

CITIZENS FOR GLEN ELLYN PRESERVATION

Working to preserve the historic
character of our village

Dear President Pfefferman and the Board of Trustees,

I feel it is important to write you to describe some concerns I have about the Downtown Plan and its relationship to zoning in the areas adjacent to the central business district. While the board of Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation and many of our members have been very supportive of the process that was used to create the plan, we feel strongly that the final result is problematic.

Not everyone is able to visualize the full three-dimensional impact of a proposed structure and I think the final version of our plan reflects this. Evidence that this difficulty is a common one can be found in nearby towns in structures that create a jarring, urban canyon that dwarfs passersby and devalues nearby historic buildings. However, there are also nearby examples of new downtown construction that add to the streetscape by repeating the scale and sensibility of surrounding buildings. The concept drawings included in our Downtown Plan illustrate this type of appropriate scale. Unfortunately, these also help to create the misconception that what is being proposed will match our streetscapes. While the various illustrations portray charming two and three-story townhouses and condos that blend into the existing historic streetscape, the actual language of the document promotes massive five-story (55 foot) buildings for the areas immediately surrounding Main Street.

Creating a concept plan to guide future development was an important task; however, it should reflect the best of what we could do. *Our current zoning*, which allows five-story buildings in the transitional area between our residential neighborhoods and our central business district, *is what has been the guiding principle behind our plan*. Because of this, instead of a plan that guides development to reflect the character of the village, we have a plan that encourages the inappropriate height and bulk that was already happening without a plan.

I understand that new multi-family housing would be a good thing for our downtown businesses and also that a growing demand for this type of housing is inevitable. However, I believe that we need to alter the expectation of providing all 450 of the proposed new multi-family units within the downtown area. If we change our zoning to only allow the very types of two and three story townhomes and condos that are pictured in the plan, although the density will be reduced, we will build for the future in the best interest of both our residents and our business owners. It is the prospect of such a good result that encouraged residents to take part in creating the downtown plan. I strongly urge you to pursue a reduction of our downtown allowable building heights to match the three-story (35 foot) limit on Main Street. I also recommend that the Downtown Plan be adopted with the inclusion of language that recommends this improvement.

Respectfully,

Linda Gilbert
President
Citizens for Glen Ellyn Preservation