COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE
EVANSTON PLAN COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 20, 2013
7:30 A.M.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2403

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. DISCUSSION – MEMBER COMMENTS RE 2000 COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN
3. NEXT STEPS
4. ADJOURNMENT

Order of agenda items are subject to change. Information about the Plan Commission is available online at: http://www.cityofevanston.org/plancommission. Questions can be directed to the Neighborhood Planner, Susan Guderley, at 847-448-8675 or by e-mail at sguderley@cityofevanston.org.

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Memorandum

To: Members of the Comp Plan Subcommittee

From: Susan Guderley, Neighborhood Planner

Subject: Member Comments on 2000 Evanston Comprehensive General Plan

Date: February 12, 2013

During its discussion last month, the subcommittee continued its discussion of the content and organization of a revised Evanston Comprehensive General Plan. Somewhere on the continuum between an update and total rewrite, the revised plan must reflect changes in City policies and programs since 2000, as well as identify emerging planning themes, challenges, opportunities and strategies.

In preparation to move forward with this task, subcommittee members were requested to review the 2000 Plan to identify what they would save, revise or eliminate. The intent was to use these observations during the February meeting to begin to develop both a plan outline and work plan strategy. Members were also invited to share their thoughts ahead of time – comments received to-date are shown below, organized by chapter. Where members’ comments were similar, some attempt was made to combine. Please excuse any inadvertent misinterpretation of meaning and/or handwriting.

Comprehensive General Plan Land Use Map Definitions (p. v)
1. There is no provision for Mixed-Use Areas

Introduction (p. 1-9)
1. Evanston’s Relative Strengths and Challenges (p. 2), combine first and second challenges
2. Suggested edits and additions to text on page 3:
   a. Key: Add material on TND as way to do development in already built-up city
   b. Add retain manufacturers
   c. Discussion re higher density infill in paragraph 3 not consistent with Chicago Ave report, but correct.
   d. Discussion re development in West Evanston (par.4) – TND on west side?
   e. Maintaining CTA usage should be addressed by discussion of improved regional mass transit investments (last par.).
3. P. 5, final par., Add material on more recent development discussions.
4. P. 6, Values & Goals of the CGP matrix – Add “TND” and “Retain manufacturing”.
5. P. 7, suggested edits:
   a. Paragraphs 3 & 4 - What might/should replace the discussion of “Technopolis Evanston”?
   b. Revise discussion of economic development strategy (par. 5).
   c. Revise discussion of Chicago Avenue corridor planning (last par.)
6. P. 8, suggested edits/revisions on:
   a. Update discussion of corridor planning (par.5);
   b. Chicago Avenue parking issue (par. 6);
   c. More specifics on discussion of design of new development (par. 7); and
   d. Update discussion about Plan for Downtown Evanston.
7. Add material on increasing density (p. 9, elsewhere?)
   a. Selected locations
   b. Design criteria
   c. Parking & access

Chapter 1 - General Land Use (pp. 15-19)
1. Good introduction, short, discuss key areas undergoing or having undergone significant changes i.e. Chicago Ave corridor, limit generalities
2. P. 16, delete discussion of Evanston’s major corridors.
3. P. 17, update paragraphs discussing Howard Street and Downtown Evanston; comment prioritizing retaining Evanston’s manufacturers is good.
4. Map 1, page 18:
   a. Needs to reflect today
   b. Revise to incorporate Mixed-Use areas

Chapter 2 - Neighborhoods (pp. 20-25)
1. Map 2: General Areas of Future Redevelopment, Revitalization, and LU Modifications
   a. Add another designation for Mixed-Use
   b. Review and revise accordingly areas noted (e.g. Chicago Ave, Main Street Commons Shopping Center, Central Street)
2. Update goals and policies/actions:
   a. Add design & location considerations with regard to mixing uses in neighborhoods; transit aspects.
   b. Add consideration of parking, TND, street design
3. Briefly describe the variety of neighborhoods we have and the balance options to keeping each neighborhood’s character with potential growth/density issues.
4. Create new neighborhoods – describe?
5. Transit oriented development should be introduced and the areas near the Metra and Purple Line should be highlighted for TOD. What is happening at Main and Chicago, etc
6. Existing TIF districts and their effect on neighborhoods
7. Ensure no conflicts with council approved plans for various neighborhoods west Evanston, etc
Chapter 3 Housing (pp.27-32)
1. Briefly describe existing housing/changing demographics/projections in housing; revise other sections to cover this.
2. The Gen Y cohort will tend toward smaller living units, discuss issues converting larger living units into smaller ones/ (condo conversion issues to do this?) and multi-generational living units.
3. Add section on accommodating aging population.
4. Tenancy of housing – rental housing is trend up
5. Ensure no conflicts with council approved plans for various neighborhoods ..
6. west Evanston, etc

Chapter 4 Business, Commercial and Industrial Areas (pp. 33-39)
1. Objectives/policies/actions update
2. P. 36 - Map 3, Primary Areas of Commercial Activity & Employment:
   a. Link to COE Business Web page discussion of districts?
   b. Change designation of Noyes, Foster Dempster and Main Street areas to Mixed-Use areas.
3. Industrial sector employment – current, training needs, potential
4. TOD, how public transportation can bring workers to jobs and encourage buildings to house those jobs.
5. Revise to incorporate current economic strategies adopted by the City Council

Chapter 5 Central Business District (pp.41-45)
1. Revise to incorporate the new downtown plan and bring discussion up to date/consistent with what has happened and in the works to happen
   a. Role in recent growth in City’s population
   b. Discussion of office market
   c. Form Based Code
   d. Certainty for developers
   e. End of TIF
   f. Incentivized development characteristics, e.g. on-site affordable housing
   g. Renewed emphasis and efforts re Arts
2. Map on 43 needs updating

Chapter 6 Institutions (pp. 47-50)
1. Update as we lost a few ... National Lewis and Kendall .. and map on 49 needs updating.
2. Public Education discussion – linkages between Chapter 4 could also include collaboration on vocational programming.

Chapter 7 City Buildings (pp.53-57)
3. Needs updating, what city had done and expects to do.
   a. Disposition of city owned buildings relationship to open space
Chapter 8 Parks and Recreational Areas (pp. 59-66)
1. Update, future of Robert Crown and others if known.
2. Exhibits on pages 64-66 not necessary
3. Possible linear park between Metra and CTA tracks
4. Ensure no conflicts with council approved plans for various neighborhoods ..
5. West Evanston, etc
6. Deficit of open space persists – are there any new opportunities or alternative strategies to be identified?
7. Impact of changing demographics upon design of facilities and programming
8. Relationship to neighborhoods
9. Bicycle path/facility planning; regional connections
10. Role of CDBG and state/federal grants in funding this function
11. IDNR’s Coastal Management Plan – activities impacted along Lake and canal and also relates to Chapter 16

Chapter 9 Community Utilities (pp. 67-74)
1. Update, electrical purchasing concept
2. Major infrastructure projects accomplished and in the works
3. Review discussion of increased streetlight illumination – is this universally desirable?
4. Exhibits on 70,71 may not be necessary
5. Public infrastructure
   a. Addressing the needs of existing and future industrial users
   b. Economic Development
   c. Green infrastructure – design, regulatory implications and State funding.
   d. New energy discussion – electricity options, renewable(wind).
   e. Do we want to discuss digital divide

Chapter 10 Streets and Traffic Mgt (pp. 77-83)
1. Update to include what the city has done or expects to do
2. don’t know if we need exhibits on 79-82
3. City’s walkability (high Walk Scores) and access to multiple transportation modes a major asset and critical issue/measure of sustainability
4. Bus stop initiative

Chapter 11 Parking (pp. 85-90)
1. Not too much has changed and it could be shortened and still get the message across.
2. Discuss parking space allocation needed when increasing density (i.e. limited on-street spaces and new off-street facilities ) at Dempster Street, Main Street, others.
3. Street design criteria associated with maximizing number of on-street spaces (e.g. prohibiting parking near intersections)
4. Might want to discuss parking rates and parking holidays
5. Parking has implications for other issues, i.e. how does it drive/affect building
design, pedestrian areas, merchant/business district constituencies, stormwater
runoff.
6. What accommodation, if any, might be made for the provision of Zip or IGO cars?
7. Update action recommendation regarding additional downtown structured
parking, parking rates for multi-family buildings, widening streets to create on-
street parking.

Chapter 12 Transit Systems, Bicycles and Pedestrians (pp.91-98)
1. Linkage between transit and land use
2. Discuss impact upon transportation needs caused by changing demographics.
3. New bike paths and plans for additional ones
4. How we can encourage more citizens to walk, bike around town
   a. Add 50/50% assistance program to add sidewalks
5. Discussion of the need to work with Metra, CTA, Pace … new Yellow Line station,
other priorities?
6. Bridge replacements made by CTA, anticipated infrastructure improvements by
them if any. Potential Purple Line stop closings/ridership issues
7. Link City’s transportation strategies/initiatives with CMAP plans and its Plan2030
8. West Evanston Master Plan (WEMP) shows bike path along the Mayfair ROW
and Main Street TOD Plan will evaluate possible “High Line” pathway
9. Pedestrian/vehicular connectivity (modal coordination) is guiding principle of
WEMP and will be focus of Main Street TOD Planning.
10. Characterize and support city’s pedestrian improvements, e.g. improved
    pedestrian crossings, bump outs & street diets (Chicago Avenue was narrowed
    as part of Keeney-South Blvd streetscape improvements), narrow street types in
    West Evanston Master Plan.
11. Health impacts of walkable design

Chapter 13 Community Design and Landscape (pp.101-104)
1. I like the building design and appearance review process but question whether
the rest of 13 is necessary.

Chapter 14 Historic Preservation (pp.105-110)
1. Could be shortened to include importance, review process.

Chapter 15 The Arts (pp.111-114)
1. Update and discuss Noyes Center and Evanston Art Center Building (one up for
sale)
2. Are there recommendations from the NEA funded study of potential downtown
arts venue(s)

Chapter 16 Environment (pp.115-121)
1. This chapter can be shortened and still get its main points presented
2. Relationship to sustainability
3. Brownfields – unites discussions of community health, economic development, sustainable development

General Comments
1. Might be possible to combine 10-13
2. Where plan alludes to improvements that rely, in part, to federal $ (e.g. park improvements, alley repaving), should alternative funding sources be identified/discussed?
3. Where possible and relevant, identify commonality/coordination of Evanston’s planning goals with neighboring jurisdictions and CMAP goals, (federal grants often look for 1) consistency with regional objectives and intergovernmental cooperation; and 2) integrated land use/transportation/environmental strategies, e.g. HUD/DOT/EP A Sustainability Partnership Grants)
4. Community Survey – what are opportunities for community input component. Comp Plan web page that can host meeting info, educational pieces, web based surveys on plan components,...
Memorandum

To: Members of the Comp Plan Subcommittee
From: Susan Guderley, Neighborhood Planner
Subject: Status of Specific Projects Recommended by 2000 Comprehensive General Plan
Date: February 12, 2013

Based upon public input and planning analyses conducted at the time of its development, the 2000 Comprehensive General Plan included recommendations for action on a number of specific projects or programs. A list of these, annotated to include subsequent action/implementation or lack thereof, is as follows:

- **Closing the digital divide by implementing “Technopolis Evanston’ in partnership with Northwestern University.**
  While not implemented, this is an issue that continues to resonate in some forums. Most recently, the City successfully applied to the State for funding to connect the Main/Chicago area with NU via ultra high-speed internet. Expanding this to serve other locations, schools, and/or underserved areas might continue to be a consideration of the plan update.

- **Develop a broader economic development strategy for Evanston**
  The city has reorganized the Community Development Department to include Economic Development as a new division, hiring new staff to undertake economic development as a major priority of city services. In 2012, the City Council adopted the *City of Evanston 2012-2014 Economic Development Plan* ([link](http://www.cityofevanston.org/assets/Economic%20Development%20Plan.pdf)) and has designated the topic one of its top strategic goals for the past several years,

- **Study the Southeast section of Evanston for a suitable location for a new community resource center**
  Following adoption of the 2000 Plan, a study was conducted for the feasibility of constructing a new community resource center to serve the neighborhoods north of Howard Street. Its finding was that developing a new community center to serve
that area was cost prohibitive and that reconstruction/remodeling of the Robert Crown Center was a more financially feasible alternative.

- **Study the Chicago Avenue Corridor to plan for future development**
  The Chicago Avenue Corridor Recommendations Report, approved by City Council April 11, 2000, provides recommendations for future development along Chicago Avenue. A significant outcome of this report were community charrettes resulting in a design concept and engineering plans for a revitalized Chicago Avenue Streetscape from Dempster Street to South Boulevard. Several sections of this new streetscape have since been constructed as part of redevelopment projects in several locations within the southern corridor and through the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program.

- **Study the Church and Dodge intersection to improve the business district in that area**
  Since 2000, West Evanston, including the Church/Dodge area, has been the focus of three initiatives to stimulate neighborhood revitalization and economic activity. From 2000-2003, the Plan Commission’s Neighborhood Committee led a neighborhood planning process to establish local priorities for community and economic development and to envision what the neighborhood should look like in 20 years. The second effort was the creation of the West Evanston Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, intended to stimulate economic activity and reinvestment by leveraging private sector development. Finally, in 2007, the West Evanston master planning process was initiated to ensure that future TIF redevelopment would respect and re-connect with the surrounding neighborhoods. The West Evanston Master Plan, approved by Council in 2007, expresses the community’s redevelopment vision and related zoning issues for this area, including a concept plan for a revitalized streetscape along Church Street and Dodge Avenue. An implementing form-based code overlay was adopted in 2009.

- **Evaluate the cost of renovating the Civic Center**
  Two studies were conducted concerning the renovation or reconstruction of the Civic Center, either on the current property or elsewhere in the city. For the present, the City has decided to make the renovations to the building required to retain the city’s administrative offices in the building.

- **Study the growth pattern and land use changes surrounding Evanston’s Major Streets**
  Since 2000, the Chicago Avenue Corridor Recommendations Report, West Evanston Master Plan and Central Street Master Plan have been commissioned and resulted in Council approved recommendations regarding future development within the Chicago, Dodge, Church, and Central arterial corridors. Related text and map amendments to the City’s zoning ordinance have also been implemented.
2000 Plan Project Status Memo
2/12/13

- **Conduct a parking analysis**
  Parking has been addressed by various reports from the Downtown Plan to the 2009 Multi-Modal Transportation Plan. The planned TOD study of the Main/Chicago transit hub will also consider parking needs and strategies for that area.

- **Conduct a new downtown Evanston plan to help provide guidance to new development**
  The Downtown Evanston Plan was formally adopted in February 2009. City staff continues to review the plan’s related zoning recommendations; however, specific goals/objectives of the plan may be incorporated in the updated Comprehensive Plan.

- **Develop a comprehensive bicycle plan for the city**
  Since 2000, a series of studies have considered this mode of transportation. In 2001, the City initiated an assessment of local conditions and needs through an examination of use and crash data, as well as extensive public outreach. This study resulted in a proposed implementation program that identified short/longer-term improvements and funding options. Beginning in 2007, work began to implement the plan by constructing sections of the recommended network of bike lanes. Bicycle planning was also a major topic of consideration by the 2009 Multi-modal Transportation Plan. Upcoming in 2013, the City will be completing the Church/Davis bike lane project, a Dodge bike lane is under discussion, and the 2001 Bike Plan will be updated.

- **Evanston Plan for Affordable Housing**
  Drafted by the Affordable Housing Task Force in 2009, the plan was presented to the Council January 13, 2010, but was not formally acted upon. It serves as a resource document for the Evanston Housing Commission.