

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** City of St. Charles Mayor and City Council

**CC:** Mark Koenen, Rita Tunagre, Russell Colby, John McGuirk

**From:** David S. Silverman; Gregory W. Jones

**Subject:** Executive Summary of Prairie Centre Neighborhood Meeting

**Date:** December 8, 2015

Shodeen Group, LLC hosted a neighborhood meeting on November 30, 2015 to present two concept plans for its Prairie Centre proposal. Shodeen's two concept plans are the PUD Concept Plan and the Alternate Concept Plan. The meeting was attended by approximately 100 members of the public.<sup>1</sup> The City's special counsel, Ancel Glink, facilitated the meeting and the public input process.

Below is an overview of the comments most frequently heard on November 30 and a summary of Shodeen's responses. The public's comments are organized according to Shodeen's two concept plans. A summary of public comments provided on November 30 is attached as Exhibit A. A summary of Shodeen's responses to public feedback is attached as Exhibit B.

## I. Public Comments Concerning Shodeen's Concept Plans

The public made the following comments most frequently. The comments are arranged in no particular order; rather, they are intended to provide a synopsis of the primary themes raised by the public on November 30.

*Table 1: Frequent Comments Concerning Concept Plans*

Prairie Center PUD Concept Plan	Prairie Center Alternate Concept Plan
a. PUD Plan is too dense	a. Alternate Plan is too dense
b. Senior housing is preferred	b. Senior housing is preferred

<sup>1</sup> Sign in sheets provided at the meeting indicated 59 attendees, but seating capacity at the Baker Community Center (~125) and attendance indicate that not all attendees signed in.

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c. What impact will PUD Plan have on infrastructure (e.g., sewers, streets) and who pays for upgrades (Shodeen or city)?	c. Alternate Plan’s site and building design is inferior and monotonous
d. PUD Plan lacks a “sense of place” or sense of community	d. Why is Shodeen presenting a plan that lacks the amenities of the PUD Plan
e. How will PUD Plan’s impact on schools be addressed?	e. Alternate Plan lacks a “sense of place” or sense of community
f. Owner-occupied housing is preferred – not rental	f. What impact will PUD Plan have on infrastructure (e.g., sewers, streets) and who pays for upgrades (Shodeen or city)?

## II. Shodeen’s Responses to Public Comments

On November 30, Shodeen responded to a number of the public comments. It is important to note that the meeting was not a question and answer session. Accordingly, Shodeen responded to only some public comments. Below is a summary of Shodeen’s responses to public comments.

*Table 2: Shodeen’s Responses to Public Comments*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Shodeen Response</b>
Senior housing	There currently is no market demand for senior housing in the Randall Road corridor, but Shodeen is willing to reserve some units in the PUD Plan for seniors.
Schools	Shodeen shared the PUD Plan with the Superintendent, who had no comment concerning the PUD Plan. Shodeen plans to share the Alternate Plan with the Superintendent shortly. Shodeen anticipates the Alternate Plan will generate more students than the PUD Plan.
Traffic	The PUD Plan will generate less traffic than Shodeen’s 2010 proposal for the site and less traffic than the St. Charles Mall generated in the 1980s.
Storm and sanitary sewer	Shodeen studied the sanitary sewer in 2010 and found sufficient capacity. The study will be updated prior to final plans being approved. Shodeen will comply with all applicable storm water ordinances.
Owner-occupied vs. renter	PUD Plan is more conducive to owner-occupied units than Alternate Plan. Shodeen wants flexibility to meet market demand.
PUD Plan vs. Alternate Plan	Shodeen prefers to construct the PUD Plan, but will construct the Alternate Plan if that is what the city approves.

## EXHIBIT A

### Summary of Comments from Special Neighborhood Meeting

November 30, 2015

#### I. PUD Plan Comments

- 1) If Shodeen targets seniors, the residential buildings should provide trash chutes
- 2) Area surrounding subject property is rundown and has bad aesthetics; is this site marketable?
- 3) Important to have some apartments in the community, but how much is enough?
- 4) Create a transitional neighborhood for seniors
- 5) Consider creating a gated residential community to reduce crime and risk for children
- 6) What impact will PUD Plan have on storm sewer? Who pays to upgrade?
- 7) What impact will PUD Plan have on sanitary sewer? Who pays to upgrade?
- 8) PUD Plan lacks sense of place
  - a. Lacks sense of community / gathering areas
  - b. How does PUD Plan attract young people?
- 9) Consider constructing 1 story homes
- 10) PUD Plan is more acceptable than Alternate Plan
- 11) How will phasing work?
  - a. What will be built first?
  - b. How long will the site be vacant and/or under construction?
- 12) Flooding in Davis School Area is a concern; will PUD Plan make things worse?
- 13) Not similar to Mill Creek or River North Developments
  - a. This area is more dense / residential
- 14) Senior living is preferable
  - a. Less transient population; invest more in the community
- 15) Who is PUD Plan marketed to? Baby boomers?
- 16) Why are only 3 buildings marketed as “luxury?” Why not make all buildings luxury?
- 17) PUD Plan imposes too great of an impact on schools
- 18) Will students have to be bussed?
- 19) How will school districts physically and fiscally accommodate student influx?
- 20) Density too high
- 21) PUD Plan will create too much traffic
  - a. Prairie Avenue already congested with commuter traffic
  - b. How will school buses navigate the area?
  - c. Who will pay for new traffic signals?
- 22) PUD Plan needs more open space; remove a few building to open up the site and provide leisure / recreation opportunities

- 23) PUD Plan is too similar to Alternate Plan
- 24) Where's the single family plan?
- 25) PUD Plan may have adverse impact on crime in the area
- 26) What's the basis for the Alternate Plan; where did it come from?
- 27) It's possible to construct attractive apartment projects (see: Naperville, Wheaton)
- 28) Where are the community assets in the PUD Plan (swimming pool, media room)?
- 29) Exterior of PUD Plan structures should be more luxurious (e.g., limestone)
- 30) Why isn't the PUD Plan (or at least the residential component) gated for safety?
- 31) How will refuse be handled in the PUD Plan, and is the proposed refuse plan consistent with a reasonable definition of "luxury?"
- 32) Height differential is out of scale (i.e., 4 stories along Rt. 38, 3 stories behind)
- 33) How will PUD Plan impact the value of my home?
- 34) Has Shodeen considered senior housing?
  - a. Provide senior lifecycle product (e.g., independent, assisted, full care)
  - b. Senior facility would reduce impacts on neighborhood
- 35) More amenities are needed (e.g., walking paths)
- 36) Who will pay to upgrade utilities?
- 37) What financial incentives (including TIF) is Shodeen seeking?
  - a. When does TIF expire?
- 38) Prefer condominiums (i.e., owner occupied) instead of rentals
- 39) Could the PUD Plan be 100% rental?
- 40) Why can't PUD Plan's amenities be applied to Alternate Plan?
- 41) PUD Plan needs to be made better

## **II. Alternate Plan Comments**

- 1) Alternate Plan lacks walkability and meeting space<sup>1</sup>
- 2) Where will children play outdoors?
- 3) Alternate Plan is too dense
- 4) Site plan and exterior design is too monotonous
- 5) How will phasing work?
  - a. What will be built first?
  - b. How long will the site be vacant and/or under construction
- 6) What financial incentives (including TIF) is Shodeen seeking?
- 7) Does Shodeen like the Alternate Plan?
  - a. Shodeen does better work elsewhere; they can do better with this site
  - b. Inferior design, inside and out
- 8) Lacks sense of place
  - a. Lacks sense of community / gathering

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<sup>1</sup> Comment made on behalf of Concerned Coalition for Sensible Spending of St. Charles, Illinois

- b. Does not embody new urbanist principles
  - c. Alternate Plan should represent an attraction, a “place to be”
- 9) Alternate Plan Will create too much traffic
- 10) Alternate plan is a watered down version of PUD Plan
- 11) Interior finishes for residential units are dated
- 12) Too similar to Wessel Court development
- 13) Combination of PUD Plan and Alternate Plan
  - a. Higher end, lower density
- 14) What are the price points for rental units?
- 15) How will management of the residential portion of the property be handled?
  - a. On site management company?
- 16) Too great of an impact on schools, libraries, and parks
- 17) Will students have to be bussed?
- 18) How will school districts physically and fiscally accommodate student influx?
- 19) Who is Alternate Plan being marketed to?
  - a. Proximity to schools doesn’t matter to seniors or millennials; if they’re the target market, why tout school proximity?
- 20) Alternate Plan shouldn’t target fast food restaurants; why not healthier, upscale options?
- 21) If Shodeen targets seniors, the residential buildings should provide trash chutes
- 22) Area surrounding subject property is rundown and has bad aesthetics; is this site marketable?
- 23) Important to have some apartments in the community, but how much is enough?
- 24) Alternate Plan has too many apartments and the ones proposed aren’t luxurious enough
- 25) The Davis-Richmond area is home to many seniors; provide transitional housing product so they can age in place
  - a. This will also make single family homes available for new families
- 26) Already meet Illinois Housing Development Authority criteria for affordable housing; why provide more with Alternate plan?
- 27) What impact will Alternate Plan have on storm sewer? Who pays to upgrade?
- 28) What impact will Alternate Plan have on sanitary sewer? Who pays to upgrade?
- 29) Create a transitional neighborhood for seniors
- 30) Consider creating a gated residential community to reduce crime and risk for children

### **III. Comments about both Plans**

- 1) Market won’t allow for all residential units to be filled with seniors; not enough seniors looking for housing to fill the development
- 2) Neither proposal embraces new urbanist design principles
  - a. Is new urbanism feasible on this property?
  - b. What are other design options?

- c. How does density, building height, and mixed use influence new urbanism?
- 3) Both PUD Plan and Alternate Plan are too dense
- 4) Both PUD Plan and Alternate Plan generate too much traffic
  - a. Prior traffic studies are flawed
  - b. Traffic concerns regarding Prairie Avenue
  - c. Concerns regarding neighborhood cut through traffic
- 5) Provide a side-by-side comparison of 2010 plan and 2 plans now proposed
- 6) Comprehensive plan only includes residential in 1 of 3 designs for the property and states that no standalone residential will be allowed
  - a. Both plans deviate from Comprehensive Plan recommendations

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## EXHIBIT B

### Responses by Shodeen Group, LLC November 30, 2015 Neighborhood Meeting

#### I. PUD Plan Comments and Responses by Shodeen

- 1) Consider creating a gated residential community to reduce crime and risk for children

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Garages in PUD Plan are secure. Need key to access garage and key to access building from garage.*

- 2) What impact will PUD Plan have on storm sewer? Who pays to upgrade?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Detention basins from St. Charles Mall are still in place. Shodeen will comply with all stormwater ordinances and regulations.*

- 3) What impact will PUD Plan have on sanitary sewer? Who pays to upgrade?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Previously studied sanitary sewer as part of 2010 effort and found sufficient capacity. Study will be updated with final plan to verify sufficient capacity remains.*

- 4) How will phasing work?

- a. What will be built first?
- b. How long will the site be vacant and/or under construction

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Phasing is market driven; no set construction schedule. Lots that sell first will be built first. Residential will be built sequentially so that units can be absorbed by the market.*

- 5) Senior living is preferable

- a. Less transient population; invest more in the community

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: No market demand for senior facility in Randall Road corridor. Nevertheless, Shodeen has offered to reserve some units for seniors.*

- 6) Who is PUD Plan marketed to? Baby boomers?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan is marketed to a wider spectrum of ages, regardless of whether the final product is rental or owner occupied. Historically, older clientele prefer elevators.*

7) PUD Plan imposes too great of an impact on schools

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan submitted to superintendent who reviewed the plan and indicated that school district had no comment.*

8) Will students have to be bussed?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Superintendent has made no comment to Shodeen concerning bussing students.*

9) How will school districts physically and fiscally accommodate student influx?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Alternate Plan is anticipated to generate more students than PUD Plan.*

10) PUD Plan will create too much traffic

- a. Prairie Avenue already congested with commuter traffic
- b. How will school buses navigate the area?
- c. Who will pay for new traffic signals?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan is projected to generate less traffic than anticipated by 2010 Plan and less than was generated when St. Charles Mall was open in 1980s. Studies conducted in 2010 indicated that no traffic signals were immediately necessary and suggested taking a wait-and-see approach.*

11) How will refuse be handled in the PUD Plan, and is the proposed refuse plan consistent with a reasonable definition of “luxury?”

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Refuse area in PUD Plan is interior to building. Residents use trash chute to access enclosed dumpster area in basement.*

12) More amenities are needed (e.g., walking paths)

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan includes pool and clubhouse. Clubhouse will include gym, meeting space, and a media room*

- 13) What financial incentives (including TIF) is Shodeen seeking?  
a. When does TIF expire?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: TIF expires in approximately 14 years. City is paying approximately \$200,000 per year on debt service for TIF bonds. The taxing bodies can agree to extend the TIF beyond its 23 year initial term.*

- 14) Prefer condominiums (i.e., owner occupied) instead of rentals

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan is more conducive to owner-occupied units than the Alternate Plan. Shodeen wants flexibility to provide a product that will meet market demand*

## **II. Alternate Plan Comments and Responses by Shodeen**

- 1) How will phasing work?  
a. What will be built first?  
b. How long will the site be vacant and/or under construction

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Phasing is market driven; no set construction schedule. Lots that sell first will be built first. Residential will be built sequentially so that units can be absorbed by the market.*

- 2) Does Shodeen like the Alternate Plan?  
a. Shodeen does better work elsewhere; they can do better with this site  
b. Inferior design, inside and out

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan is the preferred option, but Shodeen will build Alternate Plan if that is what the city approves.*

- 3) Alternate Plan Will create too much traffic

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan is projected to generate less traffic than anticipated by 2010 Plan and less than was generated when St. Charles Mall was open in 1980s. Studies conducted in 2010 indicated that no traffic signals were immediately necessary and suggested taking a wait-and-see approach.*

- 4) What are the price points for rental units

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Price points for PUD Plan units are \$200 - \$300 more per month because of the quality of the development and finishes. If the PUD Plan units are owner-occupied, Shodeen anticipates that they will sell for \$25,000 - \$50,000 more than Alternate Plan units.*

- 5) Too great of an impact on schools, libraries, and parks

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: PUD Plan submitted to superintendent who reviewed the plan and indicated that school district had no comment.*

- 6) Will students have to be bussed?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Superintendent has made no comment to Shodeen concerning bussing students.*

- 7) How will school districts physically and fiscally accommodate student influx?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Alternate Plan is anticipated to generate more students than PUD Plan.*

- 8) Alternate Plan shouldn't target fast food restaurants; why not healthier, upscale options?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: The site will be marketed openly to any potential restaurant or retail user. At best, Shodeen anticipates the restaurants to be of a Panera Bread or similar dine in restaurant caliber.*

- 9) What impact will Alternate Plan have on storm sewer? Who pays to upgrade?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Detention basins from St. Charles Mall are still in place. Shodeen will comply with all stormwater ordinances and regulations.*

- 10) What impact will Alternate Plan have on sanitary sewer? Who pays to upgrade?

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Previously studied sanitary sewer as part of 2010 effort and found sufficient capacity. Study will be updated with final plan to verify sufficient capacity remains.*

- 11) Create a transitional neighborhood for seniors

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: No market demand for senior facility in Randall Road corridor. Nevertheless, Shodeen has offered to reserve some units for seniors.*

12) Consider creating a gated residential community to reduce crime and risk for children

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Garages in PUD Plan are secure. Need key to access garage and key to access building from garage.*

### **III. Comments and Responses by Shodeen Concerning Both Plans**

1) Neither proposal embraces new urbanist design principles

- a. Is new urbanism feasible on this property?
- b. What are other design options?
- c. How does density, building height, and mixed use influence new urbanism

*SHODEEN RESPONSE: Shodeen attempted to construct new urbanist project in 2010 and was denied by the city. Both PUD Plan and Alternate Plan contain elements of new urbanism, including mixed use and increased density. Shodeen doesn't believe that a completely new urbanist design is politically feasible for the site.*