PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 11, 2017
7:00 P.M.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: December 14, 2016

3. OLD BUSINESS (Continued from December 14, 2016)
   A. NORTH DOWNTOWN AREA PLANNING
      The City of Evanston proposes to amend the Downtown Plan to expand its boundaries by
      including an area roughly between Emerson Street to the south, Foster Street CTA Station to
      the north, the first north/south alley west of Sherman Avenue to the east, Maple Avenue to the
      west and properties on the north side of Emerson Street between Maple Avenue and Ridge
      Avenue. The plan amendment is intended to help guide future development in this area north of
downtown.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for WEDNESDAY, February 8, 2017 at
7:00 P.M. in JAMES C. LYTLE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS of the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.

Order of agenda items is subject to change. Information about the Plan Commission is available online at:
http://www.cityofevanston.org/plancommission. Questions can be directed to Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use
Planner, at 847-448-8170 or via e-mail at mmjones@cityofevanston.org.

The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Any citizen needing
mobility or communications access assistance should contact the Community Development Department 48 hours in advance
of the scheduled meeting so that accommodations can be made at 847-448-8683 (Voice) or 847-448-8064 (TYY).

La ciudad de Evanston está obligada a hacer accesibles todas las reuniones públicas a las personas minusválidas o las
quien no hablan inglés. Si usted necesita ayuda, favor de ponerse en contacto con la Oficina de Administración del Centro a
847/866-2916 (voz) o 847/448-8052 (TDD).
MEETING MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, December 14, 2016
7:00 P.M.
Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle Council Chambers

Members Present: Jim Ford (Chair), Simon Belisle, Terri Dubin, Carol Goddard, Colby Lewis, Peter Isaac, Patrick Brown,

Members Absent: Andrew Pigozzi

Associate Members Present: none

Associate Members Absent: Scott Peters

Staff Present: Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Scott Mangum, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Presiding Member: Jim Ford, Chairman

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Ford called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. and introduced Scott Mangum, the new Planning and Zoning Administrator for the Community Development Department.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: September 14, 2016

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes from September 14, 2016. Commissioner Goddard seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved, 6-0, with one abstention.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Ford explained that the agenda item for old business is a continuation from the August Plan Commission meeting.

A. NORTH DOWNTOWN PLANNING
The City of Evanston proposes to amend the Downtown Plan to expand its boundaries by including an area roughly between Emerson Street to the south, Foster Street CTA Station to the north, the first north/south alley west of Sherman Avenue to the east, Maple Avenue to the west and properties on the north side of Emerson Street between Maple Avenue and Ridge Avenue. The plan amendment is intended to help guide future development in this area north of downtown.
Ms. Jones presented an overview of the planning process leading to the proposed amendment before the Commission then explained the details of proposal. Staff is proposing to amend the 2009 Downtown Plan to expand its boundaries to include 5 new subareas north of downtown: N- TOD, Na – TOD, O- Transitional, P- Traditional and Q – Transitional. Ms. Jones described the subarea boundaries as well as proposed uses, density and building design and materials that would be preferred for new development within each subarea.

Chair Ford opened the hearing to Commissioner questions and comments. There was a general agreement that the proposed plan amendment was a step in the right direction with some questions regarding the intention of the plan, boundary and subarea determination as well as including a broader vision within the plan.

Chair Ford opened the hearing to questions and comments from the public. Nine members of the public spoke. General questions and comments included:
- Clarification on why certain boundaries were chosen;
- A discussion on Subarea P and its necessity within the plan;
- Concern over what would be allowed to be built at the 831 Emerson site; and
- Impact of the plan on the existing zoning within the area boundaries.

Staff responded to the discussion items, clarifying that boundaries for the subareas were chosen based on stakeholder feedback, existing conditions and zoning as well as the location of possible development sites. Staff then emphasized that the proposed amendment would not alter the existing zoning within the area boundaries but is intended to be used with the zoning code to guide future development in the area; broader visioning for the area can be added. With regards to the 831 Emerson site, staff is expecting a new development proposal in the near future.

Commissioner Dubin made a motion to return the proposal to staff for revisions. Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

Commissioner Goddard then made a motion to continue the agenda item to the January 11, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Dubin seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2017 PLAN COMMISSION SCHEDULE

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the 2017 Plan Commission Schedule. Commissioner Belisle seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

B. ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND APPOINTMENTS OF LIAISONS AND ZONING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Commissioner Lewis nominated Chair Ford as Chair, seconded by Commissioner Goddard.
Commissioner Isaac motioned to approve Chair Ford as Plan Commission Chair. Commissioner Goddard seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 6-0, with Chair Ford abstaining.

Commissioner Goddard nominated Commissioner Lewis as Vice-Chair, seconded by Commissioner Isaac.

Commissioner Goddard motioned to approve Commissioner Lewis as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Belisle seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 6-0, with Commissioner Lewis abstaining.

Chair Ford listed the Commissioners who acted as liaisons for various Boards and Committees and asked if there were any proposed changes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Commissioner Goddard made a motion to retain the same Board and Committee liaisons appointments for 2017 (Economic Development Committee – Dubin; Planning & Development Committee – Lewis; Housing & Community Development Act Committee – Goddard; Transportation and Parking Committee – Ford; Public Place Names Committee – Ford; ADA Advisory Committee has been eliminated). Commissioner Belisle seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jones stated that a new Commissioner has been appointed and will likely attend the January 11th Plan Commission meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Belisle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Isaac seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved by voice call 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Meagan Jones
Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Community Development Department
Plan Commission

North Downtown Area Planning
Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Plan Commission
From: Mark Muenzer, Director of Community Development
Scott Mangum, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

Subject: North Downtown Area Plan
Date: January 4, 2017

Request
Staff recommends approval of an amendment to the 2009 Downtown Plan to add five new subareas covering the geographic area roughly between Emerson Street to the south, Foster Street CTA Station to the north, the first north/south alley west of Sherman Avenue to the east, Maple Avenue to the west and properties on the north side of Emerson Street between Maple Avenue and Ridge Avenue (Draft Plan Amendment attachment).

Notice
Notices have been published in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements. Additionally, the City has mailed 2,205 notices to the surrounding area, from Ridge Avenue to Sherman Avenue and Noyes Street to Emerson Street/Elgin Road.

Analysis
Update since the December 14, 2016 Plan Commission Meeting:
At the December 14th meeting, staff presented its proposal for an amendment to the 2009 Downtown Plan to add five subareas within three character zones north of the existing Downtown Plan boundary. During the course of the discussion, several items were brought up as questions or concerns including:

- Determination of subarea boundaries - Staff relayed that subarea boundaries were determined by several key items: resident and stakeholder feedback at community meetings, location of possible development sites and existing zoning district boundaries.
- Establishment of Subarea P and further promotion of that commercial area along Maple Avenue and Foster Streets – This subarea was established due to the presence of an existing neighborhood business district and the desire to improve it as an amenity for nearby residents and visitors. The existing business district zoning boundaries assisted in determining the appropriate Subarea boundaries.
Concern over future development at the 831 Emerson site – Staff stated that they are expecting to see a new proposal for the site in the near future. Conversations have been held with the property owners’ representative regarding their intentions for the site and what zoning requirements will allow for development.

The impact of the plan amendment on existing zoning regulations – The amendment does not propose any zoning changes and is intended to act in conjunction with existing zoning (which determines allowable density, building heights, setbacks, etc.). It will give greater guidance to developers with regards to the types of uses and building design that would be appropriate for the area.

Staff has reviewed the plan and provided clarification on the reasoning behind the five subarea boundaries and uses which should be considered within them. Appendix A, with close-up aerial maps, has been added to the plan document to more clearly display the subarea boundaries with existing zoning districts. Upon revising the document, staff also noted that an additional zoning district (R4a General Residential) is represented in a small portion of Subarea P which has been included within the plan and corresponding zoning allowance charts. Additional implementation strategies are included in a new section regarding the existing commercial district (Subarea P).

Background
In February of 2016, the Planning and Development Committee identified a potential need for a ‘North Downtown Area’ plan due to increased development near the area and directed staff to investigate a planning process. Since that time, staff has conducted preliminary research on the area, presenting its findings to the Planning and Development Committee in April. The presentation included the recommendation that staff be directed to gather community input on potential amendments to the 2009 Downtown Plan to add a new area north of the existing Downtown Plan boundary.

As part of that process, staff held two community meetings, established a webpage dedicated to the project as well as an email address to obtain resident and stakeholder feedback on a proposed plan amendment. Staff also reached out to property owners of several larger development sites in the area for their feedback and any updates regarding their respective properties. Using these meetings and discussions, staff presented an initial overview to the Planning & Development Committee on September 26, 2016. The Committee directed staff to amend the 2009 Downtown Plan to include the new subareas outlined below and start a review process which began with the December 14, 2016 Plan Commission meeting.

Proposal Overview
Based on these conversations, feedback received from residents and stakeholders, current trends in development, possible development sites and the increased demand in housing in close proximity to transit, staff proposes to amend the 2009 Downtown Plan to include an additional five subareas north of the existing downtown plan boundary (outlined in the map below).

- N - TOD
- Na - TOD
- O - Transitional
These new subareas are designated and titled similarly to those within the existing Downtown Plan, providing guidelines which address community concerns regarding uses, density and neighborhood context for future development. Within each subarea description are also brief suggestions for proposed building materials and design as well as examples of existing neighborhood context.

This plan area, being adjacent to both a higher density downtown district and lower density residential area, provides a unique opportunity to utilize and strengthen existing amenities such as the CTA station at Foster Street and the neighborhood commercial area along Maple Avenue and Foster Street. The suggested densities and uses are similar to those of the less dense Traditional and University Link subareas of the existing Downtown Plan. This is to encourage development which acts as a transition to the lower density residential uses further north of Emerson Street while also incorporating the existing neighborhood character. As there are seven zoning districts represented within the boundary area, it should be noted that the proposed plan amendment will be used in addition to the existing zoning regulations to help guide future development in the subareas. The two documents together will speak to land-use, building and parking requirements as well as greater neighborhood context of the area.

A brief summary of the new subareas is below, with more detailed descriptions of existing conditions, existing zoning and preferred development uses and design contained within the attached Draft Plan Amendment:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subarea</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Height Range with bonuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N - TOD</td>
<td>Area between Maple Avenue and alley west of Sherman Avenue; Emerson Street and Foster Street (including Primm Tower site)</td>
<td>New development should have similar heights to the existing 10-story buildings and contain mixed-use TOD developments</td>
<td>66 ft. - 130 ft. (6 – 12 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na - TOD</td>
<td>South side of Foster Street to roughly the alley and parking entrance north of Englehart Hall; Maple Avenue to alley west of Sherman Ave.</td>
<td>New development should contain mixed-use TOD developments with building heights stepped down from buildings fronting Emerson Street. Additional building height may be permitted when set back from Maple and Foster Streets</td>
<td>42 ft. – 66 ft. (4 – 6 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O - Transitional</td>
<td>North Side of Emerson Street. between Maple Avenue and Ridge Avenue</td>
<td>Stepped down height from buildings south of Emerson Street with mixed-use development suitable for the east-west thoroughfare directly abutting residential uses to north</td>
<td>66 ft. – 110 ft. (6 – 10 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P – Traditional</td>
<td>West side of Maple Avenue, north side of Foster Street</td>
<td>Traditional neighborhood business district serving nearby residents and commuters. Density should decrease as development moves away from transit stop</td>
<td>42 ft. – 66 ft. (4 – 6 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q - Transitional</td>
<td>South of Emerson Street, north of Elgin Road, east of CTA train tracks, including First Bank Site</td>
<td>Similar to the O-Transitional Subarea with stepped down height from buildings south of Emerson Street and west of train tracks. Would have mixed-use development suitable for adjacent thoroughfare</td>
<td>66 ft. – 110 ft. (6 – 10 stories)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementation and Timeline
Although outside of the direct purview of this Downtown Plan amendment, staff added a section that more specifically addresses potential implementation strategies, emphasizing the small commercial area located along the west side of Maple Avenue and the north side of Foster Street. Existing economic development programs such as the City’s Storefront Modernization Program could be utilized to help improve or update the appearance of existing businesses. In the future, should a merchants association be established, the Great Merchants Grant could be utilized as well as establishment of a
Special Service Area (SSA) in order to further promote the area. These could be adjusted as development occurs and more businesses are established in the area.

The timeline as proposed within the Plan is expected to remain the same. Staff will seek additional feedback on the proposed plan amendment from the Plan Commission and with that feedback, provide any necessary updates to the plan and either return to the Commission in February or move forward to presenting to the Planning and Development Committee. Following the Planning and Development Committee review and recommendation, minor adjustments could be made and the plan will move forward to City Council for its review, possible revision, and approval.

Recommendation
Staff recommends the Plan Commission make a positive recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed Downtown Plan amendment. The plan amendment will help guide future development in this area north of downtown and is consistent with the City’s goal for the Plan Commission to review and adopt neighborhood area plans and studies.

Attachments
- Revised Plan Amendment
- Correspondence received from the public since December 14, 2016
- North Downtown Planning webpage
- Link to the 2009 Downtown Plan
Section 1: Introduction
In February of 2016 the City of Evanston’s Planning & Development Committee identified a potential need for a “North Downtown Area” plan and directed staff to investigate a planning process. Staff conducted preliminary research including recent census data, CTA ridership statistics and details on Northwestern University’s 10 Year Housing Master Plan and presented this information at the April 18, 2016 Planning & Development Committee meeting. It was at this meeting that staff was directed to obtain community feedback regarding the possibility of adding an amendment to the existing 2009 Downtown Plan which would include the area just north of that plan’s boundary.

Staff conducted two community meetings, had discussions with several property owners and established a page on the city’s website and an email address to obtain feedback from residents and community stakeholders. Using this feedback and the data previously gathered, staff returned to the Planning & Development Committee which then recommended that the proposed amendment to the Downtown Plan be forwarded to the Plan Commission for further review.

The sections following will outline the existing neighborhood context (Section 2), the public participation process (Section 3) and the proposed amendment to the Downtown Plan (Section 4).

Major Recommendations
- **Short Term - 3 to 6 months:** Amend the Downtown Plan to include the area north of the northern boundary of the existing Downtown Study Area. This new area would create:
  - One (1) new character zone, Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
  - Five (5) new subareas in correlation with the existing and newly created character zones: N (TOD), Na (TOD), O (Transitional), P (Traditional) and Q (Transitional).
- **Long Term - 6 to 18 months:** Revise the existing 2009 Downtown Plan to be consistent with more current development trends and update the downtown area zoning district requirements (including the current Research Park zoning district). This process is likely contingent on City funding to retain a planning consultant to assist staff.
Section 2: Neighborhood Context/Existing Conditions

Evanston’s downtown area has seen a significant increase in development over the past 10 years. Recently constructed and proposed development has not only been located within the core of downtown, but also in the areas identified as Edge and Transitional Zones in the Downtown Plan. Recently built developments such as E2, at 1881 Oak and 1890 Maple Avenues, 1717 Ridge Avenue and the recently approved development at 1815 Ridge/Oak Avenue sit along the current Downtown Plan boundary. A proposed redevelopment of 831 Emerson Street, a largely vacant 2-story commercial retail center which is located just north of the Downtown Plan’s Emerson Street border, would have constructed a 12-story, 260-unit multi-family residence (targeted to students) with ground floor commercial space. This project was denied by the City Council but sparked greater community conversations regarding the type of development that should occur just north of the downtown, where there is no official City planning document.

The area roughly between Emerson Street to the south, Foster Street to the north, Ridge Avenue to the west and Sherman Avenue to the east consists of a mix of single family homes, multi-family buildings, Northwestern University student housing, and several commercial nodes including a small neighborhood retail district along Maple Avenue and Foster Street. This area also consists of seven different zoning districts: R4a, R5 and R6 General Residential, B1 Business, C1 and C2 Commercial and U1a University Housing and Parking (see Figure 1: Existing Zoning and Recent Planned Development Sites) which contributes to the variety of different uses and building types seen within the area.

Table 1: Existing Building Heights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Existing Zoning</th>
<th>Height (stories)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>1890 Maple Ave.</td>
<td>RP</td>
<td>16; 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primm Tower</td>
<td>1001 Emerson St.</td>
<td>R6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engelhard Hall</td>
<td>1915 Maple Ave.</td>
<td>R6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perlman Apartments</td>
<td>1900 Sherman Ave.</td>
<td>R6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reserve</td>
<td>1930 Ridge Ave.</td>
<td>R5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherman Gardens</td>
<td>1850-1866 Sherman Ave.</td>
<td>R6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The neighborhood is also bisected by the CTA Purple Line which has a station located on Foster Street. Between 2005 and 2015 ridership at this station increased by 38.8% (50.4% on weekends and 26.6% on weekdays), serving both Northwestern students and staff as well as nearby neighborhood residents. Within a short walking distance of the station are several small neighborhood shops including a salon, convenience store, restaurant, and sign shop, as well as several office uses, a small nursery school and dance studio along Foster Street. These buildings are generally older, some having
undergone exterior and interior upgrades in recent years and others in need of façade improvements or redevelopment to create a better pedestrian experience. Parking for the area is largely on-street with many buildings having a small number of parking spaces for building residents or business employees. Engelhart Hall, a 10-story graduate student housing building, is the exception with approximately 44,150 square feet of surface parking area north of the building with 130 spaces (in addition to the 119 within the building’s underground parking and 88 surface spaces just east of the building). The entire site, bordered to the east by the CTA tracks and to the north by Foster Street, totals 117,129 square feet (or approximately 2.68 acres) in size.

Along Emerson Street is also a mix of uses and building design. Just west of Sherman is Perlman Apartments, an 11-story Housing Authority of Cook County senior residence, which sits adjacent to 831 Emerson Street. The CTA purple line runs adjacent to this building and Engelhart Hall to the west. Across the street from Engelhart Hall to the west is the 9-story Ebenezer Primm Towers, a senior housing facility operated by Ebenezer AME Church. Moving further west down Emerson Street are several multi-family buildings, Ebenezer AME Church and another 2-story shopping center with surface parking. This block sits directly across the street from the newly constructed E2 development which consists of a 14-story and 16-story residential building of rental units with limited ground floor commercial space.
Figure 1: Existing Zoning and Recent Planned Development Sites
Section 3: Public Participation
On April 18, 2016, staff presented preliminary information on the proposed “North Downtown Planning Area” to the Planning & Development Committee which directed staff to obtain additional information and begin community outreach for resident and stakeholder feedback. Staff set out to obtain this information through community meetings and via email, as well as setting up a webpage dedicated to the planning effort for the area.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS
Two community meetings were held with the goal of obtaining more specific information on what residents and stakeholders in the area would like to see for an area boundary, land uses and building design. The first meeting was held on May 18, 2016. This meeting, attended by 75 residents, stakeholders and elected officials sought feedback on a possible border for the study area and main themes that should be included in the study. Attendees were able to have roundtable discussions around transit improvements, density and land use, housing and other quality of life issues. Each table was then able to provide a proposed boundary they felt should be the focus of the study.

The second community meeting took place on June 15, 2016 and focused on land uses and preferred building design for future development. The 35 attendees had roundtable discussions which included “land use maps” on which each table was able to mark with stickers of varying colors to signify uses they believed would best within the boundaries. They were then able to write the preferred height on those stickers to address density. During the discussion, staff noted design and building material preferences.

Community Feedback
The general boundaries that meeting attendees drew included Emerson Street on the south up to Noyes Street on the north, Sherman Avenue on the eastern boundary to Ridge Avenue on the west. Staff used the differences in suggested boundaries and the location of potential development sites to create the boundaries as presented within this amended plan. The northern boundary was brought further south to Foster Street due to Noyes Street having less possible development sites and feedback received from many residents to not include the existing residential areas between Noyes and Foster Streets. Residents and stakeholders also stated several major themes that should be considered or included in any updates, including maintaining and enforcing existing zoning, protecting the neighborhood context and encouraging mixed-use development and transit oriented development adjacent to the Foster Street CTA station among other items.
With regards to specific uses and density, there was general agreement that more mixed and commercial uses should be along Emerson Street with building heights that decrease as development goes further north towards the established residential areas. Greater density was preferred in the immediate vicinity of the Foster Street CTA station. Along Maple Avenue and Foster Street, attendees expressed the need to keep the neighborhood retail context, including lower density development with buildings of a masonry or wood frame construction similar to the existing buildings. In the areas along Emerson Street more contemporary design was seen as appropriate with some brick at the street level. Modulated fenestration was also mentioned as a way to bring visual interest to the buildings and help create the proper context for new development.

DISCUSSIONS WITH OWNERS OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES
Staff also reached out to and had conversations with the owners (or owner’s representatives) of several large sites which are considered to be possible redevelopment sites. Staff talked to Northwestern University regarding the Engelhart Hall site as well as the owners/representatives for 831 Emerson and the shopping center at the northeast corner of Ridge Avenue and Emerson Street.

Representatives from Northwestern indicated that in keeping with their requirement that all freshmen and sophomore students live on campus by Fall 2017, they would continue to construct new and renovate on-campus undergraduate dormitories, rather than graduate resident facilities. Northwestern, however, does recognize that the entire Engelhart site could accommodate a mixed-use development including university housing. Existing zoning was preferred in order to aid in completing any possible future development. Overall University parking requirements would need to be amended by the City to allow for a mixed-use development on this site.

The representative for the owner of the shopping center at the northeast corner of Ridge Avenue and Emerson Street stated that the center is fully leased but there have been interested parties looking into redeveloping the site. The representative indicated that the site is likely not at its highest and best use and could be redeveloped in the future, however, there are no plans to do so in the immediate future.

As briefly mentioned above, 831 Emerson Street, currently a mostly vacant two-story commercial building, was recently the site of a proposed redevelopment project which would have constructed a 12-story, 260-unit, mixed-use building on the site. The project was
ultimately denied by City Council. The owners of the site believe it is most appropriate for a mixed-use redevelopment with ground floor retail and residential uses above (not targeted to students), similar to those of nearby residential buildings and developments.

**Section 4: Master Plan Update**

The amendment to the Downtown Plan provides guidelines for future development in an area north of downtown that has several possible development sites and could be directly affected by nearby development within the existing Downtown Plan boundary. It takes into account the Foster Street CTA transit station, suggesting the incorporation of TOD developments as well as other smart growth principles such as creating and maintaining mixed-use developments that would provide additional housing options and retail for the surrounding neighborhood. The plan amendment recognizes the unique location of this area being adjacent to both higher density downtown uses and lower density residential and neighborhood commercial districts further north. This extension of the downtown plan boundary is meant to create a transition between these two areas.

The new boundary areas, existing zoning and the location of potential development sites, are outlined in Figure 2: Updated Downtown Plan Boundary. Using the subareas identified in the original Downtown Plan and the trend towards Transit Oriented Development (TOD), the new development framework outlines 5 new subareas within 3 zones for the North Downtown Planning boundary area –Traditional, Transitional, and TOD - and makes recommendations for land use and building design directed towards the neighborhood context of those areas. These recommendations are intended to guide future development of sites that have been identified as opportunity sites for possible redevelopment.

Following are descriptions of the character and recommended development approach for each subarea.

**Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zone (N and Na)**

This new zone consists of a block bordered roughly by Emerson Street to the south, Foster Street to the north, Maple Avenue to the West and the alley just west of Sherman Avenue. This zone also incorporates Primm Tower at the northwest corner of Maple Avenue and Emerson Street. The zone straddles the CTA Purple Line tracks (a primary reason for the TOD designation), currently consisting of Engelhart Hall and its parking lot, a largely
vacant shopping center, parking areas, a senior living facility and small commercial office. The shopping center, 831 Emerson, is proposed for redevelopment. Current zoning within this area is R5 and R6 General Residential, B1 Business, C1 Commercial and U1a University Housing and Parking. The 831 Emerson site is zoned C1 and, if built within zoning parameters, as indicated by Table 2: Current Zoning Allowances and Proposed Height, could reach a height of 64.5 feet with development allowances and bonuses.

As this zone is between the designated downtown area and smaller traditional commercial area, it is envisioned to be composed of two subareas: the southern portion (Subarea N) would consist of mixed-use TOD development with similar height to the existing 10-story Engelhart Hall with a range from 66 to 130 feet (6 to 12 stories). The northernmost portion of the site (Subarea Na) is adjacent to the existing neighborhood commercial district which is along the north side of Foster Street and the west side of Maple Avenue. As that is an area with lower building height and density, this portion of the zone is envisioned to more closely match that height, density and design. Staff envisions that this area would also consist of mixed-use TOD development with smaller neighborhood scale retail on the ground floors and residences above to complement the existing commercial area and surrounding neighborhood. Building heights would be stepped down from those fronting Emerson Street. Additional building height may be permitted when set back from Maple Avenue and Foster Street corridors, creating a building height range of 42 to 66 feet (approximately 4 to 6 stories).

Buildings in this area should consist of more traditional masonry construction along Maple Avenue and Foster Streets especially on the ground floors or first several floors of developments. A more contemporary design along Emerson Street could be considered similar to more recent approved developments such as 1571 Maple Avenue.

*Transitional Zones (O and Q)*

Transitional Zones are located just north of the North Edge subarea of the original Downtown Plan along Emerson Street between Ridge Avenue and just west of Maple Avenue (excluding Primm Towers) as well as just east of the CTA tracks on the south side of Emerson. Subarea O has several residences and a two-story shopping center at the northeast corner of Ridge Avenue and Emerson Street comprised of first floor retail and office space above. Subarea Q consists of a one story restaurant building and small bank. The current zoning is C2 Commercial and R6 General.
Residential.

There is denser multi-family residential and mid-rise office buildings located across the street from this stretch of Emerson Street in the part of downtown zoned RP, Research Park. The recently built E2 development consists of a 14-story and a 16-story building with townhomes and a small amount of commercial space on the ground floor.

The Transitional Zone is envisioned as an area to step down from the downtown density and height in order to create a transition to the lower density residential areas to the north. New development should be mixed-use with retail and active uses on the ground level and office or residential uses above. The amount of ground floor retail space that can be supported by the market may be more limited in this area, but new buildings should provide active spaces at street level. Building heights should range from 66 to 110 feet (approximately 6 to 10 stories). Additionally, future development in Subarea Q would need to vacate a portion of Benson Avenue in order to create a more developable site. Building design in these subareas along Emerson could be more contemporary in nature, incorporating more glass and metal with masonry on the ground levels, but still keeping area context in mind.

**Traditional Zone (P)**

This would be the fifth Traditional Subarea of the Downtown Plan. This northernmost traditional zone is a small neighborhood commercial area with smaller scaled buildings and shops convenient to surrounding residents. It is along the western side of Maple Avenue, north of Primm Tower, and along the north side of Foster Street going east incorporating the mixed use building east of the CTA tracks. The boundaries of this area largely follow the existing B1 Business zoning and are meant to include the existing businesses and buildings that would maintain a continuous commercial district. In addition to the B1 Business zoning, existing zoning is and R4a and R5 General Residential.

Subarea P should have low-rise mixed-use or commercial retail uses which keeps the local commercial district intact. Subarea Na would complement this subarea in order to create a larger commercial district with a wider variety of businesses for nearby residents and visitors. As with the other traditional zones within the Downtown Plan, new development should maintain the existing neighborhood context with a building height of 42 to 66 feet (4 to 6 stories) and decreasing density as the development moves away from the Foster Street transit station. Building design and materials should have a more traditional design and consist of masonry or wood frame construction to fit within the existing neighborhood buildings. Design...
and context could be similar to that seen along Central Street or the section of Noyes Street that is north of this area.

Figure 2: Updated Downtown Plan Boundary
It is important to note what the current zoning allows by right and through possible site development allowances within each of these new Subareas. As the proposed boundaries are located within a designated TOD area, future residential developments providing on-site affordable units may also qualify for development bonuses through the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO). The chart below breaks down the varying allowances and bonuses.

**Table 2: Current Zoning Allowances and Proposed Height**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Subareas</th>
<th>Maximum Height by Zoning District (feet)</th>
<th>Proposed Maximum Height Range (feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>w/IHO Bonuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOD Zone (N)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOD Zone (Na)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1a</td>
<td>45 (bldg.)</td>
<td>49.5 (bldg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75 (parking)</td>
<td>82.5 (parking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional Zone (P)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4a</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitional Zone (O)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitional Zone (Q)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Proposed Maximum Height Range incorporates possible development bonuses and allowances.*

**IMPLEMENTATION**

This amendment will act as a guide for how future development should fit into the existing context of the area north of downtown in terms of height, use, and design. As mentioned above, the underlying zoning will regulate what can and cannot be built within the area, however, this document will speak to the type of development that should occur and how it should fit with the existing uses and building designs in the area.

As stated in the introduction, the recommended long-term goal is to update the entire Downtown Plan which would include the proposed amendment area as well as rezoning of the area RP Research Park District. A broader rezoning effort would be included for this area in an effort to have regulations which better address current development trends and needs of the area.
community. This broader effort would be dependent upon the securing of funding in order to hire a consultant to assist in these updates.

Specifically addressing the neighborhood commercial areas, there is a possibility to utilize existing economic development tools such as the Storefront Modernization Program to improve the facades and interiors of the small businesses located along Maple Avenue and Foster Street, or the Great Merchants Grant to promote the neighborhood area should a merchants association be established in the future. Longer range, there may be an opportunity to establish a Special Service Area (SSA) that could address additional promotional, beautification or maintenance needs of the business district within the area. A similar action was taken with the Main-Dempster Mile, an SSA which combined two merchant associations and has seen some success within its short tenure. Another possible economic development tool for this area could be the establishment of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Establishment of a TIF District would have the potential to assist in funding desirable development in this area as well as provide a possible funding source for transit station improvements, park upgrades, and other infrastructure modernization.

EVANSTON TOD PARKING STUDY
The parking requirements within the subareas are determined by the City’s zoning ordinance. As with other Inclusionary Housing Ordinance bonuses, if a development provides on-site affordable housing they will receive a parking reduction bonus. As part of efforts to make sure current zoning regulations reflect changes in multi-modal transportation trends and actual parking usage observed at recent residential and mixed-use developments, the City applied for and was awarded a grant from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) through its 2015 Community Planning Program to examine parking regulations in Metra and CTA transit-served areas.

Additionally, as part of the study staff will be seeking to establish indoor and outdoor bike parking requirements and design standards for new commercial and multi-family residential developments, as outlined within the TOD Parking Study and the City’s Multi-Modal Plan.

The study has been drafted and is currently under review. Staff will present it to the City’s Parking & Transportation Committee and Plan Commission in Spring 2017. It will then be presented to Planning & Development Committee and City Council.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS – NORTH DOWNTOWN PLAN
Staff will bring the proposed plan amendment document before the Plan Commission, Planning & Development Committee and City Council for review, recommendations, and approval. The tentative timeline for this process is outlined below:

- December 2016 – 1st presentation to Plan Commission.
- January/February 2017 – Incorporate revisions into the plan document and return to Plan Commission for final recommendation.
- March/April 2017 – 1st Presentation to Planning & Development Committee.
• May/June 2017– Incorporate revisions into plan document and return to Planning & Development Committee and City Council for final approval.
Dear Planning Committee,
I would first like to thank you for putting on last nights meeting and presenting the updated North Downtown Plan. I found it very informative and believe the plan is a positive one for the area and the majority of the citizens living in and around it.

While there were certainly many comments and questions from the group representing the sections designated Q, N, NA, and O (most regarding building height), the majority of the debate focused on section P, where I live.

As a permanent (non-student) resident of this area I think I speak for a lot of neighborhood residents in saying we want to see more development within section P. Looking at the diverse makeup of the area (families, students, renter commuters) we see the potential for that area to develop into a more vibrant, albeit smaller version of neighborhood business/residential areas akin to the Noyes, Main, Central and Dempster areas. The similar mix of residents, as well as similar proximity to public transportation are so similar to these areas that we feel it could conceivably develop into something similar with strategic planning. While a few smaller businesses exist around Foster and Maple, growth there is certainly limited due to the lack of development directly south of that, most notably the parking lot adjacent to Englehart Hall. I really liked the suggestion of including economic development, as well as Northwestern in further discussions, and working to put together a plan similar to the Central Street Development Plan for this area.

I also believe that this is an opportune time with Northwestern bringing all Freshman and Sophomore's back onto campus to help facilitate the transition of many of the campus rental properties back into single family homes. It is already noticeable the # of for sale signs in front of campus rentals, it would appear that the larger rental companies are already preparing for feeling the effects of this change. At the same time, there are at least 3 properties in this area being significantly rehabbed, most likely to be flipped as families look for well priced housing close to the city center.

As probably the youngest attendees at last nights meeting I feel this proximity to restaurants/business is something that our generation is looking for when choosing where to settle down and eventually raise a family. Evanston is certainly known for this, and why it is one of the top choices for folks looking to relocate out of the city. But, with the great success of the Central and now Main corridors, finding a single family home at a reasonable price in these desired areas is becoming much harder. With a well constructed plan for the area, I believe that another of these desirable corridors could quickly develop in this area. Young, growing families are a key piece of our thriving community, and any opportunities to bring in more should be pursued.

Thank you again for your hard work on this and thoughtful consideration, we are really excited about this opportunity to improve our area. If there is ever anything I can help assist the group with, please let me know.

Sincerely,