick, and it
doesn't have to be a final number or any hard number.

Just what is that feel for you in each one of those sub-
areas?

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Rainey?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Well, I don't know if this
really addresses what you're asking about but in some of
the outside areas, let's take Davis Street going west.
You know, while those low buildings, two-story
buildings, maybe three-story buildings are very quaint,
I know for a fact that many of them are in terrible
shape. And so, I'm wondering how, while we want to keep
the look, what do we do about the quality? You know.

MR. LAMOTTE: And that's what we've got to
look at, the quality, because sooner or later someone is
going to knock on the door and need to redevelop. The
building may not be in good shape or the use can't work,
so what is the form for that district when that happens? Because we get in many areas where someone says, well, I'm never going to change, I'm never going to move and I'm not ready for retirement and we want to leave everything alone. And then a week later they come in with a developer and say, oh, I'm ready to go.

So, that's the challenge for all of us in the room. How do we keep that character? And the character may be your bigger buildings, it may be your core. How do we get that character right?

So, what do you think in that lower district, so to speak, the traditional, you feel is the right approach?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Well, because I'm very unskilled in this whole planning area, what concerns me is, and I know some of the owners of these buildings is -- everything is for sale, of course, you know that. So, you come along and a developer offers big money based on the potential right now to do a planned development. I am just wondering what is going to be the attitude of these owners, the small ones who aren't here, who aren't participating in this process when they find out that the guy four blocks over was able to make
a killing but they're not going to be able to because we're going to limit the building there to, you know, a three-story form or, you know. I am conflicted about this.

MR. LAMOTTE: And you should be because it's a challenge for everybody. And what's the balance? And what is it for that owner, or in the case of the people in this room, what is it for the City? Because we're looking at what do we get as a city as well.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Because I love the look of that street as it is.

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: John, as you know, the Plan Commission has sort of taken our first shot at some of these things. So, I can answer that in sort of more detail. But first, I wanted to address Alderman Rainey's point a little bit because I think there's two aspects of things. One is if you come in and tear a building down in some of those, what we've defined as traditional areas, and obviously having sort of the proper height and relationship to street, and all those kinds of things are important in those areas for a redevelopment. I think one of the other things that has
been a hallmark at the City is public-private partnerships, and finding an avenue for a public-private partnership that would allow for those building owners to do restoration work or preservation work on facades and their buildings is another important component in sort of that equation.

But anyway, to go back sort of to the zoning districts, within the traditional zoning district, we sort of looked at the idea that, you know, there's many different aspects to the sort of the zoning regulations. So, in terms of lot size, that there is no real minimum size, that it needed to be 900 square feet per dwelling unit in terms of defining a number of dwelling units. It used to be, for many of those zones sort of 400 square feet but you could easily get to an equation where you had a tremendous number of dwelling units on a site such that it would seem like the only way to actually develop that thing relative to an allowed number of units and the actual allowable square footage was to do like the tiniest single room occupancy buildings in the history of the universe.

And FAR of like 2.75 as is similar to some of the other business districts in the community. 42 feet
and three stories, kind of as a maximum for standard zoning.

MR. LAMOTTE: And Jim, you're talking about an approach for this that everybody can think about?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Yes, this is an approach.

MR. LAMOTTE: Just as a suggestion.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: This is a suggestion that --

MR. LAMOTTE: For us to filter through the process in the next six months.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Absolutely. These are by no means answers. These are just the Downtown Planning Committee's kind of thought process going through this thing. And then we have setbacks things.

The one thing that we thought was that in terms of a development allowance, that we would allow kind of one more story and additional FAR for the idea of having a level of parking underground. Because if I want to criticize something that's sort of happened kind of continuously in downtown, it's that there is more and more parking that's aboveground. And that creates a certain level of building mass that has to exist aboveground that, do we really have to have all of it?
Or can't we create an economic incentive to get some of
that back under the ground?

Anyway, for transitional, again, you know,
just looking, and I guess the best thing to talk about
are things like height and its relationship to other
zoning districts. When we looked at the transitional,
we really looked at it as meeting up with kind of the
existing R-6 Zoning in terms of height and mass and
things like that. And so, you got eight stories, 85
feet as generally your allowable.

MR. LAMOTTE: And this is, again,
transitional, right?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Yes. And then again,
development allowance, again for underground parking so
that, again, we're not playing with that. The current
zoning code of course would allow you to build four
stories and an additional 40 feet within many of those
districts. So, all of a sudden you go from an 85-foot
building to 125-foot building so we can put parking on
the site. And nobody has to hide it or do anything, you
just have to kind of make it look sort of nice behind
the facade of the building.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, if I can just stop you there
for a second, so we're going from traditional and just
the Plan Commission's thought process, you want us to
study three to four stories. Transitional now going to
an R-6 which height-wise is --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Eight stories roughly up
to ten with kind of some allowances.

MR. LAMOTTE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: And then, that was the
first transitional district. The second transitional
district which is maybe a little bit more commercial in
nature, we really were encouraging the idea of retail
use on the ground floor of those developments. And
there, the setbacks are different than in the current R-
6 Zoning because they're sort of the intersections of
streets and more kind of stark commercial districts in
terms of things. But again, similar height kind of
requirements.

And then, in terms of the downtown core, one
of the things that we started to explore, you know, not
necessarily having to go way outside of the current FAR
requirements of a 5.4 and 1.8 which somehow the
developer always seems to be able to fit it within the
sort of the development allowances of the FAR, but the
height is the thing that sort of surprises people. But one of the concepts that we talked about was the idea of average height in a project. And primarily from the standpoint of you can allow height in a project if the overall height of the project doesn't exceed certain kinds of levels.

And we took Sherman Plaza as an example and kind of analyzed it. And it's interesting because without the garage, it's about seven-and-a-half stories as an average height because so much of it is just two and three-story development. You add the parking garage to it because of just the general mass on that and it comes up to about nine and a half. But when you think about a ten-story building, it's not so bad. Obviously you've got a portion of the building that's 20-plus stories and part of it that's two or three, and it seems to work well.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, to clarify that for everybody, you're saying that instead of one height, you're saying you might have undulating or varying heights --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Absolutely.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, you're going to be able to
go taller because you're going to average out your whole block, just so everybody --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Right.

MR. LAMOTTE: Sherman Plaza with the mass and mix they have there.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: And maybe to go with that, we need to look at the definition of height as it meets the street and meets the pedestrian experience.

MR. LAMOTTE: Let's clarify that. Definition of height as it meets the pedestrian experience.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: So that, for example, pick a height, somewhere between four and five stories to meet the street, and then it's required to be set back for at least 75 percent of the facade before you go to additional height, so that that helps to, and you've got to define some dimension, you've got to have a setback, but it starts to preserve kind of the scale of the pedestrian experience in terms of downtown but still allows for the additional height and additional density that I think many of us believe is necessary for the vibrancy of downtown.

MR. LAMOTTE: And that, back to Alderman Rainey's point, was a tool we use, the step-back up
above, setback at the base but you start to break the
architecture up at certain points with some step-backs
if they're done well. Whether it's just an
architectural step-back or an actual terrace or deck
type thing.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Right. And it doesn't
have to be for the whole facade because maybe part of
the facade, you want the higher part of the building to
engage the base of the building so that at some point
your eye is kind of led upwards --

MR. LAMOTTE: For some elements, right.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: To create kind of a
dynamic nature to the architecture.

MR. LAMOTTE: Good point. So, in the core,
can you just --

MAYOR MORTON: That's it?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: I'm done.

MAYOR MORTON: Well, we want to hear from the
three Plan Commissioners. Mr. Opdycke?

COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: For those of you who
may be watching on television, we have three traditional
areas here. One is the Benison block if you will.
Another one is the Marshall Field block. And the third
one is the Pete Miller block. And the central
central characteristic of these traditional areas is scale.
The last thing we want is wall to wall 20-
story buildings. So, we want to maintain the scale of
these traditional areas. Is it going to be painful,
Alderman Rainey, for the property owners? Because
essentially what we're doing is down-zoning these
traditional areas. I would suggest that it is going to
be painful for those property owners when they know they
can't put anything up more than three stories, possibly
four, if they have an underground parking level.

MAYOR MORTON: That it? Okay, Dave?

MR. LAMOTTE: And Dave, if you can do me a
favor? Just clarify in the core, because I think the
folks didn't hear building height, stories or height
from that discussion. Just to clarify in core you are
anticipating --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Oh, we were talking about
average height and we were looking at an average height
sort of in the neighborhood of ten stories as a
baseline, and again, the idea of some development
allowances for putting in underground parking.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Core areas?
COMMISSIONER WOODS: Average height.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: In the core areas?

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Yes, average height.

MR. LAMOTTE: As a suggestion for all of us to study.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Right.

COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: But you're saying if they have a two-story and then a --

COMMISSIONER WOODS: And then a 30-story or 35-story, it still could potentially work.

COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: It's not really ten-

story.

MR. LAMOTTE: That's where you work from up and back.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: Right.

COMMISSIONER OPDYCKE: So, a 50-story may translate to maybe 15 stories or something if you use average height.

COMMISSIONER WOODS: It depends on how much of what height you have. But I think the concept there is that height isn't a bad thing as long as we don't have height literally everywhere. That if you're going to have height, you have to trade it also for air space.
closer down to the street and to the pedestrian so that there is this variety.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: An example of a project that I think addresses this concept and fulfills it relatively well was the recent project that the Plan Commission reviewed at 1890 Maple where the vast proportion of the building that approached the street was four, three to five stories in height, and then a portion of the tower addressed the street but the vast majority of that tower was set back significantly from Emerson.

MR. LAMOTTE: And that's where we got to this mixing of roof lines, varying the architecture massing, forgetting the design for a minute but the massing.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Absolutely.

MR. LAMOTTE: So, I think that's a clear concept. We talked a little bit about that on Central Street, too, just to break the thing up.

MAYOR MORTON: Alderman Moran --

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: I'd like to make a few comments if I can on the traditional area?

MAYOR MORTON: Sure.

COMMISSIONER GALLOWAY: Because I think that's
one of the more exciting and successful developments
that came as a result of our process. The traditional
areas were meant to retain the traditional scale and
color of the original booming retail history that,
Ann, you alluded to earlier. Granted most of the
buildings in there are of a certain vintage, but we
engaged the Preservation Commission to evaluate all the
buildings in these proposed districts for their
architectural integrity, similar to the way they would
evaluate any building for a landmark status.

So, what we found was that the majority of the
buildings in those districts, in those proposed
traditional districts, do have a relatively high level
of integrity. In other words, they are not, you know,
they are not imminently destined to become a pancake on
the site. So, that was all very good news. And it was
also an excellent process in that we got the
Preservation Commission to act in a very brave proactive
manner. And they performed this function in an
exceedingly short period of time with a great deal of
detail. And it managed to substantiate, I think, our
desire to retain these areas as traditional areas.

And as Jim said, there are certainly many
options that the private and the public sector, where
the private and public sector can work together to
preserve these buildings over time.

MR. LAMOTTE: And if I could just real quick,
Commissioners, on that, we've got the map behind me for
those at home, again the three district or sub-area
ideas that have come out of the Downtown Planning
Committee, traditional, the smaller scale, mostly retail
or at least neighborhood oriented type forms and
buildings and shapes. The transitional and the green
around the perimeter of downtown, transition into the
downtown as well as out of the downtown to the
surrounding neighborhoods back on your question. And
then, the core or the blue would be the downtown that
might have been where we were before but the downtown
has been growing out.

So, on that note, let's just quickly, because
we've got a couple more minutes, just think through a
little bit more on that scale. You've given us some
good direction to think about. I think the baton is
being passed here tonight, Mayor, from the Committee and
you to us to work on.

Think through the core again. We've had two
or three proposals for new development right on the Fountain Square block. We've got a couple of others that are pending. We are not a four or five-story downtown anymore in those core blocks. We've gone to 20, I think the tallest is 23 or something like that.

If this was Mayberry and everything was one-story and now you're going to propose three stories in the corner, some of us going wow, we're tripling our size. But you are a new downtown, and 1989 to 2007 is a different game. So, we're going to work that with you and show you ideas and show you forms. You can visually see it and feel it and touch it. We'll go down streets and show you what that will look like.

But any other direction or ideas you want us to look at? The core looks good? Stick with what the Committee has done? Or you know, go higher or lower in certain locations? Work with these averages a little bit? Any other things you want us to --

MAYOR MORTON: Okay. We have four minutes.
MR. LAMOTTE: Four minutes.
MAYOR MORTON: At which time the gavel will --
MR. LAMOTTE: Come down, okay.
MAYOR MORTON: Okay. So, we have two people,
Alderman Moran and Alderman Rainey.

ALDERMAN MORAN: With respect to the core, height in and of itself doesn't present big problems for me. I'm sorry, height in and of itself doesn't have big problems for me. We have height there. The block that is being proposed on a couple of different plans is a block that is surrounded by, maybe not surrounded but is sort of book ended by height.

I would say beyond that that I think there still has to be some more of a discriminating look at how that height is done. In other words, you know, we've got two proposals for those blocks, for that block. And I could never envision both of them being there. I see them as competing projects, I don't see them as complementary projects.

Aside from that, I think there should be some discussion about how we order. If height is going to be a fairly constant, you know, process here in the core, then how do we arrange the height? In other words, okay, you know, somebody said buyer beware, you know. But does it have to be buyer beware to such a degree that literally you can expect that everything is going to be cheek to jowl? Or can you have height and avoid
cheek to jowl?
In other words, can you orient the height within this framework, this palette, so that you minimize the disruption from one building to another? And it strikes me that that can be done, you know, if we look at it correctly so that there may be height but there is also visual relief within that framework of height.

MAYOR MORTON: Thank you. Let's get one more person who hasn't spoken tonight. Alderman Tisdahl?

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Thank you. I agree with Alderman Moran. It strikes me in looking at the downtown that one height for the entire downtown is not appropriate, that there are places where more height is acceptable but that height would not be acceptable throughout. So, I would suggest looking at the downtown in a more diverse manner.

MAYOR MORTON: As I understand it, we're going to have community group meetings and if you have other ideas, you will be able to do it at that time. Do you want to close with a few remarks?

MR. MARINO: Yes, Mayor, if I could, just to again announce the community meetings, location and
time. Thursday, June 21st at 7:00 p.m., we'll be here in the Civic Center, Parasol Room. Thursday, July 12th at 7:00 p.m., there will be two community meetings that night. One at the Levy Center and the other one at the Fleetwood Jourdain Community Center. And then, Tuesday, July 17th through Friday, July 20th is the design charette at a place to be named later but shortly within the downtown. And then that will wrap up on Saturday, July 21st with the presentation of initial results from the design charette.

So, all those are very intensive community participation processes to be led by the consulting team. Staff will also be present for those.

We also would encourage everyone in the audience and watching on TV to make use of the City's web site. The Planning Division section of the web site is a very strong one, maintained by Tracy Norfleet, our general planner who is also very involved in this project. And through that, you'll see a lot of the emerging documents not only for the Downtown Planning but for other neighborhood planning as well, as well as reference to things like the Comprehensive Plan and so on.
And also, we certainly would accept calls in the Planning Division from anybody who would like to talk to us. Again, Tracy Norfleet, or me, Dennis Marino. And that's 866-2928. Thank you, Mayor.

MAYOR MORTON: Thank you. You just want to say a quick word there, Alderman Holmes?

ALDERMAN HOLMES: Yes, thank you, Mayor Morton. I just wanted to suggest to the Staff that we use the Mayor's Summer Youth Work Program to get input from the youth in terms of what they would like to have downtown because that is already an audience of about I think 100-150 kids. So, that would be one way, maybe a part of the orientation could be to work on this project.

MR. MARINO: It's an excellent idea and we will do that. I'd very much like to thank the consulting team. I think we are off to an excellent start.

MAYOR MORTON: And I wanted to close by thanking the team, too. Thank you so very much. And we are not going to keep you another minute. You can get home and watch that final game.
All right, the meeting is so adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting in the above-entitled cause was concluded at 9:30 p.m.)