

VILLAGE OF ORLAND PARK

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 8, 2012

7:00 PM

Village Hall

Plan Commission

Louis Stephens, Chairman

*Commissioners: Judith Jacobs, Paul Aubin, Steve Dzierwa,
Nick Parisi, John J. Paul and Laura Murphy*

CALLED TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by the Plan Commission Chairman, Mr. Lou Stephens, at 7:00 p.m.

Present: 6 - Jacobs; Dzierwa; Aubin; Stephens; Parisi, Paul

Absent: 1 - Murphy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES**2012-0265 Minutes of the April 24, 2012 Plan Commission Meeting**

A motion was made by Commissioner Aubin, seconded by Commissioner Dzierwa to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2012 Plan Commission Meeting with the following changes:

On page 3 under C. Bedar's testimony change 'mobile' to 'automobile'

On page 5 under C. Bedar's testimony change 60 to 6' and also correct the spelling of Stephens

On page 6 under J. Bedar's testimony correct the spelling of berm

On page 7 under Mrs. Flom's testimony delete the second 'in' after 'fence' and add an apostrophe to denote the possessive tense of neighbor's

On page 10 under Commissioner Dzierwa's testimony correct the spelling of traveling as well as altering the spelling of buses

On page 12 under Chairman Stephen's testimony correct the spelling of buses

Change the motion to remove the recommendation for denial and only have the recommendation for approval.

On page 13 change the testimony to say Stephens and not Aubin

APPROVED

Aye: 6 - Jacobs, Dzierwa, Aubin, Stephens, Parisi and Paul

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 - Murphy

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS

2012-0035 CMAP LTA Water Use Conservation Strategic Plan & Ordinance - Informational

PITTOS: Staff presentation made in accordance with the written Staff Report dated May 8, 2012 as presented by Hala Ahmed.

STEPHENS: I have a comment here. As we are going through this report, if we have questions we should ask those during each paragraph that we review?

AHMED: Yes.

STEPHENS: Ok, good.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: Can I stop you for a second? Just a simple question: do we think that we are going to run out of water in Lake Michigan?

AHMED: I don't think that the Lake will dry up. But we have a specific amount of Lake Michigan water in the northeastern region of Illinois that we can use. It is not an infinite amount.

AUBIN: There's a limit?

AHMED: There is a limit for our use of Lake Michigan water and we completed a study in 2010 that shows that even though we have not reached that limit yet; projecting the growth that we have been experiencing we will reach that limit unless we take more action to be responsible with our use.

STEPHENS: So what you are saying is that we may reach our allocation?

AHMED: Correct.

STEPHENS: And who determines the allocation?

AHMED: The allocation was initially determined by the U.S. Supreme Court consent decree. It is administered by the Illinois Department of Water and natural resources. The Office of Water Resources is the specific office that administers that.

STEPHENS: Ok, thank you.

DZIERWA: On that same subject, this is determined by the Supreme Court and it is governed by the Department of Natural Resources. Do we take into the whole all the states that basically feed off of Lake Michigan? Do they take into consideration that populations drop off in certain areas? At some point in our

particular area we happen to grow where other areas decrease in population, wouldn't we be able to get an increase in our allocation?

AHMED: So the specific allocation is only for Illinois. It does not apply to the other Lake Michigan basin area states or Canada. These other areas do not have an allocation. They are considered as part of the basin. They take water from Lake Michigan and then once it's used they give it back to Lake Michigan. In our case, we do not give the water back because we have reversed the Chicago River so the water that we take from Lake Michigan in the northeastern Illinois region actually finds its way to the Mississippi River and then the Gulf. That is why we have this specific allocation. We are considered a non-returning entity.

DZIERWA: So could we reverse the Chicago River the other way and then all of a sudden not have an allocation?

AHMED: Well that question is beyond me.

DZIERWA: Well there has been a lot of talk about that and I'm sure you have read about it. It's the one reason why we have an allocation while everyone else can have as much as they want.

STEPHENS: Yes, because you're taking it and not giving it back.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: I think you came up with an interesting fact here. Under this paragraph that says residential water use, the last sentence says that "housing density may be another explanation for higher water use rates. Studies completed elsewhere in the nation have concluded that water demand tends to increase with lower development densities." Then it says down at the bottom "analysis from this study demonstrated that the annual water consumption in a two person household was 73,000 gallons at a 10 unit per acre development versus 116,800 gallons for the same size household at 3 units per acre district." That's interesting.

AHMED: Yes.

STEPHENS: So the lower the density, the higher the water usage, that's what we have determined.

AHMED: Yes, and that would most likely be attributed to landscape areas. When you have open lands you have larger lawns. Research shows that water is mostly used by irrigation. They call them the two L's: landscape and leaks. Whenever there is a leak it takes up a lot of water as well as larger landscape areas.

STEPHENS: Some municipalities would be better served in two ways with higher densities and better water conservation.

AHMED: True but we don't necessarily say lets go ahead and make every place high density because there are preferences.

STEPHENS: Well there are balances and different needs. I understand that. I just wanted to comment on that. That is a very interesting point.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: I want to stop here for a second and ask Mr. Pittos. Under this existing ordinance, number one is anticipated water usage for development. Have we required developers who are coming into the town to give us an anticipated water usage study?

PITTOS: It is my understanding that it has been requested in the past but in more recent times, this particular provision was not enforced consistently.

STEPHENS: It was not being enforced?

PITTOS: From a planning perspective, of course. From a public works system management and the installation of infrastructure, that was of course being monitored by staff. You could tell based on the size of the piping that was being put in how much water would be used. But is it something that we would have brought forward to Plan Commission? Not likely.

STEPHENS: That you would not have brought forward? But you have required that from developers?

PITTOS: Yes we have had the information but not every development has been scrutinized the same way.

STEPHENS: Ok. I was unaware of that ordinance.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: Are most dishwashers and clothes washers energy star?

AHMED: Yes it is up to the buyer.

STEPHENS: I understand that. I just thought that most of the appliances are energy star already.

PITTOS: The newer appliances tend to be more efficient because of the types of cycles that they have but they are not necessarily energy star or water sense products. They have some efficiency to them they are just not to the star level.

STEPHENS: They are not to the standards of energy star.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

PITTOS: I was just going to add to that. The water sense label and the energy star products are becoming more mainstream and because of that a lot of people have the perception that all of the new appliances are water sense products. They are very competitive with each other, basically.

AHMED: They are becoming more market price and not as expensive. Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: Question on this for Mr. Pittos. It says that combined size of turf or other features to be no more than 40% of the total developed landscaped area. Are we talking about 40% of the lot or are we talking about 40% of the lot minus the buildable area?

PITTOS: Right. If you have a typical R-3 lot, lot coverage begins at 35%. So you need to have 65% green space on there. Of that 65%, 40% of that would be this low water use plant material.

STEPHENS: Is that sod?

PITTOS: Sod is a high water use plant material.

STEPHENS: So 40% of the 35%?

AUBIN: No, 40% of the 65%.

STEPHENS: Ok, 40% of the 65% needs to be low water use.

PITTOS: Low water use plant material.

STEPHENS: For more than half?

PITTOS: Or just under half.

STEPHENS: It's more than half of the 65%.

PITTOS: Potentially it is a little over 1/3 of the lot area depending on how big your lot is. But what this provision does is basically eliminate how much high water use plant material you can use in the landscaping that is supposed to be green space on your lot. Does that make sense?

AHMED: Let's rephrase that. This is not limiting. This is encouraging. This is not saying the Village tells you that you have to do that. This encourages and there

could be bonuses.

STEPHENS: Ok, so this is not a requirement.

PITTOS: Right and as it was mentioned in the staff report that accompanied the draft strategy, the Land Development Code currently allows it and that is what has enabled the type of landscaping that we see today specifically at the library or the police station; as Hala mentioned in terms of that list of plant materials that are acceptable in the jurisdiction here. So this is simply providing a national standard to tell somebody that if you are going to do this, this is what other communities do across the country. They go up to 40% of their landscape area with this material.

STEPHENS: We are not going to make that mandatory?

PITTOS: No this is an encouragement. It would serve as a guideline.

AHMED: I am glad you mentioned that. The standard comes from the Water Sense Single Family. Again this is a US EPA standard that they have done some research on. They have found that ideally if 40% of the landscaped area is limited to turf, then we are able to have some sustainable landscaping here where it is not using too much water. But staff believed that this should be a guideline. I hope that this is understood that this is a guideline. It is encouraging and not mandatory. Are we ok keeping it that way?

STEPHENS: Yes.

AHEMD: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: Do we have a code requirement that says you have to have 6" of topsoil?

PITTOS: Yes, we do.

STEPHENS: Ok.

PITTOS: And that has been enforced through the landscape plan review process.

AHMED: Continues with presentation.

STEPHENS: Under this irrigation area here, you have a separation of watering sod and watering flower areas. Is there a differentiation between them? Meaning if you have flower beds and you want to water them all morning long you can? That is allowed any time or that is going to be limited to certain times?

PITTOS: The way that the CMAP Model Ordinance and the way that this draft strategy is talking about it is in terms of the method of watering. Typically turf grass

is watered by an impact sprinkler that shoots water around the lawn or an oscillating system that just goes back and forth or an automatic system that pops up out of the ground. Those often result in water falling on driveways, sidewalks, streets, etc. If you have a plant bed, the ordinance does provide unlimited water use when you have a concentrated water source; the bubbler systems for example.

STEPHENS: What if you have sprinklers in a plant bed?

PITTOS: Those would probably be regulated by the Ordinance. But if you were standing there with a hose and watering them, you could potentially do that at any period of time.

STEPHENS: Ok.

AHMED: I will mention that the current regulations do not allow for hand held hoses anytime. There are recommendations on them. Under the new recommendations, that is allowed. It can happen at any time of day. However, the current ordinance does not allow it. This is strategic thinking here.

STEPHENS: So this is taking an ordinance and improving it.

AHMED: Yes. That is exactly it.

PITTOS: You might consider it as more of a strategic relaxation.

STEPHENS: It is sensible.

PAUL: It makes more sense than what we're doing now. You can water your driveway for four hours every other day but if you're caught out there with a hose you can get fined.

AHMED: You are certainly wasting less water with your hose.

STEPHENS: So you can use the hose on your flowers any time you want. You should have the sprinklers aiming at the sod rather than taking the whole area and running it down the driveway.

DZIERWA: Can I ask a question about other water uses outside as long as we are on the subject? What about the people who use power washers to wash their decks, their windows, their siding; and wash their cars? How would that be affected in this new ordinance?

PITTOS: In those instances that would fall under the water time limits that the ordinance establishes which is between 6 pm and 10 am. So if you are going to wash your windows and siding in the summer, you would probably do it after 6 pm

when you still have light and can begin washing. Otherwise it would be early in the morning like 7, 8 or 9 am. If you tried to do it midday say, you would be violating the ordinance.

STEPHENS: Could we put some sort of provision in there that would allow that?

PITTOS: Well, right now the way that the code is written even car washing is prohibited during the day. It would fall under that category under current ordinance standards. If we were to open that up and say you are able to wash your siding at any time of the day, why can't I wash my car or my windows or anything along those lines? It would be a lot more difficult to enforce as well because you are not able to keep up with the entire community.

STEPHENS: But there is no requirement that says that you can't wash your car, correct?

PITTOS: No you can wash your car. You just can't wash it before 6 pm or after 10 am.

STEPHENS: So you can't wash you car on Saturday morning before 9 o'clock?

PITTOS: You can, depending on your address.

STEPHENS: Well what if you work Saturday and you want to do it Sunday? Are you going to get a ticket? I think that's crazy. We need to put something in here to allow people to do things like that.

AHMED: Just to be clear, for the recommendation for the ordinance we did not talk about other outdoor uses. It basically covers lawn irrigation and indoor uses. But that is a good point and I think we can certainly go back and discuss that.

STEPHENS: How many people wash their cars on a Sunday afternoon? I mean, that's a lot of people. It's Sunday afternoon and I'm out there washing my car. There needs to be something added that makes it sensible and logical. That to me is not sensible and logical.

PITTOS: It is noted. We will look at it further.

STEPHENS: Thank you.

PAUL: Another point on that. If it's Saturday and it's not your day and you want to wash your car if you can't do it in your driveway; you're going to take it somewhere and you're going to use up the water anyway at the carwash. That's legal.

AHMED: Car washes are supposed to be a little bit more efficient. They need to be recycling the system. They have an apparatus that makes it more efficient.

PAUL: Would you say that a commercial car wash would use less water than washing a car in the driveway?

AHMED: Yes.

DZIERWA: I would think so. It is not only more efficient but how about all those chemicals that you use in your driveway are going into the underground water. It is a lot friendlier for the environment.

PITTOS: Yes, we will research it and take a closer look at what this would mean for other types of water uses.

STEPHENS: Ok.

AHMED: Continues with presentation.

STEPHENS: On page 19, the top sentence says "irrigation shall not continue beyond two hours per irrigation day nor more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " during the allocation schedule." What does this mean? Are you given a 2 hour grace period?

AHMED: For a specific part of your landscape that you're irrigating.

STEPHENS: "Landscape Irrigation Schedule: For the months of April through October, landscape irrigation shall not occur between 10 am and 6 pm. Irrigation shall not continue beyond two hours per irrigation day nor more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " during the allocated schedule." What does that mean? Does that mean if you have hours between 10 and 6, you can go until 8 pm?

DZIERWA: No you can't. You can't water for eight hours constantly.

STEPHENS: Well it doesn't say that. It's ambiguous. It says shall not occur between 10 am and 6 pm. Then it says that irrigation shall not continue beyond two hours per irrigation day. What does that mean? I read this several times and I could not understand what it meant.

AHMED: Ok, we can definitely make that clearer. I can explain what it means. We will go back to change the language to make sure it reflects that. If you are watering your front lawn, then two hours is what should be sufficient for you to do that.

STEPHENS: My interpretation of this is 'shall not go beyond two hours of irrigation per day'.

PARISI: Right and if you have a typical irrigation system you might have several zones. In order for one cycle to complete and cover all of the zones of my lot, it

takes all of four hours.

AHMED: Oh, ok.

PITTOS: What you are saying, Mr. Chairman is that if you're watering from 7 am to 10 am, this provision reads as if you could continue watering for two more hours.

STEPHENS: Right. That's how I read it. It says that irrigation shall not continue beyond two hours per irrigation day.

PARISI: I read that to say that watering can not be done continuously for two hours.

STEPHENS: Well that sentence is ambiguous. There are two different interpretations right here so that needs to be cleared up. The point that Mr. Parisi made is a logical point. A lot of these sprinkler systems, they will take four hours to cycle and that is only using them for 10-15 minutes per zone. But if you have that many zones, you are going to use it for more than three hours. That's what this meeting is all about. We need to find some way to address that and clarify this language. Let's move on.

AHMED: Well all of these comments are important to us. It lets us know that you've read it and are ready to provide feedback.

STEPHENS: Mr. Pittos, under this variance, isn't that what we are talking about here? "Irrigation using a microspray, microjet, drip, bubbler system, soaker hose, hand-held hose equipped with automatic shut off nozzle is allowed on any day at any time." Would that take into account washing a car?

PITTOS: Well I think the current ordinance limits car washing during the conservation periods because all that water is slowly falling on the hard surface. This goes straight into the storm sewer. But as you mentioned before, we can take a look at it and see what the impact of the ordinance would be on it with that type of activity and how that might fit in this situation when you're washing your car with the handheld hose.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: On page 20, my question is for Mr. Pittos. When they do landscape plan reviews, do we have a form currently that they have to fill out that can require a developer of a commercial building to give you a reporting survey on an annual basis? Do you require that now?

PITTOS: We do not require that right now. It can be required particularly if a project has various incremental improvements or has mitigating factors for variances and modifications, either to the site plan or to a landscape plan. The reporting is considered one of these smart behavior activities that are supposed to bring more

awareness for water conservation to the land owner. There is obviously a balance to be made between requiring a business to do a certain activity and meeting their green aesthetic requirements. For instance, if you were to require a certain amount of reporting and if they don't meet that reporting then they would have to be penalized in some way with higher fees or something like that. Well developers might just determine that they will have more hardscape versus landscape so that they don't have to deal with all these irrigation fees. There is a balance that you have to keep. In this case we are encouraging someone to take on the proactive behavior of monitoring their water use. In that monitoring, if you are a land owner that subscribes to this, then we could ask for these types of surveys or reports during review procedures and license renewals in order to assist the owner with more appropriate strategies.

STEPHENS: So at annual license renewal, you could require a survey?

PITTOS: You could, but we haven't.

STEPHENS: Ok. Thank you.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

PARISI: One thing that I mentioned last time we were here; and I didn't see it when reading through this. We talked about water conservation and leaks and maybe some standards for new developments. I mentioned last time that in my subdivision in a town in Michigan we are having new water lines put in the streets. Obviously if you do that you have to tap into the home. Outside of the house by street level, there are smart meters on them that will detect if there is a leak in your house. If its 3 am and you have a faucet leaking, it will detect it. Did we talk about smart meters at all?

AHMED: No we did not talk about that. We can certainly talk about it.

PITTOS: The strategy itself does not necessarily talk about metering methodology primarily because the Village is gearing up to go in that direction already. I don't know if the studies are public yet but Public Works has been researching the potential for this type of metering technology to be deployed in the community. That is something that we are looking at as a community and staff but it is not mentioned in this because metering has to do more with the actual distribution of water and this is more on the user end rather than the provider. But that is something that we can adjust because it is all one system and it is the same system.

DZIERWA: Commissioner Parisi makes a good point but how would you police that because some people might take showers at 3 am. Water usage is different at different times of day and night for different families.

PITTOS: Well the smart meters are connected to the central database and what they'll do is track the water use for that particular parcel address. If there is an anomaly there is cause for further investigation.

STEPHENS: So this will detect leakage; for example, if there is a toilet that has a drip.

PARISI: And that is a lot slower flow than if someone is taking a shower at 3 am.

PITTOS: Seeing how much water is going into the house and how much is actually used during the day; with that data you can figure out what is happening, if it is a leak or a legitimate use.

AHMED: Well the other way that we kind of get to that again from the user perspective is the water billing. That is where the water bill shows the account holder how his or her water use compares. Currently the Orland Park water bill shows the use for this period and how it compares to the previous year. We are also suggesting that it should show a comparison to a conservative neighbor's bill.

PARISI: I look at my electric bill for example, and it does alter your behavior. I look at the typical household in my area and if I see it is lower, I change my behavior.

PITTOS: An important distinction to make though is that Hala is referring to a conservative house as an ideal versus comparing yourself to your neighbors. For example if you're in a subdivision similar to Silo Ridge, you will have different water consumption than someone who is in Eagle Ridge. Comparing to your neighbors does not necessarily relate to water conservation awareness.

STEPHENS: Ok, lets move along.

AHMED: I think that Terry makes a valid point.

PARISI: Yes, but whatever they do on the electric bill, they compare you with user groups and it looks pretty logical to me.

AHMED: Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: Excuse me; Commissioner Aubin made a good point. How many of us that live in the Village aren't aware that there is this (bracket) pricing?

PITTOS: I should hope that everyone is aware. But there is a point in your comment that I see. Many people do just see the water bill as it is. They feel that they need to use the amount that they are using so they just pay the amount on the bill.

STEPHENS: Sure, is there anything on the water bills that say this (bracket)

pricing is in effect?

PITTOS: It does. Whenever you exceed your 9,000 gallons per month, you enter the next bracket. You are told that you've now entered tier two and you are now paying this much.

STEPHENS: I don't know because I never see the water bill.

AHMED: That is the other issue. That is why I talk about pricing in two different areas. We, as residents, don't seem to care that much. We don't look at water the way that we look at the electric bill or cell phone bills. Water seems to be an underpriced commodity so we just don't pay that much attention to it.

STEPHENS: It's not going to be like that much longer.

AHMED: Exactly. That is why it is important to start looking at these things now before we start getting hit by the higher bills. Continues with staff presentation.

STEPHENS: I think the tier structure is enough of a penalty.

PITTOS: I think that our current codes are similarly parallel to what is outlined here. Whenever there is an anomaly happening, Public Works picks up on it and they do go out and they do these types of inspections particularly when you haven't been paying your water bill.

STEPHENS: But do they charge a water waste fee?

PITTOS: Well you have to pay the water that is lost.

STEPHENS: Well yeah but on top of that, this is a fee for wasting water.

PITTOS: I'm not sure that there is a waste fee but you do pay for wasted water.

STEPHENS: Well that is what the last dot here is saying. The fee is included in the next water bill.

AHMED: So the fee would be for wasting the water.

STEPHENS: Exactly. Isn't the penalty paying the bill for the wasted water?

PITTOS: I would have to check the code. I think that there are citations that are written.

STEPHENS: That's penalty enough. Its bad enough to pay the bill from all the wasted water but then you have to pay a \$500 fee on top of that because you wasted the water?

PARISI: These are just bullet points on things that the Village could consider .

STEPHENS: I understand that. I am making a recommendation that I don't think we should consider this.

PARISI: Well, it depends on who it is. If you have someone from the city that is opening a hydrant every weekend, then they should be paying a fee.

STEPHENS: Well that is a different story. I am talking about an individual homeowner. How are you going to charge someone an additional watering fee of \$500 if they're already paying a \$2,000 water bill?

PARISI: We do that now. If somebody waters outside of the even odd days, they are going to be fined.

STEPHENS: But that is not what she is referring to.

AHMED: This would be the same. If someone is violating the ordinance, they would be issued a notice and they need to stop. If they do not stop then they would be fined. Therefore when we say fee, we really are referring to a fine for a violation.

PITTOS: We can certainly look into it and compare it to the existing code . I know there are citations that the Village can issue in scenarios such as these and then just compare to what other communities in the region do to figure out if this is the right use for Orland Park. Ultimately, at the end of the day, this report will go through the process as informational items. However, the Board will look at this and decide what is best for the community and what to implement.

STEPHENS: Won't this come back before us as a finished product? Is this our last look at this?

PITTOS: I think the Plan Commission will see it again, one last time, to provide a recommendation.

STEPHENS: Well, we would have to if we are going to adopt an ordinance.

PITTOS: This is not an ordinance, itself. What you might see is the water resources chapter during Land Development Code proceedings that we normally do every so often. The report you might see one more time to garner a recommendation but that might not happen until later this year.

STEPHENS: Ok, thank you.

DZIERWA: I waited until the end and I wanted to ask you a couple things. If people

live in a house and wash their hands, it takes a minute for the water to get hot. That is a terrific waste of water. Has anything been considered like that? For example, the proximity of the water heater to the plumbing fixtures? We don't have to talk about that but please just think about that. The next thing, did you see in the article in the paper today about Loyola banning water bottles on campus? They are not going to sell them. They are only going to sell bottles so people can refill them on campus. Something like that would cause the school to use more water because kids just like to drink water. That could be something that if all the schools were to do this, that would cause water consumption to increase significantly. The last thing that I hope we don't get to is to install water use cameras on the street lights where if we're watering at the wrong time, we get a ticket similar to the red light cameras. That is all I have, Mr. Chairman.

STEPHENS: Thank you Commissioner Dzierwa, you made one valid point. Mr. Pittos, with regard to this comment that he made about water heater being so far from the plumbing fixture; might there be some sort of requirement for an inline water pump? They have those. It would continually pump the water through the lines so that when you turn on the faucet, your water is warm and gets hot right away.

DZIERWA: Mr. Chairman, I agree with what you're saying. In most commercial buildings, they have what is called a hot water return system where it is pumped. I think you're running into a problem in a residential setting. You can run a loop without even a pump off your hot water heater and the hot water will actually travel by itself without even being pumped through that loop. It does work in that case. But I think if commercial buildings have hot water loops, it is smart. However, in a home if you do that it costs a little bit more to heat that water. You are constantly heating it because it is circulating even though you are not using it. But that is a good point Mr. Chairman.

STEPHENS: Thank you Mr. Dzierwa. We don't have any more comments from our Commissioners. I see that Mr. Sosin would like to make a comment.

SOSIN: Thank you. I'm here tonight on behalf of the Southwest Suburban Homebuilders. The Village has always had a policy of giving the builders the opportunity to be heard on items that affect our residential construction. We did receive a copy of this on Friday and we do have a municipal outreach committee of professionals who will be looking at this. It is a little bit troubling to me that this thing will be moving ahead and now it is scheduled before the committee and it has an impetus to it. There are some things that I think we need to consider. First of all, there's no way you can do any of this residential without changing the entire comprehensive plan. It starts with the comp plan. You have been telling the builders for years what the values of this Village are and I live in the Village. The values of this Village are landscaping, large lots, land areas with substantially less density than other communities, and berms that take a lot of water. You have landscape awards that you give out to people who are high water users that water

the heck out of their lawns and shrubberies. We reward them for doing that. You have been telling the builders for years that we don't want six units to the acre; we'd rather have three. All those lots are out there sitting now. There are hundreds probably thousands in Orland Park. There is no thought here in this report where the rule starts and where it ends. Does this only apply to new construction, on lots that were approved after the date of implementation or are you going to tell a builder who you made take a 12,000 sq ft space and make it a 15,000 sq ft space and then tell him that he can only cover 40% of 65%? What do you do with the rest of it? Do they make sand or plant a forest? A forest takes trees too. What do you do with that land? It doesn't go away. Or are you going to redo all of these subdivisions to satisfy these new standards? This is a big thing. We appreciate the fact that conservation is extremely important. There are some parts of this that are not all bad. There are some good parts to this but the parts that I get real nervous about are where they say that it is only a recommendation. Do you remember the 3 year income tax in Illinois? That was supposed to be for 3 years. That was 20 years ago. Things have a way of starting and they end up in an ordinance. They also end up in a plan review. When a builder takes a plan to this Village, it starts with the staff and we respect that. We work with the staff. What the staff is going to do is to evaluate every plan in the prism of this study if it is implemented without any thought to what these lots were intended to do and what we as a Village told our building community was expected of them. This is a mess. It is going to be a mess unless it is thought through carefully. Way more carefully than presenting a report on Friday, running it here and running it up through the departments. That is what we are concerned about and our committee hasn't even looked at it. The parts that will work: we are not going to have the police running around at 3 am looking for sprinklers that are on. But, if we tell people that already have a large estate that they can only water two hours a day and two days a week, they are not going to do it. Also, if you tell my builders that they have to put in a spigot that does not give satisfactory water pressure for someone that bought a million dollar house, the first thing that they are going to do when they get in there is take that thing out. How are we going to know that as a Village? There is a right way to implement savings. I want to add one thing that was not said here. The State of Illinois has yet to enforce water usage to any municipality. It is an ideal, a goal, and something that they feel is believable. There are reports that go to the State from each Village that report water loss and total water usage. But there has never been an absolute quota and nobody has ever even talked about it. It is an area wide problem. You have to look at it that way. But what will work is to educate the people that use the water and not police them. They are going to take out what they don't want in their house because it's their house. After they paid a lot of money for that house, they are going to get that house the way it is. There are ways to educate people and there are ways to get them through the auspices of the Village to show them how they can run their house better. Who wants to pay more for water than they need to? Nobody. But once you have all these houses with all this grass and you want that grass to look nice and subdivision covenants require it and we put in landscaping equipment in all these subdivisions or use it enough to get their grass green. It's not going to happen. The goals are good but

this needs to be thought through with much more practicality. It is an ideal and ideals have to meet the practical before they work. We are very concerned but the worst part about the 65/40, that's nuts. Think about your lawn and your grass and your houses. Think about those lots that we've platted to be developed in the next ten years. If you want to do something for new subdivisions, that's a different story. We lost the fight years ago with the Board where we recommended smaller lots. Smaller lots are more efficient, they create less urban sprawl; they allow your policeman, teachers and firemen to get into the Village and live in good housing that they can afford. That was not the policy of the Village. We have the lots that we have because of the goal. You can't just stop and shift backwards and now say we're going to go this way. How do you make these rules work for those lots? It's never been addressed here and that is fundamental before this thing goes ahead. We would respectfully request that this matter be tabled to give us an opportunity to look at these issues and give your staff an opportunity to look at these issues and answer those tough questions. How is this going to be done?

STEPHENS: I think he makes some important points, some excellent points.

AUBIN: Tabling it here would be pointless. There is no action being taken here other than to review this draft. If there is any action that is going to be taken by the Plan Commission, it will come at a final draft and I don't even know if we will have any action on that.

SOSIN: We like to work with the Village and we have some knowledge and input that could be valuable if it is listened to. We were not consulted for one second in the preparation of this report. Nobody asked us to review it or give any input that might help make it a better report. That is troubling.

PARISI: In all fairness though, and you make great points, but I don't think it is fair to say that you weren't informed at all. We had open meetings at the library.

AUBIN: This is the third time that we've been together.

PARISI: Its not like Friday was the first time anybody heard of it. But I understand the point that you're making and obviously one of the points that you're making is that the largest deterrent to wasting water is to have to pay for it.

STEPHENS: Have we seen this draft before? This is the first time we are looking at it. We didn't get it until Saturday. You got it Friday and we got it Saturday. You are just asking for the right to have some input and I don't think it is an unreasonable request. Mr. Pittos, what can we do to get their input?

PITTOS: As Commissioner Parisi noted, we have had quite a bit of publicity surrounding this project all the way from January through April and May. More publicity than what you would expect for a normal public hearing: numerous newspapers throughout the various months both local and regional. Chicago

Tribune has publicized the efforts. We have had the meetings here at Plan Commission and we've had the meetings at the public library which other organizations did attend like the Illinois Association of Realtors. With that said, this is indeed the first time that the strategy is publicly available, that is the reason why there is no action before the Plan Commission or any action to the Committee or Board on June 4th. At all these meetings, anyone is more than welcome to attend. On May 21st, the Committee will not make a recommendation on it and on June 4th the Board actually sees this and the Board has the copy that you have right now. Though it is a more official setting on June 4th, they still will not take a vote. From that perspective, the public whether they be a typical resident or the builders association; they will have ample opportunity to review this document as it goes along in this more public setting.

AUBIN: Mr. Pittos, does this draft have room for more input? Even from the builders?

PITTOS: I think so.

AUBIN: Case closed.

STEPHENS: Is that ok with you? Does that give your association enough time to discuss this?

SOSIN: Yes. We have a lot of members and a lot of expertise. I am here as a representative giving our feedback. When we do that we are happy to meet with them. Conservation is great, it's good for everybody. If you travel in Europe everywhere else they do a way better job than we do; with water, energy, everything. One way they do it is by charging people. But the other way is just the general culture and it is an education with people as to how lights flick off if you don't go in the room and if you turn your hot water heater, it goes off automatically in Ireland. When you flush the toilet, you don't use eight gallons. All of that is good but some of the things in here are just a fundamental shift in the whole way that the Village is operated. Our perspective is that when it effects what we are going to build in the future, we just cant change it because somebody decided that now is the time to cut back on water. It is just not practical and that is what we are so concerned about.

STEPHENS: Well, I think you make a valid point in regard to the lots that are already out there that are platted or are sitting there waiting to be built on. He does make a point. The Village's impetus in the past was to go with bigger lots, less density, so on and so forth. This report even talks about that fact; that greater density is the culprit.

SOSIN: I think in the future the general feeling when it comes back is that you're going to be busy for many years redoing subdivisions and changing the thinking and adapting to the marketplace. The marketplace is the only thing that matters in

the Village. If you can't sell it, it doesn't matter what it is, its got to change or its going to sit there. We have way too many big lots. So part of the marketplace is playing right into the strategy and it is going to help if we are going to have more open space and the units are going to be smaller. I live in Charleton Highlands behind Lifetime and those are fairly small lots. It's great, it's very efficient. That is what you're missing.

STEPHENS: It's a better use of land.

SOSIN: It is the energy cost, the cost of building and real estate taxes. They are going to dictate that.

DZIERWA: Take this thought back with you. Maybe you might want to bring this up. You are aware of the tier two and tier three for the water guzzlers. How would they perceive drastic increases in fees as an incentive to deter them? That is one way to enforce it without really enforcing it.

STEPHENS: I don't think that is the point that he is making at all.

DZIERWA: It seems like he is here representing the people who just want to water their lawns excessively.

STEPHENS: I don't think he is at all.

DZIERWA: But there are people who want to do that and you don't want to force them to do that. I understand what you're saying.

SOSIN: What concerns us is not the penalties. Let's talk about incentives. Let's talk about the builders that put things in to save energy and figure out ways to do this to implement this program. Let's figure out an incentive rather than a penalty to a homeowner. For example, we built Settler's Pond. Beechen & Dill did a beautiful development by a great builder. Two years later we get a call from the Village after the Village told us to put a path behind the homes and natural grasses going to the ponds. It sounds great and they did it. They received an award for it. Two years later we get a call that none of it is there anymore. You have to look at what works. The homeowners mowed down the native grasses into the lawn. When nobody was looking, they replanted and resodded. They took out the walking path around the lake and they burned down the gazebo. We have to look at what works.

DZIERWA: I just mentioned about the tier two and tier three. The homeowner's end up doing it and my point was that we should hit them with it and not necessarily the builder.

SOSIN: The other thing that I think would work would be to educate them. Have a class here. If somebody said to you on Saturday morning you could go and learn how to save yourself some money, these are positive ways of doing something.

AUBIN: Mr. Sosin, we have met here regarding this three times and you are the largest crowd we've had.

SOSIN: Right, but we're talking about money.

PITTOS: For the record when you read through the draft strategy here, most of the recommendations that are being made are geared towards new construction. For existing buildings, we do approach water conservation through incentives, programs, education and outreach. Through those means we will affect a change in existing residences. From that perspective we are not necessarily penalizing existing buildings. It should be noted though that at the end of the day water is a finite resource and while this draft strategy is certainly being developed in the suburban context, we do need to address our own water use with what we have today. We do have large homes, we do have a number of properties that are on large lots and this has been the preference: a community preference for low density developments. So this strategy is not saying increase the density in order to become more water efficient; it is relating water conservation to the existing suburban context. We have to keep that in mind when we talk about water conservation. The last thing that I wanted to mention was paying for the water through conservation means or no conservation means, we are going to end up paying it regardless, whether it is through our own water bill or the taxpayers paying for large regional water systems that need to take into account increased demand and increased capacities. Already with certain regional systems like the Oak Lawn system, they are talking about new infrastructure upgrades that the taxpayers of the system will have to pay into. Water conservation could potentially defray some of those costs in the future. Lastly, take into consideration the pricing program that the city of Chicago is going to unroll these next few years and that is going to increase the price of water considerably despite our large lots and big homes which could mean a little more money for the average resident. That plays into what Hala mentioned earlier which is that we historically have paid low water rates compared to the rest of the country. Certainly, there is opportunity to listen to what the builders have to say and incorporate that into the report so I look forward to their feedback.

STEPHENS: Why do we have to follow the schedule of May 24th and June 4th? What happens if we push it back 30 days?

PITTOS: It has to do with the CMAP LTA timeline. CMAP was given a grant to help us.

STEPHENS: So what would happen if we push it off for 30 days?

AHMED: The issue from the CMAP perspective is staff availability. We are willing to accommodate time that will improve the project.

STEPHENS: So you don't have any problem if we push it off for 30 days?

AHMED: We would like to be able to complete this project in terms of handing over our final report in the most efficient manner. That would be one of our priorities. But again, we would like to make sure that this is a successful project.

STEPHENS: I would like to see the builders in our community work with the Village to have their input as well. So if 30 days is not a big delay to you, then I don't see why we can't push this off and get input from the builders. We have done it in the past many times.

PARISI: One of the issues is that we don't have a final draft and a lot of what we're talking about could be accommodated in the final draft.

STEPHENS: But what CMAP wants to do is to push this through so that they can get the final draft to present. If 30 days isn't a problem and I don't see that it is then I don't feel it would make a big difference to push it off.

SOSIN: There is nothing that we would like better than to stand up in a meeting and endorse one report instead of writing a second report to the Village saying that we take exception to these fundamental parts.

STEPHENS: If we put this off for another 30 days, will that give you ample time?

SOSIN: I don't know. We can try it.

PITTOS: If I might add, I don't have a problem with a 30 day delay. Again this is not being voted on at any level in the review process. What the May 21st meeting and June 4th meeting might allow is direct feedback from the elected officials regarding this document. If we push it back for 30 days, then we are going to be another 10,15, or 20 days away from getting direct feedback from the elected officials as well.

STEPHENS: So you're telling me that this is going to be a work in progress for May 21st and June 4th and that during that time they can have as much input as they want and even after that they can still have input before we see anything final?

PITTOS: Correct.

STEPHENS: Is that reasonable?

SOSIN: I guess we will know that afterwards.

STEPHENS: I want to know if you feel that is reasonable for your group.

SOSIN: We will pursue this. This is very important to the builders and we will see

how the process goes. But we will make sure that we are heard. This is just too important of an issue.

STEPHENS: This is a draft in progress and nothing will be formalized until we have everyone's input.

SOSIN: Thank you for hearing me.

STEPHENS: Thank you Mrs. Ahmed for all the time and effort that your group has put into this. I can see that it is a lot of time and a lot of resources. Eventually we will come out with something that makes sense for everyone concerned.

NO ACTION

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Plan Commission, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

STEPHENS: This meeting is adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Rosignolo
Recording Secretary