

North Downtown Planning Community Meeting – June 15, 2016

In response to concerns about the increased development on the north edge of Downtown Evanston, the Evanston City Council directed staff to start a planning process that would guide new potential development in the neighborhoods north of downtown. Two community meetings were planned to obtain feedback on any quality of life concerns and the appropriate scale of new development in the area. The first meeting was held on May 18, 2016 and focused on gathering input for the north downtown planning boundary and major themes that the community would want the area plan to focus on



The second of the two community meetings was held on June 15, 2016. The meeting was attended by approximately 35 residents, community stakeholders, aldermen and staff. Following up on the May meeting, the goal was to share initial feedback gathered and to obtain preferences on the types of uses, development scale and building materials/design the community would like to see in future development.

Photo courtesy of Evanston Now

After a brief presentation by staff, attendees were asked to participate in roundtable discussions on the following questions:

- Visual Preference Survey
- What is the appropriate density and where?
- What uses would you like to see?
- What are the appropriate materials?

Over the course of the discussions that followed, attendees at each table marked their maps with stickers of varying colors to signify what use they believed would best fit within the proposed boundaries. Then, to address density, stickers were marked with preferred building heights (in number of stories). Staff at each table noted the design preferences and building materials. The finished maps can be viewed on the North Downtown Planning page on the City's website at www.cityofevanston.org/northdowntownplanning.

The following is a summary of the feedback received during the discussions:

- Keep existing zoning “as-is” north of Foster Street
- Maintain existing residential areas
- Create transition zones
- Provide height variations and setbacks
- Lower heights as you move further north and away from transit
- 8-9 floors maximum height along Emerson, some setback from Garnett Place
- 4 floors maximum height in area
- Podium building design appropriate along Maple Avenue
- Similar density to Central Street
- A small neighborhood grocery like D&D is needed
- Institutional uses: doctors’ offices, hospital, low-income housing, children’s home, uses that assist “aging in place”,
- Mixed-use appropriate along Emerson
- Retail, offices uses along Foster from Maple to Sherman
- Foster possibly too narrow for commercial
- Pocket greenspace open to public on the NU property
- Neighborhood context should include more traditional look and materials
- Contemporary design appropriate along Emerson. Keep some brick at street level
- Keep brick and wood frame near Maple Avenue & Foster Street
- Use environmentally friendly materials
- Use Modulated fenestration
- More traditional brick buildings with punched windows in facade

Next Steps

Staff will be presenting its findings and meeting summaries at the July 25, 2016 Planning and Development Committee meeting. At that time, staff will seek guidance on any next steps in the North Downtown Planning process.