

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2019**

Members Present: Vice Chairman Kessler
James Holderfield
Laura Macklin-Purdy
Jeff Funke
Peter Vargulich
Tom Pretz
Suzanne Melton

Members Absent: Chairman Wallace
Jennifer Becker

Also Present: Rita Tungare, Director of Community & Econ. Dev.
Russell Colby, Community Development Manager
Ellen Johnson, Planner
Rachel Hitzemann, Planner
Monica Hawk, Development Engineer
Ciara Miller, Economic Development Planner
Court Reporter

1. Call to order

Vice Chairman Kessler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Vice Chairman Kessler called the roll. A quorum was present.

3. Presentation of minutes of the August 6, 2019 meeting of the Plan Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Holderfield, seconded by Ms. Purdy and unanimously passed by voice vote to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2019 Plan Commission meeting.

4. Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown

Recommendations for East Side study area
Recommendations for West Side study area

The attached transcript prepared by Planet Depos Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

5. Rules of Procedure Amendment - Pledge of Allegiance

The attached transcript prepared by Planet Depos Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

Minutes – St. Charles Plan Commission
Tuesday, August 20, 2019
Page 2

Motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Ms. Purdy to amend the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure to add the Pledge of Allegiance to the Plan Commission meeting agenda.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Purdy, Melton, Funke, Vargulich, Pretz

Nays: Kessler, Holderfield

Absent: Wallace, Becker

Motion carried 5-2

- 6. Additional Business from Plan Commission members or Staff**
- 7. Weekly Development Report**
- 8. Meeting Announcements**
 - a. Plan Commission
 - Tuesday, September 3, 2019 at 7:00pm Century Station Training Room
 - Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - b. Planning & Development Committee
 - Monday, September 9, 2019 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Monday, October 14, 2019 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
- 9. Public Comment- None**
- 10. Adjournment at 8:17 p.m.**



Planet Depos[®]
We Make It *Happen*[™]

Transcript of Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown

Date: August 20, 2019

Case: St. Charles Plan Commission

Planet Depos

Phone: 888.433.3767

Email: transcripts@planetdepos.com

www.planetdepos.com

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES

-----x
In Re: Comprehensive Plan :
Update for Downtown and :
Rules of Procedure :
Amendment, Pledge of :
Allegiance :
-----x

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
St. Charles, Illinois 60174
Tuesday, August 20, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Job No.: 218470
Pages: 1 - 65
Reported by: Joanne E. Ely, CSR, RPR

Transcript of Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown
Conducted on August 20, 2019

1 Report of Proceedings, held at the location of:

2

3

ST. CHARLES CITY HALL

4

2 East Main Street

5

St. Charles, Illinois 60174

6

(630) 377-4400

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

Before Joanne E. Ely, a Certified Shorthand

14

Reporter, and a Notary Public in and for the State

15

of Illinois.

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

Transcript of Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown
Conducted on August 20, 2019

1 PRESENT:

2 TIM KESSLER, Vice Chairman

3 JEFFREY FUNKE, Member

4 JAMES HOLDERFIELD, Member

5 SUZANNE MELTON, Member

6 TOM PRETZ, Member

7 LAURA MACKLIN-PURDY, Member

8 PETER VARGULICH, Member

9 ALSO PRESENT:

10 RITA TUNGARE, Director, Community &
11 Economic Development

12 RUSSELL COLBY, Community Development
13 Division Manager

14 ELLEN JOHNSON, Planner

15 RACHEL HITZEMANN, Planner

16 MONICA HAWK, Development Engineer

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

Transcript of Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown
Conducted on August 20, 2019

4

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Good evening.

3 This meeting of the St. Charles Plan Commission is
4 now in session.

5 Roll call. Funke.

6 MEMBER FUNKE: Here.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Pretz.

8 MEMBER PRETZ: Here.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Holderfield.

10 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: Here.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Vargulich.

12 MEMBER VARGULICH: Here.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Purdy.

14 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Here.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Melton.

16 MEMBER MELTON: Here.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Kessler, here.

18 No. 3 on our agenda is the presentation of
19 the minutes of the August 6th, 2019, of the Plan
20 Commission.

21 Do we have a motion to approve?

22 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: So moved.

23 MEMBER FUNKE: Second.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All in favor.

1 (Ayes heard.)

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That's No. 3.

3 No. 4 on our agenda is the comprehensive
4 plan update for downtown, recommendations for the
5 east side study area and recommendations for the
6 west side study area.

7 So anything further, Russ, will take over.

8 MR. COLBY: Good evening, everyone. This
9 will be a follow-up presentation regarding the
10 east side study area, and we also have the initial
11 presentation of the west side study area.

12 Based on the presentation on August 6th, I
13 went back and tried to incorporate some of the
14 Plan Commission's comments and revised the slides,
15 and I'm going to walk through some of those
16 changes and also some additional information on
17 the active river project, which I hope should
18 answer some of the questions about what's
19 happening along the shoreline of the river. That
20 was one of the topics that the Plan Commission had
21 some interest in.

22 These are just views, an aerial view that
23 you saw at the last meeting, the open house
24 comments shown on the aerial view, which we walked

1 through previously.

2 We also walked through the site
3 constraints, highlighting the fact that there's a
4 lot of utility infrastructure that's located in
5 the northeast quadrant of downtown, and that makes
6 it somewhat challenging when we look at
7 redevelopment opportunities.

8 We've tried to focus on only including
9 development on locations where there's utilities
10 that could be more easily relocated, such as where
11 there's water main connections, and staying clear
12 of the areas where there's major sanitary sewer
13 lines and also the well sites and keeping in mind
14 that the well sites are fixed, and you need to
15 have some access to them.

16 We also presented this information about
17 the building height and scale showing what the
18 current zoning allows and how the elevation varies
19 across the study area from the river up to the
20 neighborhood, and we had a discussion about the
21 50-foot building height which is allowed on most
22 of the site by current zoning which is similar in
23 height to the current Century Station building.

24 The developable area -- this slide has

1 been updated based on some discussion that the
2 Plan Commission had about how much of this portion
3 of the study area should be identified as
4 developable.

5 First, we've included the entire parking
6 lot to the north of the municipal center that
7 serves City Hall. I think there was a comment
8 that it was important to highlight that as a
9 potential development site, that if the parking
10 that's currently located there could be
11 accommodated somehow in the quadrant, that it
12 would be an opportunity where some other type of
13 development could make better use of that property
14 given its proximity to the river, the open space
15 along the river.

16 With respect to the one-story police
17 station building, we had some discussion regarding
18 the Historic Preservation Commission
19 recommendation. We've added in a note here which
20 I think better clarifies what the Historic
21 Commission's intent was commenting on that
22 building.

23 They thought there is potential for it to
24 be incorporated into a redevelopment project, but

1 there was not an interest necessarily of any kind
2 of historical protection for the building, and I
3 think this is from the standpoint of not wanting
4 to see the building demolished without having
5 consideration of whether a potential redevelopment
6 of this area might incorporate the building
7 structure.

8 I don't know, Tom, if you want to add any
9 comments to that.

10 MEMBER PRETZ: Yeah. And the comment
11 would be that if additional language is needed to
12 further separate between the landmarks, which is
13 definitely a Historic Commission interest in
14 preservation in comparison to the police station;
15 and as you've said would be -- I mean, there isn't
16 a lot that I can add to that.

17 The fact that if it can be incorporated,
18 that would be wonderful; but, yeah, as indicated,
19 it's not a historical property, and it should be
20 treated differently than the landmarks.

21 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Can I ask what the
22 other two landmarks are? The yellow house and
23 then the two-story brick house?

24 MR. COLBY: They're two residential

1 structures. I believe the one that's located at
2 the corner of State and 2nd Avenue is known as the
3 Dearborn House. That's the limestone house.

4 The second house down the hill which is
5 the yellow one, I believe, it's called the Poole
6 House. Both of these buildings have had
7 commercial uses at various times on the first
8 floor, and I believe had upper-floor residential
9 uses. They both are designated historic landmarks
10 individually.

11 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Okay.

12 MR. COLBY: We also have extended the
13 developable area up to 2nd Avenue to reflect some
14 of the discussion. There's potential for better
15 utilization of the properties that front along 2nd
16 Avenue here, specifically the two that are north
17 of the landmark houses.

18 And just for clarity, we drew the
19 developable area around this entire block
20 recognizing that these structures have landmark
21 protection, but whatever type of redevelopment
22 occurs here may involve some portion of those
23 properties to some extent.

24 So any questions, comments on this before

1 I move ahead?

2 MEMBER PRETZ: You're still going to talk
3 about the east side; right?

4 MR. COLBY: Yes.

5 So there were questions at the last
6 meeting about information from the HVS economic
7 impact study, which looked at the economic impact
8 of the active river park project which is the
9 portion of the project that has been proposed
10 along this section of the Fox River that's
11 directly in the middle of the comprehensive plan
12 study area.

13 And what this exhibit shows are how each
14 of the properties were classified for the purposes
15 of the projections for redevelopment potential
16 when the economic impact study was looking at what
17 property tax revenue could be generated from
18 development of the study area.

19 The properties that are highlighted in red
20 were excluded from the analysis. That includes
21 some of the utility properties and the residential
22 properties along 2nd Avenue. It also includes the
23 municipal parking lot and open space area along
24 the river.

1 There was a discussion that this larger
2 parcel to the north of the police facility it's --
3 the portion south of Riverside Avenue is
4 potentially developable while the portion north of
5 it is not; but because the data that they were
6 working with was based on parcel area, what we did
7 was we kept this entire parcel included and kept
8 this entire parcel excluded.

9 This parcel has potential to be developed,
10 roughly half of the parcel, so it's sort of
11 balanced out, the total developable area that
12 there is within the east side study area.
13 Although the actual footprint of developable
14 parcels does not directly match what in reality
15 could be the developed portion of this area.

16 The information on the site constraints
17 and what's shown on this exhibit more accurately
18 reflects what could be feasibly developed. Really
19 this was just based on parcel data and using the
20 tax assessor information, which is based on the
21 parcel data.

22 So what was projected off of this was
23 development potential of a certain square footage
24 of property, assuming mixed-use development; and

1 those were the numbers that were generated in the
2 study to project out the potential future property
3 taxes, if these sites were developed.

4 We also have certain parcels identified as
5 reserved for multilevel parking, and the
6 assumption there was that those parking areas
7 could be publicly owned, in which case they would
8 not be generating any more property tax. So we
9 have highlighted parcels right at the corner of
10 State and Riverside here that could be utilized
11 for multilevel parking.

12 So then the conclusions of the economic
13 impact study -- these are bullet points that I
14 took from the study that sort of speak to which of
15 the findings would be applicable to the
16 comprehensive planning process and specifically
17 physical improvements and development of downtown.

18 And as they noted in the findings, the
19 project could encourage private investment and
20 land development downtown. It's not necessarily a
21 guarantee that the project happening would drive
22 faster or more intensive development of these
23 sites than if it didn't occur.

24 I think the study recognized that downtown

1 St. Charles is a desirable location as it exists
2 today along the riverfront. So while the active
3 river project could enhance that, it wouldn't
4 necessarily be the only driver for redevelopment
5 within downtown.

6 The discussion about how the active river
7 would create a more unique attraction that would
8 be something different in downtown St. Charles
9 than other downtowns along the river, that really
10 has more of a tourism impact versus a -- tourism
11 and potential tax revenue generated from tourists
12 as opposed to it being attractive for residential
13 development.

14 Say, for example, the site could still be
15 attractive for residential development whether
16 this project happens or not, the active river
17 project, but the potential for attracting
18 commercial uses in this area could be enhanced if
19 the active river project was constructed.

20 There was a discussion about the project
21 potentially attracting a younger population, maybe
22 more interested in recreational activities if the
23 downtown has more activity and sort of is more
24 energetic based on having recreational uses right

1 in downtown.

2 The study addressed the reduction of the
3 floodplain, which we've talked about extensively,
4 and there's greater impacts within the west side,
5 and potential environmental benefits from removal
6 of the dam.

7 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: I have a question.

8 MR. COLBY: Yes.

9 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: In terms of the
10 cleanliness of the river, does that mean that it
11 might help with the May fly issue?

12 MR. COLBY: I don't know the answer to
13 that. I don't think it necessarily is related to
14 the cleanliness of the river.

15 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: I don't know. I
16 mean, I think if the water -- I have no idea, but
17 it might be something. It definitely affects the
18 businesses downtown. So it will be interesting to
19 look at that and see if there would be any impact
20 on the river flies, bugs.

21 MR. COLBY: That's an interesting
22 question.

23 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: It's an issue.
24 Thank you.

1 MR. COLBY: Any other questions, comments
2 on this information from the HVS study?

3 So this exhibit was prepared by WBK
4 Engineering to look at the potential changes to
5 the floodplain within the adjacent areas along the
6 river which are within the study area for the
7 comprehensive plan amendment.

8 I have summarized this information in sort
9 of a more generic form in some of the exhibits
10 that were included in the earlier slides, but this
11 shows the real specifics of what's been modeled so
12 far.

13 So the dotted line that's shown along the
14 shoreline, that is the existing floodplain line
15 that's shown on the floodplain maps. So that's
16 what officially designates property in or outside
17 the floodplain, whether it's on the inside of that
18 line on the east side.

19 In order to try and determine how much the
20 floodplain would change, there was a model that
21 was made with the topography of the area, how the
22 river level would change based on the active river
23 project, and that shows the change from the purple
24 area, which is the current condition, to the blue,

1 which is where the floodplain would be after the
2 project is completed.

3 So this is more of a -- it shouldn't
4 necessarily be read to the detail of where exactly
5 the line is because the way the modeling was
6 conducted, they used the best available
7 information, and it's more theoretical and assumes
8 certain levels of the river as you move down
9 through the project.

10 The actual project hasn't been completely
11 designed and engineered, so this really just kind
12 of gives an overall idea of if the river would be
13 lower in this area, what the impact would be.

14 And so you can kind of see that on the
15 east side, in the modeling, it does show areas
16 outside of this dotted line that appear to be
17 within the existing floodplain but are not based
18 on the maps. But for the most part, it generally
19 follows the existing floodplain line.

20 You can see that the blue area is pulled
21 back significantly so that it generally is over
22 the existing river trail, not by a great distance,
23 except for right outside the municipal center by
24 the parking lot where there's this larger grass

1 area. There's some additional floodplain. So
2 this shows you sort of what the basis was of our
3 assumptions about the changes of the floodplain.

4 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, did they give you
5 any idea for, specific to the east side, about how
6 many acre feet of water they are changing or
7 taking?

8 MR. COLBY: I don't believe that they
9 calculated that in this model. That's something I
10 can look into, but I don't think it was a number
11 that was produced.

12 MEMBER VARGULICH: And the reason I'm
13 asking is when you think about, you know, what the
14 City intends to do and invest in the active river
15 project in various capacities, supporting soft
16 costs, and construction costs, those kinds of
17 things, that, you know, if the City decided to
18 undertake compensatory storage somewhere, there
19 would be an acre feet cost for that.

20 And so most engineering firms that do that
21 kind of work say if you move 2 acre feet here, we
22 have to compensate at 1 1/2 to 1; and so to
23 produce that somewhere else would eliminate
24 recognized, you know, by the DNR is X amount of

1 dollars per acre foot.

2 So if you just said we want to have this
3 same effect without doing the active river
4 project, the City would have to invest that many
5 dollars to accomplish the same thing. So it's
6 just, I think, potentially helpful even though
7 it's ballpark information, helpful information,
8 not so much for us, but maybe for the aldermen to
9 think about. You know, what is the impact of
10 leaving the floodplain where it is versus paying
11 for compensatory storage versus some level of
12 investment in the active river project.

13 MEMBER FUNKE: Does this represent
14 100-year or the 10-year?

15 MR. COLBY: The 100-year.

16 MEMBER FUNKE: 100.

17 MS. TUNGARE: You know, I think, to
18 respond, this space working at this point, I don't
19 think it would break even or even come close to
20 breaking even and doesn't solve, you know, the
21 production of floodplain versus the investment in
22 the active river project. So that's just a
23 guesstimate.

24 MEMBER VARGULICH: I think, Rita, also a

1 fair part is if you're looking at the
2 redevelopment of those parcels, and you can't
3 build in those parcels, and you have to leave them
4 as open space or use them as parking, the yield is
5 decreased. So you have to also weigh in what the
6 loss of yield is as it relates to property taxes,
7 retail sales taxes, and other things too.

8 So the understanding is it wasn't intended
9 to be equated -- equal dollars, that whatever the
10 active river investment is is directly related to
11 compensatory storage, but at a minimum, you have
12 to include those two things, but then also look at
13 what the lost yields are for not doing that.

14 MS. TUNGARE: Thank you.

15 MR. COLBY: So these next few slides show
16 the feasibility study which was prepared by WBK to
17 look at if you were to actually try to do some
18 conceptual engineering based on the current
19 conditions of the river, how the conceptual
20 project that was shown in the plan might actually
21 be constructed and sort of how it would work based
22 on topography and the flow of the river and the
23 features that were shown in the plan.

24 There were three different alternatives

1 that were included, and each of them has different
2 impacts along the shoreline.

3 This first alternative shows a single
4 channel of the river through this section. The
5 other alternatives have a secondary channel, which
6 is along the east side that modifies the
7 shoreline; but what this shows to you is there is
8 an increase in land area when the river is at its
9 normal level.

10 It's identified on here that these areas
11 are shown as native vegetation or riparian
12 habitat, and that's partially because if you look
13 at the cross section of these areas, they may be
14 somewhat sloped because they are going to be
15 within the floodplain, and they may be at times
16 inundated with water depending on how the control
17 works at the entrance to this portion of the
18 project.

19 So they may be useable periodically, but
20 they're not necessarily useable open space
21 consistently or can't necessarily be used like a
22 park site could be. That's labeled along some
23 portions of the shoreline here. There are some
24 areas that are shown as some hardscape

1 improvements.

2 And as you move further down towards the
3 municipal center, because the water level would be
4 lowered significantly here, there would be more
5 exposed land area adjacent to the municipal
6 center. But in this alternative, also there's no
7 widening of the trail underpass under the railroad
8 bridge based on the assumption of where WBK had
9 placed the entry control structure for the river
10 park.

11 So this plan and the other two plans,
12 there's a lot of assumptions made, but it's based
13 on engineering information and actually trying to
14 take what's shown as a graphical plan and put it
15 into something that's closer to reality of what
16 could be constructed.

17 And the dashed line that's there shows the
18 existing shoreline along the river trail, so that
19 can give you some perspective as to the distance
20 of land area that's added. It varies across the
21 site. The scale here, this shows an 80-foot
22 distance. So the single channel has fairly
23 significant land area that's added along both
24 shorelines.

1 This cross section, this is a different
2 scale. This is a 36-foot distance. You can see
3 where the existing river trail is.

4 So in Alternative No. 2, there is a
5 secondary channel that follows the shoreline of
6 the east side. It's a flat channel. It's not
7 designed as a rapids course. So the topography as
8 you see here is relatively flat with the
9 shoreline. What that means is the area between
10 the channel and the shoreline is flat, and also
11 there's a fairly large island that's created
12 between the two channels. In this alternative,
13 there is some land area that's being added under
14 the bike bridge underpass here.

15 And then the third alternative is with a
16 whitewater channel along the east side, and you
17 can see there's a difference in the topography in
18 order to accommodate the grade changes of the
19 whitewater. It's likely that this would be a
20 little steeper sloped, maybe not as flat and
21 useable.

22 But these three engineering concepts show
23 what was contemplated if the project were to be
24 constructed with the active river park where

1 actually the water level of the river is being
2 changed, and that does result in this additional
3 shoreline that's being shown in each of these
4 exhibits.

5 So the land uses that are being
6 recommended -- this is similar to the information
7 that we saw previously, but I did expand the
8 mixed-use area to include all of the police
9 station site and also the municipal center parking
10 lot as mixed use.

11 We also dropped the alternatives that
12 tried to plan around the police station building.
13 I think based on the feedback, there was a feeling
14 that that -- working around that structure sort of
15 as a fixed point in the project wasn't necessarily
16 the correct approach in looking long term. It's
17 not how to best utilize the property but
18 recognizing that someone could propose to utilize
19 that building in a redevelopment scenario, if they
20 chose to if the building was still remaining.

21 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, just a comment or
22 a question. One of the things that might be -- I
23 don't know if it's this page or somewhere else --
24 is do you have a view that you get coming down

1 State Street towards the curve. It might be nice
2 if State Street could either be extended towards
3 the river or at least a view of the river
4 maintained. I think some other master plans that
5 I've seen have involved a sense of public
6 connection to the river that's really important.

7 It exists for Cedar Avenue because of the
8 fact that it runs behind the municipal center and
9 there's that sculpture plaza, but it also might be
10 nice through State. Once you get further to the
11 north, Chestnut and all those other streets are
12 cut off by 2nd Avenue.

13 And also from a traffic standpoint, in
14 fact, there's some connection from the residential
15 property area that's shown in the yellow, that
16 maybe a stop sign could be added at Chestnut and
17 2nd because right now there's no stops between
18 Pottawatomie Park and Main Street.

19 If, in fact, that traffic connection was
20 realized for parking, then a stop sign might be
21 appropriate to address traffic and sight lines.

22 MR. COLBY: So regarding the open space
23 that's shown along the river -- so this land use
24 plan is assuming that the active river project,

1 you know, whether it happens or not, but the main
2 shoreline is staying in its current location and
3 that the width of approximately 60 feet would
4 encompass almost all of the existing floodplain
5 and potentially could accommodate some relocated
6 floodplain from this area, if this were regraded
7 to provide some additional storage perhaps in the
8 area where the existing police station building is
9 located.

10 The 60-foot distance, it sort of matches
11 the distance from the shoreline to the existing
12 municipal center parking lot, If you can envision
13 what that width looks like; and then it also sort
14 of matches the width that exists when you get out
15 to the north end between the river trail and this
16 bike path that extends up across the bike bridge.

17 But we wanted to -- I'll get to this in
18 the recommendations. We wanted to also include
19 some language that states that, you know, in the
20 event that the active river project is constructed
21 and this site development, you wouldn't
22 necessarily need to include the same width of open
23 space; but there needs to be at least a minimum
24 width to maintain the river trail that's located

1 there, perhaps wider than it is today; but that
2 shoreline level will still function as the main
3 trail because when you get further -- closer to
4 the river, the elevation will drop, and you will
5 have those riparian areas, and those planted areas
6 won't necessarily be actively used.

7 So the improvement opportunities -- this
8 is similar to what was shown previously. The
9 opportunity for enhanced river trail. These are
10 open spaces. There was discussion about a
11 potential viewpoint up the north end of the open
12 space, better screening of the utility buildings.

13 With respect to parking, there was
14 discussion about trying to conceal any structure
15 parking within buildings so that there's not
16 stretches where structure parking is exposed along
17 the street. There's also discussion about
18 potential for structure parking in this location
19 which could have some kind of access from 2nd
20 Avenue depending how the structure was designed.

21 MEMBER PRETZ: Russ, in reference to the
22 last thing that you talked about and Peter had
23 mentioned about a stop sign, I think that the
24 language that's used there, structured parking

1 could be accessed from 2nd Avenue, implies that
2 that's a given.

3 And taking my own firsthand, you know,
4 knowledge of the area, based on the fact that you
5 can see my house on this slide there, is that if a
6 traffic study -- I think it would be necessary
7 from a traffic study perspective that they would
8 be doing both a visual as well as the southern
9 traffic, that because of the elevation of that
10 bridge that exists there and the contour of the
11 land coming down, when the cars are coming south,
12 the sight lines are extremely poor as well as it's
13 hazardous for all those driving, including coming
14 down Chestnut going west. You only make the
15 mistake one time and realize that there's a car
16 ready to hit you.

17 So I would suggest that maybe -- my
18 suggestion would be that the language change from
19 making it imply that it would happen, but the
20 potential is always there; and especially, you
21 know, if they could install stop signs or whatever
22 else, but I'm not really sure, from my own
23 perspective, that a stop sign at Chestnut coming
24 over that bridge is sufficient enough for a car to

1 actually stop. You have the speeds that they come
2 at specific times leaving Pottawatomie Park.

3 So just my recommendation is to change the
4 language so it doesn't imply that it's a given.

5 Make sense to you, Peter, on that?

6 MEMBER VARGULICH: No, not completely, but
7 that's okay.

8 MEMBER PRETZ: Okay.

9 MR. COLBY: So then based on these
10 exhibits, I've revised the draft plan
11 recommendations. So with respect to the open
12 space, most of the floodplain would remain open
13 space; and the current river trail could be
14 expanded, it was suggested, a minimum path width
15 of at least 20 feet long the existing shoreline.

16 But the goal would be to maintain a width
17 of approximately 60 feet of open space along the
18 riverfront. So these building setbacks would vary
19 depending on if that river project advances and
20 the distance that the actual river is from the
21 shoreline, which could vary depending on how that
22 space is designed. As you saw in the different
23 engineering exhibits, it could be a short
24 distance, or it could be wider distance.

1 So the primary land uses would be mixed
2 use, with commercial uses -- hotel, residential
3 uses discussed. Residential uses or structured
4 parking would be appropriate for the areas east of
5 Riverside Avenue.

6 Building scale -- we talked about at the
7 last meeting that, you know, there were a lot of
8 comments about a three-story building. We felt
9 that it would be more accurate to represent that
10 as -- the height that falls under the current
11 zoning would be most appropriate; and if there
12 were taller structures proposed, that they would
13 need to be reviewed through a process like the PUD
14 process, which is how a project would typically be
15 reviewed by the City if it exceeds some zoning
16 standard.

17 And then parking should be concealed
18 within the development where possible.

19 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, if there is any
20 way to incorporate here or someplace else, just
21 the comment that the relocation of the existing
22 memorial because it's not incorporated in the
23 active river project design, and we're showing a
24 development site that includes it. So I think,

1 you know, it doesn't have to be in the same area
2 but if it can be, that would be great, but at
3 least it should be identified, and it isn't
4 something to get rid of. Just relocated.

5 MR. COLBY: Any additional comments? I'll
6 move on to the west side.

7 All right. So the west side study area,
8 again, this is a pictometry view that shows the
9 study area boundaries, which are Main Street on
10 the South, 4th Street on the west, and then the
11 railroad track, and railroad trestle as the
12 northern boundary.

13 So the open house comments that we
14 received on the west side were similar to what was
15 heard regarding the east side about missing
16 sidewalk and trail connections. There were a
17 number of references to the area along Route 31
18 and the bike trail where there's sidewalk gaps and
19 connections that require you to sort of go a long
20 distance to move from the bike bridge into
21 downtown.

22 We also had a number of comments about the
23 Salerno's site being a potential redevelopment
24 opportunity. There were a lot of comments from

1 residents of Carroll Tower regarding the
2 importance of the parking that exists adjacent to
3 their building. In particular the use of the
4 public parking lot, which is the north half here,
5 as being important for their regular use.

6 And part of that concern was also that
7 there's not a traffic signal controlled crossing
8 over Route 31 that would provide community access
9 to public parking that exists on the west side of
10 Route 31.

11 The comments regarding --

12 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, does the City own
13 the parking lot that faces the river there, the
14 entire stretch?

15 MR. COLBY: The City owns from State
16 Street north to the creek.

17 MEMBER VARGULICH: To the creek.

18 MR. COLBY: Yes. So the portion south of
19 State Street to Carroll Tower is owned in common
20 with the Carroll Tower building. So that's
21 private.

22 MEMBER VARGULICH: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. COLBY: Comments about preservation of
24 the residential neighborhoods on the fringe of the

1 area, on the west side, the residential
2 neighborhood is a little further to the west, and
3 there's only sort of pockets of residential
4 structures on the fringe of the study area.

5 And comments about parking ideally being
6 located on interior blocks and away from the
7 river, so that was sort of a general comment that,
8 you know, sort of conflicted with the interests of
9 maintaining this parking adjacent to Carroll
10 Tower.

11 So the site constraints on this side of
12 the river, really the floodplain is the most
13 significant. If you look at where the utilities
14 are located, they generally follow the existing
15 streets. There's not a lot of infrastructure
16 located over here other than the mains that are
17 crossing the area.

18 There is a large sanitary sewer trunk line
19 that follows the State Street Creek up to this
20 area. The State Street Creek, which passes from
21 west to east to the river in this area, it serves
22 a large drainage area on the west side of
23 St. Charles.

24 The creek is exposed, this portion up

1 across 4th Street, and then it actually passes
2 underneath this building, which is along Route 31,
3 and it goes sort of underground from behind this
4 building up until it pops out right over here
5 along the -- near the river just south of the
6 Salerno's property. So the creek that's passing
7 through there, there's probably not a lot of
8 appreciation that it's there but you don't really
9 see it from Route 31 at all.

10 But when looking at the floodplain through
11 the area, there's a stretch of floodplain that
12 follows along the creek through the topography
13 around the creek and also a large area to the west
14 of Route 31 that's currently mostly parking lots
15 that is fairly low, and it has a similar elevation
16 to the shoreline of the river. So that when
17 there -- and there is flooding here. It does have
18 the potential to travel all the way across
19 Route 31.

20 What you typically see when there's
21 flooding in this area is actually Route 31 will
22 flood first because the water will back up through
23 the storm sewers that are out there. And since
24 Route 31 is slightly lower than the parking lot,

1 you typically see the flooding on Route 31 first.

2 As I mentioned, there is no signalized
3 pedestrian crossings on Route 31 north of Main
4 Street. That makes it difficult for people who
5 are trying to access a site on one side or the
6 other to park on the other side as a result, so
7 they're parking on both sides.

8 This public parking that's located here
9 and also here on the lot, sometimes called the VFW
10 lot where the VFW building used to be located,
11 these parking lots are heavily utilized by both
12 uses right in the vicinity but also uses along
13 Main Street in the northwest quadrant of downtown.
14 So these are relied on quite a bit for general
15 public parking that serves these blocks to the
16 south.

17 Other things to note with respect to the
18 transportation network, when you're north of State
19 Street, there is no connection, street connection
20 or driveway connection From 4th Street to Route 31
21 in this area.

22 There is a location where at times there's
23 been sort of an informal cross access that you
24 could drive through. At this time it's currently

1 closed off. But there is sort of a -- this is a
2 large block of land in downtown, and there's not
3 really links across it.

4 Also Route 31, because it is an IDOT State
5 route, there's some limitations as to, you know,
6 how it can be modified. Also it really serves
7 more as a highway exiting out of St. Charles right
8 now based on how it's designed and so that -- sort
9 of the volume and speed of traffic has an impact
10 on how it's perceived from the standpoint of a
11 pedestrian.

12 Initially, the lack of a pedestrian
13 infrastructure, as mentioned earlier, makes this
14 area -- although it's in close proximity to
15 downtown, it doesn't necessarily have a feel of
16 downtown partially based on the development around
17 it as well.

18 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Russ, wasn't there
19 some talk about talking to the train line people
20 who -- I can't remember what the term is. The
21 people who own the railroad.

22 MR. COLBY: Yes. Are you talking for use
23 of a rail line as a trail?

24 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Well, that and also

1 to possibly create access at the end of 4th, or
2 did I make that up?

3 MR. COLBY: Are you saying from 4th back
4 around?

5 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Uh-huh.

6 MR. COLBY: I think that was one of the
7 potential options, if there was interest in any
8 type of shared cross access through here. It
9 might be in this location, or it might wrap around
10 the backs of these buildings. There's land area
11 to do that, but it's a fairly limited width.

12 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Okay.

13 MR. COLBY: Based on where these buildings
14 are located today, it would be fairly difficult to
15 get a public street back there, but there is a
16 driveway width.

17 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: All right.

18 MR. COLBY: So regarding building height
19 and scale, this side of the river is relatively
20 flat. There's not a lot of elevation change. The
21 zoning that's in place is similar to what's on the
22 east side. The CBD-1 zoning with the 50-foot
23 maximum height is over most of the study area
24 except for this area, which is in sort of a

1 residential portion which is zoned CBD-2 and has a
2 40-foot height limitation.

3 And the zoning for these properties that
4 front along 4th Street back here is mixed. Some
5 of them have industrial zoning, and there's some
6 industrial zoning to the west across 4th Street
7 where there's sort of a mix of residential and
8 industrial uses in that neighborhood.

9 And marked on here, the tallest building
10 in this area is Carroll Tower. It's approximately
11 65 feet tall. Another tall building, the
12 Charleston Center building, is about 45 feet to
13 the ridgeline, the main portion of that building.
14 So that gives you some sense of sort of what scale
15 the buildings exist in this area and what the
16 zoning permits.

17 So the HVS study, similar to the
18 information on the east side, there were parcels
19 included on the west side. A number of parcels in
20 the west side study area were identified as fully
21 utilized, which meant based on their tax value and
22 zoning, it was unlikely that there would be an
23 opportunity for significant enhanced tax value to
24 be generated from them, but a number of the

1 properties, particularly the ones that have a
2 significant amount of parking or low scale
3 commercial buildings, were identified as
4 underutilized, which are the green sites.

5 There was an area shown for multilevel
6 parking, assumed to be a public parking deck, and
7 also municipal parcels that were included, which
8 are the parking lot along the river and also the
9 one to the west of Route 31.

10 So looking at what portion of this study
11 area is developable, if you consider where the
12 floodplain is located currently, there's quite a
13 bit of this area where its usage would be limited.

14 The floodplain area, it can be used for
15 parking or open space fairly easily. There's a
16 potential to develop within a floodplain, but it's
17 complicated. It can be expensive and require you
18 to do certain things to a building that might make
19 it not economical to construct.

20 So when we look at areas of floodplains,
21 the assumption is that, you know, the buildings
22 that are there right now, those could remain, but
23 the redevelopment potential is limited unless
24 there is some effort to relocate the floodplain.

1 There are some structures identified by
2 the Historic Preservation Commission for
3 preservation interest. These two buildings that
4 are the Johnson statuary business were identified,
5 particularly the front original portions of the
6 buildings. There's some additions and some
7 outbuildings that aren't necessarily up from the
8 same era, but those two are identified.

9 There was also some discussion that there
10 are contributing historic structures along this
11 stretch of State Street where there is a
12 residential street that's more or less intact.
13 One structure in particular that was of interest
14 was this four square, which is located right at
15 the north end of 3rd Street, which is red brick,
16 and used as an office building right now. It was
17 identified as having a lot of integrity for being
18 an intact example of that style of architecture.

19 Do you have anything to add?

20 MEMBER PRETZ: I have nothing. You did a
21 good job.

22 MR. COLBY: So obviously, the floodplain
23 is quite a limiting factor. So with the active
24 river project, based on the modeling, you can see

1 the floodplain would be significantly reduced in
2 this area because it is relatively flat.

3 But you would still have pockets of
4 flooded areas. Based on the modeling, they're
5 actually sort of disconnected from the main river.
6 So, as I mentioned, you have here a storm sewer
7 surcharge along Route 31, so this potentially
8 floods; and also from State Street Creek back
9 behind this building, where you could have
10 flooding in this area where the creek is exposed.

11 So those are two areas of floodplain
12 that's sort of disconnected from the actual
13 floodplain and the river.

14 So there's different ways that the
15 floodplain issue could be addressed. One of the
16 potential methods of trying to maximize the
17 buildable area within this quadrant of downtown,
18 while still keeping the floodplain storage within
19 the same general area, would be to analyze whether
20 you could lower the elevation or cut into certain
21 areas in order to provide additional floodplain
22 storage and then raise other areas within the
23 floodplain.

24 So you, essentially, shift the floodplain

1 storage that's occurring on these properties on
2 the west side of Route 31 to maybe the east side
3 of Route 31 or along the State Street Creek
4 corridor. The benefits of that is you can still
5 utilize the floodplain area for parking, if
6 needed, or also as an open space amenity in that
7 it won't be flooded consistently; but in the event
8 that it did, you know, the uses of those areas
9 could be limited without impacting the structures.

10 So this is just a concept, and this would
11 have to be analyzed further to see if this is
12 feasible, and also if you're able to achieve the
13 volumes that are required because, as Peter was
14 mentioning, there's what's called compensatory
15 storage, where you're providing storage elsewhere.
16 You typically have to provide more storage than
17 the area that you filled. So there's some burden
18 when you try and move floodplain, that you have to
19 provide additional storage.

20 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, the area along
21 the river, is it politically a good idea to
22 identify property that Carroll Towers owns as part
23 of that, considering they're hypersensitive to the
24 parking issue?

1 MR. COLBY: Well, I think this really is a
2 concept, and I think it should be only looked at
3 as a concept. If there are changes to the public
4 and private parking lot there, I think there's
5 going to need to be some coordination with Carroll
6 Towers as to how their parking needs will continue
7 to be met.

8 I think trying to account for their
9 parking elsewhere is problematic for their use
10 unless there's an opportunity for a safer crossing
11 at Route 31. So, you know, without some other
12 improvements, this would be difficult to do and
13 not negatively impact their property.

14 So it's really identified here only
15 because it is parking now, that you could lower
16 that area without negatively impacting a parking
17 use for most of the time, which makes it appealing
18 as an area for the storage. But your point is
19 taken, that, you know, there's some sensitivity to
20 showing -- particularly in an area that has an
21 active use for a building we expect to remain.

22 MEMBER VARGULICH: Also the fact that in
23 lowering that area, you're going to increase the
24 frequency in which it does flood and they can't

1 use it --

2 MR. COLBY: Yes.

3 MEMBER VARGULICH: -- compared to where it
4 is now. It's less likely that if you lower that
5 whole area and put it back as parking, there's
6 just going to be a higher frequency of flooding,
7 and then they can't use it, and that would be
8 another issue.

9 MR. COLBY: Yeah. And I think in that
10 scenario we'd want to have an alternative location
11 for sort of the more permanent parking, and maybe
12 that serves almost as their more temporary visitor
13 parking similar to how the public parking is used.
14 So it would have to be -- there would have to be
15 more to it than just lowering the parking lot, but
16 I think it's something that should be noted here.
17 So I appreciate the comment.

18 So the active river feasibility study
19 alternatives -- I have highlighted on here the
20 west shoreline. As you can see in alternative
21 one, there's a significant amount of land area
22 that's being added along the west side. And as
23 noted on here, sort of the riparian areas are
24 actually past this path that's shown, so there

1 potentially is sort of useable open space along
2 the river that would be added in this alternative,
3 that would pretty significantly add land area
4 along the west side.

5 In the other two alternatives where
6 there's a secondary channel, the area of land
7 being added along the west side is quite a bit
8 narrower. It isn't necessarily adding a lot of
9 useable area, but it is relatively flat because
10 that area is relatively low currently.

11 You can see the third alternative is
12 fairly similar to the second in terms of the land
13 area that could potentially be added.

14 So then looking at land uses for the west
15 side, most of the property is identified as mixed
16 use that reflects the current zoning that's out
17 there today. It identified that there's existing
18 residential development here, that it's going to
19 be valuable to preserve that area since it is a
20 fairly intact grouping of buildings. But then the
21 rest of the study area is identified for mixed
22 use.

23 It identified an open space corridor along
24 the State Street Creek and an open space area

1 along the riverfront, and with a note on here that
2 this could function as open space or it could
3 function as parking.

4 If the active river project is constructed
5 and there ends up being a lot of open space that's
6 along the riverfront there, it may make sense to
7 keep some of the parking there as sort of an
8 access point for people to be able to access the
9 park, be able to pull up and drop someone off,
10 maybe some shorter term parking there.

11 If the shoreline remains in its current
12 location, it may be a better use of this space to
13 have it as usable open space and have the parking
14 relocated elsewhere potentially on the west side
15 of Route 31 if there's a means to cross Route 31
16 safely.

17 So the areas identified in blue are shown
18 as to be determined. If they are to remain in the
19 floodplain, it's likely that they could continue
20 to function as surface parking or even potentially
21 structured parking and if they were -- or open
22 space; and if they were removed, they would be
23 locations that could be developed for mixed use.

24 Then the assumption would be that the

1 parking would be either incorporated into the
2 project, or it could be provided within a
3 centralized structure that might be located on
4 this block, for example, or there could even be,
5 depending on the scale of the development, more
6 than one parking structure within each block.

7 So the improvement opportunities that
8 exist, as I mentioned, potential for parking
9 structure locations. There is some grade change
10 in this block around the VFW where you potentially
11 have access on slightly different levels without
12 necessarily needing a series of ramps, or they
13 could be smaller ramps, so there's some benefit to
14 that area.

15 This area if it remains a floodplain
16 either remaining as parking or potentially as a
17 structured parking that potentially exists.

18 We discussed that having some sort of
19 controlled crossing along Route 31 would reduce
20 the need for there to be parking on the east side
21 along the riverfront. The potential location, if
22 there were to be a traffic signal installed, would
23 be on State Street. That would have benefits both
24 to pedestrians but also to vehicular traffic in

1 accessing this area and increasing the safety and
2 potentially slowing down traffic along Route 31.

3 Also on Route 31, potential to add
4 pedestrian infrastructure. That might be
5 sidewalks or other kinds of landscaping or
6 streetscape that might make this sidewalk a little
7 more pleasant to walk along the street.

8 There's also the potential to consider
9 reducing the number of lanes on Route 31. This
10 was done further to the north a few years ago
11 where a section that was two through lanes in each
12 direction was replaced by a single through lane in
13 each direction and a turn line along the center.
14 So it reduced the total width of the street to
15 three lanes.

16 There's a potential that something like
17 that could be considered in this area if there is
18 an interest in trying to sort of reduce the width
19 of pavement and also reduce the room that's
20 available for pedestrian improvements.

21 Regardless of whether the active river
22 project is installed or not, there is potential to
23 provide a trail that links the bike bridge down
24 underneath the railroad trestle and along the

1 shoreline to connect at least to this location on
2 State Street and provide a more direct connection
3 from the downtown area on the west side to reach
4 this bridge across.

5 Also if this becomes more of a defined
6 pedestrian crossing location, then it also
7 provides linkages from this area to sort of the
8 rest of downtown without having to either cross
9 against uncontrolled traffic or having to walk
10 down to Main Street to reach a traffic signal.

11 Also identified, ideally if there was some
12 redevelopment or parking reconstruction in this
13 area, it would be preferred to establish some type
14 of cross access in this area so that there is the
15 ability to sort of move between these properties
16 without necessarily having to go all the way
17 around this large block.

18 MEMBER VARGULICH: Russ, I like the idea
19 of adding the traffic signal at State Street and
20 31 for a variety of reasons. I was thinking the
21 land use, unless there is just really nothing that
22 can be done about the floodplain, having parking
23 or a parking deck remain on Route 31 as a gateway
24 coming into St. Charles is less than desirable

1 unless it's absolutely necessary to have the
2 floodplain without a lot of extraneous costs.

3 And I'm not really sure how the trail
4 connection physically works heading north of
5 Salerno's because as soon as you get to the other
6 side to get above it, the river widens out from
7 Boy Scout Island, and there doesn't seem to be a
8 lot of space to accomplish --

9 MR. COLBY: Yeah.

10 MEMBER VARGULICH: -- what we've talked
11 about.

12 MR. COLBY: I think that would be in the
13 form of stairs down, up the north side, and you
14 would have -- you may have to cantilever a trail
15 or a bridge sort of underneath along the river.

16 It would -- it wouldn't necessarily be
17 kind of a flat, direct trail linkage, but you
18 would at least get along the shoreline up to a
19 point, and then you'd have to figure out how to
20 make that connection up to the bridge. So it's
21 something that would require some analysis, and it
22 would not necessarily be a simple connection.

23 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yeah. You know, it
24 almost would seem like you'd want to take the

1 trail, assuming you put in a traffic light on
2 State and 31, and cross over and then had a nice
3 trail on the west side of Route 31 that connects
4 to the sidewalk and already crosses underneath the
5 trestle and then ramps all the way up to the trail
6 for that improvement that's already been done.

7 Especially if you go through the effort of
8 getting a signalized intersection, that would seem
9 like a lot safer and consistent way to move people
10 on lines rather than having them potentially use
11 stairs or other things like that.

12 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Where is the
13 connection? Doesn't it loop around?

14 MR. COLBY: Yes. But the trail sort of
15 dies out right in this area to the south.

16 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yeah. The trail dies
17 out, but extending that trail south along 31 to
18 State Street and then crossing at a signalized
19 intersection to then potentially go past Carroll
20 Towers and the Baker Hotel, assuming the fact that
21 the project happens and all that waterfront lowers
22 to make that connection to the lower part of the
23 riverwalk, which is something we've already talked
24 about, so.

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Russ, I have a
2 question. Isn't there -- when you're talking
3 about the cross-access drive or street, isn't
4 there an alley there now?

5 MR. COLBY: There is --

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It's south of
7 the --

8 MR. COLBY: There's not a formal alley.
9 It's just parking lots that are sort of connected
10 together.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: There's curb cut
12 on 4th Street, isn't there?

13 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Yeah, there is.

14 MR. COLBY: Yes, and it's really just --
15 it's just this entrance to this parking lot.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It goes into
17 parking. So it's private property.

18 MR. COLBY: Yes. There's a number of
19 parking lots that abut each other. There is cross
20 access between these two sites and these three
21 buildings, but that access I believe is cut off at
22 this location.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

24 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Can you put up

1 barriers?

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And we talked
3 about the Salerno property. That's not in play at
4 this time for redevelopment, is it?

5 MR. COLBY: No. It's a potential
6 redevelopment if the property owner had an
7 interest in offering it for development.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Because, you know,
9 all of the ideas for the parking and lowering the
10 grade with the two parking lots and, you know,
11 compensatory drainage for the floodplain, there's
12 a lot of potential to use that property there
13 as well.

14 Possibly, you know, Peter mentioned not
15 taking the parking, and I don't believe that would
16 be necessary, but the structured parking, you
17 could do that if you lowered the grade and then
18 accept more water. You could do that for
19 structured. The structured parking may even work
20 better along the railroad.

21 MR. COLBY: I know the Salerno's site
22 right now -- it's mostly outside of the
23 floodplain, so the benefit there is it's
24 developable today.

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: As it is.

2 MR. COLBY: Yes.

3 MEMBER VARGULICH: I think, Tim, the
4 combination of lowering the parking lot was really
5 the municipal parking lot that the City owns and
6 potentially the private parking lot that's owned
7 by Carroll Towers. It had nothing to do with
8 doing anything to the north of State Street Creek
9 with Salerno's.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That's why I'm
11 saying we may be able to include that because we
12 haven't had that discussion because it's not in
13 play at this point.

14 MR. COLBY: So I drafted some
15 recommendations. These were not included in the
16 packet. This generally follows what I presented.

17 So the primary land uses are mixed use,
18 and there's kind of three different scenarios for
19 what might happen with the floodplain.

20 Working with the existing floodplain, you
21 could utilize those parcels for parking or open
22 space. That really does limit the development
23 potential on Route 31. There's opportunities to
24 improve the layout, appearance, landscaping,

1 amenities around those parking lots to make them
2 more appealing and to make that entrance into
3 downtown along Route 31 more -- have an improved
4 design. But the development potential would be
5 limited if you leave the floodplain where it's at.

6 The second alternative, which shows the
7 lowering and some areas being fill, that would
8 consolidate and relocate the floodplain to the
9 riverfront creek. This provides an opportunity
10 for a greenway along the State Street Creek and
11 open space along the riverfront because that area
12 would not necessarily be negatively impacted if it
13 were added to the floodplain that was still open
14 space.

15 It would also provide additional
16 development parcels then fronting along Route 31.
17 You would be able to sort of utilize those
18 building footprints where they may have access to
19 the parking and other development that exists to
20 the west and have a more attractive type of
21 development that's consistent with downtown as
22 opposed to having parking lots fronting on
23 Route 31.

24 The third option would be to try and

1 provide the floodplain storage elsewhere. This
2 would really maximize the development footprint in
3 this quadrant. This is what the City did with the
4 First Street project, where the floodplain area
5 was provided off site. It's actually down the
6 river quite a ways on the east side in a park
7 area; and, essentially, the floodplain storage
8 volume that was located where the First Street
9 project along the riverfront was located was just
10 relocated outside of downtown.

11 So if there were an opportunity to do
12 that, you could significantly improve the
13 development potential of this area. Obviously,
14 there's costs associated with doing that, and you
15 have to have the land available. It's not a
16 simple proposition, but it's something that could
17 be done.

18 The other recommendations, that public
19 parking structures are needed in this area to
20 serve the northwest quadrant downtown, including
21 the Main Street businesses. So there isn't a
22 situation where you're just supporting the parking
23 needs of this development. There's also quite a
24 bit of parking demand within the downtown in that

1 area.

2 Building scale similar to the east side,
3 the height of the current zoning is appropriate
4 and the taller structures would require review.
5 If there is anything that's in closer proximity to
6 the river, there was a discussion about trying to
7 step down the height to try and keep the river a
8 little more open if there are buildings close by.

9 Improving the pedestrian trail
10 infrastructure -- we talked about some kind of
11 connection between the bike bridge and the State
12 Street, Route 31 area, whether that's on the
13 riverfront or along Route 31, like Peter was
14 suggesting.

15 Potential to narrow Route 31 and improve
16 and extend the sidewalks along the frontage to try
17 and make it a little more of a -- have a downtown
18 feel versus kind of a highway design.

19 Traffic network improvements -- a traffic
20 signal on State and Route 31. That would improve
21 walkability in the area and also improve access to
22 both sides of the river both for pedestrians and
23 vehicles.

24 And also some kind of cross access between

1 4th Street and Route 31 on North State Street that
2 could take the form of just shared cross access.
3 It could take the form of a small right-of-way
4 depending on if something is done with the creek
5 in that area. It might be an opportunity to
6 utilize some of that frontage as an open space and
7 also provide an access way that would serve
8 adjacent properties.

9 I think that was the conclusion of the
10 west side recommendations.

11 MEMBER PRETZ: Nice job, Russ.

12 MR. COLBY: Thank you.

13 Any further comments?

14 What we plan to do is bring back more
15 finalized versions at the next meeting for the
16 Commission to review and if you're prepared to
17 take action on making a recommendation to the City
18 Council on the recommendations. I'll take into
19 consideration each of the comments that were
20 offered and provide revised versions for the next
21 meeting packet.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

23 MEMBER FUNKE: Is there any way that --
24 now that we have this study and we're looking at

1 this, where we could actually create, like, a
2 master plan, show massing, show some sort of
3 streetscape that could evolve from this that would
4 get a potential investor/developer excited about
5 the possibilities of building in this area?

6 MR. COLBY: Yeah. I think that's
7 something that we'll be discussing with the City
8 Council as to whether they would like to engage in
9 that kind of exercise, particularly with respect
10 to the police station site in anticipation that
11 the City may offer that for development and seek a
12 request for proposals.

13 Do we want to engage in that type of
14 exercise so that we can sort of -- kind of add
15 some more context to these plan recommendations in
16 a physical form? That's something we'll be asking
17 the City Council for direction on.

18 MEMBER FUNKE: Because I see that, you
19 know, Cedar Street would have a great potential
20 for, like, that idea that Main Street is similar
21 to 1st Avenue where you're creating that -- you've
22 got the plaza and you've got the -- you know, it
23 would make Cedar Street, seeing that it's off of
24 Main Street and Main Street is a busy street, and

1 it's not very conducive for pedestrians, that, you
2 know, Cedar Street, you can have a lot of those,
3 you know, the restaurants that have the outdoor
4 terraces off of Cedar Street. I mean, you can
5 actually see, you know, the back of those
6 buildings.

7 So the opportunity of creating a
8 connection, creating that street, you know, that
9 landscape, I think it would be great at that
10 location to sort of delineate that or show that to
11 a potential, you know, developer or investor. It
12 may be pretty exciting to, you know, create that
13 potential.

14 The same thing on the east side, if there
15 is a possibility of coming up with a master plan
16 that, you know, can give a vision to somebody or a
17 developer for the potential, it would be a great
18 asset.

19 MR. COLBY: All right. Thank you.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Thank you.

21 All right. That concludes No. 4 on our
22 agenda.

23 And now No. 5, Rules of Procedure
24 Amendment, Pledge of Allegiance.

1 I think that's among us. So after our
2 last meeting, staff was directed, and a motion was
3 made too to prepare an amendment to the Plan
4 Commission rules of procedure to add a Pledge of
5 Allegiance as an agenda item.

6 Essentially, that's all on page -- it's on
7 page 6 of our rules of procedure under our order
8 of business. It would be No. 3 on our agenda to
9 say the Pledge of Allegiance regularly at the
10 meetings.

11 I know there was some discussion about
12 making it a part of the rules of procedure,
13 perhaps not making it, but I believe if it's in
14 the rules of procedure, it would become part of
15 our agenda.

16 MR. COLBY: Yes. It would be listed as a
17 regular agenda item.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So is there a
19 motion to approve the changes in the rules of
20 procedure, the St. Charles Plan Commission rules
21 of procedure?

22 MEMBER PRETZ: I'll make that motion.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

24 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: I'll second.

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Any discussion on
2 the motion?

3 I just feel compelled to -- you know, as I
4 said, it's not the hill I intend to die on; and
5 being on the Plan Commission, I'll certainly
6 follow the rules and procedures.

7 But I don't agree that we make it part of
8 our order of business simply because of the type
9 of body that we are. I know, as Tom pointed out,
10 that it's common that some Plan Commissions do say
11 the Pledge of Allegiance, some don't.

12 But I'd also point out that we're a quasi
13 judicial body that exists by the statute of the
14 State and the City of St. Charles, unlike other
15 commissions in the City.

16 I'd also like to point out that we operate
17 by rules of evidence, and that it's unheard of
18 actually to say the Pledge of Allegiance in a
19 court of law where evidentiary evidence is being
20 used.

21 So I think it's inappropriate, and I also
22 am very concerned about the climate in which we're
23 attempting to do it. I believe mandatory
24 recitation kind of takes away from the strength of

Transcript of Comprehensive Plan Update for Downtown
Conducted on August 20, 2019

62

1 the Pledge itself. So I'm just going to go on
2 record as making those comments.

3 And any other discussion?

4 (No response.)

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right.

6 Funke.

7 MEMBER FUNKE: Yes.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Pretz.

9 MEMBER PRETZ: Yes.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Holderfield.

11 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: No.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Vargulich.

13 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yes.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Purdy.

15 MEMBER MACKLIN-PURDY: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Melton.

17 MEMBER MELTON: Yes.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Kessler, no.

19 All right. That motion passes. 5 to 2.

20 All right. So I believe that goes into

21 effect at our next meeting. Would that be

22 correct? All right. That concludes No. 5.

23 No. 6 on our agenda is additional business
24 from Plan Commission members or staff.

1 Any additional business from the Plan
2 Commission?

3 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: I need to say I won't
4 be attending the next meeting. Is this the proper
5 time to say it?

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Good timing.

7 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: Okay.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: We'll miss you.

9 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: This is my wing man
10 here.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Staff,
12 anything?

13 (No response.)

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right. Then
15 weekly development report, we got that. I have
16 the comment again that it's a very nice report.
17 It's very helpful to keep abreast of everything
18 that's going on and where it's at. So I
19 appreciate that. Thank you.

20 Meeting announcements, we have a meeting
21 on September 3rd, September 17th, October 8th. It
22 should be noted on September 3rd, the next meeting
23 will be at Century Station across the street.

24 Do we have items for that meeting?

1 MR. COLBY: Yes. We anticipate the
2 comprehensive plan will be on the agenda for
3 review.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Plan development
5 September 9th and October 14th.

6 Public comment?

7 (No response.)

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That brings us
9 then to No. 10 on the agenda, and that's
10 adjournment.

11 Is there a motion?

12 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: So moved.

13 MEMBER FUNKE: Second.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All in favor.

15 (Ayes heard.)

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: The St. Charles
17 Plan Commission adjourns at 8:17.

18 (Off the record at 8:17 p.m.)

19

20

21

22

23

24

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, Joanne E. Ely, Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 84-4169, CSR, RPR, and a Notary Public in and for the County of Kane, State of Illinois, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the proceedings, that said proceedings were taken by me stenographically and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my supervision, and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 27th day of August, 2019.

My commission expires: May 16, 2020



Notary Public in and for the
State of Illinois