

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2014**

Members Present: Tim Kessler, Vice Chairman
 Brian Doyle
 Tom Schuetz
 Tom Pretz

Members Absent: Todd Wallace, Chairman
 Curt Henningson
 Sue Amatangelo

Also Present: Rita Tungare, Director of Community & Economic Dev.
 Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
 Matthew O'Rourke, Planner

 Court Reporter

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Kessler.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Presentation of minutes of the November 5, 2013 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Schuetz, seconded by Mr. Doyle and unanimously passed by voice vote to accept the minutes of the November 5, 2013 meeting.

**4. Foxwood Square PUD – 309 S. 6th Ave. (SGC Builders Inc.)
Application for Concept Plan**

The attached transcript prepared by Chicago Area Real Time Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

**5. First Street Redevelopment PUD (First Street Development LLC)
Application for Concept Plan for Phase 3**

The attached transcript prepared by Chicago Area Real Time Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

6. Meeting Announcements

Tuesday, January 21, 2014 at 7:00pm Century Station
Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 7:00pm Century Station

7. Additional Business from Plan Commission Members, Staff, or Citizens.-None.

8. Adjournment at 9:03PM

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STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
COUNTY OF KANE)

BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES

In Re the Matter of:)
)
Foxwood Square PUD,)
Application for)
Concept Plan.)

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
Council Chambers
2 East Main Street
St. Charles, Illinois 60174
January 7, 2014
7:00 p.m.

Reported by: Joanne E. Ely,
CSR, RPR
Notary Public, Kane County, Illinois

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PRESENT:

- MR. TIM KESSLER, Vice Chairman;
- MR. BRIAN DOYLE, Member;
- MR. THOMAS PRETZ, Member; and
- MR. TOM SCHUETZ, Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

- MR. RUSSELL COLBY, Planning Division Manager;
- MR. MATTHEW O'ROURKE, Planner; and
- MS. RITA TUNGARE, Community Development Director.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: This meeting of
2 the St. Charles Plan Commission will come to order.
3 Schuetz.

4 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Here.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Doyle.

6 MEMBER DOYLE: Here.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Pretz.

8 MEMBER PRETZ: Here.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Kessler here.
10 Okay. No. 3 on the agenda is the
11 presentation of the minutes from the November 5th,
12 2013, meeting.

13 Is there a motion to approve?

14 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Motion to approve as
15 written.

16 MEMBER DOYLE: Second.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It's been moved
18 and seconded, and the minutes are accepted.

19 Item No. 4 on our agenda is the Foxwood
20 Square PUD at 309 South 6th Avenue. That's SGC
21 Builders. It's an application for a concept plan.

22 An application for a concept plan is simply
23 an effort to review a concept for development, and
24 there will be no formal action taken on this, but we

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1 will get feedback from the Plan Commission and from the
2 public for the applicant as to what this Commission
3 believes is the viability of the plan.

4 So with that, we're ready to hear from the
5 applicant on the Foxwood Square PUD. Could you tell us
6 your name and address, please.

7 MR. CIAMPI: The address?

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Name and
9 address.

10 MR. CIAMPI: Yeah. Michael Ciampi. The
11 address is 825 Laurel Drive in Aurora, Illinois.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Thank you.

13 MR. CIAMPI: As stated, I'm Michael
14 Ciampi, president of Michael Vincent Custom Homes.
15 I've partnered with my father, Gary Ciampi, of SGC
16 Builders and Developers. We are currently under
17 contract with Home State Bank to purchase the property
18 at 309 South 6th Avenue, known as Foxwood Square.

19 A little history on the property, recent
20 history. In the early 2000s, it was a single-family
21 home. A developer purchased the property and got
22 approval from the city to redevelop the property to
23 five duplex sites and turn the historic mansion into a
24 sixth duplex site.

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1 The developer built two units and could not
2 or, you know, had difficulty selling them. Obviously,
3 his timing was about '07 or '08, so the market was very
4 tough. They were very large units, about 3,000 square
5 feet apiece and subsequently priced high, and he could
6 not sell them and went into bankruptcy.

7 The bank took the building over, and there
8 has been no improvements, no anything done to the
9 existing property. The current duplex that has been
10 built has residents in there. I don't know if they
11 bought them from the developer or from the bank or
12 anything like that. They are not part of any of this
13 presentation or anything like that.

14 We are looking to redevelop the property to
15 multi-family as well, but include tearing down the old
16 mansion to form a better use of the property.

17 As you'll see when we go through some of our
18 stuff, we're looking to add three units more than the
19 original zoning had called for. We are looking to
20 shrink the scale of the properties. Right now
21 approved, they're about 3,000-square-foot each on the
22 duplex. We're looking to be about 1800 to 2,000
23 square feet.

24 We want to go to a little less expensive

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1 materials on the exterior, brick and siding similar to
2 developments that are near the area and similar to
3 existing homes that surround the area.

4 As we skip through to page 20, here it shows
5 the old -- or the original approved site plan from
6 2007. You can see what was proposed and approved
7 before. The Building B is the existing building that
8 has been built. The kind of shaded-out building in the
9 center is the existing Judd House that is there.

10 The property then called for four more
11 duplexes to be built surrounding the Judd House in
12 an U-shape, and then that existing driveway to be
13 installed having access to all the buildings from the
14 rear where the garages would be.

15 We feel like this plan is not a very good
16 site plan and not a very good development plan from the
17 aspect of the house is so large on the property and
18 placed right in the center, it poses very strong
19 restrictions to any parking on the property, the scale
20 of the driveways being very skinny, and access to the
21 buildings being very cramped.

22 We feel like it's tough for emergency
23 vehicles to get in there. It's very tough for any snow
24 removal, snowplowing to be done. Garbage pickup, if

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1 you had to get anywhere inside to the interior there
2 would be very difficult.

3 If we scroll up to page 17, you will see what
4 we have proposed for a new site plan of the
5 development. Building B is that existing two-unit
6 building that's there now. As you can see, the biggest
7 change is the Judd House is removed. This plan calls
8 for much more open space, a much more open concept.

9 Obviously, the removal of the mansion gives a
10 large vestibule in the center, a courtyard feel, that
11 could be greenery and kind of give an overall courtyard
12 to the buildings. It allows much more accessible and
13 usable driveway areas.

14 The two spots to the west on 5th Avenue
15 there, we have two kind of little spots there that
16 could be used for overnight parking. It could be used
17 for snow storage and plowing situations in this time of
18 year. We like this plan. It adds -- the existing had
19 two guest parkings onsite which are the south -- off
20 6th Avenue there, there's a south little driveway it
21 shows. Those were the only parking spaces for the
22 existing development.

23 Now, doing this, we keep those two parking
24 spaces plus we add six more, three on either side of

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1 that courtyard in the center. Plus, we have the
2 ability -- in between Building E and D to the south, we
3 have a little spot there that could be extended to make
4 two more parking spaces, or it could be kept that size
5 to maybe have a dumpster onsite that would serve all
6 these buildings as one main dumpster that would have a
7 weekly pickup.

8 We feel one thing the other plan struggled
9 with was the tightness from the actual drive area to
10 the front of the garage door areas. There was only
11 about 3 feet in between the drive and the doors, making
12 it very difficult for a car to back in or back out or
13 drive in there.

14 The driveway on the previous plan was about
15 12 feet. So if you add that 12 and 3, it gives you
16 about 15 feet to back a car out of your garage or pull
17 into the garage. It was very tight.

18 This plan here gives you about 12 to 14 feet
19 from the garage to where the driveway starts there. So
20 it's a much more usable space to maneuver vehicles.
21 People who have smaller compact cars, that's enough
22 space to actually park a car there outside the garage,
23 which would add more onsite parking.

24 We feel like this leaves a lot more access

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1 for emergency vehicles. If you ever had to get a fire
2 truck in there or an ambulance in there, that would
3 allow a lot more room to maneuver around.

4 So the overall site plan, we feel like this
5 is a better developed plan from what was there and
6 allows for more open space and allows for aesthetically
7 a better looking development.

8 Scroll down to page 18 here. It shows an
9 elevation of what we're kind of proposing for a
10 building here. You can see the building -- this is a
11 three-unit building here. The garage and the front
12 doors are on the same level, the ground level. There
13 is no basement under here. The second level would be
14 your kitchen, the family room, the bathroom area, and
15 the upper floor would be sleeping quarters.

16 The units, like I said, we want to shrink the
17 size of the individual units to keep the cost down to
18 be able to sell them at a more reasonable price for
19 what we feel like this area would hold.

20 Switching materials to siding and brick fits
21 in with similar developments that are to the north, the
22 Heritage Square, which is a recent development that was
23 done. It's a mixed-use development. Also the
24 surrounding single-family homes in the area are all

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1 siding or brick and siding or -- yeah, brick and
2 siding.

3 The other stuff we want to talk about is the
4 zoning. As it's brought up in the memo, the current
5 zoning is the R-T4, which calls for single-family or
6 duplex units. The CBD-2 zoning, which is a zoning that
7 would allow for a mixed use, a business use, which we
8 would not want, but would allow for three-unit
9 buildings like this is the zoning we would like to be
10 acquired in here.

11 If we look at page 5 and page 6, it kind of
12 talks about zoning review for and compares the current
13 R-T4 zoning, and then all the way on the right is the
14 CBD-2 zoning, and the gray-shaded box would be kind of
15 what our concept plan is calling for right now.

16 If you compare the minimum lot areas, the
17 zoning calls for 3,000 square feet minimum. The
18 current pads, as they sit, are a little under that.
19 They're about 2,683 square foot per unit, but rewriting
20 the PUD, which would have to be done if we took down
21 the mansion and added a couple three-unit buildings, we
22 could probably get our minimum lot area up to that
23 conforming 3,000 square feet.

24 The density calls for 14.5 dwelling units per

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1 acre. With our total of 15 units, the two being
2 already developed, it gives us about 16.2 dwelling
3 units per acre. So it's about -- there is a property
4 to the north that has 15 dwelling units per acre. That
5 is the CBD-2 District. So we're about one dwelling
6 unit more than that would be.

7 Maximum building coverage -- the allotted is
8 40 percent. We're much lower than that at 34 percent.

9 The maximum building height is 40 feet. We
10 don't have actual elevations that show what the height
11 would be, but it would be less than 40 feet. I know
12 that.

13 The minimum front yards -- they allow for 5
14 feet. We have 10 feet.

15 The minimum side yards require 5 feet
16 minimum. We have 8 feet.

17 The minimum rear yard requires 20. We only
18 have 8, but we cannot have 20 because we don't really
19 have a -- what they consider the rear yard here is
20 along the 5th Avenue part of the parcel, but we will
21 have a building facing 5th Avenue there because all the
22 buildings face the streets. So we could not possibly
23 get a 20-foot rear yard there.

24 The maximum number of buildings on a lot --

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1 there's no limit as long as the lot dimensions are met.
2 We would have six buildings on this site.

3 And off-street parking, as we talked about
4 before, they only require one per unit. We would have
5 two per unit, plus six additional stalls.

6 So that's our main plan for the development
7 here at Foxwood Square. We're looking tonight to get
8 some feedback from the Plan Commission and everybody on
9 kind of what they think.

10 Our top three goals are, of course,
11 getting -- is taking the old Judd House down, allowing
12 for the three extra units than were previously
13 approved, so three more units, and then just overall
14 thoughts on the concept plan, on the site plan, the
15 open areas, and the materials used on the exterior of
16 the building.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Plan Commission,
21 questions, comments.

22 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I do. I've got a few.
23 It was Michael; right?

24 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

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1 MEMBER SCHUETZ: St. Charles, as you
2 well know, is a very historical town. The Fox Valley
3 is very historical. Have you given any thought, if you
4 were to remove the Judd House, of potentially having
5 something in that center area that looks as though it
6 may not necessarily be that useful except open space,
7 and that's great, but something along the lines of a
8 historical marker maybe -- I don't want to say museum,
9 but I want to say like the history of the Judd House,
10 something, if it were to be --

11 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: -- allowed to be taken
13 down, you know, to just add some interest to the site
14 that's historical?

15 MR. CIAMPI: Yes. Absolutely. I
16 think -- I'm very familiar with the house. I went to
17 Lincoln School right across the street there and grew
18 up in St. Charles my whole life.

19 So, yeah, I'm open to stuff that would kind
20 of help, you know, whether it's a brick kind of
21 monument with a plaque or something, you know, talking
22 about the history or saying, you know, the Judd Mansion
23 built in, I think it was 1878 or 1898 or something like
24 that and doing that would, you know, kind of let people

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1 know what was there previously and kind of what the
2 history was on the site. I haven't given any thought
3 to, I guess, what you could do, I guess, but yeah.

4 MEMBER SCHUETZ: That can be developed.

5 MR. CIAMPI: Yes. I think we're open to
6 that kind of stuff and keeping, you know, the history
7 of what was there and that stuff.

8 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I have another
9 question.

10 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

11 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Heritage Square was
12 mentioned. Are those all occupied?

13 MR. CIAMPI: I do not know.

14 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Pardon me?

15 MR. CIAMPI: I don't know.

16 MEMBER SCHUETZ: All right. I'm good
17 for now. Thank you.

18 MR. CIAMPI: Okay.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Anything else?
20 Brian?

21 MEMBER DOYLE: What's your primary
22 reason for wanting to demolish the Judd House?

23 MR. CIAMPI: Well, one, I don't feel
24 it's a very attractive house, even though it has a lot

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1 of history behind it. I feel like the front porch has
2 these very large stones. I feel like the brick and
3 just some of the aesthetics of it aren't very
4 attractive, and I feel like with being all new
5 development around there, I feel like people want to be
6 surrounded by new buildings versus older buildings that
7 don't look as good, I guess. I think an older building
8 that looks really nice, I think, has a lot more merit
9 and a lot more -- a better feel to it aesthetically.

10 And secondly, the use of the overall space, I
11 think, the building being so large and right in the
12 center just hurts the ability to really develop
13 buildings around it without being crammed and without
14 being -- you know, if you drive by it now, Building B
15 that's up, and you feel like they could walk out their
16 window, you know, and touch the Judd House almost.

17 So it's just very crammed and very tight. I
18 think that's for me the main reason why. I think it's
19 harder to develop it -- it would be harder to sell
20 units with the mansion there than without the mansion,
21 I guess.

22 MEMBER DOYLE: Do you regard it as a
23 historical landmark?

24 MR. CIAMPI: I don't know. I guess it's

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1 hard to say. Like I said, I went to Lincoln School
2 right down the street. So, you know, I'm 33 now. So I
3 don't know how old I was then, you know, in my -- you
4 know, 6 to 10, I think I went there, something like
5 that, 6 to 11. I remember walking by all the time. I
6 had friends off on South Avenue that we would always
7 hang out there after school.

8 Certainly it was -- it looked a lot nicer
9 than it does now because it had all the trees around
10 it. It was, of course, in better shape. People were
11 living there. It had more of that old, historic
12 mansion type feel, where it took up the whole block.
13 It had large trees. It had more of a presence, I
14 guess.

15 Now when I see it, it looks kind of tired.
16 It looks -- you know, with the trees down and
17 everything that the other developer did, it looks kind
18 of like it doesn't belong there anymore. It's just
19 kind of holding on, and so I don't know. It's
20 historic, I guess, because it's been there forever.
21 It's a large building. It has some history behind it.
22 So I guess yes and no, if that makes sense.

23 MEMBER DOYLE: Have you considered ways
24 to possibly preserving that?

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1 MR. CIAMPI: Yes, yes. We have gone
2 through and looked at ways, I guess, to do it. We
3 talked with the Historic Commission about doing some
4 stuff as well. They kind of agreed with the placement
5 of the building being very difficult to work around.
6 They had suggested maybe trying to move the building up
7 further to the east on the site towards 6th Avenue.

8 I talked to a couple people, Dan Marshall,
9 who did the drawings for us, and just some other
10 subcontractors. I use concrete guys and excavators who
11 have been around for a long time and have done a lot of
12 stuff. They thought you could probably move it. The
13 problem I think we face is the expense of it,
14 obviously, pouring a brand new foundation for that
15 large of a building. Getting to move it, we would have
16 to kind of gut the whole interior and then move the
17 building and then rebuild the interior.

18 So when we kind of went around either moving
19 it or keeping it, it was simply I thought too expensive
20 for what you could recoup, I guess.

21 MEMBER DOYLE: Okay. Just one more
22 question.

23 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

24 MEMBER DOYLE: In the findings of fact

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1 for Ordinance No. 2000-Z-16, which is the ordinance
2 that designated the house as a landmark --

3 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

4 MEMBER DOYLE: -- one of the findings of
5 fact that had to be answered was in 2002, that the
6 property is suitable for preservation and restoration,
7 and the home has been well-maintained, and the findings
8 of fact was the current owner, Thomas and Pat Matesky,
9 have made great effort to restore the property in the
10 appropriate manner.

11 What's the condition of the home and the
12 interior? What sort of -- this finding of fact
13 references efforts that were made prior to 2000 to
14 restore the property.

15 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

16 MEMBER DOYLE: So I'm just curious what
17 we're giving up in terms of previous efforts.

18 MR. CIAMPI: It's been vacant now since
19 I think '07 or '08. It doesn't have any utilities as
20 far as heat or cooling or anything like that on in the
21 building.

22 I walked through it maybe a month ago, but we
23 found a lot of the bad stuff. A lot of windows don't
24 close. So they're open to the elements. There seems

1 to be a lot of water damage and possible mold in the
2 third -- there's a finished third floor with attics on
3 either side. Those seem to have a lot of dampness and
4 a lot of -- you can't see much because there's no
5 lights in there but -- of course, the plumbing is all
6 original. There's some bathrooms that, you know, it
7 looks like the toilets are almost original, very old,
8 pull chain on the tanks, very old styles. The kitchen,
9 although it's not original, it looks very old.

10 So I think the problem we would find is, of
11 course, updating it to new codes being electrical, the
12 plumbing, HVAC. It's all plaster and lathe, of course.
13 So that presumably would have to be gutted and then
14 kind of done.

15 The floors are not in very good shape, of
16 course, and the windows are very old. They're not in
17 good shape. I didn't go on the roof or anything like
18 that. I mean, it would be -- it would have to be, in
19 my opinion, just completely gutted and redone.

20 MEMBER DOYLE: That's all the questions
21 I have right now.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Tom.

23 MEMBER PRETZ: I have two questions.

24 In your appearance before the Historic

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1 Preservation Commission --

2 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

3 MEMBER PRETZ: -- it was a
4 recommendation to secure a third party to justify some
5 of your visual --

6 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

7 MEMBER PRETZ: -- in the building.

8 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

9 MEMBER PRETZ: Have you done that?

10 MR. CIAMPI: We have not. We have
11 talked to -- I have talked to the bank. They had a guy
12 out of Wheaton who they had talked to before about
13 doing that. We have just kind of put it off until we
14 kind of go through another informal meeting with the
15 Plan Commission and then our next one just to kind of
16 get some feedback from them.

17 We didn't want to spend a lot of money if we
18 felt like this wasn't going to go anywhere, I guess.
19 We kind of wanted to take the informal meetings a
20 little further before we went down that road, I guess.

21 MEMBER PRETZ: My other question came
22 from some recommendations, and I don't know if you
23 recall it at the end of the conversation, that there
24 was discussion to maybe preserve the building --

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1 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

2 MEMBER PRETZ: -- until the very final
3 phase --

4 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

5 MEMBER PRETZ: -- understanding that
6 it's possible that the building cannot be saved.

7 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

8 MEMBER PRETZ: So if demolition didn't
9 take place, then you would hopefully leave the building
10 up until you reached that end of the phase --

11 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

12 MEMBER PRETZ: -- so we didn't run into
13 another situation in town where we took down a building
14 but then didn't finish the project.

15 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

16 MEMBER PRETZ: Your thoughts on that.

17 MR. CIAMPI: I understand what the point
18 of doing that is and their kind of fear of, you know,
19 take down the building, and then, you know, we build
20 one unit, and it doesn't sell, and then, you know,
21 we're running from the project, and then you're left
22 with, you know, another half-developed project and the
23 building is gone.

24 So I think we appreciate that sentiment. I

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1 think we would probably rather take it down first just
2 to help with the aesthetics and just from a
3 construction side of having the room in there to do
4 what we need to do. We are going to have to move
5 around some existing utilities that have been done,
6 albeit either electric or water and sewer, that are
7 probably in the way of where we're trying to go with
8 stuff now. So I guess that would have a lot to do with
9 it, if you could get around the building with that or
10 not. But in a perfect world, we would probably like to
11 take the building down right away, I would say.

12 MEMBER PRETZ: I had one more and that
13 was in reference to -- because I know that part of your
14 presentation deals with the materials on the outside of
15 the building.

16 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

17 MEMBER PRETZ: My question doesn't
18 really pertain to whether there are less expensive
19 materials or not, but there is an existing building
20 from the earlier development.

21 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

22 MEMBER PRETZ: And in your design and
23 pictures and that, I'm not sure -- part of our
24 discussion in that other commission was the fact that

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1 how can you tie --

2 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

3 MEMBER PRETZ: -- that existing building
4 into -- blending into your --

5 MR. CIAMPI: Sure. Sure. Yeah. That
6 would certainly need some massaging. That building
7 that's there is not really anything like what we're
8 proposing. It's all brick and stone, a lot of
9 commercial stone on the bottom; and I think it was more
10 designed to kind of mimic or kind of tie into the Judd
11 House being a lot of limestone and brick.

12 So I think you could find aesthetically ways
13 to blend those together, but we haven't really gone
14 into depth of how or what we would do to do that.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Go ahead. Sure.

16 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I'm curious how things
17 were left with the Historical Commission.

18 MR. CIAMPI: They kind of --

19 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Is there support or no
20 support or whatever as far as the Judd House?

21 MR. CIAMPI: They wanted us to secure a
22 third party, what me and Tom were talking about, a
23 third party to come in there who is independent from us
24 and from Dan Marshall, the architect, and have them

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1 give their opinion of the condition of the building,
2 what it would maybe cost to save or if it's
3 salvageable, if it's movable, that kind of stuff.

4 It sounded to me like they would be open to
5 removing the building if they had no other option, I
6 guess, and they kind of left it as that. You know, it
7 was kind of get them -- have an independent report done
8 on the building and present that to them, and it would
9 give them some direction to say, yeah, we think this
10 is, you know, impossible to save or, yeah, we think we
11 could maybe do something with it.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Question on the
13 existing building. You had mentioned there's tenants
14 in there currently, in their 3,000-square-foot units.

15 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

16 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I can't recall. When
17 you say you will -- say, you go ahead with this
18 project, will you be revamping the inside of those
19 buildings to change the 3,000 to maybe 15 --

20 MR. CIAMPI: Nope. Nope. Because they
21 have nothing to do -- they're independent. Each
22 building pad has like its own PIN number, and so
23 they're all individual units. So that duplex that is
24 built, Building B, is essentially their own duplex

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1 right now. So they have nothing to do with what we do
2 as far as the zoning or remodeling or anything like
3 that.

4 MEMBER SCHUETZ: They would stay there.

5 MR. CIAMPI: Correct. Yes.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I have a couple
7 of questions, Michael.

8 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You know, you
10 talked at the very beginning about some of the issues
11 that are facing the existing PUD.

12 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Emergency,
14 garbage pickup, and all that sort of thing.

15 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: But it seems to
17 me that those were answered in the initial
18 presentation. I mean, all of those things meet code
19 and are standard.

20 MR. CIAMPI: Sure. Sure. Oh, yeah, I
21 would assume.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Assume. Right.

23 Let's talk about the mansion just a little
24 bit.

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1 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You mentioned
3 that there were problems inside with perhaps water
4 damage, plumbing --

5 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: -- have to
7 replace the electric, mechanical systems.

8 Wasn't the original PUD that that would be
9 converted into two duplexes?

10 MR. CIAMPI: Correct.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Wouldn't you
12 have do that anyway?

13 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So tell me about
15 the structure of the building. What are your
16 observations of the actual structure of the building?
17 It sounds like it's all cosmetic up to this point.

18 MR. CIAMPI: Yeah. I would say it's
19 mostly cosmetic. I haven't walked in the basement at
20 all. I'm not, of course, a structural engineer, but
21 looking at it, the porch looks like it needs some work.
22 That I would say would be the number one thing that
23 stood out to me, I guess.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Structurally.

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1 MR. CIAMPI: Structurally, yes.

2 Inside, I didn't really pay too much
3 attention to whether -- nothing seemed to be falling
4 down.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: But if you were
6 to convert it into a duplex --

7 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: -- you'd have to
9 gut the interior to do that anyway, wouldn't you?

10 MR. CIAMPI: Yeah. Certainly.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I was just
12 curious about that.

13 And, you know, this is my main question:
14 What's different about the PUD of 2007 that makes you
15 have to change it? I mean, it was approved by the City
16 Council and recommended.

17 MR. CIAMPI: Well, I think in my talking
18 with Russell is that if you removed the building, you
19 would have to rewrite the PUD; and if you added
20 Building A, E, and D or the same footprint that was
21 approved for the duplex, we have shrunk the units to
22 get three-unit buildings out of those three, and I
23 believe that's why we'd have to rewrite the PUD.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Well, why are we

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1 even hearing this? Why can't you just conform with
2 the PUD as it's written?

3 MR. CIAMPI: Well, for us we don't want
4 to build that big of units. We feel like that's too
5 big to support what someone is willing to pay down
6 there, I guess; and we really feel strongly about
7 moving the development forward without the Judd House.
8 So that's our main goal is to get the feedback on
9 whether the city would allow us to take the house down
10 and then, you know, shrink the size of the units.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: We talked a
12 little bit about building materials, and you would like
13 to move towards some less expensive materials --

14 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: -- the siding
16 and --

17 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: -- what else did
19 you say?

20 MR. CIAMPI: Siding and brick.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Siding and
22 brick.

23 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And Tom brought

1 up the existing unit.

2 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Tom brought up
4 the existing unit. How would you propose to make them
5 look the same or similar?

6 MR. CIAMPI: I'm not 100 percent sure.
7 We would possibly use in our brick the similar brick
8 that they used would be one thing that pops into my
9 head. The biggest difference is they're all brick and
10 stone similar to the first phase, like the brownstones
11 on the river there.

12 For us our main reason of shrinking the size
13 of the units and going to a siding versus all brick and
14 stone is, one, for cost, to be able to keep our cost
15 down, to be able to sell the units for what we feel
16 like is an appropriate price for what people are going
17 to pay down here.

18 Also we feel like the building that's there
19 doesn't fit in with anything around it. In fact, other
20 than the Judd House, there's nothing that's like all
21 brick and stone in the area. I think most of the
22 Heritage Square is brick and stone and siding.

23 I feel like this architecture is similar to
24 what is there, and I feel like the siding -- you know,

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1 all the houses, if you drive around that area, the
2 single-family, older houses are either siding or brick.

3 MEMBER DOYLE: Mr. Ciampi, I just have
4 to respond to that. Isn't that why it was designated a
5 historical landmark? Because there is no other
6 structure in the entire city that has these
7 architectural features.

8 MR. CIAMPI: I believe so. I'm not
9 sure. I'm sure that was part of it as being the
10 history of the house and the architecture of it, yes.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Do you think the
12 PUD, the original PUD could have been successful,
13 given -- I mean, did it hit at the wrong time?

14 MR. CIAMPI: It definitely hit at the
15 wrong time. No, I don't think so. I think, to me, the
16 buildings are so big you have to get -- and the way
17 they're designed with those materials -- I haven't been
18 inside one. So I don't know what it looks like inside.
19 I'm assuming it's very nice.

20 I would assume it's -- I didn't look back at
21 the history to see what they were asking when they were
22 selling them, but I've got to assume it was like 7- to
23 800,000 for each unit, and I feel pretty strongly that
24 that's too expensive for this area in St. Charles.

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1 Yeah.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I guess where
3 I'm going is I'm trying to find a compelling reason to
4 change the PUD.

5 MR. CIAMPI: Sure. Sure.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is it possible
7 that we're trying to work with the same business plan
8 from 2007 in 2013?

9 MR. CIAMPI: No. I think that building
10 plan in 2007 was working off of 2005 and 2004, 2006,
11 when the market was booming like crazy, and people were
12 overpaying for stuff, and the appraisals were over
13 appraising, and I think that's what was happening.
14 They felt like, yeah, we can stick these big, all brick
15 and stone expensive duplexes here, and people will buy
16 them because everybody is buying anything you want.

17 Obviously, the economy collapsed, you know,
18 and the housing market especially collapsed, and I
19 think that's what hurt them the most. I think even now
20 they're too big to sell. The brownstones, which are
21 similar in size to these units, struggled to get, you
22 know, 600,000, and they're in, in my opinion, probably
23 a better location being right on First Street there.

24 So I don't think the existing PUD as written

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1 with those buildings would be able to be something that
2 would be successful.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I'm not sure who
4 this question is for.

5 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I think it's for
7 staff or maybe even Tom from the Historic Preservation.

8 What kind of teeth does the fact that you
9 designate a structure or a property as a historic
10 landmark -- what does that mean?

11 MR. COLBY: Well, this property was
12 designated as a landmark back in 2000, and there were
13 findings that needed to be met for the property to be
14 designated, and I think Brian referenced those findings
15 earlier. There was a finding at that time based on a
16 recommendation from the Historic Commission and also
17 the City Council that the property qualified as a
18 historic landmark.

19 Essentially that means in terms of the city's
20 ordinances that any changes to that property are
21 reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission as if
22 the property was in a historical district; but because
23 it's designated a landmark, it is considered to have a
24 level of significance belonging to the different types

1 of buildings in the historic district.

2 And because this property is also a PUD,
3 planned unit development, the Historic Commission
4 reviews all PUD plans, including this concept plan
5 which we have mentioned, and they make recommendations
6 on these plans to the Plan Commission as part of the
7 PUD process.

8 In addition to that, they would also review
9 any building permits for a historic landmark to assess
10 whether or not they were complying with the certificate
11 of appropriateness criteria in the ordinance.

12 So essentially, what it means is the Historic
13 Commission reviews all changes to the exterior of the
14 property in great detail. They review all the material
15 changes, and they look at the existing materials and
16 prioritize preservation of historic features on the
17 building whenever possible.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is there a
19 discussion in there about whether the building can be
20 torn down or not?

21 MR. COLBY: An applicant could request a
22 building permit to tear down a historic-designated
23 structure like this one. In this situation, though,
24 because it is a PUD, to be able to accept that building

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1 permit application, the PUD ordinance would need to be
2 amended to allow that building to be removed;
3 otherwise, we would not accept that permit application
4 because it's required to be there by the PUD ordinance.

5 So the City Council would need to take action
6 to amend the PUD ordinance to actually allow the
7 building to be torn down. Absent the PUD, if they do
8 come in for a permit to demolish a historic structure,
9 then there's criteria that are considered in relation
10 to that specific request.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I have a question.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Yes.

14 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I think it's for staff,
15 Russ. When was it designated as a historical landmark
16 because you said 2 --

17 MR. COLBY: 2000.

18 MEMBER SCHUETZ: 2000. Was it vacant?

19 MR. COLBY: It was not.

20 MEMBER SCHUETZ: It was not. When it's
21 designated a historical landmark, who is responsible to
22 maintain that?

23 MR. COLBY: There is no additional
24 requirement to maintain a historic property other than

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1 the requirements to comply with the city's normal code
2 requirements for property maintenance.

3 The historic landmark designation remains
4 with the property regardless of the owner, and to have
5 that designation removed, you have to go through a
6 similar process as having it designated, whereby you
7 submit an application and request to have landmark
8 status removed, and the Historic Preservation
9 Commission holds a public hearing on that and makes a
10 recommendation to the City Council on that request.

11 MEMBER SCHUETZ: But if it's vacant, it
12 still has the historical --

13 MR. COLBY: Yes. It sticks with the
14 property.

15 MEMBER PRETZ: It may be vacant, but
16 there is an owner to the property. There is an owner.
17 The owner is the financial institution right now.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Home State Bank.

19 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Okay.

20 MEMBER PRETZ: So there is an owner.

21 MEMBER SCHUETZ: So it could deteriorate
22 and deteriorate and deteriorate, and nobody would -- if
23 it's vacant. It's not being used; right?

24 MR. CIAMPI: Correct.

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1 MEMBER DOYLE: It was occupied as late
2 as 2007?

3 MR. COLBY: Yes, I believe so.

4 MR. CIAMPI: In 2007, though, it was not
5 a family living there. It was a developer's sales
6 office, I believe.

7 MR. COLBY: I don't have the specifics
8 on that.

9 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I guess the point I'm
10 trying to make is what's going to happen to it --

11 MR. CIAMPI: The bank --

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: -- if it's not
13 maintained?

14 MR. CIAMPI: Sorry. The bank who owns
15 it has told me that they aren't going to put a penny
16 into it.

17 MR. GREEN: My name is John Green, and I
18 live up at 111 Gladys Avenue in Fox River Grove. I'm
19 the director of special assets for Home State Bank, so
20 we're the owner of the property.

21 Some of the historical things you're asking,
22 to be honest with you, I don't know. We took the
23 property back, I think, in 2010 from the developers.
24 They hadn't been occupying the building, as Mike said,

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1 other than as a sales office, I think, during the 2006,
2 2007 time period, something like that. So pretty much
3 nobody has been there since then.

4 What we have tried to do in terms of -- as
5 the owner and maintaining the property, when the city
6 has called with issues that need to be taken care of,
7 we try to take care of them. But we're kind of, you
8 know, as some of your questions, we're kind of stuck
9 sitting here. We've been trying to sell the property
10 for over three years, and we have not had one developer
11 come in to date and say, hey, you know, we're prepared
12 to move forward and redo the building. Just the
13 economics are just so, you know, difficult to try to do
14 something with that building.

15 And as Mike said, the two units that were
16 built, they couldn't sell those. So you had such a
17 dramatic change in the market from 2005, 2006, that the
18 original PUD, even if the market had stayed the way it
19 was, I'm not sure it was going to work.

20 I think some of the decisions and some of the
21 concepts that went into the original plan were fairly
22 flawed, and I think when you go by the property and
23 look at it, you can look at the way the buildings line
24 up and the way the porch sits up. Some of the stuff is

1 pretty challenging and pretty difficult, but you've had
2 such a significant market change. You've had such a
3 challenge to get the economics to work just putting two
4 units into that building. Every developer that we've
5 talked to over the past three years has just come away
6 thinking we can't save that building. That's kind of
7 where we are.

8 I think -- I think if we could, we would.
9 But I'm just -- I'm not sure how to make it work, to be
10 honest with you. So when we worked with Mike and Dan
11 Marshall to come up with this concept plan, one of the
12 things we tried to do was, you know, keep the
13 impervious lower, keep the open space better.

14 Units, yes, they're smaller, but I think
15 they're more reflective of where the market is. So
16 anyway, I'll leave it at that, but we do own the
17 building -- own the property, I should say. As Mike
18 said, the two units in Building B are sold. You know,
19 they're not -- they are individual owners now on those
20 properties.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So they sold
22 before 2010?

23 MR. GREEN: They were sold -- one was
24 sold about a year-and-a-half ago for 325. The other

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1 one is still owned by the excavator who took them back
2 as part of the settlement with the developers.

3 I will also share with you, as Mike said, I
4 grew up on Illinois Avenue about a block away from
5 this, so I went to Lincoln School also. So I am
6 familiar with the building, and back when it was a
7 nursing home and stuff when I was growing up.

8 So anyway, I'll answer any other questions if
9 you have them, but I'll give it back to Mike.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Go ahead.

11 MEMBER DOYLE: There are two other
12 questions, recommended questions on page 8 of the staff
13 memo. I'd like to turn our attention to -- first of
14 all, I think we'll go back to this other issue as well.

15 One of the questions is: Is there support
16 for adding additional townhome units to the
17 development? Should the project comply with the
18 existing zoning restriction of two-unit buildings only?

19 Mr. Ciampi, could you speak to the
20 existing -- there are three priorities. The second
21 priority was to change the zoning or change the PUD in
22 such a way that allows you to build three-unit
23 townhomes.

24 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

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1 MEMBER DOYLE: Why is that a priority
2 for your company? Why is it central to your vision for
3 the property?

4 MR. CIAMPI: We feel like it's --
5 although it's adding three total units to what was
6 approved already -- there was 12 units that were
7 approved before, and we're looking to add three more
8 for a total of 15. We feel like it supports the
9 density with the other developments that are around
10 there.

11 We feel like with the downtown First Street
12 development and all the retail and stuff that's going
13 on there, I think it's essential to have more people
14 here to support that downtown. Obviously, retail
15 businesses have to have customers obviously to stay
16 open. I think it helps to have more people near
17 downtown that can help support that.

18 One of the ideas we talked about on the
19 middle units, on the three three-unit buildings, the
20 middle units was possibly shrinking them small enough
21 so that we could get more affordable type housing out
22 of the three units and maybe sell them to, you know, a
23 family or a single parent or, you know, someone who
24 maybe otherwise couldn't afford a newer house in

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1 downtown St. Charles. So stuff like that, we were
2 thinking of kind of creative ways to just, you know,
3 add density and help kind of grow the community and
4 help in that way.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Tom, you had
6 something?

7 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I have a question and
8 just a comment. I have a question and just a comment.

9 MR. CIAMPI: Yes.

10 MEMBER SCHUETZ: The question -- you
11 mentioned that you want 1800 square feet to 2,000. I
12 understand that. That's a good size --

13 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

14 MEMBER SCHUETZ: -- a nice size, a
15 manageable size. What price are you thinking? I'm not
16 trying to narrow it down because I know the project
17 isn't done.

18 MR. CIAMPI: We would love to be able to
19 sell these at under 350,000. As John just said, one of
20 the big duplexes -- what did they get? -- 325, I don't
21 know if that was a short sale or -- so I think that
22 kind of -- you know, obviously, that's --

23 MEMBER SCHUETZ: A fire sale.

24 MR. CIAMPI: A fire sale, yes. But I

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1 think that price point is what it supports down there.
2 I think it allows a wide range of people, either
3 first-time buyers or empty-nesters. I have my broker's
4 license. I work under the McKay Group out of Coldwell
5 Bank here in St. Charles. We get calls from higher-end
6 clients in the city of Chicago who are looking for
7 either maybe a smaller condo or townhome that would be
8 close to downtown. Maybe they've lived here at one
9 point and now do a lot of stuff in the city, but maybe
10 would come back, and this kind of price point is where
11 they'd like to be at.

12 So we think that price point serves a good,
13 broad range of people that would be able -- who would
14 be happy to live here, and people would be helping to,
15 you know, improve the city.

16 MEMBER SCHUETZ: My comment was I like
17 some of the attitude in your comments you've made, but
18 I would like to, again, I guess, suggest if you can
19 seriously consider if the Judd House does come down --

20 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

21 MEMBER SCHUETZ: -- to remember it
22 somehow.

23 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

24 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I don't know if it

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1 would be a facade, you know, a little park area --

2 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

3 MEMBER SCHUETZ: -- a plaque, whatever,
4 you know, just an area --

5 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

6 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Both of you mentioned
7 about Lincoln School, and you're probably sensitive to
8 your history as well.

9 MR. CIAMPI: Right. Absolutely.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right. I'd
11 like to ask if anybody in the audience would like to
12 ask any questions, make any comments; and when we're
13 done with that, we'll just go through the Plan
14 Commission one by one, and, Plan Commission, if you
15 could pay special attention to the questions from staff
16 in our staff memo.

17 Oh, you can go first. Ladies first, but
18 that's okay.

19 MR. LEMKE: I guess I heard -- after
20 50 minutes, I heard that we're doing this to add
21 density, and I would argue perhaps this site is already
22 too dense is why there was a problem.

23 I did look at other places around St. Charles
24 and -- my name is Art Lemke. I live at 3214 Blackhawk

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1 Trail, and I have been out of this for a while until
2 this year, so I speak to this more as a matter of
3 history, what's happened in the last eight years, and
4 I'll go back a little farther than that.

5 I was asked by former Mayor Norris to serve
6 on a historic preservation kind of a task force to see
7 if we couldn't refresh the historic preservation
8 ordinance after we lost the school, the Lutheran school
9 at Mount St. Mary.

10 What we did is we came up with -- we dusted
11 off a proposed historic preservation ordinance, and we
12 got that passed by the City Council. That was probably
13 in the '90s. One of the things one could do is to sit
14 on the Historic Preservation Commission and make
15 decisions, as you do, pro and con. One of my reasons
16 in doing that was to preserve places like the Baker
17 Hotel, the Arcada Theater, and the Judd Mansion.

18 What's important about that is when you look
19 at something like that -- what I did when I was out of
20 this for eight years is took a personal -- I didn't
21 make any money on it. I just took a personal interest
22 in that building and got involved in the group that
23 wasn't mentioned here, but it was the Riverside
24 Community Church who took care of that building and

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1 actually occupied it, if not as a residence, but as a
2 church office and as a place where they could have
3 meetings and a nursery.

4 I think what's important about that is not
5 only that it was a historic place and perhaps it could
6 have been expanded for additional church use, but
7 knowing that we probably would have stayed there, we
8 did things like completely restore the porch where it
9 has a very large soffit area, took down all the old
10 plaster soffits and put up new, restored some of the
11 brick work in the area that had been affected maybe by
12 settling, put in structural steel to strengthen and
13 preserve the bay window that overlooks the porch
14 itself.

15 I would argue that maybe the curved area
16 around the south end -- I'm not sure that it was even
17 part of that original porch. One would argue whether
18 the stone is the same or different; but when it came on
19 down to it, not only were we using the plumbing and did
20 a little work with the heating and the electric, but we
21 hired a commercial roofer to stabilize the roof.

22 All those windows open and shut. I wouldn't
23 have been scraping the floor, the oak floors of old
24 tile if I couldn't close the window and preserve the

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1 thing. I would argue perhaps we should have just, you
2 know, let the thing -- you know, left windows open and
3 collected flood insurance on it, but I don't think that
4 would be a fair way to do this.

5 If there is a bottom line here today other
6 than adding density, which I think was an issue in the
7 first place, perhaps it's to offer this building for
8 sale and develop, as had been developed, the parcels
9 around the periphery, as we have heard here, that there
10 is unique parcel IDs for tax purposes. So there's
11 probably no reason why this couldn't be offered for
12 sale to somebody, as the church who once took an
13 interest in it.

14 So I guess you could take a position pro and
15 con on anything, but why would we do historic
16 preservation, why would somebody like me go and do this
17 with a group, a church, do a team building, and then
18 have it be trashed?

19 So there is more that could be said, but I
20 think the point is that building was stabilized, it was
21 in good shape, it was occupied, and it is
22 substantial -- yes, it looks different than the
23 surrounding buildings that are framed, but it is
24 substantial, and we wouldn't have put structural steel

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1 in there and a solid roof on it if we had the sense
2 that it was going on the downhill.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Thank you.

4 MS. GUSTAFSON: Can I come up?

5 This is my first meeting of this kind, and
6 I'm from St. Charles originally. I've lived here all
7 my life, and I'm really proud to be part of a community
8 where a commission takes this much time to do the due
9 diligence to look into a project like this.

10 I am actually the owner of Building B, the
11 existing building, and there are quite a few things we
12 talked about tonight that are of concern to us,
13 primarily when we talk about the materials of the
14 building and -- I'm sorry. What was your last name?

15 MR. CIAMPI: Ciampi.

16 MS. GUSTAFSON: Ciampi. Okay.

17 I guess I'm not super reassured about the --
18 your comments specifically were that it's going to take
19 some massaging, and we haven't really delved into how
20 we're going to make the existing building fit into the
21 new development. So those are of primary concern to
22 us.

23 Also specifically, we're very much in favor
24 of the original PUD. I would disagree with the

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1 discussion tonight about our home being a fire sale. I
2 don't find it that way. I think we paid a fair market
3 value for the home. I think we can develop the rest of
4 the community in a similar way.

5 We're in favor also of tearing down the
6 historical building last. I think that makes a lot of
7 sense. We've seen what's happened on First Avenue or
8 First Street where we tried to start a development, and
9 it doesn't happen. Should that same thing happen, we
10 would be looking at a similar situation. We don't feel
11 it's an eyesore. I mean, I live next to that building.
12 So I'm speaking with firsthand experience. Like I
13 said, I'm from the community.

14 So I guess in summary, I guess I'd say our
15 comments are specific to the materials, the facade, the
16 historical property next door, tearing that down last,
17 and I have a question too about we currently have --
18 when we talk about materials, we currently have a paver
19 driveway. Is your plan to tear that up?

20 MR. CIAMPI: I'm not sure.

21 MS. GUSTAFSON: Okay. That would be a
22 real concern. I mean, I'm speaking tonight without
23 counsel. I just wanted to make sure that our concerns
24 are heard, the only existing property, and we care

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1 about the community. We care about the historical
2 value of the community.

3 I know there has been some discussion too
4 about placards or -- I mean, you can have 1,000
5 placards around St. Charles, but without these actual
6 properties, I don't know how historical that's going
7 to feel.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. This is a
9 concept plan, and what we are discussing with them is
10 the possibility of doing this. So your comments are
11 well taken.

12 MS. GUSTAFSON: Thank you.

13 THE COURT REPORTER: Can I get your
14 name?

15 MS. GUSTAFSON: Melissa Gustafson,
16 G-u-s-t-a-f-s-o-n.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Yes, ma'am.

18 MS. RICE: Hello. Laura Rice, 201
19 Chestnut Avenue, St. Charles.

20 I'm here as a member of the community in
21 Pottawatomie, and I'm also here as a board member of
22 the Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley.

23 My concern with tearing down this beautiful
24 landmark is the precedent that it sets for the future.

1 Right. What protection do we have in St. Charles of
2 other landmarks, if this precedent is set? I mean,
3 this is why people move to this community. It's not
4 Naperville. We don't have these neighborhoods where
5 one house looks like another. I mean, they all look
6 different, and this adds charm.

7 You know, the aesthetic value -- I mean, that
8 comes down to people's personal opinions. I mean, I
9 happen to think that the Raymond Judd Mansion is
10 spectacular. It is so unique, but I think that's what
11 makes it really special. I think to lose something
12 like that -- and, again, just the precedent that it
13 sets.

14 You know, we have this eyesore already. I
15 mean, part of the aesthetic value were the trees.
16 They're gone now. So now if the mansion is gone and
17 that property is left vacant, now we have another
18 eyesore.

19 So I would agree with the resident of the
20 existing townhome, that that has to be last. If the
21 decision is made to tear down the Raymond Judd Mansion
22 because it is not structurally salvageable, it really
23 has to be the last part of the project because, again,
24 we can't afford to lose it and not have the opportunity

1 to bring it back.

2 I would also recommend that if it does come
3 down -- I agree that you can't just put a plaque up and
4 have some memories of what was there. I would think
5 that the bricks should be incorporated into the new
6 development in some manner or to create a wall because
7 if you would put a little plaque on the inside, that's
8 almost private property. I mean, people aren't going
9 to be walking through there to look at some monument to
10 the Raymond Judd Mansion when it's inside a parking lot
11 in some private residences.

12 So I think that that would need -- that is my
13 recommendation, that if that mansion comes down, those
14 materials should be incorporated in some way into that
15 property where it's more than just a plaque, that some
16 of that spirit of the history of our community remains
17 on that block.

18 Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Thank you.

20 Okay. Anybody else?

21 (No response.)

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Let's go through
23 the Plan Commission then. If you would, as I said, pay
24 special attention to the questions that the staff asked

1 in your comments.

2 MEMBER SCHUETZ: There's three questions
3 or three statements here that the staff has asked us
4 to, you know, consider of the development of this and
5 by the developer, and some of those have already been
6 asked.

7 I don't want to reiterate or hash out or
8 whatever you might want to call it. Some of the
9 comments made here I felt were very appropriate. You
10 know, tying the architecture together is appropriate.
11 I know you've already been considering that, but that
12 is a big deal.

13 And if the Judd House does come down, it has
14 to obviously go through many committees. It has been
15 for sale for three years, you mentioned, and there
16 hasn't been any buyers. You know, if there could be
17 some -- maybe you could save it somehow and use it for
18 another purpose, I don't know, within, you know, the
19 community or within the development.

20 I guess just give a lot of thought to making
21 the whole property cohesive, I guess, and it doesn't
22 look like a patchwork would be my main emphasis.

23 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Brian.

1 MEMBER DOYLE: I want to start by
2 referencing Exhibit B, Resolution No., I think it's
3 1-2007. It's part of the -- this is an exhibit that's
4 attached to the ordinance that established the PUD, and
5 it was this Plan Commission's recommendation for denial
6 of the PUD application.

7 The Plan Commission by a vote of 3 to 2
8 recommended for denial on the basis that the proposed
9 amendment in 2007 did not fulfill the purpose of the
10 PUD process; and two, that the amendment did not meet
11 the finding of fact because it weakened the intended
12 location by allowing for unacceptably high residential
13 unit density per acre and an unacceptable
14 building-to-coverage ratio in the PUD in allowing for
15 construction of unacceptable building heights, as well
16 as not protecting in the PUD the zoning yard
17 requirements.

18 These deviations from the existing PUD force
19 the current zoning to the affected neighborhood south
20 and west of the subject site, and the St. Charles'
21 comprehensive plan does not meet the required findings
22 of fact.

23 I find it interesting that the applicant or
24 the presenter entered a concept plan and commented that

1 the PUD as approved in 2007 could not have been
2 successful, and it may be water under the bridge, but I
3 think it's important for us to think about, which is
4 that this commission recommended denial, and now we're
5 here back.

6 I have not heard that the problem is with the
7 house. I heard the problem is with the PUD. In the
8 PUD, the design of the site is too cramped and that it
9 doesn't suit the house. But I have not heard anything
10 tonight that really suggests that the Judd House's
11 historic nature has changed since it was designated a
12 historic landmark in 2000.

13 When I asked what the rationale was for
14 demolishing it, I did not hear the claim of economic
15 hardship. I heard that the aesthetics were not
16 appropriate to the new vision. I think the fact is is
17 that it is a historic landmark according to the
18 ordinance that's designated it as such. So I have not
19 heard anything that would incline me to remove that
20 status.

21 There are other mechanisms and procedures in
22 place, legal procedures, I believe, that could -- that
23 an owner could take to seek a certificate of
24 appropriateness.

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1 I also want to reference a part of the City
2 Code, Chapter 17.32080B2, which states that prior to
3 the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness or
4 demolition or relocation of a building or structure,
5 that a plan for use of the property being vacated by
6 the proposed demolition and relocation shall be
7 submitted and approved by the commission, that's the
8 Historic Preservation Commission, or upon appeal by the
9 City Council, and that the approval of the certificate
10 of appropriateness for demolition or relocation may be
11 conditioned on the issuance of a certificate of
12 appropriateness for the new construction on the site.

13 So tonight all we have been talking about is
14 if it should be torn down, if we should get to that.
15 There is a provision in our code that says that a
16 certificate of appropriateness to grant demolition of
17 the site could be conditioned on -- I think I'm reading
18 this correctly -- another certificate of
19 appropriateness for the new construction on the site,
20 which gets us to what is being proposed to be placed
21 there.

22 I don't feel that what's being proposed right
23 now is comparable to the quality of the property that
24 is already on the parcel, the property that

1 Ms. Gustafson currently is the owner of.

2 Also I don't think that -- I'm not at all
3 inclined to support a change to CBD-2, which is the
4 zoning for the central business district because this
5 is not a mixed-use proposal. There is no business
6 component that would make it part of the central
7 business district. It's a purely residential proposal.
8 So I would not be inclined at all to increase the
9 density beyond what the PUD currently grants, which
10 already is fairly high at 13.

11 So in terms of what I think we need to hear
12 as a Commission, and I think this is true of the city
13 in general, we need to hear a more affirmative and
14 coherent argument for why, if at all, this house --
15 this house of a historic nature has changed in the last
16 14 years, and a rationale for an amendment to the PUD
17 that it's not simply about more intensification of use,
18 more density, because that is actually not the purpose
19 of the PUD. The purpose of the PUD is expressly not to
20 intensify use. It's to negotiate flexibility.

21 You know, ideally, what I would -- the thing
22 that complicates this is the one thing that I'm
23 inclined to agree with Mr. Ciampi about is that in the
24 current plan, it's way too close. You know, if I were

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1 in the market for a historic home, I would not buy a
2 historic home that is eclipsed by a bunch of new
3 development around it and where my view from that home,
4 which once had been onto my grounds, is now a bunch of
5 garages that surround the property. I mean, I don't
6 know who in their right mind would buy a historic
7 property with all of the economic responsibilities that
8 come with it to have a view of someone else's garage.

9 If the home were to be preserved, if it were
10 to be, you know, preserved, the only way that I think
11 it could be preserved and to make this parcel workable
12 again would be to move the home with a southern facing
13 profile so that the north face of the parcel is
14 townhomes, and we restore a yard and some grounds
15 around the home.

16 Another thing that interested me about the
17 ordinance in 2000 that granted the historic
18 designation, one of the findings of fact was that --
19 pardon me here while I grab this reference -- the home
20 is located on the full block of property and as set in
21 the middle of the property increase the regal
22 appearance.

23 So it's in the middle of the property, but
24 it's not going to be a regal appearance any longer

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1 because it's going to be surrounded by new development.
2 So I think the city has complicated this agreement for
3 a prospective owner, for an owner of the houses next
4 door, for the current owner, which is the bank. I'm
5 sympathetic to your position, but I agree with some of
6 the comments that were made by people in the audience.

7 This is why we move to this community.
8 People do move here because it's St. Charles, and I do
9 think that if we were to tear down this property
10 because, in effect, the city made a mistake and granted
11 a PUD in 2007, that would be a real cause for concern
12 for me. So that's my comment.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Tom.

14 MEMBER PRETZ: Well, I would just like
15 to say thank you to the owner of Building B for coming.
16 It was nice to have the perspective of the ownership on
17 that block.

18 Having been in attendance at the Preservation
19 Commission's meeting, I think I can safely say that the
20 commission -- unless there was something structurally
21 wrong with the building to cause demolition, that that
22 commission won't support demolition of the property. I
23 just wanted to -- you know, because I think, Tom, you
24 had asked that question.

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1 And while I am very happy to see activity for
2 that property both for the current owner, the bank,
3 obviously, and then for the developers and maybe
4 overall for the city, instead of its current condition
5 of sitting vacant, in order for me to support the
6 overall project, it would be very difficult if part of
7 that was demolition of that property, the Judd Mansion,
8 just for the sole purpose of the development. So I
9 just want to make sure that, you know, the rest of the
10 commissioners were aware of that.

11 I would like to say that in recent history,
12 we had down in Geneva, the Pure Oil Building, which was
13 a major concern down there, that a financial
14 institution fully vested in that and had plans in that
15 and somehow that institution was able to listen to the
16 people, and then work towards incorporating that into
17 their current property to make better use of it.

18 That may be an example for Home State Bank
19 that may be something that would be of interest to take
20 maybe a little bit more of a look at -- in-depth of how
21 they went about to figure out how to utilize that
22 property.

23 And, finally, I think the density itself as
24 proposed is too high. I think the current PUD is

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1 probably a little bit too high also, but we have one in
2 place today. I would be more supportive of the current
3 PUD than to support the additional density.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Thank
5 you.

6 Gentlemen, I thank you for coming here with
7 this proposal today. I know that other developers have
8 looked at it. John, you guys have been working on this
9 for some time. Not many people are interested in this.
10 So good for you. It's going to take some creativity to
11 do this.

12 I have three issues. My issues are the
13 density, the historic mansion, and the existing PUD. I
14 don't see -- you know, in 2007 when the original PUD
15 was approved, there was a recommendation that it was
16 too dense. Increasing the density just doesn't make
17 sense. It's not a compelling reason to change the PUD
18 that's existing.

19 Number two, the historic structure. It was
20 designated as a historic landmark. At some point at
21 some time, we as citizens of this community have to say
22 it's designated a historic landmark. I mean, it's not
23 there to, well, maybe if you want to change it, you
24 can. It's a historic landmark. And, again, I don't

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1 see a compelling reason in the existing PUD to tear
2 it down.

3 And then, number three, the existing PUD. It
4 was approved by the City Council with those
5 recommendations that Brian spelled out, and this would
6 change them -- would make them even worse than we said
7 we didn't want them.

8 So I just can't -- I think you have a real
9 challenge here. I think it's a real challenge, and
10 frankly, I think you guys would be real heros if you
11 could figure it out. I don't have the answer. I'm
12 concerned about the structure of the building. I know
13 you've looked at, you know, the cosmetics of it. It's
14 probably falling into disrepair. That's a pretty
15 sturdy -- that building as got some bones.

16 MR. CIAMPI: Sure.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And I also
18 understand the challenges of restoring old structures,
19 even gutting them. It is expensive, but that could be
20 what saves us.

21 Now, Brian also mentioned that, you know, he
22 never heard that it was an economic issue. Frankly, I
23 did hear that, John. It is an economic issue between
24 the bank and the developer, and that's not something

1 that's under the purview of this commission. But if
2 that's what it's going to take to mitigate those issues
3 that we bring up as a Plan Commission, then you guys
4 have to talk more about that.

5 Brian.

6 MEMBER DOYLE: And I would tag on to
7 that, if that is the direction that you're going to
8 take with this proposal, I think -- I referenced the
9 certificate of appropriateness provision because it's
10 going to be -- you're in a real bind. It's going to be
11 a real bitter pill, I think, for this community to
12 swallow to see a historic landmark that was just
13 designated 14 years ago torn down.

14 So I think that it would be essential for
15 your vision to come forward and say you are replacing
16 it with something that is of high quality that honors
17 the historic nature of the property that you are
18 replacing, and that's why I referenced that provision,
19 which is a contingency that the Historic Commission and
20 the City Council can attach to any certificate of
21 appropriateness.

22 So I would encourage you as you get your
23 creative juices going that you think about ways that
24 you could bring forward a compelling vision that meets

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1 your market needs.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. If
3 there's nothing else, that is it for Item No. 4.

4 Thank you, gentlemen.

5 PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 8:18 P.M.

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STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
COUNTY OF KANE)

BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES

In Re the Matter of:)
)
First Street)
Redevelopment PUD,)
Application for)
Concept Plan for)
Phase 3.)

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
Council Chambers
2 East Main Street
St. Charles, Illinois 60174
January 7, 2014
8:18 p.m.

Reported by: Joanne E. Ely,
CSR, RPR
Notary Public, Kane County, Illinois

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PRESENT:

- MR. TIM KESSLER, Vice Chairman;
- MR. BRIAN DOYLE, Member;
- MR. THOMAS PRETZ, Member; and
- MR. TOM SCHUETZ, Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

- MR. RUSSELL COLBY, Planning Division Manager;
- MR. MATTHEW O'ROURKE, Planner; and
- MS. RITA TUNGARE, Community Development Director.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: We're on Item
2 No. 5, First Street Redevelopment PUD, First Street
3 Redevelopment, LLC; and this is an application for a
4 concept plan for Phase 3, which is the same concept
5 that we just went through.

6 The applicant is here in front of us to get
7 feedback on a proposed concept plan that they may
8 propose in the future.

9 So, Russ, are you presenting?

10 MR. COLBY: No. I'm just pulling up the
11 presentation.

12 MR. RASMUSSEN: Good evening. Bob
13 Rasmussen, 409 Illinois Avenue, St. Charles,
14 R-a-s-m-u-s-s-e-n.

15 I'm here tonight to present a change in the
16 First Street development for phase 3 that we're looking
17 at, and I want to discuss three proposed buildings that
18 we'd like to modify on this site.

19 We're actually significantly decreasing the
20 square footage volume that was previously approved
21 there. When we came forth with the whole First Street
22 development plan back in the mid-2000s, I guess 2005
23 and 2006, we were pretty grandiose. We believed the
24 economy wasn't going to stop, and I think we all

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1 believed that, and designed some pretty significant
2 structures for this particular parcel.

3 We have now sat back for the last four years
4 basically and waited to see what this economy was going
5 to do, and I think the new norm of the economy has
6 taught us quite a few lessons, and in this case we have
7 chosen to come forward with a little less density on
8 the site and head towards some rental units as opposed
9 to for-sale condominium units which really don't exist
10 in our economy today.

11 So you see in front of you right now a
12 three-building plan with a two-level parking structure,
13 ground level and one level above it. That's
14 internalized between those three buildings, and in the
15 third building on the river, which right now we're
16 proposing as the one for-sale condominium unit
17 building.

18 Each of these three buildings we're proposing
19 would have first-floor retail and office space on them.
20 The remaining floors in Buildings 1 and 2, which would
21 be floors 2, 3, and 4 would be residential rental. The
22 remaining floors in Building 3, which would be floors
23 2, 3, 4, and 5 would be for-sale condominium.

24 We have eliminated an entire second floor of

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1 office space in this proposal, where previously the
2 second floor was all office space in these buildings.
3 So that's a significant difference as well.

4 We originally had 212,000 square feet on this
5 particular parcel. The parcel, as you see in the dark
6 outlined triangular space, is identical to the original
7 parcel. We have kept everything within that original
8 space. But that 212,000 feet, we have shaved it down
9 to 159,000 feet in this three-building plan.

10 The parking right now, we, as a parking
11 ratio, are better than we were before. We have a total
12 of 121 public spaces in the two stories of the parking
13 garage. We have a total of 107 private spaces by
14 parking underneath the buildings. As we did in the
15 Milestone Row building, if you're familiar with that
16 down the street, 350 South First Street. That's parked
17 underneath a four-story building which is very similar
18 to what these buildings would be. We built that in --
19 I think '06 or '07 we finished that building.

20 So that in a nutshell is what we're asking
21 for comment on tonight with the Commission. We have
22 been in front of Historical Preservation. Their
23 biggest comment, which was a great comment, was the
24 facade was a little bland. It wasn't very historic.

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1 It didn't have a lot of character to it, if you will,
2 which is difficult to do, you know, in this size and
3 shape of a building.

4 But what we have done -- Dan went back to
5 work and tried to add in some architectural elements on
6 the buildings with steel bars holding up the added-on
7 features of the balconies, if you will, as if it was an
8 old warehouse. Changed some of the products on those
9 bay windows so that they won't be EFIS product.
10 They'll be actual composite or wood product that's
11 painted.

12 Added some different architectural elements
13 you can see on the main entrance of the building so it
14 looks a little more historical in nature like an old
15 factory or an old building would. You can see it in
16 the 3-D dimensional. The building is starting to take
17 some pretty good shape and look.

18 We'll need to get back to the Historical
19 Preservation Committee to discuss some of these
20 elements that we're adding to it, and I believe that
21 we'll come to an agreement between us that we'll both
22 be happy with.

23 The previous development, as you see here,
24 the three pink buildings, you can see was more

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1 significant. They were five stories, but they're
2 really almost six because we had a mezzanine approved
3 above them at 73 feet, and you can see the size and
4 shape of those as well, but I'm not going to spend much
5 time on that. We're here to talk about the new
6 buildings.

7 So that's where we stand tonight, and I'd
8 like to open it up to your questions so I could try to
9 answer those for you.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right. Plan
11 Commission.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I guess I'll start.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Go ahead.

14 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I have two, I guess,
15 just quick questions that come to mind. You mentioned
16 the parking spaces, and we have always got a challenge
17 down there. Right now we all park where those
18 buildings would be. How do you meet the parking
19 requirements? Are you exceeding them? Are you hitting
20 them with the new buildings?

21 MR. RASMUSSEN: Again, I believe
22 proportionally we're parked better than we were -- I
23 don't believe; I know we are -- better than we were in
24 the previous plan. We're parking a little more than

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1 one indoor parking stall per residential unit. We've
2 got a mixed-use situation here so that the outdoor
3 parking can be used in the evenings and the off times
4 when the businesses aren't there for the residential
5 overflow, if you will.

6 MEMBER SCHUETZ: So you're exceeding the
7 requirements or meeting them or what?

8 MR. RASMUSSEN: Tom, I'm sorry, but I
9 don't know what the current requirements for for-rent
10 apartments are. I don't know that.

11 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I don't either.

12 MR. RASMUSSEN: I just know that we're
13 better than we approved it before, and I'll have to
14 research that, Tom.

15 MEMBER SCHUETZ: The other question,
16 general comment I have as far as the color scheme of
17 the building compared to what's there, how does that --
18 I mean, I know what's there, but, I mean, how does it
19 match? How does it seem?

20 MR. RASMUSSEN: Well, I think we'll work
21 with Historic probably on the colors because they're
22 probably our best shot at getting some good input from
23 what will look best with across the street. I mean,
24 that's what their strengths are on the commission. So

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1 we'll bring some samples in. We'll try to coordinate
2 the lower renaissance-type stone and the brick and the
3 different elements that are there so that it looks good
4 with the building we have already built across the
5 street.

6 MEMBER SCHUETZ: And then my last
7 question would be the plaza that's done now, is there
8 going to be any duplication on the other side or --

9 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yeah. Right now the
10 city's plan for the streetscapes, the river walk, the
11 plaza remains the same. We have tried to keep this
12 revision in the project within the envelope of the
13 buildings of the four so that we won't affect any of
14 that. So I believe it's the city's objective to
15 continue that forward.

16 Whoops, did I click something? There we go.
17 Now, I got a mess, Russ. How do I turn it sideways?

18 What I was trying to get to was this right
19 here because the biggest change we have is these two
20 open areas here, which used to be encompassed with the
21 building. Now, those open areas will allow us to have
22 some outdoor dining for some potential restaurant uses.
23 Say this half of the first floor of this building was a
24 restaurant, this now becomes an outdoor patio/dining

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1 area overlooking the river which I think is a
2 significant improvement from what we had before.

3 This gives us that same opportunity here
4 doing that -- this parking garage is proposed to be
5 kind of an open-air garage, which on these two sides
6 will create a brick facade to kind of hide that so that
7 you get a nice outdoor dining area that doesn't stare
8 into cars. So I think that adds a lot to that.

9 This riverwalk across here, here, and the
10 plaza that comes here remains the same that's in that
11 original plan.

12 MS. TUNGARE: And if I could add some
13 comments to Mr. Rasmussen's comments. I think he is
14 correct in the fact that everything that's been planned
15 is within the original building footprint, but once --
16 the plaza we would be looking for would be located
17 in -- it would be in and out, and the plaza will
18 interface with the building facade and the plan that
19 they propose, but that will come forward to you later.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: When you say
21 "plaza," you mean the plaza on Main Street?

22 MR. RASMUSSEN: This one right here.
23 This is the original plaza. I think what Rita is
24 getting at is the way this facade was designed with the

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1 sidewalks, those sidewalks won't exactly be the same
2 because this is now open area. So some of that plaza
3 will need to be modified.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Well, that plaza
5 won't be there at all.

6 MR. RASMUSSEN: No, it will be there.
7 That Building 2 that you just saw, or was it Building
8 1, it ends right here. That triangle I showed you is
9 this triangle across here. So all of that -- all of
10 this remains the same. All the streetscapes remain the
11 same, everything on the outside.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It looks to me
13 like that plaza that you're talking about was actually
14 all the way out to State Street, right on State Street.
15 Am I wrong about that?

16 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yeah. It's not.
17 It's not.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So Building 2
19 doesn't extend out to State Street?

20 MR. RASMUSSEN: No. Building 2 ends
21 right here. This is the corner.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

23 MR. RASMUSSEN: Okay.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So this whole

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1 plaza goes to State Street -- or Main Street way out
2 here. All right.

3 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yeah. See right here,
4 that's where the plaza is right there. Okay.

5 MEMBER DOYLE: The first thing I
6 noticed, and I know that -- I think the Historic
7 Preservation Commission made the same comment about the
8 views from across the river and from the bridge as
9 you're coming westbound over the bridge. You mentioned
10 that the north and east face, the northeast face of the
11 parking deck would have a facade.

12 My biggest concern is that while there are
13 patios there and plazas there and decks for outdoor
14 seating, that coming across the bridge, the main thing
15 you're looking at is the facade of the parking deck.
16 I've seen facades on parking decks before, and they
17 look like facades.

18 So I guess my question is have you looked at
19 any other configurations that would allow you to
20 have -- to move that parking structure so that it's not
21 coming north of Building No. 3 as it is now on your
22 diagram? I know your old plan had shallower buildings
23 off of First Street and also off of the river which
24 made for more room behind the parking deck.

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1 I guess I'm curious to know if that -- if
2 something about that design was impractical or if
3 you're going to go back and look at it. I really feel
4 like the riverfront is the asset that your respective
5 property has, and not to maximize it would just be an
6 opportunity -- a missed opportunity.

7 MR. RASMUSSEN: Well, I completely agree
8 with you. I mean, the river is what we're trying to
9 capitalize on.

10 Understand what this garage is. The first
11 floor of this garage is going to be about 2 feet lower
12 than the ground level of some of these other areas.
13 Okay. So it's going to sit down a little bit. So
14 these plazas will be up higher than it -- actually it's
15 about 3 feet.

16 MEMBER DOYLE: So it's not fully sunk,
17 but it's about 3 feet.

18 MR. RASMUSSEN: Just a little bit.
19 Right.

20 MEMBER DOYLE: Okay.

21 MR. RASMUSSEN: Okay. Then the second
22 floor of that garage, if you do 10 foot floor to floor,
23 or 11 foot possible, it's only going to be about 8 feet
24 in the air. If you put a parapet on it, it's about

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1 11 feet tall.

2 So I believe when you cross the bridge going
3 westbound, you're not going to see much garage. You're
4 going to see a four-story facade of a building. At the
5 back of this building you're going to see almost its
6 entirety. The garage sits below the first-floor
7 retail. It doesn't even approach the second-floor
8 balconies of the residences. So you're going to see
9 all those residences. You're going to see, of course,
10 this entire facade. Our objective is to make that
11 garage go away so that this whole building up here
12 becomes riverfront.

13 Now, we looked -- to answer your second part
14 of that question. We looked at many, many iterations
15 of how to park these buildings. How to get the right
16 amount of buildings in there and then park them. We
17 had the garage a little shorter and did some different
18 iterations with this right -- coming out here on the
19 end to kind of hide that, but it didn't work for the
20 building. You couldn't make the space usable, and you
21 certainly couldn't get any more parking underneath it
22 with that kind of triangle configuration there.

23 So meeting with staff and meeting with
24 Council a little bit a few times, we came up with this

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1 option that would kind of be the best of both worlds.
2 So we'd have enough parking, but yet create the right
3 size of buildings.

4 I believe that because that garage is not
5 that big on the ends, we're going to be able to hide it
6 real well, and the garage facade as well as
7 landscaping, and I think we can do a good job of that.

8 MEMBER DOYLE: Can you explain what this
9 facade will look like? I mean, I've seen facades where
10 you've got open -- you've got something that looks like
11 a window dressing, but it's really just a big opening.
12 It's concrete, and you put a tree in there, and then
13 there's the car, and that sometimes is referred to as a
14 facade.

15 We have a parking structure on the other side
16 of First Avenue that has some architectural detail on
17 the outside, but you can still tell that it's a parking
18 garage.

19 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yeah. On the west side
20 of the parking garage, we did those --

21 MEMBER DOYLE: Yeah. So --

22 MR. RASMUSSEN: -- false muntin bars, if
23 you will, to kind of make it look like windows.

24 Brian, we haven't designed this yet. As part

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1 of the PUD, obviously, we'll have to come forth and be
2 approved by both you folks and the Council. I just
3 haven't done that yet.

4 MEMBER DOYLE: Okay. My opinion is that
5 this is the make or break issue in terms of, you
6 know -- again coming across the bridge --

7 MR. RASMUSSEN: Sure.

8 MEMBER DOYLE: -- this is sort of a
9 gateway into the First Street area, and what people
10 need to see coming across the bridge is commerce and a
11 lifestyle center and things going on that they want to
12 go do, and so my hope is that whatever architectural
13 sketch we can see in the future will show how that
14 design is going to do that.

15 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yes. We also haven't
16 designed Building 3. That would have to come back
17 through when it gets designed. The design you're
18 seeing right now in the architectural is Buildings 1
19 and 2, so --

20 MEMBER DOYLE: Right. That was the
21 other thing that occurred to me is that -- as you were
22 showing the sketches is what the facade on the east
23 side of the parcel would look like because, of course,
24 that's --

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1 MR. RASMUSSEN: Right.

2 MEMBER DOYLE: -- the public face.

3 MR. RASMUSSEN: And each of those
4 architectural elements will have to go through Historic
5 Preservation, Plan Commission, City Council. As a PUD,
6 each and every one of them has to be approved.

7 I hope you can rest assured knowing some of
8 the other projects I've done in town. I believe we
9 have the best looking projects around between the
10 Heritage Square, between the Tyler and 64 Business
11 Park, the River Oaks Business Park, the Milestone Row,
12 First Street.

13 I don't think there's many architectural
14 blemishes out there. We've used Dan Marshall almost
15 exclusively. He and I work very hard together to make
16 sure these things look right. I certainly am not going
17 to put my name on something -- and I drive across the
18 bridge -- that doesn't look great. Not going to
19 happen. So we'll work hard on that.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right.

21 MEMBER DOYLE: That's it.

22 MEMBER PRETZ: For the benefit of the
23 other commissioners, when the applicant came before the
24 Preservation Commission, the dialogue was extremely

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1 healthy and very workable. The applicant was very open
2 to the recommendations that were coming out of that
3 commission. So I see a lot of work actually being done
4 at that level and coming up to here.

5 But one of the things that I wanted to ask is
6 because you have a change in philosophy, maybe you can
7 explain it to the other commissioners here, you're
8 moving away from condo to rental, and I believe that
9 you are going to keep it rental permanently is your
10 thought.

11 Can you kind of explain your rationale to
12 them on why you're making this shift in ownership for
13 the housing elements?

14 MR. RASMUSSEN: Well, we, of course,
15 have done market studies. We have read those. We know
16 the market. We're pretty educated on both the rental
17 market as well as the for-sale market, and I assume
18 you're all aware there is really no such thing as
19 for-sale residential condominiums to be built right now
20 in this country. And I mean in the country. It's not
21 financeable.

22 They're not sellable because you can't
23 finance the individual units because the FTIC has
24 changed the rules and regulations. So a building has

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1 to be 70 percent owner occupied before you can borrow
2 on a unit. It's not possible. Unless you have 70
3 percent cash buyers, it doesn't happen.

4 So on that one particular building we're
5 looking at doing this, it's the third building, we're
6 hoping that in the next couple of years some of that
7 lending regulation gets lightened up a little bit.

8 In Milestone Row down the street, we did
9 finally get to about 60 percent owner occupied there,
10 but it took a lot of effort, owner financing, and
11 different things like that, cash buyers. We still have
12 some rental units in that building.

13 So we have just realized that in today's
14 market -- and I don't think today means today. I think
15 today is probably an additional 7- to 10-year horizon
16 right now. The market is more geared towards a rental
17 community. We spent a decade really from the mid-90s
18 changing our lending structure in this country to allow
19 people to buy homes that shouldn't have bought homes.
20 Historically in this country we're about 62 percent
21 owner-occupied single-family houses. We went to 72.
22 We're right back at 62. It's where we need to be.

23 So we have a strong demand for rental
24 property, and we do in this town have a huge demand for

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1 rental property, for young people, older people, empty
2 nesters, each type. That's why we've created a product
3 here with studios, with two bedrooms that will
4 facilitate the entire gamut of what we have for a
5 rental community. So that's why we changed our
6 thinking, and I think you'll see that in almost every
7 community out there right now.

8 And we're really underserved rental-wise in
9 St. Charles, the Fox Valley actually. We haven't had a
10 decent sized rental project since Aml i, and I believe
11 Aml i was built in '99, '98. That's the last time a
12 significant amount of rental property was brought into
13 our community.

14 We own 56 units between Heritage Square and
15 First Street right now. That's the next biggest group
16 to the downtown, you know, and we're very successful
17 with it. We command high rents because we have high
18 quality products, and we bring in the right type of
19 people that we'd like to see in St. Charles, you know,
20 working in our offices and eating in our restaurants
21 and shopping and so on. So that's the intent.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Go ahead.

23 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I have a question on
24 the parking garage. If this is low profile, which is

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1 great, what's the top -- the roof look like because the
2 upper units are going to be looking down on the roof.
3 Has there been given any thought to putting a plaza or
4 some kind of --

5 MR. RASMUSSEN: Yeah. It's actually not
6 a roof.

7 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Oh, it's not.

8 MR. RASMUSSEN: The second floor is the
9 parking.

10 MEMBER SCHUETZ: It's open air.

11 MR. RASMUSSEN: It's open air. Yeah.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Yeah. Sorry.

13 MR. RASMUSSEN: It will have a parapet
14 wall around it so you won't see it so much, but if
15 you're up in the air you could see it looking down from
16 the apartments.

17 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Okay. Well, even more
18 of a question then, I guess, has there been any thought
19 to possibly large planters or something to soften what
20 they'll be looking at, or is that not necessary?

21 MR. RASMUSSEN: I don't think it's
22 necessary in that situation as long as the exterior of
23 it looks great. I don't think it's going to deter from
24 the people. They're not going to look down so much as

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1 they're going to look out, look for the river, look up.
2 They're above it, you know. So I don't foresee that as
3 an issue, no different than any apartment building that
4 looks down to a ground-level parking situation.

5 MEMBER SCHUETZ: All right.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

7 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Thanks.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Well, I am also
9 for lowering the density. I think three buildings
10 instead of one colossal building is much softer and
11 gives a nicer look.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: Could you speak up?

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is that better?

14 So I do welcome that in this plan, and I'm
15 all for it; and I do have the same concern that Brian
16 brought up and Tom just mentioned in coming down the
17 hill, that parking garage.

18 I love the new architectural look that you
19 came up with after the meeting with Historic
20 Preservation, and I know that this being a concept, you
21 will continue with that. You do have some beautiful
22 buildings in town.

23 MR. RASMUSSEN: Thanks.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So I'm

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1 comfortable that we're going to get there, but like
2 Brian said, that parking garage has got to be a thorn
3 in your side too, trying to figure out how to, you
4 know, hide it from the street.

5 MR. RASMUSSEN: Well, I think what Dan
6 recently did with these 3-D renderings -- I'm going the
7 wrong way -- with these 3-D renderings where you can
8 turn them and stuff, and not to speak for Dan, but I'm
9 pretty confident he can probably help us get a good
10 vision of that.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Renderings,
12 there you go.

13 MR. RASMUSSEN: Because now you can see
14 this, and we even have a streetscape down at ground
15 level which is pretty realistic.

16 You know, when you talk about these buildings
17 and you say what are you really going to see when you
18 drive down First Street, you're not going to see that
19 facade. You're going to see this. So it's really a
20 nice perspective to be able to look at that, and I'm
21 sure we can accomplish that same thing on the parking
22 garage as well.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is it possible
24 to get that set back far enough off Main Street?

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1 You're going to be on the bridge, and you won't see it.
2 Is it possible to set back --

3 MR. RASMUSSEN: It will be diminished,
4 but you'll still see it, but it will --

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Will you see it
6 from high? You won't see --

7 MR. RASMUSSEN: No. You won't see above
8 it. Absolutely not.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You will not.

10 MR. RASMUSSEN: No. No.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That is a
12 concern, but anyway, I like the concept.

13 MR. RASMUSSEN: Thank you.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Brian.

15 MEMBER DOYLE: There are a couple other
16 questions at the end of the staff report that I just
17 want to touch on.

18 So we've talked about the proposed revised
19 building plan, the building architecture.

20 The third question was: Should business and
21 professional offices be permitted on the ground-floor
22 level and follow the recent changes to the Downtown
23 Overlay District?

24 So my thought on that is that we recently

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1 talked about these uses have to generate traffic, and
2 we then -- Russ, please correct me if I'm wrong -- but
3 we're saturated with restaurants in downtown; isn't
4 that the case?

5 MS. TUNGARE: I wouldn't quite use the
6 word "saturated." We have a fair number of
7 restaurants, but I think there is an opportunity for
8 accommodating more in the downtown area.

9 MEMBER DOYLE: Pardon me. I'm just
10 going to look something up here from our comp plan, the
11 market analysis in the downtown area.

12 According to page 7 of Chapter 1 in the comp
13 plan, in the downtown area, the retail gap shows
14 negatives in every category except for nonstore
15 retailers.

16 So I know that this doesn't lead to a hard
17 and fast decision like, you know, would it saturate it,
18 but my point is that since there is not, in fact, a
19 retail gap in downtown for restaurants or some of these
20 other kinds of retail businesses, I feel like there is
21 a strong rationale to relax the restrictions on this
22 and not place an undue burden on the development
23 community, including this parcel.

24 MR. RASMUSSEN: In our asking for those

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1 additional uses on the first floor, our objective is to
2 bring bodies that stay and work and live and eat in
3 downtown St. Charles. One will help facilitate the
4 other.

5 So our office situation in all of St. Charles
6 is difficult right now. We've got one of the highest
7 vacancy rates anywhere in the suburban area as far as
8 office space goes. However, in this particular
9 corridor, I think we're lacking.

10 There is a lot of people who actually love to
11 work down here. We have maintained probably 93 or 4
12 percent occupancy on the second floor of the plaza
13 building which is the parking garage building for the
14 office space. We tend to get about 20 to 25 percent
15 premium rent above anybody else in the Fox Valley area
16 because of this structure and its location, and we
17 believe we can accomplish that here as well.

18 So it's one thing to say we need to bring
19 retail or we need to bring restaurants in, which,
20 obviously, we'll do our best to get as much of that as
21 we can because we want that, and I think by having more
22 people living there, that will work as well, but we
23 need to bring in some office space as well. We had a
24 bunch of it on the second floor, as I mentioned

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1 earlier, proposed previously. Now we just want to do
2 some of that on the first floor with the retail and the
3 restaurant, and that's our objective.

4 MEMBER DOYLE: Does the current PUD not
5 allow this on this parcel?

6 MR. COLBY: There are specific
7 limitations within this PUD ordinance for the
8 ground-floor uses, and there is a more limited list
9 actually than is allowed in the zoning ordinance that
10 specifies what should be retail and restaurant, and
11 there is a certain percentage of certain uses allowed.
12 So it is actually more restrictive than even our
13 downtown ordinance district was before.

14 So the proposal to change the restrictions on
15 this site would affect these buildings that are here,
16 but the restrictions would remain in place for the
17 other properties that are already developed or to be
18 developed until the request that we change those.

19 MEMBER DOYLE: So that the
20 recommendation that we recently made does not apply to
21 these new buildings.

22 MR. COLBY: Correct. Because the PUD
23 ordinance controls the ground floors in the First
24 Street project.

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1 MEMBER DOYLE: I'd be curious to know
2 what the other commissioners feel about that. I mean,
3 we had a discussion about that and concerns about
4 whether, you know, we needed to include some sort of a
5 sunset provision, you know, because of the length of
6 rents, long-term leases, et cetera.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Well, for some
8 years, I have had a concern about us trying to drive
9 retail in St. Charles to work. I think there's other
10 reasons retail isn't in St. Charles. I mean, it's not
11 been a walkable community. It's not been the downtown.
12 It's not been the shopping center, and geographically,
13 it makes it difficult.

14 Relaxing those standards in a building like
15 this would allow people that are living downtown to
16 work downtown because most of the traffic that you have
17 in these communities is localized. It's very localized
18 traffic in all of downtown St. Charles, and it always
19 has been.

20 So I would be in favor of relaxing that
21 retail component and not just here, but pretty much all
22 of downtown. I don't think trying to force people to
23 shop here is worth it.

24 MS. TUNGARE: And, in fact, that is

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1 already in place. The regulations on development have
2 already been relaxed to allow for the situation of
3 offices in the downtown. So that already passed City
4 Council.

5 MR. COLBY: Yeah. A couple months ago.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So to allow it
7 or to say let's move forward with it here is just a
8 continuation.

9 MS. TUNGARE: It would be consistent
10 with the zoning ordinance.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. RASMUSSEN: Thank you.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Anything from
15 the audience?

16 Yes, sir.

17 MR. ENCK: My name is Jim Enck, E-n-c-k,
18 and I have lived in St. Charles since 1967, and I'm a
19 landscape architect. So my comments will be coming
20 from that direction.

21 My one question is do these apartments go all
22 the way through the building?

23 MR. RASMUSSEN: No. They do not.

24 MR. ENCK: Well, if you go back to the

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1 site plan and you look out your apartment over that
2 parking deck, that is going to be -- I hit it again,
3 Russ.

4 MR. COLBY: Click on the picture.

5 MR. ENCK: What's that?

6 MR. COLBY: Click right there.

7 MR. ENCK: Click here?

8 MR. O'ROURKE: The left one not the
9 right.

10 MR. ENCK: I warned you. Thanks, Chris.
11 Go the other way, all the way. There you go.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is that the one?

13 MR. ENCK: Yes. So if we're talking
14 about this upper building right here -- that's the
15 first building we're talking about; right?

16 MR. RASMUSSEN: Correct.

17 MR. ENCK: So if we're going to have
18 apartments on this side looking out over the street and
19 the streetscape has trees and everything and trees on
20 both sides of the street, I think that's going to be,
21 you know, fairly handsome; but on this side, if your
22 front door and your living room window is going to look
23 out onto this parking deck -- and the one comment was
24 made, well, your view isn't down, it's going to be

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1 straight across. Well, if you're looking straight
2 across, you're going to be looking in the side of this
3 building.

4 I think at a minimum planters should be
5 introduced into this planting -- or this parking deck
6 here so you can get a roofscape up there of some sort.
7 So at least you're starting to look into the canopy of
8 some trees.

9 And I don't think you'll ever see the river
10 from these apartments here. Maybe you'll get a peek
11 over this way at some point, but you'll never look over
12 this building and see any of this. I mean, that's just
13 going to be a barrier there.

14 So one of my recommendations would be to get
15 as much landscaping on this deck as possible. I know
16 that takes away from parking, and so you have to be a
17 little more creative in how you handle the parking, but
18 I think it's just really important to have trees and
19 shrubs because they bring everything down to the human
20 scale. You've got some fairly massive buildings here,
21 and the only way we're going to be able to get it down
22 to the human scale is to introduce landscaping.

23 So that would be my comment.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Thank you.

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1 Okay.

2 MEMBER DOYLE: I have one more question
3 for Mr. Rasmussen. I know nothing about landscape
4 architecture. So this is, you know, an honest
5 question.

6 Is there any kind of product or, you know,
7 way of -- I'm thinking that in a private home, you can
8 have trellises or latticework over a deck and you can
9 have vines and things, you know, so it's not really a
10 load-bearing structure. It's cosmetic. Is there kind
11 of -- pergola. You know, is it possible to do
12 something like that over a parking deck that would
13 provide some screening from the top and allow for vines
14 or things like that to grow?

15 MR. RASMUSSEN: Anything is possible. I
16 mean, yes, you could. I think the answer is to do some
17 kind of hanging, not basket structure, but planter box
18 structures around the perimeter of the parapet wall
19 that would add some color to it. Some things like that
20 would probably make some sense.

21 To put an entire roof pergola type structure
22 over it probably doesn't make economic sense or
23 long-term sense. The city is going to own this garage.
24 I'm going to guess the city is not going to want to

1 maintain that sort of thing.

2 I myself am not concerned with those units
3 looking down onto a parking lot, if you will. I'm only
4 concerned about the exterior of that so it looks good
5 from our views around it. So I wouldn't be concerned,
6 but to add some planters, and those planters probably
7 should hang off the outside, not the inside, so then,
8 again, you see them from the outside more, but it will
9 also help people looking down too.

10 I think those are good comments that I heard
11 tonight that we can actually do something with.

12 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Excuse me. What about
13 the space between the building and the parking garage?
14 How much is there, and could trees be planted there or
15 something, not a canopy, but --

16 MR. RASMUSSEN: There is about 11 feet
17 there, but on some of the staff comments, you saw
18 issues with where is the garbage?

19 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Right.

20 MR. RASMUSSEN: Where is the electric?
21 Where are the transformers?

22 There is a lot of infrastructure that needs
23 to be dealt with in that 11-foot area, and I certainly
24 am not going to promise we can do much landscape-wise

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1 in there.

2 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Keep it in mind, if you
3 would, please.

4 MR. RASMUSSEN: I'm with you. It's just
5 very limited.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right.
7 Anybody else? Yes, sir.

8 MR. RABCHUK: John Rabchuk, 914 Ash
9 Street. A couple of quick comments.

10 One is I understand from the presentation
11 that you made to Council that you're using Type 5
12 construction materials; is that correct? So it's
13 essentially a wood structure, the interior?

14 MR. RASMUSSEN: We haven't determined
15 that for sure yet.

16 MR. RABCHUK: Okay. Those were your
17 comments then.

18 I guess overall, while this is better than
19 some of the renderings that were done earlier, my
20 concern is this is the premier site for the city, and
21 it deserves to be a premier site for the city, and it's
22 not.

23 The city made some mistakes, you know,
24 whoever the parties were that were involved at that

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1 time in taking on the size project they did. The
2 timing was wrong and everything else. At some point in
3 time, the city has got to decide do they want a premier
4 architecturally beautiful addition to the city on this
5 site and have to eat some -- you know, financially, eat
6 some of what was committed to, or does it want to say
7 this is the best we can do and make the economics work
8 as best as possible.

9 Because this isn't a premier site to make
10 St. Charles, you know, be an attraction, if that's what
11 we want to do. I'm not saying that there -- and maybe
12 the overriding reason is the economics, and then we've
13 got to accept that and say this is the best that we can
14 do, but I think we could do better, and I think that
15 St. Charles deserves better.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Thank you.
17 Anybody else?

18 (No response.)

19 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That concludes
20 then Item 5.

21 Item 6 on our agenda is meeting
22 announcements. Any of those dates -- January 21st,
23 February 4th, February 18th -- anybody know they can't
24 be at them? Do we have items for those dates?

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1 MR. O'ROURKE: Possibly.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Possibly.

3 MR. O'ROURKE: It's not known yet.

4 There's applications on file. I'm not sure exactly

5 what dates they're going to get to at this point.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: But they could

7 be at any one of those three.

8 MR. O'ROURKE: Correct.

9 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I will be out of town

10 the 21st as well as the 18th of February.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Oh, my, when are

12 you going to retire?

13 MEMBER SCHUETZ: I wish.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Any

15 additional business from the Plan Commission?

16 (No response.)

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Staff?

18 Audience?

19 (No response.)

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right. Then

21 do I have a motion to adjourn?

22 MEMBER DOYLE: So moved.

23 MEMBER SCHUETZ: Second.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Moved and

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1 seconded at 9:03 p.m.

2 PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 9:03 P.M.

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