

**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE  
VILLAGE CENTER STUDY**

## VILLAGE CENTER STUDY

### I. Introduction.

In November of 1993, the Village Board of Trustees requested that the Plan Commission study the Village Center in order to develop recommendations to guide future Village Center decision-making. The goal was to determine what a desirable Village Center might contain and to determine what government could do to effect those ends.

The Plan Commission began its study with the belief that direct financial participation by the Village in the development of the Village Center was unlikely. Whether taking the form of direct inducements to new businesses, sales tax rebates or, the recent facade rebate program, the impact of such programs on achieving the desired outcome is not at all clear. Such programs may not be necessary or effective. Regardless of this fact, the Village Board is unlikely to authorize the spending of tax revenues in this manner.

The quality and success of the downtown retailing will be affected most directly not by Village government, but by the mix and quality of its retailers and their willingness to provide an attractive, innovative yet responsive shopping environment. The Commission has heard frequently that good retailing attracts good retailing. Improvement of the quality and diversity of Village Center retailing will attract new merchants as well as benefit those already here. The challenge is to make Wilmette's Village Center an attractive place in which to do business while preserving necessary safety and aesthetic safeguards. It is the hope of the Plan Commission that this Report will contribute to the creation of an environment in Wilmette where that is encouraged for the benefit of merchant, property owners and residents.

### II. The Public Meetings; Questions and Responses.

The Plan Commission began the public meeting process on April 5, 1994. The Plan Commission believed that any meaningful recommendations would have to take into account the views of all the individuals and groups having an interest in the condition of the Village Center. The chart attached as Appendix A lists those individuals and groups and how they participated in the meeting process. Summaries of the meetings are attached as Appendix B. Also as part of the process, the Plan Commission had a resident, shopper and merchant survey completed, the results of which are attached as Appendix C.

The Plan Commission held open-ended meetings with direction provided by a series of questions the Commission had developed. The questions, developed to be neutral and non-leading, were delivered to the participants before the meetings or handed out at the meetings. These would function as the starting point for the discussions. The intent was to capture what could be learned from all sources, both the "soft" insights and opinions based on personal experience and intuition as well as the "hard" data from past planning efforts, surveys and market research. Two meetings were held with local experts in various related fields (planning, market research, development, real estate, etc.) to help the Commission provide organization and focus for the data and information that was gathered. The key questions which were used to prompt the discussion are presented below:

What are the geographic boundaries of the Village Center?

What are characteristics of the "ideal" Village Center?

\*Appearance/Ambiance

\*Convenience/Access

\*Goods and Services

\*Facilities

What do you like most about the Village Center?

What do you like least about it?

What, if anything, is missing in the Village Center?

The following are brief summaries of the answers from the meetings and the survey process:

#### ● The Village Center Defined

The area generally regarded as the Village Center was addressed in several different ways. For example, some participants felt the Village Center should include only the commercial area east of Green Bay Road, while others felt that it should include commercial areas on the west side of Green Bay Road, from Lake Avenue south to Isabella Street. The Plan Commission defined the Village Center as shown in Map 1. While the Plan Commission discussed including all of Green Bay Road between Lake Avenue and Isabella Street in the Village Center, it was decided that the uses on that section of Green Bay Road were more automobile than pedestrian-oriented. The Plan Commission included the Library and Post Office properties in the Village Center since those uses are customarily thought of as downtown uses.

While Map 1 defines the boundaries of the Village Center, the Commission is also aware that there is an area contiguous to the Village Center zoning district that materially affects the Village Center. That area, shown also on Map 1 is close enough to the Village Center to allow convenient pedestrian travel to the Village Center, and is therefore an important element in making the Village Center more pedestrian oriented.

● Current Status - Issues and Concerns

The major concerns addressed at the meetings were the lack of retail shopping opportunities; the procedures involved in opening a new business or redeveloping property in the Village; and the general appearance of the Village Center.

The primary criticism about the Village Center was the lack of retail shopping opportunities. Many people referred to Central Street in Evanston and Hubbard Woods in Winnetka as being good examples of exciting places to shop, where browsing is encouraged by the many interesting retail shops. Many people said that they are less inclined to browse Wilmette's Village Center because of the lack of interesting retail opportunities. Map 1, in addition to the Village Center boundaries, shows the land use breakdown for the Village Center. As the map indicates, a high percentage of street-level stores contain personal service uses and office uses, which do not create the type of atmosphere found on Central Street in Evanston or Hubbard Woods.

A number of merchants, landlords and real estate professionals commented on the "red tape" involved in opening up a business or redeveloping property in Wilmette. Of particular concern was the Appearance Review process and the Site Plan Review (SPR) process. Many people felt the Appearance Review Commission (ARC) acts too arbitrarily in rendering their decisions. It is a common belief that the SPR and ARC processes causes costly delays and uncertainty which may have the effect of discouraging prospective developers and retailers. For example merchants and landlords said they were reluctant to do improvements to parking lots such as resurfacing or restriping because the permitting process imposes additional requirements such as landscaping.

Another issued raised frequently was the appearance of the Village Center. While most people like the scale, size and configuration of the Village Center, many felt the streetscape and building facades could be improved. The condition of the sidewalks and the dull merchant windows were two of the most frequently mentioned concerns.

Parking was one issue where opinions were sharply divided. While some believed lack of parking was a problem in the Village Center, others felt that parking in the Village Center was sufficient. Because of the mixed opinion on parking the Plan Commission requested that a professional parking/traffic study be completed. The Village hired Barton Aschman & Associates to complete the study which is summarized on pages 8 and 9 of this study and is attached here as Appendix D.

● Strengths

Among the strengths frequently mentioned were the "hometown" character, the layout of the Village Center, and the availability of public transportation.

Many felt that a "hometown" character was created by the relationships store owners have developed with their customer base. The layout of the Village Center was noted as a strength. The Village Center is laid out like a traditional downtown and not like an automobile-oriented strip shopping center.

The availability of excellent public transportation was also mentioned as an asset. The Village Center is fortunate to have a Metra train stop as well as Pace bus stops located within its boundaries. It was also felt that having the Post Office, Library and Village Hall in the Village Center helps support the traditional downtown feel of Wilmette's Village Center.

**III. The "Vision" for the Village Center.**

During the meetings the participants and the Commission attempted to formulate a "vision" for the Village Center. The following vision reflects a consensus of those participants and the Commission:

The Village Center should be a vibrant and exciting shopping area that offers a variety of quality retail and restaurant establishments while maintaining its traditional hometown character and pedestrian scale.

#### **IV. Translating the Vision into Reality.**

To translate the Vision statement into a strategy and action plan the Plan Commission carefully considered what the Village might do to promote and encourage desirable development of the Village Center. Actions here may include the following:

- **Mitigate Regulatory Barriers and Uncertainty**

The Plan Commission received comments, from local businesses that the process to develop or change a business involves excess and/or subjective regulations, the effect of which is to deter and impede more desirable retail and restaurant use.

Specifically cited as subjective, adversarial and arbitrary was the Appearance Review Commission (ARC). One of the more frequently noted concerns was the sign issue. The Village, including members of the ARC, should work with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce to develop a local sign ordinance for the Village Center. Such an ordinance would permit a business requesting signage that meets the guidelines to obtain a permit without first obtaining ARC approval. The Commission also recommends the ARC research design guidelines for private property in the Village Center. The Commission recommends adopting private property design guidelines only if they will streamline the approval process and make the process less arbitrary and more predictable. Other key aspects of the development process, such as the Site Plan Review (SPR) process, may also be candidates for closer examination. The Plan Commission does not, however, recommend abolition of either the Appearance Review Commission or the Site Plan Review process as both of these are critical to maintaining a desired degree of unity, coherence and safety in the development of private properties.

In addition to these specific regulations affecting the development process, other regulation may also contribute to a lack of growth and development in the Village Center. All local regulation affecting how a merchant must conduct his or her business should be reviewed in light of its purpose and actual effect. Consideration should be given to the revision of those regulations which are not necessary and which do not ensure to the health, safety and vibrancy of the Village Center. Among them are parking requirements (see Review Parking Requirements), hours of operation, signage, outside displays and outdoor retail sales. The effect of current liquor licensing regulations was raised by some participants, but no consensus was reached as to whether changes to those regulations

might help or deter desired development. Finally, staff should create a business development handbook which would clearly outline the steps a business owner or developer would have to take to develop in Wilmette.

The Central Street shopping district in Evanston was frequently cited to the Plan Commission as an area of diverse merchants, with interesting storefronts, sidewalk displays, etc. The creation of similar excitement and attraction, while still preserving the "hometown" quality of the Village Center, should be a goal in any development. In order to encourage a more exciting streetscape the Village should permit outdoor seating and sales. The outdoor uses could be regulated through an administrative procedure which would ensure the proposed outdoor use would not become a nuisance to surrounding properties. The recently adopted outdoor seating license procedure represents precisely the kind of approach which simplifies the regulatory process which has been advocated by the stakeholders.

- Actively Promote and Encourage "Key" Retail Uses

The Village Center contains several key properties that because of their size and location can influence the retail composition and character of the whole Village Center. Throughout the Village Center review process the Plan Commission has heard that good retailers will attract good retailers. The Village should use its influence and good offices to focus on "key" properties to attract desirable retailers. The market will take care of the rest.

The Village should continue to participate, in an active way, in redevelopment opportunities affecting key Village Center sites. The participation by the Village in the development of the property at the corner of Wilmette and Poplar (commonly referred to as the IHOP/Colette's property), was met with some public skepticism initially and its final retail mix, success and appeal are not known at this time. Initial results, so far are encouraging. Shopper activity appears to have increased and the development contains the attractive "mix" of stores and amenities identified as desirable. This development, if successful, may be an important step toward achieving the necessary commercial mass critical to sustaining and growing the Village Center.

The Commission discussed and reviewed various financial incentives including the facade rebate program. Other incentives discussed included sales tax rebates, real estate tax adjustments, direct subsidies. The general conclusion was that, while the facade rebate program did succeed in making storefronts more attractive, it and others would not

contribute significantly toward creating the desired retail mix. In fact any resulting benefits may not justify the costs of the programs.

Village Center property owners should be educated in modern leasing and marketing techniques. Many Village Center landlords are unaware of the economic benefits of remodeling their buildings and seeking tenants that will further the Vision for the Village Center. The Village should seek out residents with experience in leasing and marketing to help educate landlords at Village/Chamber sponsored seminars. This should help reduce the number of non-retail or non-restaurant uses in the Village Center.

The Village should assist the Chamber of Commerce and Village Center leasing agents with the marketing of the Village Center. Information such as recent market and demographic reports should be shared with all groups interested in marketing the Village Center. The Village should work with the Chamber to make sure up to date marketing information is being used. The marketing information should be targeted to potential retailers that would enhance the desired mix. In other words, the Village should actively pursue key tenants by marketing the benefits of the Village Center. The attached report (Appendix E) outlines typical retail uses and the demand for those uses as well as demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the residents in the Village Center trade area and should be used to better market the Village Center. A separate Village Center landlords/merchant group should be established to oversee issues specifically related to the Village Center.

The Plan Commission believes that being aware of key properties and working with landlords to better market and lease their properties will contribute to positive change within the Village Center.

● Improve Public Property

The Village should insure that the public property is developed and maintained in a safe and attractive manner.

The Plan Commission recommends that a streetscape plan (including lighting, seating, sidewalks, signage, landscaping) be developed for the Village Center that will result in a consistent, unifying character. It is important that appropriate unifying design elements be incorporated in the redevelopment of Green Bay Road between Central Avenue and Wilmette Avenue to visually link the two parts. Therefore the Plan

Commission also recommends that the Appearance Review Commission develop a streetscape plan and that the plan be completed prior to work commencing on the redevelopment of Green Bay Road.

The Plan Commission understands that streetscape improvements will not alone bring about the exciting and vibrant shopping area referred to in the Vision. However, the creation of a more appealing streetscape will make the Village Center a more inviting place to browse and shop.

- Residential Density

Contributing to the success of a pedestrian oriented Village Center are the many residents living within walking distance. The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance have noted this need by permitting apartments and townhouses in certain adjacent areas.

The Village should encourage appropriate multi-family residential development in the Village Center and townhomes in the R2 district surrounding the Village Center. Comment before the Plan Commission has suggested that such development can create a "critical mass" of customers and browsers. This may in turn lead to the attraction and success of varied and successful retailers. The sustained success of retailing at Plaza del Lago as well as the attraction of the Central Street area in Evanston have been related to the numbers and demographic profiles of their nearby residents. Similar quality and upscale retailing may prosper with appropriate density and residential redevelopment of the Village Center. Here, for example, the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to allow, as a special use, fully-residential development in the Village Center. Specifically, the Village's residential parking requirement of the Village Center should be reviewed with particular attention given to lowering the parking requirements for one and two bedroom dwelling units. The current requirement may be excessive and counterproductive given the location, in the Village Center, of public transportation and nearby goods and services.

- Better Utilize Existing Parking Lots and Review Parking Requirements.

Throughout the planning process there has been a difference of opinion on whether or not there is adequate parking in the Village Center. Lack of parking was raised as a concern in the resident survey but was not mentioned as a major concern in the shopper survey.

The Parking/Traffic study completed by Barton Aschman & Associates found there is not a lack of parking in the Village Center. The study indicated that there is a deficiency in commuter parking but not in shopper and employee parking. The study recommends that the two parking lots south of Veteran's Park be consolidated and reconfigured to provide additional parking as well as improve the traffic flow. The study also suggests increasing the capacity of the Poplar commuter lots by approximately 40 parking spaces by reconfiguring the parking from angled to 90 degree parking. Also the Village should consider leasing spaces in outlying lots not used during the week to make permit parking available for employees.

Barton Aschman also recommended amending the Zoning Ordinance parking requirements. More specifically they recommend that the residential and retail parking requirements in the Village Center be reduced. The Plan Commission recommends that the residential and retail parking requirements for the Village Center be reviewed further, but does not, in this Study, either accept or reject the Barton Aschman conclusions regarding these parking requirements.

While the lack of parking was not found to be a problem by Barton Aschman, the Plan Commission feels any improvements that can be made to existing lots that would increase their capacity or make them more functional should be done provided any change is cost effective. The Plan Commission also believes that existing parking regulations in the Village Center and surrounding areas should be reviewed. This would help mitigate one of the uncertainties (parking variation requests) in the development process.

#### **V. Need to Change the Comprehensive Plan.**

As part of the Village Center study, the Plan Commission carefully reviewed the Comprehensive Plan and discussed whether some change to the Plan would be necessary or desirable in order to effect the changes suggested here. The Commission concluded that the Comprehensive Plan was consistent with changes suggested in this Study. Further, the Commission concluded that the suggestions here should be viewed as ways to further the broad statements contained in the Comprehensive Plan and therefore, that no changes need be made to the Plan in response to this Study.

## VI. Conclusion.

Wilmette's Village Center has been fortunate not to suffer through a prolonged period of vacancies. However, there is broadly-held perception that the Village Center is deficient in both the quality and diversity of retailers. Because the Center is not considered an area in which to browse, but rather is an area to go to for a specific shopping destination, many desirable retailers are not attracted to the Center and shoppers are lost to other, more desirable, shopping areas. Administrative procedures within Village government were viewed as an impediment to improvement, and stores and merchandise were described frequently as "tired" and "unexciting".

This Study identifies several areas where the Village Center is strong. For example, local merchants provide quality service in a small, hometown atmosphere. Much can be done, however, to make the Center a more attractive place to visit, browse and shop as well as to improve the procedures which affect the opening and development of a local business. All of those are identified above. This Study is about what the Village can and should do to create an environment that is conducive to desired development while maintaining the appropriate and necessary oversight and control. Well-conceived rules and regulations, consistently applied, along with an active customer, merchant and government partnership are the keys to a successful Village Center.

# ACTION MATRIX

	BUDGETARY	ZONING AMENDMENT	VILLAGE BOARD	COMMISSION	STAFF	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
<b>MITIGATE REGULATORY BARRIERS AND UNCERTAINTY</b>						
REVIEW DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES			X		X	
CREATE DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK					X	
DEVELOP LOCAL SIGN ORDINANCE			X	APPEARANCE REVIEW	X	X
REVIEW OUTDOOR SEATING/SALES REGS *		X	X	LAND USE	X	X
RESEARCH PRIVATE PROPERTY DESIGN GUIDELINES			X	APPEARANCE REVIEW	X	X
<b>ACTIVELY PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE "KEY" RETAIL USES</b>						
FOCUS ON KEY SITES			X		X	X
EDUCATE LANDLORDS					X	X
MARKET VC	X		X		X	X
CREATE VC MERCHANT/ LANDLORD GROUP					X	X
<b>IMPROVE PUBLIC PROPERTY</b>						
DEVELOP STREETScape GUIDELINES			X	APPEARANCE REVIEW	X	
IMPROVE STREETScape APPEARANCE	X		X		X	
<b>INCREASE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY</b>						
PERMIT RESIDENTIAL ON FIRST FLOOR IN VC		X	X	LAND USE	X	X
<b>BETTER UTILIZE EXISTING PARKING LOTS AND REVIEW PARKING REQUIREMENTS</b>						
RECONFIGURE PARKING LOTS	X		X	TRANSPORTATION AND PLAN	X	X
REVIEW PARKING REQUIREMENTS		X	X	TRANSPORTATION AND PLAN	X	

The review of outdoor seating regulations has been completed

**APPENDIXES**

- A. Meeting Schedule
- B. Meeting Summaries
- C. Survey Tabulations
- D. Parking/Traffic Study
- E. Retail Reports

APPENDIX A

1. <u>Participants</u> *	2. <u>Involvement Method</u>	3. <u>Timing</u>
Village Board	Village Board Meeting	Entire Process
Chamber of Commerce Local Business Owners/Managers	Plan Commission Meeting ""	April 1994 ""
Local Property Owners Commercial Advisory Council	Plan Commission Meeting ""	May 1994 ""
Local Developers/Real Estate Experts	Round Table Discussion #1 at Plan Commission Meeting	June 1994
Residents VC Employees	Plan Commission Meeting ""	July 1994 ""
<b>Boards and Commissions -</b>		
Zoning Board of Appeals	Work Sessions at PC Meeting	Sept 1994
Appearance Review Commission	""	""
Housing Commission	""	""
Senior Resources Commission	""	""
Community Relations Commission	""	""
Preservation Board	""	""
Transportation Commission	""	""
Youth Commission	""	""
Ad Hoc Cable Advisory Com	""	""
<b>Civic Groups</b>		
League of Woman Voters	Plan Commission Meeting	Oct 1994
Arts Guild	""	""
Lions Club	""	""
Rotary	""	""
Kiwanis Club	""	""
Optimists	""	""
Sister Cities	""	""
Community Fair	""	""
Woman's Club	""	""
United Way	""	""
Garden Clubs	""	""
PTA and PTO	""	""
Library, Park and School Boards	""	""
Metra and Pace	""	""
Utilities (Il Bell/ComEd/Ni-Gas/Cable)	""	""
<b>Institutions</b>		
Post Office	""	""
Places of Worship	""	""
Normandy House	""	""
Gates Manor	""	""
Local Developers/Real Estate Experts	Round Table Discussion #2 at Plan Commission Meeting	June 1995
Residents	Survey	June, July and August, 1994
Merchants	Survey	""
Visitors/Employees	Survey	""

\* The Plan Commission allowed any stakeholder to address the Commission regardless of which meeting they attended. However, the topics and questions discussed were based on the above outline.

# APPENDIX B

## **PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS - APRIL 5, 1994**

Chairman Schneider said this was the first meeting with the different groups and stakeholder. The groups were organized by common interest. The Commission was asked by the Village Board to address the planning of the Village Center received a letter from President Jacoby listing the attempted surveys that has been done over a number of years, specific actions that was taken e.g. the recent proposed development of the former IHOP property, many of the citizens were concerned that this kind of a piecemeal approach addressing small problems one at a time without linking it to an overall concept is not in the best interest of the businesses and the community. Chairman Schneider said after looking at what other Villages had done and talking with consultants, the recommendation and best approach is not a solution but to enlist everyone involved for their views without editing by the Plan Commission on the key topics. Have brainstorming session, idea recorded and filtered through consultants to confirm or not to confirm concerns.

The members of the Plan Commission gave a brief introduction of their background.

The Chairman said at the next meeting the groups will consist of local developers, property owners, real estate experts. There will be two meetings. The first will be in three months to take stock of the input gathered, there will be meetings with residents, staff, Boards, Commissions, institutions and City groups. At the end of the meetings the panel of experts will be invited to review all the information gathered and filter all the information what is the common real issue during this period the need to determine that professional help is needed the Plan Commission have the availability of monies to retain the experts.

An audience member asked what was the time frame. Chairman Schneider said the Plan Commission has no specific time period.

Mr. Jack Close, President, Northshore and Community Bank, said he thinks of the Village Center as being the business district east of the railroad tracks and the Green Bay corridor as another business district but not the Village Center.

Ms. Beth Lambrecht, Lambrecht's Jewelry, said she thinks of the Village Center as across Green Bay Road and continuity to include all retails on both sides of the railroad track.

Mr. Whitehand asked what can be done to tie the two sides of the railroad tracks together.

John Conroy, Scandia Catering, said he thinks the businesses from Isabella Street all the way to Kenilworth should be considered the Village Center.

Art Karas said in the past the Village Center included the block all the way to Lake Street, he felt that Isabella should not included.

Chairman Schneider asked if there were different characters to the two areas.

Mr. Karas said all areas are a mix of all kinds of businesses.

Betsy Storm, President, Betsy Storm Public Relations, said she thinks of the Village Center as the part that defines the core on Green Bay Road and Isabella to be different but connected.

Mr. Close was in agreement with Ms. Storm regarding the definition of the core of the Village Center.

Ms. Lambrecht said she considers west of Green Bay Road a part of the Village Center because the nature of the businesses are similar, and if continuity is expected both sides should be included. She said south of Linden and north of Lake are an extension of the Village Center.

George Martin, Owner, Design Supplies said choosing Green Bay Road would discriminate against the businesses on the east and west sides. Both sides of Green Bay Road should be included.

Mr. Whitehand asked if the railroad track was a barrier and if there were any ideas of what can be done to overcome the barriers.

Chairman Schneider said from looking at the map the commercial areas along Green Bay Road are single loaded and the Village Center is the portion which is east of Green Bay Road.

Matt Lambrecht, Lambrecht Jewelers, said he does not think of Green Bay Road as a dividing line. After the Village Center Planning Process is done, what must go back to the Village Board is Fourth and Linden, Ridge businesses and out west on Skokie should also be looked at, in the past these business areas have felt neglected.

Chairman Schneider asked the audience what are the "ideal" characteristics of the Village Center.

Mr. Lambrecht said the Village Center is viable. The parking has been an issue, there is a need for more retail in the Village, generally women and men clothing. The Village Center looks tired, the sidewalks are scary due to cracks, get rid of bricks in the sidewalk, the planters are looking worn. What makes Wilmette different is it's unique buildings the businesses are all individual which makes it attractive.

Chairman Schneider asked how are people attracted to the Village Center. Mr. Lambrecht said through goods and services.

Ms. O'Laughlin said the Village Center shopping is very specific there is much less serendipity.

Ms. Storm said she totally agrees with Ms. O'Laughlin. She said there is not enough interesting mixture of stores.

Joanne Hyun, Real Estate Broker, Remax on the Shore, said the Village Center needs more trendy stores, brighter colors and better parking and provide retail services for the rich.

Ms. Lambrecht said there are a perception that the Village does not have a lot of nice stores, Morning Glory and the Crystal Cave is a good addition to the Village Center. A dime store would be a good asset to the Village Center but parking is a deterrent.

Ms. O'Laughlin said a mixed selection of stores in the Village Center helps a shopper wander a little.

Ms. Lambrecht said the Village Center need stores that will be around for a long period of time.

Mr. Conroy said the movie theater causes the parking problem.

Ms. Storm said she does not think trendy is the type of store but interesting and different types of stores are needed.

Chairman Schneider asked if Plaza del Lago was considered successful.

Ms. Storm said she considered Plaza del Lago different.

Mr. Whitehand asked can it be economically feasible or will the Village support the same kind of stores in Plaza del Lago and the Village Center.

Mr. Lambrecht said it's difficult for businesses in the Village Center on Saturdays due to matinees. He suggested valet service for the theater. Mr. Lambrecht said there are few store vacancies in the Village Center and the rents are very high which makes it difficult for small businesses.

Ms. Lambrecht said there are lots of wonderful services in the Village Center but during matinee hours parking is a problem.

Mr. Martin said if you have diverse stores, that would encourage pedestrians.

Ms. Lambrecht asked Mr. Martin what is the difference between Wilmette and Central Avenue.

Mr. Martin said there is not much difference.

Mr. Karas said Central Street in Evanston is more density, there are a lot on apartments on both sides of the street.

Mr. Close said Central Street just received a transformation, the stores are attractive. He thought there were some disappointment from the facade program.

Gale Inbinder, Wilmette Jewelers, said what makes Wilmette more unique are: the Bahai Temple which draws visitors from far distances and the Kohl Children Museum which also have a parking problem but is very successful. Regarding the Village being tired, she thinks that the Village needs to adopt a plan. She made reference to Long Grove and said there were no difference in the stores in Wilmette and Long Grove but people drive long distances to shop there.

Chairman Schneider asked what was the difference in characteristic between Wilmette and Winnetka.

Mr. Lambrecht said Winnetka is more spread out and has a much broader range of stores. He asked Mr. Adler if Winnetka's Village Center was larger than Wilmette's.

Mr. Adler said he did not think so.

Ms. Hyun said Winnetka's central business district encompasses Green Bay Road, with a broader range of shops which attracts kids. Mr. Lambrecht agreed that the Village need more mix to attract the youth e.g. a CD and records store.

Ms. O'Laughlin said the young residents enjoys the Strange Brew.

Ms. Storm said teenagers have money and would like to spend their money in Wilmette.

Mr. Barrow said Hubbard Woods is stylish and colorful which is lacking in the Wilmette.

Mr. Martin asked if Meat-N-Shoppe owns the parking lot. Ms. Lambrecht said no. The store rents the parking the lot.

Mr. Carter asked if employees use the street parking in front of the stores. Mr. Lambrecht said yes.

Jerry Crabbe, State Farm Insurance, said offices in the Village have problem with

employee parking.

Chairman Schneider asked what topped the list of problems in the Village Center.

Mr. Lambrecht said the concerns were: parking, retail clothing and appearance.

Ms. Inbinder said the Village Center needed ambiance.

Ms. Lambrecht said Wilmette's ambiance can be seasonal. The store windows are attractive.

Ms. Storm said she agrees with Ms. Inbinder on ambiance. The Village need some outside dining and entertainment.

Ms. Hyun said Starbucks would be an attraction to Village Center.

Ms. German said Central Street has the vitality of a city urban kind of neighborhood which is very attractive.

Mr. Whitehand said a business district is some what reflective of it's market.

Ms. Lambrecht said the Village's customer base has changed. The Village Center has to attract younger families.

Chairman Schneider asked would an anchor help. Ms. Lambrecht said he does not think a successful business could be duplicated but there is a lot of life in the Village Center.

Chairman Schneider asked if the Village Center needs to change character what is missing.

Ms. Lambrecht said Joseph Banks going into the Joe Moss's building would be fabulous for the Village Center.

Mr. Lambrecht said different kinds of retail stores carry different kinds of merchandise so customers would visit each store. One of the issues that scares businesses off is the way the ARC rules are being enforced. Businesses are reluctant to go through the long tedious process of nit picking.

Chairman Schneider said the ARC rules are imposed for the protection of the business owner. So the rules are imposed and no one likes them.

Ms. Inbinder said the business owners disagree with the way the rules are enforced. The ARC process is very antagonistic and tedious to the small business owners to go through, in the end the owners are terrified and reluctant to go through the

process.

Mr. Conroy said the ARC was no help to the new small business owners.

Mr. Close said the market should dictate what is needed. Walking by book stores is very interesting.

Mr. Conroy said the sidewalk that was done is a disgrace. Tile bricks are slick and dangerous. Ms. Lambrecht agreed that the sidewalks are dangerous.

An audience member said more bike racks are needed and encouraged.

Ms. Storm said with the new malls coming into Old Orchard the Village Center needs direction to be more the character of the Village of Wilmette. Ms. O'Laughlin agreed with Ms. Storm.

Ms. Inbinder asked Ms. O'Laughlin if she ever walked into all of the stores in the Village Center. Ms. O'Laughlin said yes. If the downtown has a pleasant route people tend to browse.

Mr. Whitehand said the Village is trying to facilitate to keep the Village Center economically viable. There are lots of bicycle racks space at the Metra Station.

Ms. Inbinder said the knuckles are a concern. The business owners agreed.

Chairman Schneider thanked the audience for their attendance and input. Mr. Whitehand asked the audience to put their thoughts in writing.

Mr. Adler said staff will put together an outline of this meeting which will be presented to the Plan Commission. A copy may be obtained by calling the Community Development Department. The Chamber of Commerce will receive notices of the following meetings.

Mr. Barrow moved to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Schneider seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH LOCAL PROPERTY OWNERS AND  
COMMERCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS - MAY 3, 1994

Chairman Schneider said this was the second Village Center planning meeting with stakeholder groups. He said the groups were organized by common interest. The Plan Commission was asked by the Village Board to address the planning of the Village Center. Chairman Schneider explained the planning process as outlined by the Plan Commission.

Each member of the audience gave a brief introduction of themselves and their affiliation with the Village Center.

Mr. Whitehand asked if staff could compile a list of laws that were written for the Village Center.

Chairman Schneider asked the audience what were their thoughts on the boundaries of the Village Center.

Ms. Donna Hill, Executive Director, Wilmette Chamber of Commerce, said business areas are divided into different areas for mailing purposes. The Village Center is divided into the VC east and VC west. East is everything in the downtown area that has the outlets for the holiday lights on the trees. West of the tracks is considered VC west, those areas which are serviced by the outlets on the sidewalk next to the trees. Chairman Schneider asked if the VC went all the way to Isabella. Ms. Hill said no, because Isabella is not serviced by the outlets.

Chairman Schneider asked what should be included as areas of concern for the Village Center.

Ms. Orlando, owner of 1151 Wilmette Avenue, said the Village Center does not have enough interesting retail stores and too many personal service uses.

Chairman Schneider asked if the areas east and west of Green Bay Road were different. Ms. Hill said the Village Center has the same type of uses on both sides of Green Bay Road.

Mr. Chris Baker, owner of 1150 Wilmette Avenue, said the heavy traffic on Green Bay Road acts as a dividing line.

Mr. Whitehand asked if consumers thought of the railroad tracks as a barrier that divides the Village Center into two separate districts.

Mr. Dick Keefe, 724 12th Street, said there is virtually no retail on the west side of Green Bay Road. He said Green Bay Road should be included in the Village Center.

Mr. Leonard Orlando, owner of 1151 Wilmette Avenue, said nobody "shops" in the Village Center. You go for a specific service or item. There are not enough parking spaces in the Village Center. The Village should set up a committee consisting of a member of the Plan Commission, landlords, business owners and the Chamber, which would maintain a list of vacant space and a list of proposed uses and rental prospects. The committee could arrange for merchants to have certain days for discounts to attract shoppers.

Ms. Orlando said businesses do well during the sidewalk sale, with shoppers coming into the VC for sale shopping.

Mr. Orlando said the Chamber of Commerce should make available a list of new business prospects interested in moving into the Village Center.

Ms. Hill said the Chamber does have a list of available space and prospects but it is only given to Chamber members.

Mr. Joe Moss, owner of Plaza del Lago and co-owner of 1199 Wilmette Avenue, said the Village Center property owners spent a year fighting for parking in the Village Center. He said the Village Ordinance is inhibiting in terms of making it comfortable for merchants to locate in the VC. The parking requirements will have to be changed if the Village expects to attract new merchants. Two parking spaces per apartment dwelling unit is ridiculous. He said at Plaza del Lago there was never a time when all twenty seven (27) residential parking spaces were being used by the tenants. Mr. Moss said what makes a downtown vital is nearby residential uses. He said he has monitored the parking situation at Plaza del Lago for twenty four years and never experienced a parking problem because shoppers will circle three or four times if needed.

Mr. Keefe said his building on Twelfth Street is the only building in the Village Center that complies with the parking requirements. The entire year of 1985 was spent in six public hearings trying to convince the Village that he did not need 84 parking spaces for 36 condominium units.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Adler what the parking requirement for retail is. Mr. Adler said 1 parking space per every 200 square feet.

Mr. Barrow asked Mr. Moss what would he suggest in terms of parking requirements in the downtown area. Mr. Moss said he did not have the answer but if the parking requirements continued the VC plan would get nowhere. Mr. Barrow asked Mr. Moss about parking decks. Mr. Moss said they work very effectively in Winnetka and could work in Wilmette if properly located. Mr. Moss said he was bringing two quality merchants into the VC which will provide vitality and a springboard for other quality merchants.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Moss how does the current parking ordinance impact on existing retail. Mr. Moss said it does not. Mr. Keefe said the VC would never get another building built under the current parking ordinance.

Ms. Cindy Falzer, 3035 Hartzell, said as a retailer her parking variation hinged on what kind of ventilation was being installed in her restaurant and her business is not allowed to be opened before 11:00 A.M. on Sundays. She said if she had not been so deep into the project she might have walked away.

Chairman Schneider asked if this relates to the parking ordinance or the general ordinances. Ms. Falzer said in order to get the parking variation the Zoning Board tied the other requirements in. Mr. Adler said the Zoning Board attached the opening hours and ventilation equipment as a condition to the special use for outdoor seating.

Ms. Falzer said when Dunkin Donuts applied for a parking variation they had to post a sign telling their customers that it is illegal to eat in their cars in Wilmette. She said the Zoning Board uses the parking variation to dump conditions on the business owners.

Ms. O'Laughlin asked Mr. Adler where the Village got the number of parking spaces required per unit. Mr. Adler said these figures typically come from studies done by the Urban Land Institute, the Institute of Traffic Engineers and the American Planning Association.

Ms. O'Laughlin said if a shopper wanted to shop at a specific store parking would not be a deterrent. She felt if the right mix of stores was present in the Village Center, people would not mind walking a couple of blocks.

Mr. Orlando suggested deck parking somewhere remote from the business area for employees only, with an inducement sufficient enough that they will walk the extra blocks to the deck.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Orlando if he was a shopper would he park his car by the train station and walk to the VC. Mr. Orlando said if he was an employee he would.

Mr. Moss said the Village should make it easier to build more residential in the VC. Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Moss if the apartments on Central Street in Evanston contributed to the success of Central Street, because there is more density. Mr. Moss said yes.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Moss if Plaza del Lago would still be successful without the highrises. Mr. Moss said yes, but to create more vitality in the Village Center, more apartment buildings were needed. Mr. Moss said what makes for a vital Village Center is the transportation, the merchants, the residents and the shopping.

Ms. Falzer said there is parking in downtown Wilmette, it's just hard to find. There are usually vacant parking spaces behind the Depot, but they are hidden.

Mr. Paul Dauer said he does mind walking when he's shopping for heavy merchandise.

Ms. O'Laughlin said patrons who are visiting personal service uses want to park as close to the use as possible.

Mr. Dauer said many of the patrons illegally park their cars when they are patronizing service businesses.

Mr. Orlando said a healthy man or woman can walk, but a mother with small children would need to park near the store of the service being rendered.

Mr. Keefe said new merchants cannot get into the Village Center. Chairman Schneider asked why couldn't they get into the VC. Ms. Falzer said the Zoning Board ties in too many conditions.

Mr. Moss said the Village is not "user friendly." He said the Appearance Review Commission makes it very hard for merchants to come into the VC. Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Moss if the Village was unique in their attitude. Mr. Moss said no, but the Village can improve. Mr. Moss said to improve on being "user friendly" the Village should get rid of the ARC.

Mr. Keefe said the office he located in the downtown was not allowed by right.

Chairman Schneider asked if the theatre was a positive for the VC. Ms. Falzer, Mr. Moss and Mr. Keefe all said yes. Ms. Hill said the theatre is the envy of the surrounding villages.

Mr. Barrow asked if a change in the liquor licensing would make a difference in terms of restaurant development. Ms. Falzer said she is of a mixed mind. She said it's difficult if someone comes in and wants just to drink and she has to explain the policies of the Village. On the other hand it helps with liquor liability insurance.

Mr. Dauer said the bricks on the sidewalk are a problem and during the winter when he shovels, the bricks comes up.

Ms. Orlando said nobody likes the knuckles at the intersections.

Chairman Schneider asked if the mix in the VC is the problem, and what other kinds of retail would help to create an atmosphere like Central Street in Evanston.

Ms. Orlando said Jos. Banks coming into the VC is wonderful but the VC also needs women's accessories.

Mr. Orlando said the VC needs a variety of shops.

Chairman Schneider asked if sales tax incentives should be given.

Mr. Moss said no. He felt the Village Center needed quality merchants.

Mr. Keefe said as a resident of the Village Center he felt the noise made by the street cleaners on Friday mornings was uncalled for.

Chairman Schneider asked if Winnetka's downtown is considered better than Wilmette's.

Mr. Moss said it looks better, architecturally it's more appealing. Mr. Moss said there are only two vacant stores in Wilmette's Village Center.

Chairman Schneider asked if the VC needs an expansion of retail space. Mr. Moss said yes.

Mr. Whitehand asked what the Village's attitude is on a mix of residential and retail uses. Mr. Adler said the Comprehensive Plan encourages residential above the first floor in the Village Center.

Mr. Moss said it would be impossible to build an apartment building in the VC due to the parking requirements.

Chairman Schneider said during the meeting many areas that do not work were covered. He wanted to talk about what works in the VC.

Mr. Dauer said the trains are an asset to the VC.

Chairman Schneider asked what were the audience thoughts on the Facade Rebate Program. Ms. Orlando said the program was good for the Village. Ms. Hill said the property owners and the merchants need the incentives provided by the Village.

Ms. Falzer said she enjoys the small town atmosphere.

Mr. Whitehand asked if most of the shoppers come from nearby. Ms. Orlando said yes.

Ms. Hill said a lot of the stores pull from the immediate area. Ms. Hill said she gets at least one phone call a week from groups coming to Wilmette to visit either the Kohls Children Museum or the Bahai Temple. These groups are looking for other things to do in Wilmette.

Mr. Whitehand asked if customer counts are being taken in the VC. He said Glenview's merchants are doing it by getting the Zip Codes of their customers. Mr. Adler said no.

Chairman Schneider asked how to attract the right types of businesses. He asked if being user friendly and providing more parking would help. Mr. Dauer doubted Wilmette will ever go back to where it was before Old Orchard and Northbrook Court were built.

Chairman Schneider asked for any further questions or comments. Chairman Schneider thanked everyone for attending and participating.

Mr. Barrow motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Carter seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

## **PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH EXPERT PANEL - JUNE 7, 1994**

Chairman Schneider said this was the third Village Center planning meeting with stakeholder groups. He welcomed and thanked each guest. He said during the first three meetings a number of factors for a successful Village Center were raised. These included the following:

- 1) Greater residential density in the Village Center.
- 2) Making the Village and Village bodies more "user friendly."
- 3) The need to show how to find parking in the Village Center.

Each member of the expert group introduced themselves.

Dennis Harder Developer/Planner - Joseph Freed and Associates

Terry Jenkins Director - Evmark

Dave Kase Property Manager/Owner - Kaseco Management Co.

Valerie Kretchmer Real Estate and Planning Consultant/Owner - Valerie Kretchmer Associates

John Lahey Architect/President - Soloman Cordwell Buenz & Associates

Kim McGuire Senior Vice President - Northern Realty Group, Ltd.

Joseph Moss Developer/Owner - Moss Realty

David Stone Real Estate Investment and Leasing/Vice President  
M and J Wilkow, Ltd.

Jake Young Market Analyst/Regional Director - Deloitte & Touche/The Roulac Group

Mr. Jake Young, questioned if people other than business owners think there is a problem with the Village Center.

Mr. Lahey said there is a sentiment among the Village staff that is positive to redevelopment but this sentiment is not always shared by the Village Board. He asked if the Village was really committed to redeveloping the Village Center. Mr.

Barrow asked Mr. Lahey if this belief is different from the beliefs of the nearby villages. Mr. Lahey said the Board acts as if petitioners are trying to get something for nothing. Mr. Barrow asked if the behavior that Mr. Lahey referred to was from members of boards and commissions. Mr. Lahey said yes.

Mr. Whitehand asked if any of the guests thought the ordinance's basic rules are so tightly written that no one can live with them. Mr. Moss said yes.

Mr. Harder felt that the various Boards and Commissions should be given more discretion. He said property owners feel they have no right to develop their property since the development process takes so long.

Chairman Schneider asked if the process were much different between Wilmette and other communities. Mr. Harder said the Village should find a happy medium and have projects reviewed from all angles and not make it too hard to obtain a permit.

Mr. Higgins asked Mr. Moss when Plaza del Lago was built. Mr. Moss said it was built in 1928 and rehabbed in 1968. Mr. Higgins asked Mr. Moss if he saw a large difference in the attitude of Village staff over the years. Mr. Moss said yes. Mr. Moss said if he knew what conditions would prevail for his project he would not have considered developing in Wilmette.

Mr. Lahey said the Zoning Ordinance parking requirements are a problem.

Mr. Harder said a concept the Village has gotten away from is development by right. He said there should be a base package available to property owners informing them of what can be built without needing to go through a public hearing process.

Mr. Moss said public hearings are also a problem and if there is going to be any future development in the Village Center there must be changes in the hearing process.

Mr. Young questioned the potential for development in the Village Center. Mr. Moss said many of the buildings in the Village Center should be demolished due to the age of the buildings and then redeveloped.

Mr. Lahey said the Village Board should not request models for projects. Mr. Barrow said he does not find requesting a model inherently objectionable since the reason you build a model is so that before the building is completed people get a chance to look at it. Mr. Lahey said the Village should amend the ordinance to specify when a model will be necessary.

Ms. Kretchmer said people would like to do more shopping in Wilmette but the choices are not there. She said on one Saturday morning she completed fourteen errands in a two block stretch on Central Street in Evanston.

Chairman Schneider asked how does Wilmette Village Center replicate Central Street in Evanston.

Mr. McGuire said Central Street in Evanston is a strip of independent retailers who know the market. He said it's in a more urban and younger market.

Ms. Kretchmer said she did a study on land uses and businesses near eighteen (18) commuter stations, one of the stations being in Wilmette. She said the results were some merchants believe the customers today are the same as the customers who shopped in the Village in 1960. She also said some stores in the Village close too early to serve the commuters.

Mr. Stone said the rents are high and the number of vacant spaces is low. There are good and poor retailers and good retailers attract good retailers. He said the merchants in downtown Wilmette must be doing well since there is a low turnover rate. He suggested the realtors in the area compile a list of vacancies to show prospective tenants.

Mr. Barrow asked what is a poor retailer. Mr. Stone said someone whom other merchants do not want to be located next to, such as a drug store or resale shop. Mr. Stone felt that other landlords might consider going after more savvy retailers after they see the types of rents the 1199 Wilmette Avenue building is commanding.

Mr. Harder said maybe the Village Center is on the verge of a breakthrough in finding ways to encourage business turnovers.

Mr. Moss said the Village makes it hard to obtain permits. Mr. Young asked Mr. Moss how would he solve the problem if he was in the Village's position. Mr. Moss said he would eliminate the Appearance Review Commission. Mr. Lahey said the Appearance Review Commission goes beyond health, safety and welfare issues.

Mr. Kase said the success of Central Street in Evanston started with the Food Stuffs grocery store.

Ms. Kretchmer said the physical appearance of the Village Center does not have to be changed. She felt understanding the market was most important. Mr. McGuire said the facade program was good for downtown.

Mr. Jenkins said successful downtowns have come to the conclusion that they need to view themselves as a shopping center, not in looks, but in management. He said the public and the private sectors need to build a series of goals they agree on for their downtown. Mr. Jenkins said a municipality may want to generate revenue, a property owner may want to maximize the value of their property and the community may want a certain mix of stores, so the partnership reviews what the

driving issues are and out of that flows what things are needed to meet the mutual objectives. He said in the early stages the public sector drives the process. As time moves on the most successful downtown entities are primarily private sector driven both in terms of the financing to do the management and the commitment. The partnership still exists, but the private sector drives it and not the public sector as those areas mature. He went on to say successful downtowns typically focus on meeting niches, and don't try to compete with shopping centers or malls. They figure out what their specialty is and focus on that.

Chairman Schneider asked what would be some goals of the public sector. Mr. Jenkins said increasing sales tax revenue might be a public sector goal. Mr. Jenkins said if the public sector and the management representing the constituents decided that there is something wrong with the Village Center then the Plan Commission would drive the process to fix it. The Plan Commission will have to hand the process over to the private sector because it's as much the private sector's responsibility as it is the public sector's. He said the Commission has to come to a consensus on the priority of the issues and what the objectives and goals are.

Chairman Schneider asked how would this be done. Mr. Jenkins said just removing the regulations does not work if it is not supported by both the public and private sectors. A consensus must be reached on the goals and objectives of the groups. Mr. Jenkins continued to say most downtowns need to put more people in or near their downtown to become more successful. He said twenty years ago the first chapter of downtown revitalization read like the "Field of Dreams", if you build it they would come. Today that same chapter reads put people in or near your downtown, then retail, will develop around the people who live and work there. He went on to say it seemed the Village Center thrives on shoppers who live within a mile of downtown and suggested that the Village Center can be successful by maximizing the buying power of the people who live near the downtown. He recommended not worrying about the Village Center being "the downtown of Wilmette" because people might shop somewhere else anyhow.

Chairman Schneider asked if loosening the controls will solve the problem by itself. Mr. Jenkins said the Village must decide on it's goals before loosening the ordinances. He said if you put people in the downtown retail will grow. You have to maximize the strengths the downtown has.

Mr. McGuire said the Village Center has huge buying power close by that needs to be captured.

Ms. Kretchmer said few of the businesses in Wilmette recognize the volume of business due to the commuters.

Mr. McGuire asked how much turnover goes on downtown. Mr. Young said the older businesses in Wilmette are doing well and asked Ms. Marston what her thoughts were on the older businesses in the Village Center.

Ms. Marston said the older businesses in Wilmette's downtown survive and there are few vacancies. However, their customer base is usually long-time residents and some merchants are not aware of the changes in the Village's demographics.

Mr. Harder said a home improvement store is needed in the Village Center. He asked why there are so many dry cleaners in the downtown. Mr. Moss said because of the low start-up cost and small margins it is easy to start a dry cleaning business. Mr. Stone said property owners continue to renew the leases of dry cleaners as tenants. Mr. Kase said the property owners do not realize there are better tenants available when they give one to three year leases. They also have developed relationships with the tenants.

Ms. Kretchmer questioned why Rosie's Kitchen and LP3 have been vacant for about six months. Mr. McGuire said the reason Rosie's Kitchen has been vacant is the sublease is for only 2 years and the rent is very high. He said it will take a lot of money to turn LP3 into a nice store unless you get the exact same use. Mr. Stone asked why Starbucks did not go into LP3. Mr. McGuire said Starbucks thought the landlord was asking for too much.

Ms. Marston said personal service uses, including dry cleaners, are now special uses on the ground floor in the Village Center. She also said that in 1987 office uses on the first floor were made special uses.

Mr. Higgins asked if there were a lot of different owners of buildings in downtown Wilmette. Ms. Marston said there are not that many different property owners in the Village Center. Ms. Kretchmer asked if the owners were local. Ms. Marston said most were from the Village or nearby communities.

Chairman Schneider asked if the regulations restricting the first floor use was good. Mr. Moss said yes. He also said to improve life in the Village, first and foremost do away with the Appearance Review Commission; revise the ordinance that deals with multi-family housing; and amend the parking restrictions such as requiring two parking stalls per multi-family dwelling unit. Mr. Moss said there are a total of six hundred and thirty (630) families living on Sheridan Road across the street from Plaza del Lago, which helps to make it a success.

Mr. Higgins asked what the constraints to multi-family housing in the Village Center were. Mr. Moss said no apartment housing on the first floor level is allowed and there must be a minimum of two parking spaces per unit.

Mr. Young said the Village has a retail area that has almost no vacancy. Why would the Village want to tear it down to put in housing units. Mr. Young continued to say the Village Center has some poor retailers and some poor landlords, and the way to improve the retail opportunities is to improve the quality of the two groups, one depends on the other. Mr. Higgins agreed.

Ms. Kretchmer said now is the time to do something with the property at 1199 Wilmette Avenue so when Old Orchard Shopping Mall and Edens Plaza are completed the Village Center will be able to compete. Ms. Kretchmer also said the landlords and businesses need to be educated about today's market.

Mr. Harder said maybe the general citizens and politicians think the downtown could be better but the landlords don't share their opinion. It is important to developers to have some predictability in the redevelopment process.

Mr. Whitehand asked if the political environment was more friendly towards redevelopment would it increase the willingness of developers to buy property in the Village Center to redevelop. Chairman Schneider said he thinks it's a more subtle process and he asked about multifamily housing.

Mr. Whitehand said Central Street in Evanston improved without help. Mr. Jenkins said Central Street has an extremely strong merchant and property owner association. Mr. McGuire suggested having a market study done for the Village Center.

Mr. Lahey said the lack of parking is overstated and is not a problem in the Village Center. Ms. Kretchmer said merchants park in front of their stores. Mr. Lahey said Barrington ruined their downtown by building too much parking. Winnetka built an attractive parking deck.

Mr. Lahey said new restaurants and with outdoor seating would add to the vitality of the Village Center. Mr. Higgins asked what would happen if the restaurants and stores stayed open until 10:00 P.M. Ms. Kretchmer said the Village Center merchants cannot compete on price, they must compete on service. Mr. Jenkins said adding more entertainment like restaurants is often the easiest and most effective way to re-vitalize a downtown. Mr. Harder mentioned revising liquor license laws and said all development restrictions should be made clear. Mr. Young said if people want to control a situation they create vague restrictions. Mr. Jenkins said if you want more restaurants you should loosen the liquor regulations.

Mr. Moss said the mind set trickles down from elected officials to staff. Some elected officials support redevelopment others oppose it. Some staff are cooperative but others are obstructionists.

Mr. Young said the community of Wilmette does a good job of serving residents and questioned if the mind set filters up from the residents to the elected officials. He felt most regulations are adopted because the residents demand them.

Mr. Whitehand said the Village Center has declined over the years. Mr. Barrow said somebody is taking the vacant spaces. Ms. Kretchmer asked if the sales tax revenue generated in the Village Center had declined over the years.

Chairman Schneider said the goal is to try to encourage the Village Board to create the right climate in which a more vibrant Village Center could be created. Mr. Stone said things will change in the Village Center with the completion of the construction at 1199 Wilmette Avenue. Mr. Stone felt with Joseph Banks coming in other landlords will feel pressure to upgrade the quality of their tenants. Mr. Moss said the Village Center needs another new building of 20,000 to 30,000 square feet in the Village Center to help the vitality of the center. Ms. Kretchmer asked about the status of the car dealers on Green Bay Road. Ms. Marston said some of the dealerships have been sold to new owners. They are a big source of revenue to the Village.

Chairman Schneider asked if only east of the railroad tracks was considered the Village Center. Ms. Kretchmer said west of the tracks should also be included since Green Bay Road is an area which has lots of visibility, lots of traffic and retailers. Mr. Jenkins said the plan should have a strategy in case the car dealers on Green Bay Road leave which is likely to happen. Mr. Whitehand said the sidewalk over the railroad tracks should be passable.

Chairman Schneider asked for final comments from the experts:

Mr. Kase said parking is an issue in the central business district because it is a convenience center. He said a parking fund, paid into by developers receiving parking variations, should be established to create more parking. Mr. Kase said the Village must invest in some of the few remaining sites around the Village Center and develop a Comprehensive Plan that deals with parking.

Mr. Moss said he disagrees with Mr. Kase. He said if you have quality merchants people will walk and shop. Mr. Moss said in Plaza del Lago merchants cannot park in front of their stores. A thirty (30) day survey done by his consultants showed at no time was the depot parking lot on Central Avenue full and no less than 11 spaces were available in the Poplar lot.

Mr. McGuire recommended getting better retail stores and more parking. He said downtown Winnetka and Hubbard Woods have a playground near them which attracts families. Mr. McGuire suggested removing the Village Center fountain and replacing it with a playground.

Ms. Kretchmer said organization is missing in Wilmette. The Chamber of Commerce has not taken the lead with the retailers and landlords to get people working together to form a downtown organization. The Village Center merchants and landlords need to understand that Old Orchard and Edens Plaza will hurt their business if they are not prepared.

Mr. Jenkins said he agrees with Ms. Kretchmer. He also said in order to move forward you have to determine whether there is a consensus on some issues. Mr. Jenkins said what has driven Evanston in the past six years is the consensus around a single point; citizens, elected officials, and appointed officials all can't stand any more property tax increases and they began to realize the income side of the development equation. They are willing to make some concessions in order to get additional revenue through development.

Mr. Lahey said he agrees with Mr. Moss on parking. He said there is never enough parking for any retailer and their signs are never big enough.

Mr. Young said he senses it is not a dramatic problem, it will get better in the long run. He said the retailers and landlords must be educated about how to better compete in today's market.

Mr. Stone said there are no signs on Green Bay Road or Sheridan Road directing shoppers to the Village Center business district. Mr. Stone asked Ms. Marston who does public relations for the Village. Ms. Marston said last year the Chamber of Commerce was concerned about a proposal offered by the Village Board to fund a public relations campaign by increasing business license fees. Mr. Kase said the Chamber hired a public relations firm and is trying to get something going.

Mr. Stone said there are some very good stores in Wilmette that should be promoted to people outside Wilmette through the Wilmette Life and other media.

Mr. Harder said it is important that the politicians of Wilmette build a consensus with the private sector. He said the Village needs to decide to be active or passive when it comes to redevelopment. If active, the Village should look at underdeveloped sites like single family homes surrounding the Village Center and other underdeveloped parcels.

Chairman Schneider thanked the experts for their attendance and input. He said the Plan Commission would be inviting them back for another session in the fall.

Mr. Higgins motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Whitehand seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

**PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH RESIDENTS AND VILLAGE CENTER EMPLOYEES - JULY 19, 1994**

Chairman Schneider said this is the fourth meeting of the Village Center planning process. Chairman Schneider said a professional survey of parking is being considered and informed the audience of the various groups that will be attending future meetings. He asked the audience members for their comments.

Mr. David Lee, Township Committee on Youth member, asked what the Village Center boundaries are and how many businesses are in the Village Center. Mr. Adler said there are between ninety and one hundred businesses on the first floor, with more businesses on upper floors. Chairman Schneider asked how many of the businesses are service and how many are retail. Mr. Adler said there are approximately 25 - 30 service establishments and approximately 30 - 40 retail establishments in the Village Center. There are other uses, such as offices, restaurants and a theater in downtown.

Mr. David Blum, 2222 Crestview, Transportation Commission member, said the geographic boundaries of the Village Center are fluid and ever changing. From a commercial perspective the Village Center should include the Post Office and the Library on the west, 11th Street and Central Avenue, Wilmette Avenue in the downtown area and include Greenleaf Street. He said it is interesting that the Zoning Map does not include Washington Street with all its parking problems. Mr. Blum said little can be done to attract additional retail. He said there is a big problem with employee parking. Mr. Barrow asked if the parking problem exists because commuters are occupying the parking spaces. Mr. Blum said parking by commuters was part of the reason but also the Post Office employees use the commuter lot.

Sharon Weingarten, Township Committee on Youth and Youth Commission member, said she likes to shop where it is fun. She said she frequently shops on Central Street in Evanston because it is an interesting place to be. She said "Meat-N-Shoppe" is a prime space in the Village Center and would be a good location for a youth center.

Mr. Barrow said Ms. Weingarten's perception of Central Street in Evanston is interesting because the Plan Commission has heard from several residents and business owners about the excitement of Central Street.

Ms. Weingarten said her family enjoys eating outdoors and the Bean Counter Cafe has an enjoyable outdoor dining area on Central Street in Evanston.

Mr. Whitehand asked Ms. Weingarten if she lived in walking distance of the Village Center. Ms. Weingarten said no. Mr. Carter asked Ms. Weingarten if parking on Central Street in Evanston was a problem. Ms. Weingarten said no, Central Street has a convenient triangular parking lot and she enjoys walking.

Linda Owen, 619 Maple, said she likes the Village Center and never has a problem parking. She said she shops locally for things she needs on a daily basis and likes the

Village Center businesses. Ms. Owen said she disagrees with a more uniform facade storefront recommendation and likes the variety of stores and the good service she receives from the Village Center merchants.

Ms. Weingarten said she likes to shop at 4th and Linden. Ms. Owen said Meat-N-Shoppe is a convenient place to shop and Wilmette is safe to walk around.

Mr. Blum said it's difficult to attract certain tenants. Wilmette had been attracting better restaurants. He said Joseph Banks coming into the Village is an asset. Mr. Blum said what is needed in the Village Center is more retail and less services.

Mr. Barrow asked what can a village do to attract the kind of stores that people identify as positive. Mr. Blum said retailers care only about making money. Chairman Schneider said good retailers attract good retailers. Mr. Blum said the Village has good restaurants and is starting to get more exciting stores. Mr. Barrow asked if Wilmette is perceived as a difficult place to obtain a building permit. Mr. Blum said Wilmette is a pleasure compared to Northbrook. He owns a shopping center in Northbrook and had a Fortune 100 Company wanting to locate in his building. Northbrook caused so many problems the company said they would never locate in Northbrook again. Mr. Blum said to get new retailers to move into the Village, Wilmette needs a real estate broker who is excited about the Village.

Mr. Lee said teenagers do not have a place to go to hang out. He said he was disappointed that Edens Plaza was going to have a Borders Book. Since it is an ideal location for a youth recreation center that can service Glencoe, Winnetka and the other surrounding Villages. He said a youth recreation center in downtown area would bring in new retail stores. Ms. Weingarten said she was fascinated by Mr. Lee's idea.

Mr. Blum said the problem with economic coordinators is they don't know the right people like commercial real estate brokers do. Mr. Schneider asked Ms. Owen how she would characterize Plaza de Lago. Ms. Owen said she has never walked into a Crate and Barrel store and been asked if she needed help. She said because these stores are anchor stores and are usually chain stores, the service is impersonal. Chairman Schneider asked Ms. Owen where she grocery shopped. Ms. Owen said she shops at Treasure Island and Jewel in Evanston on Green Bay Road.

Ms. Weingarten said she knows a Wilmette resident who operates a drop in center for children in Winnetka who would like to be located in Wilmette but space is not available. Mr. Blum asked if Winnetka approved the zoning. Ms. Weingarten said yes.

Mr. Blum recommended that the Village put together a really "up" video selling Wilmette. He believes Borders Books is an asset, but Edens Plaza is different, a regional sub-mall. Mr. Whitehand asked Mr. Blum what spaces are available for new stores in Wilmette. Mr. Blum said Reuss Sporting Goods on Ridge Road has recently moved out.

Ms. O'Laughlin said there were two different parking issues. Employee and commuter long term parking and shopper short term parking. She said employee and commuter long term parking hurts the merchants. If the Village could force long term parkers into the long term lots, then the short term parking might be solved. Mr. Blum agreed. Ms. O'Laughlin said the lot between the Post Office and the Library is fairly large. Mr. Blum said multi-story garages could be constructed for long term parking. Ms. Weingarten said parking in Wilmette is not a big problem and the stores in Evanston are developed around the youth market. Mr. Blum said Winnetka built a nice multi-story garage in Hubbard Woods.

Chairman Schneider asked what types of retail are missing in the Village Center. Ms. Owen said she shops for everything in Wilmette except clothing, which she purchases from Lord and Taylor. Chairman Schneider asked about restaurants and the liquor laws. Ms. Weingarten mentioned that Noyes Street Cafe has great food at inexpensive prices. Mr. Blum, Ms. Owen and Ms. Weingarten said the liquor laws are acceptable.

Mr. Blum said his impression is that stores in the Village Center are aimed at older shoppers. Ms. Owen said it's not feasible for everything to be provided in downtown Wilmette. Ms. Weingarten said there is no place in Wilmette to buy intimate garments.

Ms. O'Laughlin said there are no fun stores for teens. Mr. Lee said what is needed is a balance between stores that focus on younger individuals and on all older individuals, so that all members of the community will be attracted. Mr. Lee said the Village should be more oriented towards stores like the Gap. He said personal service is not expected by youth, but is expected by older people. Ms. Weingarten said if Wilmette had a youth center, then Coconuts, BlockBuster and the Gap would be attracted to the Village.

Chairman Schneider asked about the movie theater. Ms. Weingarten said the theater is good. Mr. Lee said the theater is adult oriented and if the Village wants to attract a greater diversity of people, then new movies are needed. Mr. Blum said you cannot attract first run movies due to the size of the theater. Mr. Carter asked at what age kids stop playing video games. Mr. Lee said 13 years old and disagrees with having a pool hall and video arcade in Wilmette because those types of facilities attract gangs and drugs.

Mr. Carter moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Barrow seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH VILLAGE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - SEPTEMBER 20, 1994

Chairman Schneider said this was the sixth meeting of the Village Center planning process.

Chairman Schneider asked if the seventh meeting will be with the civic groups. Mr. Adler said yes and that meeting will be held on October 18.

Chairman Schneider said this meeting was for the Boards and Commissions to participate and give their views on the goals and policies for the Village Center. He said the Commission has covered a whole range of topics at previous Village Center planning meetings. Chairman Schneider asked for comments from the Commission on the surveying that was completed.

Mr. Barrow said the surveys seem confirmatory. Much of what the Commission has heard from previous meetings such as the retail being tired, parking being a problem and lack of choice in stores and in inventory were all raised. Chairman Schneider agreed with Mr. Barrow and said when asked in the shoppers survey why do you shop elsewhere instead of Wilmette, parking did not come up as a problem. Mr. Adler said what is interesting is when the residents were surveyed many said the Village Center needed additional parking, but not many shoppers mentioned parking as a problem.

Mr. Higgins said the shopper survey confirmed what the Commission already knew and the residents and merchants survey were inconclusive. Chairman Schneider said the comments from the merchants survey were good comments. Mr. Barrow said there is a sense of complacency in the merchants survey which goes hand in hand with the perception that retail in Wilmette is tired. The stores lack pizzazz and interest. Chairman Schneider said good retailers attract good retailers and then opened the meeting up for comments from the audience.

Ms. Esther Stern, member and representative of the Zoning Board of Appeals said the ZBA tries to make zoning user friendly to the applicant and the Community Development staff has been a great asset to the ZBA process. She said petitioners coming before the ZBA have the highest praise for the staff and their suggestions. She said that the Village bends over backward to make sure the process is speedy and user friendly. She made reference to two new developments, 1199 Wilmette Avenue and United Audio at Edens Plaza. Ms. Stern said the United Audio plans were not in keeping with the Zoning Ordinance but with the help of Community Development the Administrative Appeal was scheduled as quickly as possible. This was important because the financing depended upon whether or not United Audio located in the Center.

Chairman Schneider asked Ms. Stern if the Zoning Board of Appeals got involved in reviewing the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Stern said the ZBA could make suggestions to the Village Board to review certain sections of the Zoning Ordinance since the Village Board is the body which amends the ordinance.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Adler what was the Zoning Ordinance amendment process. Mr. Adler said someone would have to propose it to the Village Board who then determines who will review the amendment. Mr. Adler said there are several bodies that could review the amendment, the Plan Commission, the Land Use Committee, the Village Board, the Zoning Board or any other group appointed by the Village Board.

Ms. Stern said the Zoning Board of Appeals would appreciate a parking survey of the Village Center. She said there has been growth of available parking in Wilmette but in downtown it never seems to be enough. Ms. Stern said when a new merchant comes in, the other merchants testify that they don't want them in because they take up valuable parking instead of being happy that the new merchants will generate more pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Carter said the new parking lot in the Village Center is wonderful. Ms. Stern agreed. Ms. O'Laughlin asked if there were any areas other than parking that Ms. Stern wanted to discuss with the Plan Commission. Ms. Stern suggested the Plan Commission brainstorm and come up with a shot in the arm for the Village Center. Ms. Stern asked if the downtown suffers and looks tired due to the success of Plaza de Lago.

Chairman Schneider said from what the Commission has heard that is not necessarily so. Mr. Adler said the only way the Village Center would suffer from Plaza de Lago is if there were vacancies in both the Village Center and Plaza de Lago, since specialty stores prefer to locate around other specialty stores. Ms. Stern said she avoids Plaza de Lago on week-ends but other people are not deterred due to lack of parking. Ms. O'Laughlin said the uses that require parking are not necessarily the uses that we are trying to encourage.

Lisa Roberts, Associate Planner, Village of Wilmette, representing the Preservation Board and the Housing Commission, pointed out structures in the Village Center with historic significance. Chairman Schneider asked what restrictions are there if an owner of a significant property wants to redevelop the property. Mr. Adler said the normal zoning and building codes. The Preservation Board must also review any permits, if the property is a designated landmark.

Ms. Roberts said the Housing Commission asked that the Village Center not extend into the R2 district because the R2 district is one of the few districts in the Village that actually allows multi-family housing. The Housing Commission would like to see the

establishment of group homes and senior housing within the R2 district. Mr. Whitehand asked where the R3 districts are. Mr. Adler said R3 is along Ridge Road and 4th & Linden. Mr. Whitehand said the way to increase the potential of attracting desirable retail to the Village Center is to increase the availability of multi-family housing adjacent to the Village Center to increase the number of shoppers living nearby.

Mr. Higgins said the Plan Commission never addressed if R3 opportunities should be provided near the Village Center. Mr. Adler said commercial and restaurant uses can be built on first floors in the Village Center but residential units cannot. Mr. Adler said residential units can be built above the first floor in the Village Center. Mr. Higgins said the Commission does not know how the Housing Commission feels about rezoning from R2 to R3. Chairman Schneider asked Ms. Roberts what was her view on the Housing Commission's request. Ms. Roberts said she agrees with the Housing Commission. Mr. Carter asked what the height limitation in the Village Center is. Mr. Adler said 40'. However, bonuses may be permitted if certain requirements are met. Ms. Roberts said one of the Housing Commission members was sad to see the IHOP restaurant go because the kids used it as a hangout. Chairman Schneider said it's interesting that the kids are now using Dunkin Donut on Green Bay Road as a place to hang out because it is open late. Ms. Roberts said another Housing Commission member questioned the image of the Village Center with two resale shops being located on two main street corners. Ms. Roberts said she once had a professor who said "if you don't have a parking problem in your downtown, you don't have a healthy downtown".

Mr. Higgins said it would be interesting to hear the Housing Commission thoughts on R3.

Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Adler for background on the parking/traffic study. Mr. Adler said the Village received two proposals. Mr. Higgins asked how staff came up with the thirteen consultants. Mr. Adler said a list of nine came from engineering and the Community Development staff added the other four. Mr. Adler said a number of the consultants indicated since a traffic element was included, the proposal was beyond their expertise. He said three of the consultants did not have the work force to complete the project within the time frame specified. Two other firms did not submit a proposal since members of their firm sat on a Village Board or Commission. Mr. Higgins and Ms. O'Laughlin asked where the time frame came from. Mr. Adler said staff was hoping to get a preliminary report back to present to the expert panel when they met again in November. Ms. O'Laughlin said she would like the study to be done at a time when the parking is worse due to the Christmas holiday. She said parking/traffic studies are better done when you foresee problems, and likes the idea of a longer time frame. Mr. Adler said one of the things staff requested in the proposal was that the consultants come back when 1199 Wilmette Avenue is completed and fully occupied. Mr. Carter asked about the Clean Air Act having a major impact on vehicle

use. Ms. O'Laughlin said there is going to be a lot of pressure put on employers to show that they are reducing car trips to places of employment. Chairman Schneider asked the Commission which of the two consultants presented would they choose. Mr. Higgins said he did not study the two proposals in detail. Mr. Barrow said given the similarity and price he found that Barton Aschman had much greater experience with the Village and similar communities on the North Shore. Ms. O'Laughlin said her reaction was the same as Mr. Barrow's. She said Barton Aschman clearly presented a better and more specific proposal. Ms. German said she would be more comfortable if this issue was referred to the Transportation Committee because they have more expertise in the field. Mr. Carter agreed but felt that since Barton Aschman has done so many studies in the Village, it might be good to get a fresh perspective. Ms. Stern suggested the Plan Commission have lawyers in the community who deal with zoning issues provide a list of the consultants they hire to do parking/traffic studies.

Chairman Schneider said he feels that the study will only provide us with technical responses to our request and that other policy questions will be more difficult to address. Chairman Schneider recommended leaving the decision to the Transportation Commission.

Ms. O'Laughlin said she was concerned with all the different developments going on in the Village. She would like to delay the study for about three or four months. Mr. Carter said this issue has gone on for so long it has to be settled so the Commission can complete the Village Center plan. Ms. O'Laughlin asked if the parking survey is designed to qualify the parking concerns. Chairman Schneider said the survey was designed to provide some factual information about parking. Ms. Stern asked if the survey is done before 1199 Wilmette Avenue is completed, will this survey have any validity with the merchants. Mr. Adler said the study was budgeted to include a revisit after the completion and occupancy of 1199 Wilmette Avenue building and the Pioneer Press property. Ms. Stern said the Pioneer Press property will not have the same effect on the parking/traffic study as 1199 Wilmette Avenue. Mr. Whitehand said he would like to consider what will be done with the results. Chairman Schneider said if we wish to see the Village Center an active thriving shopping area that people want to come to, the demand for parking would have to be projected since that demand does not exist right now. He said what the Plan Commission wants to see is the activity of a Central Street in Evanston. Since that does not exist right now in Wilmette, the study will have to project it for the future.

Mr. Higgins suggested having a joint meeting with the Transportation Commission and the Plan Commission to decide what to do. Mr. Adler said the three members of the Transportation Commission that Chairman Pell has designated as the review committee are professional practicing engineers who have already been involved in developing the RFP and have been asked to comment on the proposals. Mr. Carter asked if the RFP was the Transportation Commission's original proposal. Mr. Adler said yes, staff took the Transportation Commission's proposal from 1991 and added the

traffic circulation element with the Transportation Commission's input. Mr. Adler said the Village Board budgeted funds for the study to find out if there is a parking/traffic problem in the Village Center.

Mr. Carter said if there is never any base line data, what will the Commission use for comparisons in the future. He is in favor of going ahead with the proposal now.

Ms. O'Laughlin said she thinks it would be worthwhile to delay the study until some part of 1199 Wilmette Avenue is occupied. She said if they will revisit in six months why gather the information to start with. Mr. Adler said before they revisit they will do projections for what is going into 1199 Wilmette Avenue, and those projections will probably be within 5% of what actually takes place. Mr. Barrow said he agrees with Ms. O'Laughlin that if this going to produce meaningful information baseline or otherwise the Plan Commission needs to have it reflect the biggest development in downtown and accordingly Mr. Barrow opposes the undertaking of any traffic study at this time. Mr. Carter asked what if there is another big development in six months. Mr. Carter said if you don't start some place you can never look back to compare anything. He said before this parking/traffic study is completed downtown might be completely redeveloped. Mr. Higgins agreed with Mr. Carter.

Mr. Higgins moved to ask the Transportation Commission to make a selection between the two proposals submitted. Ms. O'Laughlin seconded the motion.

Ms. O'Laughlin said she is still concerned about the short time frame that both the consultants referred to in their proposals. Mr. Adler said that would be addressed in the contract. Mr. Barrow asked if voting for the motion implies support for going forward with the study at this time. Chairman Schneider said yes.

The vote was as follows:

Chairman Schneider	Yes
Dan Carter	Yes
Rachel German	Yes
Jay Higgins	Yes
Kathleen O'Laughlin	No
Peter Barrow	No
Frank Whitehand	No

Since there was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

## PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH CIVIC GROUPS, UTILITIES, AND INSTITUTIONS - OCTOBER 18, 1994

Chairman Schneider said this was the seventh meeting of the Village Center planning process and asked Mr. Adler for an update on the parking study.

Mr. Adler said the Village Board recommended unanimously to go ahead with the traffic study and award the contract to Barton-Aschman. Mr. Adler said staff will receive the contract from Barton-Aschman later this week and then set up a meeting with Barton-Aschman, a member of the Plan Commission, Transportation Commission, staff from Community Development and Engineering Departments. Mr. Adler said the study will take two to three months. Mr. Higgins volunteered to be the Plan Commission's liaison to the parking/traffic study group.

Chairman Schneider welcomed the guests and gave them an update on the progress of the Village Center plan and asked for their input.

Mr. Dan Malinowski, Post Master, Wilmette Post Office, gave background on the Post Office and said he was happy with their Village Center location. He said the the Post Office was operating with a 250 - 275% space deficiency in their current building. Mr. Malinowski said the Post Office had anticipated expansion several years ago before the Library building plan began. He said in the future the Post Office hopes to build over the parking area to the east and would consider a parking deck similar to the Arlington Heights Library. Mr. Malinowski said nothing was approved and if the Village Center is looking at other opportunities for expansion the Post Office is always interested in additional contract stations which increase foot traffic by 25%. Chairman Schneider asked what a contract station was. Mr. Malinowski said contract stations are private merchants, such as Millens Hardware that agree to provide many postal services at cost as a convenience to the community when the Post Office is closed. Mr. Higgins asked if contract stations are an alternative to expanding the Post Office. Mr. Malinowski said Post Office space constraints are internal for equipment to sort mail as well as space for carriers, so the contract stations would not solve their space constraint problems. He said the Village is growing not only by density but pieces of mail being delivered and that equates to a growth pattern that is very similar to a new housing subdivision.

Mr. Malinowski said the Postal service would like to construct an addition in the area east of the existing Post Office building. Mr. Carter asked Mr. Malinowski if that would be doubling the Post Office's current square footage. Mr. Malinowski said it would increase the current square footage by approximately 45%. Mr. Malinowski said what would be ideal is if the Post Office could utilize a drive through window to solve some of the on street parking problems.

Mr. Carter asked Mr. Adler if a drive up window would be regulated by the Village. Mr. Adler said a drive up window would be a special use. Chairman Schneider asked Mr. Malinowski how many employees the Post Office has. Mr. Malinowski said between 95 and 118 employees. Chairman Schneider asked if that number would increase. Mr. Malinowski said no. Mr. Carter asked if the Post Office was operated twenty four hours a day. Mr. Malinowski said no. There are two tours of operations which begin at midnight, Monday through Saturday evening. There is also a Saturday operation of 8 hours which is mostly custodial and three to four hours of carrier collection of mail as well as delivery of express mail on Sunday. Mr. Higgins asked if the Post Office employees park in their parking lot. Mr. Malinowski said the Post Office has insufficient parking, but there is available parking on a first come, first serve basis. He said the first shift which is the midnight operation has sufficient parking and many of the employees purchase monthly parking permits for Village lots.

Chairman Schneider asked if the lot between the Post Office and the Library is leased to Pioneer Press employees. Mr. Adler said many of those spaces are leased to Pioneer Press employees, which will become available when Pioneer Press leaves. Mr. Malinowski said the employees of the Post Office would be interested in those parking spaces. Mr. Higgins asked if the spaces were leased to the employees or are they leased to the businesses. Mr. Malinowski said the parking spaces were leased to the employees. Mr. Higgins asked if there was parking on the Post Office property. Mr. Malinowski said there are approximately 14 to 18 parking spaces on the parking lot provided for the employees. He said the Post Office provides 4 to 6 parking spaces for customers on the east lot.

Mr. George Pearce, St. Joseph Church, said the church has over 1,300 families registered and is one of the largest institutions in Wilmette. He said the questionnaire that was prepared by staff was given to members of St. Joseph Parish. Mr. Pearce read several of the comments to the Plan Commission.

Mr. Higgins asked if St. Joseph Church had discussed expanding or staying the same. Mr. Pearce said in the past eight years the number of registered families has not changed. He felt the number of families would increase. Mr. Higgins asked about parking. Mr. Pearce said there is a parking problem because of Sunday school overcrowding. He said there is not enough meeting space for fifty or more people except in the school building. Mr. Carter asked if St. Joseph considered reopening the school. Mr. Pearce said they are considering a pre-school after school program with Loyola's Education Department.

Mr. Roger Cameron, Linden Street, said he was curious of how the Village's planning process worked. Mr. Barrow asked Mr. Cameron what he considered the Village Center. Mr. Cameron said east of the rail road tracks. He said parking was getting better, he usually drives to the Village Center. He goes to a specific store to rent videos.

Mr. Adler said he received phone calls from Pace, the Wilmette Park District and Ameritech. They all indicated they will send information to staff in writing. Mr. Adler said the parking spaces next to The Dancing Noodle restaurant, which are owned by Ameritech, are for sale. Chairman Schneider asked how big was the site. Mr. Adler said approximately 110' x 150'. Mr. Carter asked what was the zoning. Mr. Adler said the site is zoned VC. Mr. Carter asked if the site was left as a parking lot, would they have to go through the Site Plan Review process. Mr. Adler said if the site continues to be leased to Bank One and Wilshire Ford there would be no intervention by the Village. Mr. Adler said he also received a call from School District 39 and League of Women Voters. The League of Women Voters was unable to come to a conclusion but expressed interest in outdoor seating, more green space, public phones, bike access, rents lowered to attract more start up shops, ethnic restaurants, encourage projecting signs, more bathrooms, longer store hours and better handicap access. Mr. Adler said St. Louis Bakery will be going into 1199 Wilmette Avenue, which should create more activity for the Greenleaf shops.

Chairman Schneider asked if there were any calls from Metra. Mr. Adler said no but Metra had done a study of their stations. Chairman Schneider asked if staff could request the study. Mr. Adler said staff will request a copy of the study.

Chairman Schneider said he felt it would be beneficial to ask the Appearance Review Commission to develop design guidelines for the Village Center.

Mr. Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Barrow seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

## PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WITH EXPERT PANEL - JUNE 20, 1995

Expert Panel:        Dave Kase  
                          John Lahey  
                          Jeff Renkert  
                          Kim McGuire  
                          Dennis Harder  
                          Joseph Moss

Chairman Schneider welcomed the members of the expert panel. He said during the last 18 months the Plan Commission met with all Village Center stakeholders. Chairman Schneider said resident, shopper and merchant surveys, as well as a parking study were completed. He noted that the first expert panel met almost a year ago.

Chairman Schneider introduced the panel members: Mr. Dave Kase, Mr. John Lahey, Mr. Jeff Renkert, Mr. Kim McGuire, Mr. Dennis Harder and Mr. Joseph Moss. The Chairman asked for a brief summary from Mr. John Adler, Senior Planner and Mr. Peter Barrow, Plan commission member.

Mr. Adler said in November of 1993, the Village Board of Trustees requested that the Plan Commission study the Village Center in order to develop recommendations to guide future Village Center decision making. The goal was to determine what a desirable Village Center might contain and what government could do to achieve that goal. He said the Plan Commission began the public meeting process in April, 1994 and held open-ended meetings with a series questions developed by the Commission. Mr. Adler said the intent was to capture what would be learned from all sources.

Mr. Adler said the Village center was addressed in several different ways. He said the Plan Commission decided to include the Library and the Post Office properties in the Village Center since those uses are customarily thought of as downtown uses. Mr. Adler said many people felt that a "hometown" character was created by the relationships store owners have developed with their customer base. He said the availability of public transportation was mentioned as an asset. The "vision" for the Village Center reflects a consensus of the participants that the Village Center should be a vibrant and exciting shopping area that offers a variety of quality retail and restaurant establishments while maintaining its traditional hometown character.

Mr. Barrow said the Plan Commission received comments, from local businesses that the process to develop or change a business involves excess and/or subjective regulations. He said specifically cited as subjective, adversarial and arbitrary was the Appearance Review Commission (ARC). The Village, including members of the Appearance Review Commission, should work with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce to develop a local sign ordinance for the Village Center. Mr. Barrow said

the Plan Commission does not recommend abolition of either the Appearance Review Commission or the Site Plan Review process as both are critical to maintaining a desired degree of unity, coherence and safety in the development of private properties. He said staff should create a business development handbook which would clearly outline the steps a business owner or developer would have to take to develop property in Wilmette.

Mr. Barrow said in order for the Village to encourage a more exciting streetscape the Village should permit outdoor seating and sales. The outdoor uses could be regulated through an administrative procedure which would ensure the proposed outdoor use would not become a nuisance to surrounding properties. The Village should use its influence and good offices to focus on "key" properties to attract desirable retailers. The Village should seek out residents with experience in leasing and marketing to help educate landlords at Village/Chamber sponsored seminars to help reduce the number of non-retail or non-restaurant uses in the Village Center.

The Village should assist the Chamber of Commerce and Village Center leasing agents with the marketing of the Village Center. The Plan Commission recommends that a streetscape plan (including lighting, seating, sidewalks, signage, landscaping) be developed for the Village Center that will result in a consistent, unifying character. The Plan Commission also recommends that the Appearance Review Commission develop a streetscape plan and that the plan be completed prior to work commencing on the redevelopment of Green Bay Road. The Village should encourage appropriate higher density multi-family residential development in the Village Center and townhomes in the R2 district surrounding the Village Center. The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance have noted this need by permitting apartments and townhouses in certain adjacent areas.

Mr. Barrow said the Parking/Traffic study completed by Barton-Aschman & Associates found there is not a lack of parking in the Village Center. The lots behind Veteran's Park should be combined and reconfigured. The reconfiguration would add parking spaces as well as make the lot easier to locate and use. Mr. Barrow said the study is about what the Village can and should do to create an environment that is conducive to desired development while maintaining the appropriate and necessary oversight and control.

Mr. Harder said many northwest suburban communities are doing studies of their downtowns. He felt that developers are looking for consistency in regulatory process. Mr. Harder said he feels the Plan Commission is on the right track with the draft study.

Chairman Schneider said the Barton-Aschman parking study concluded that parking was adequate in the Village Center. He asked the expert panel to comment on parking in the Village Center.

Mr. Joseph Moss said the Villages requirement of 2 parking spaces for every one bedroom dwelling unit is a large impediment and should be re-evaluated. Mr. Moss said the requirement should be 1 for 1 (unless it is a 3 bedroom unit). Empty nesters often have only one car and they are the likely occupants. The parking requirement for restaurants need to be amended also.

Mr. Lahey said Village does require 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit. He felt that parking is sufficient in the Village Center.

Mr. Harder said Chicago and Northwestern commuters play an important part of parking in the downtown area. He said the majority of people take the train to and from work. Due to the public transportation, there is a market for housing in the Village Center.

Chairman Schneider asked if higher density contributes to a more exciting downtown.

Mr. Young said his concern is where the overflow of cars will go if no parking spaces are available. He said the Village must be careful not to underestimate the demand for parking.

Mr. Harder said commuter spaces can be used by Village Center residents since their usage should not overlap. Mr. Young said there's a need for balance.

Mr. Moss said at his building in Chicago for 240 residential units there are 240 parking stalls.

Mr. Rowell said the number of parking spaces provided is driven by income. People living on the near north side of Chicago may not own cars because they choose to take cabs instead. A developer will not be able to sell or lease a residential unit if adequate parking is not available.

Chairman Schneider asked the panel how the Village could promote and encourage an atmosphere like Central Street in Evanston.

Mr. McGuire said the Village must identify the type of tenants they want and go out and get them. He said the Village must be pro-active. He suggested attending International Council of Shopping Centers meetings and providing demographic information to potential retailers.

Mr. Harder said there should be a good mix of stores to promote strolling and be competitive with existing stores. The Village should be proactive and consider purchasing property for resale to the right type of business.

Mr. Renkert said encouraging cross shopping in a downtown is very difficult. Glen Ellyn is a quaint town where merchants maintain a specialized customer base. He said Wilmette merchants must create their own customer base.

Mr. Lahey said there is a fear of competition among the merchants in Wilmette. He said competition can be good for merchants. He said restaurants lead downtown revitalization. The Village also is fortunate to have a movie theatre.

Mr. McGuire said the landlords won't take the risk of vacancy to wait for better tenants, even though they might get higher rents. It is important to have a grocery store and a quality drug store in the Village Center.

Mr. Kase said the landlords in Wilmette are not willing to take the risk of losing the tenants of 10 - 15 years. He said some owners refuse to fix or update their buildings to attract new tenants. When older retailers retire, the chance for new and better retailers increases. Mr. Harder suggested attracting national chains.

Mr. Lahey said Southport in Chicago has experienced success with outdoor seating and entertainment.

Mr. Kase said on Central Street in Evanston most of the merchants retired. He said there are now younger merchants who are not afraid to take risks.

Mr. Moss said the Village should make it easier to open a business in Wilmette by abolishing the Appearance Review Commission process, and help staff by making the process easier. He said staff's hands are tied and the development process should be made simpler.

Mr. Lahey said there should be written guidelines for the Appearance Review Commission (ARC). He said the ARC should have members of other professions not just architects. The Village may consider setting specific limits for what the Appearance Review Commission can do. Chairman Schneider said the Plan Commission may need to rethink their reluctance to have private property design guidelines.

Chairman Schneider asked if there was any particular property the panel would focus on as a way to revitalize the Village Center. Mr. McGuire said Meat-N-Shoppe. Chairman Schneider asked how the Village makes sure Meat-N-Shoppe is leased to a desirable tenant. Mr. McGuire said the demand is there for Meat-N-Shoppe, the problem is with the owner. He said redevelopment along Green Bay Road will also impact the Village Center.

Mr. Moss suggested that the Village lease parking from churches in the area which would help to ease parking in the Village Center. Ms. Marston said the Village has begun to talk with the churches.

Mr. McGuire said a railroad underpass should be considered. Ms. Marston said consideration was given to underpass but it is very expensive.

Chairman Schneider asked if streetscape improvements are necessary. Mr. Lahey said it will tie the Village Center together but it alone will not change the Village Center for the better.

Mr. Harder said streetscape improvements in the Village were done years ago. He said maintenance of the existing improvements is important. Mr. McGuire suggested eliminating the knuckles.

Mr. Barrow asked what is the role of restaurants? What do Wilmette's liquor laws add or subtract from the community? Mr. Harder said allowing liquor to be consumed at a bar in a restaurant would make the Village more attractive to a number of restaurants. Mr. McGuire said restaurants are very important to downtowns.

Mr. Rowell asked what the best prospect for development in the Village Center is at this time. Mr. Moss said the Meat-N-Shoppe property and any property on Green Bay Road.

Mr. Higgins asked if there was any other option to developing private property appearance guidelines rather than reinventing them? Mr. Lahey said many towns have developed design guidelines for private property such as North Pier and Canal Dock and Trust.

Mr. Higgins asked what would be an appropriated residential parking requirement? Mr. Moss said 1 space for 1 unit would be appropriate.

Mr. Kase said the Village working with the Chamber of Commerce to attract families with children into the Village Center would be beneficial. The Village should take advantage of the location of Kohl Children's Museum and the Bahai Temple.

Mr. McGuire said coming up with brochures selling the benefits of locating in Wilmette would be a good idea. He also suggested constructing a playground in the Village Center, similar to Central Street in Evanston and Hubbard Woods in Winnetka.

Chairman Schneider thanked the expert panel for their time and input.

## ATTENDEES

Mr. Paul Dauer  
Ms. Gayle Inbinder  
Ms. Cindy Falzer  
Mr. Jack Close  
Trustee Frank Whitehand  
Trustee Beverly Smith



# APPENDIX C

**SECTION I RESIDENT SURVEY**  
 Total surveyed: 280 people

1. How do you rank Wilmette's downtown with other downtowns?  
 1 is worst and 10 is best.

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 .....	7	2.5%
2 .....	7	2.5%
3 .....	18	6.4%
4 .....	26	9.3%
5 .....	82	29.3%
6 .....	38	13.6%
7 .....	37	13.2%
8 .....	36	12.9%
9 .....	11	3.9%
10 .....	18	6.4%

Average: 5.9

2a. How do you think downtown Wilmette needs improvement?

<u>answer</u>	<u># of responses</u>
-Increase parking	73
-Diversify stores	43
-Don't like "balloon curbing"	38
-Increase retail	32
-Don't change anything	30
-Better restaurants	26
-More plantings/landscaping	24
-Improve traffic flow	24
-Limit number of service businesses	21
-More interesting/unique stores	20
-Renovate buildings	16
-Need better quality merchandise	16
-Need more coordinated appearance	15
-Need more stores	14
-More classic architecture--no modern	13
-More charming/quaint	12
-Need more activity--seems "dead"	11
-More awnings	10
-Need an anchor store	9
-Limit/eliminate resale shops	8
-Repair sidewalks	8
-Storefronts need to be more attractive	8
-More modern stores	8
-Green Bay Rd. needs to be more attractive	7
-Better service and attitude from merchants	6
-Need evening restaurants/entertainment	6

2a. continued

-Street lights are unattractive--too modern	6
-Lower rents	6
-Clean the stores	5
-Need parking closer to merchants	5
-Coordinate signage	5
-Need places to sit and socialize	5
-Stores are too expensive	5
-Need businesses that cater to younger crowd	5

Other answers under 5 responses

-Stores need later hours	
-Stores need to be closer together/more concentrated	
-Spruce up inside of stores	
-Chain stores are needed	
-Need bicycle racks	
-Make parking lots more attractive	
-Fill vacant stores	
-Ban or limit rollerblading	
-Remove sign restrictions	

2b. How do you think downtown Wilmette should remain the same?

-Keep small size/small town character	81
-Good variety of stores	48
-Village Hall area/fountain	32
-Greenery/plantings are nice	30
-Parking is adequate	29
-Architecture style/size of buildings	26
-Awnings look good	24
-Lack of congestion; quiet	24
-Clean; well maintained	22
-Personalized attention from merchants	21
-Independently owned shops	18
-Sidewalks	18
-Stores have improved recently	17
-Small stores	17
-Good restaurants	15
-Little park on Central (Veteran's Park)	14
-Can walk to everything	13
-Has the basics/everything one needs	13
-Free parking	13
-Events/sidewalk sales	11
-Layout is good	11
-Location--close to home	10
-No fast food	9
-Appearance has improved recently	9
-Great access to transportation	8
-Sign regulations are good	5
-Other stores should follow Crystal Cave's appearance example	5

2b. continued

Other answers under 5 responses

- Traffic control
- Village Hall location
- Not many vacancies
- Safe
- Street size is good
- No left turns at peak times
- Storefronts are attractive
- Parking behind stores

3. What could be done to attract more people downtown?

- I don't know 34
- Don't want to attract more 27
- Nothing the Village needs to do 17

Answers relating to Business

- Increase retail--general comment 31
  - Specifically:
    - clothing for everyone 24
    - upscale boutiques 18
    - interesting specialty shops 15
    - kids' store/activities 9
    - women's clothing 8
    - not too expensive 5
- Need more variety 22
- Different/more restaurants--general comment 21
  - Specifically:
    - Upscale 23
    - Family restaurant 11
    - Cafe 7
    - Ethnic; Mexican, Italian, general 6
    - Coffee house 5
    - Casual 5
    - Fast food 5
    - Deli/Sandwiches 4
    - Dinner place 3
    - Inexpensive "Hangout" 3
    - Pizza Parlor 3
- Better quality stores 12
- Stores that residents would frequent--general 9
  - Specifically:
    - Dime/Variety store 14
    - Larger/better drugstore 6
    - a Gap (chain store) 5
    - Larger/better bookstore 5
    - Hardware store 5
    - Grocery store/Supermarket 5
    - Antique store 4
    - Sports store 4

### 3. continued

-Health food store	4
-Hobby shop/arts and crafts	4
-Record store	3
-Toy store	2
-Computer store	2
-Limit the number of service businesses	7
-Need entertainment/night activity	7
-Another/bigger movie theater	7
-Stores like Winnetka	7
-More interesting shops	6
-Stores open in evenings	5
-Need a good anchor store	4
-Stores like Evanston	4
-Better service	3
<u>Answers relating to aesthetics</u>	
-Need more flowers and planters	12
-Stores like other Northshore communities	9
-Renovate buildings	7
-More attractive store windows	7
-More coordinated look	5
-More quaint look	5
-Get rid of tacky signs	3
-Need modern architecture	3
-Stretch by theater is ugly	3
<u>Answers relating to marketing/promotion</u>	
-Have more Village fairs/celebrations	18
-The Village should promote the town	9
-Need activities with bands/concerts	8
-More sidewalk sales	7
-Promote the stores--general comment	7
Specifically:	
-Businesses need to advertise more	9
-Let people know what is there	7
-Chamber of Commerce should advertise	7
-Advertise businesses in papers more	7
-Advertise friendliness and good service	4
-Keep Farmers Market	6
-Holiday promotions	3
<u>Answers relating to parking</u>	
-Need more spaces	30
-Get Meat 'N' Shoppe to make their lot public	3
-More short term parking along Wilmette and Central	3
<u>Miscellaneous answers</u>	
-Need more benches	5
-More open areas	3
-Fix Meat 'N' Shoppe	2
-Need a gathering place near Village Hall	2

4a. Should the Village of Wilmette provide economic incentive to attract new retail or restaurant businesses downtown?

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	135	48.2%
No .....	98	35.0%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	47	16.8%

Comments from 4a.

-Possibly--need to know more	27
-Absolutely	26
-No tax increase for incentive	26
-Absolutely not	17
-Have too many businesses and restaurants	13
-Village should not get involved	11
-Enough non-economic incentives; shouldn't need economic ones	10
-Probably	8
-It's up to shop owners to get business	7
-Only for restaurants	7
-It won't work here--residents won't support	6
-Eden's has/will hurt	6
-Only on a case-by-case basis	5
-Only in a small amount	5
-Don't trust Village after IHOP	3

4b. Should the Village of Wilmette provide economic incentives to improve the appearance of downtown businesses?

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	122	43.6%
No .....	129	46.1%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	29	10.4%

Comments from 4b.

-It looks fine the way it is	41
-Absolutely	26
-Won't spend money/taxes on it	20
-It's up to businesses to improve	20
-Possibly--need to know more	17
-Absolutely not	13
-Only in a small amount	10
-Continue facade improvement program	7
-Just mandate appearance by code	6
-Village shouldn't get involved	6
-Only if money comes from the budget	5
-It is being/has been done	5
-Give a tax reduction as incentive	4
-Share expense between Village and businesses	3
-It will come back in sales tax revenue	3

5. If 4a. is "yes," how would you like to see the economic incentives to attract new businesses funded?

-Don't know	69
-Tax incentives/breaks	25
-Not through taxes	13
-Float a bond	8
-Temporary tax breaks	8
-Money within existing budget	8
-Use existing taxes	7
-From property taxes	4
-Business and residential fundraising	4
-Would pay for itself through increase in tax revenue	4
-Lower rent/rent compensation	3
-Sales tax increase	2

6. If 4b. is "yes," how would you like to see the economic incentives to improve the downtown appearance funded?

-Don't know	62
-Tax incentives	13
-No taxes	11
-Issue bonds	11
-Taxes, general	7
-Facade Improvement program	6
-From existing budget	5
-Village/business cooperation	4
-Existing/increase in sales tax	4
-Low interest loans to businesses	3
-Fundraisers	2

7. If 4a. or 4b. is "yes," which of the following sources of funding would you support for either attracting new businesses or improving downtown appearance?

a. a sales tax increase

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	47	24.9%
No .....	128	67.7%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	14	7.4%

Comments on 7a:

-Yes, if small increase	14
-May be counterproductive	13
-Definitely not--too high already	8

7. continued

b. a property tax increase

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	18	9.5%
No .....	156	82.5%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	15	7.9%

Comments on 7b:

-Definitely not--too high already	29
-Yes, if small increase	6
-Only temporary	3

c. a transfer tax increase

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	68	36.0%
No .....	84	44.4%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	37	19.6%

Comments on 7c:

-Don't know what it is now	7
-Yes, if small increase	5

d. an increase in business license fees

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	90	47.6%
No .....	52	27.5%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	47	24.9%

Comments on 7d:

-May be counterproductive	
-Don't know what it is now	18
-Yes, if small increase	6
-Must be comparable to other villages	4

e. a source of funding within the existing budget that will not require an increase in taxes or fees

	<u># of responses</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes .....	162	85.7%
No .....	10	5.3%
Maybe/Don't Know .....	17	9.0%

**Comments on 7d:**

-Ideal--Yes, of course	23
-Don't know how it could be done	18
-Sounds unrealistic	10

COMMENTS FROM FINAL PAGE FROM RESIDENT SURVEYS

DOWNTOWN/BUSINESS RELATED

- Wilmette has several downtowns.
- Downtown doesn't have enough stores so I go to the mall.
- I don't shop downtown.
- Where exactly is downtown?
- Everyone agrees that something needs to be done to the downtown but no one knows what.
- Village should encourage the business owners to lower their prices and be competitive with the malls.
- Sidewalk sales have "petered down to nothing"--need to get more merchandise to attract people from other communities.
- We need carry-out food places for working parents.
- I don't shop downtown often because I live on the West side.
- Another small, attractive mall like Plaza Del Lago would be nice.
- The thrift store is an anchor store and it sets a bad tone.
- Highland Park has revitalized their downtown well with upscale boutiques and it is all in a 2-3 block radius.
- Frankly, I never go to downtown Wilmette to shop.
- The downtown doesn't deter people from moving into residential areas--people come for other reasons. Fixing it up would just be a nice perk.
- The downtown needs to make people feel that they live in a community--volunteer opportunities, more celebrations.
- If I can't find a parking space, sometimes I won't shop there.
- I don't know why we don't have chain stores.
- The point of downtown is to have a gathering place, a place to sit down, meet with people, etc. It needs to be a focal point for gathering. The Farmer's Market and occasional concerts are good for this, but there needs to be more. Try to build a "critical mass" of people--people go where other people go so it will be "the place to go."

- Highland Park's downtown is too glitzy; Hubbard Woods is charming.
- I would like to be able to shop in the downtown--I hate malls. It just needs better stores.
- We've lived here for 27 years and I've noticed great improvements in the past 5 years: awnings, taking down ugly signs, better restaurants.
- Lake Forest has the best downtown because they have pride in their shops and keep them clean.
- I've heard a lot of stores are leaving Glencoe because rents are getting too high; make sure rents are fair here.
- I don't go to bakeries downtown--Evanston's are better.
- Many businesses seem to shut down too soon. Why do they go out of business so fast?
- I don't think the plan to unify the outside of the stores was completed.
- We don't need more banks.
- I find myself going to Central St. in Evanston and Winnetka instead of Wilmette.
- Eating places in Wilmette are unattractive; not many "neat little cafes."
- There should be a ban on trucks unloading in the 2 block area on Wilmette and Central because it causes terrible traffic problems.
- The area west of Green Bay is exceptionally unattractive.
- I don't think downtown can compete with Eden's and Old Orchard being so close.
- I'm more likely to go downtown if I see several ads; the downtown merchants should join together and advertise.
- They should consider renovating buildings upwards to add a second or third story for shops
- The theater brings in such interesting movies.
- I sometimes feel the merchants aren't interested in helping customers as much as those in other villages like Winnetka are.
- The Depot and C.J. Arthur's are marvelous.

- The theater is terribly dirty.
- There is only one restaurant downtown and nothing to attract anyone there.
- I've lived here 35 years and I can't put any more money into it. I like the downtown the way it is.
- I heard from a retailer in Winnetka that rents are too high and people have to close shop before they get started.
- No more dry cleaners!
- Downtown Wilmette can't compete with Evanston and Plaza del Lago; it needs a unique identity.
- Business owners must realize that part of the cost of owning a business is keeping it up.
- Leave Wilmette alone, the way it is; so many things change in this world and usually it is for the worst.
- People don't go downtown everyday, only when they're looking for something "different."
- Facade Improvements was a waste of money; it didn't make much of a difference.
- Downtown Evanston almost died out completely before they added parking garages.
- Competition drives some of the businesses out and there is nothing the Village can do about it no matter how much money they throw at it and no matter how beautiful the buildings look.
- I've heard that fast food restaurants can't get in the Village and I don't know why.
- Younger people feel the downtown is boring.
- I hate downtown Evanston compared to downtown Wilmette because parking is impossible, there is too much noise, and I hate the high-rise garage.
- I don't want any fast food restaurants--they would cause traffic, people congestion, noise and litter.
- I can find parking in Glenview and Northbrook so I go there.
- Whoever has been planning lately has been doing a wonderful job. The Village is moving in the right direction with the downtown.

- I wouldn't expect people past Illinois Rd. to go there--it's not their downtown and they go elsewhere.
- Tenants with rear parking should make stores more accessible--sometimes you don't know which door to go in.
- Truck delivery is a big problem, especially UPS.
- People avoid going through the downtown because it's congested due to trucks stopping, cars stopping to wait for people; this needs to be stopped and never happens in Winnetka.
- On the west side of tracks, there is at least one vacant house that can be torn down and used for more retail space.
- Greenleaf seems detached from the business district. Needs signage, extended landscaping.
- The Village is facing efficient utilization of space.
- To attract new businesses the Village should: show potentials demographics as a positive asset, show potentials other assets (low crime rate, etc.), "woo" potentials by making locating process smooth, make space available, and target particular industries/retailers.
- I don't live far from downtown and I'd shop there more often if it didn't look so shabby. Lake Forest is beautiful and it should look more like that.
- Using gimmicks and tricks to attract businesses would be a big waste of time and it would not improve business. Using public money for aesthetics would be an even bigger waste.
- It's very difficult for older people to walk around large department stores; it's nice to have smaller stores to shop in. If they had nice women's clothing stores downtown, I would go.
- Eden's will adversely affect downtown--Wilmette is "shooting itself in the foot."
- Wilmette is limited by size and by diagonal streets.
- Used clothing store detracts--should be more enticing and their image is wrong.
- I've heard rents are too high downtown.
- Not everyone in this town makes \$100,000/year. It would be nice to have a Sears or something.
- I would favor a property tax increase because I think a good downtown adds thousands to your property value.

- Wilmette hasn't kept up with the times and is so outdated. We've had the same businesses over the past 35 years.
- I like Wilmette much better than Evanston because parking is free.
- Most of the good stores are in Plaza del Lago; they should be moved to downtown because there is no reason to go downtown.
- Downtown should stick with service businesses and shouldn't try to compete with malls.
- More businesses should hire 15-year olds and make opportunity for younger people.
- Downtown is a "potpourri of nothing."
- The Pancake House was the biggest bumper ever--it was a good business and now it's a parking lot and a big, gaudy building.
- Georgette's should carry larger clothing sizes.
- Taxes are so high here we are thinking of relocating.
- I've lived here 38 years and I don't see much hope for the future of downtown. Everything closes too early.
- It's sad that Once More With Feeling has such a prominent place in the downtown.
- The merchants are friendlier in Winnetka. Allen's was rude to me and now I won't go back.
- The Village gives too much to libraries and schools and wastes too much money.
- We could use a better grocery store on east end of town.
- I don't think parking is a problem.
- My husband used to have a business in the Village but he couldn't afford it so he moved to Evanston.
- Businessman's Association should pay for an open house or something to entice potential businesses; the Village shouldn't provide economic incentives.
- Parking is not as bad as people make it out to be.
- The Village Hall is the only descript place in the downtown and it is very pretty.
- The downtown lacks charm and evening activity.

- There is no central point to downtown--it's like a lot of loose ends floating around.
- You can't artificially create something like Evanston; it just naturally evolves.
- People don't do major shopping in the downtown, so the Village shouldn't spend money trying to build it up.
- We need some kind of evening activity downtown.
- Larger stores and fast food would attract more people.

#### VILLAGE RELATED/OTHER

- We need liquor licenses so people can stay here and do that instead of going elsewhere.
- Where does the Village "get off" telling the resale shop across from the theater to raise their prices?
- Property taxes are outrageous.
- Village should have junior high band play at the Memorial Day parade and "give back to the community."
- I'm glad that we're recycling and the snowplowing has been great.
- The police have been doing a good job lately.
- Why was IHOP torn down? It was the only place for teens and college kids and now there is no where for them to go.
- Need a place to wash your car.
- Thank you for taking this survey--it shows that the Village cares.
- You should do a survey on what Wilmette residents would like to see in their Village.
- There used to be a division East-West and many activities used to take place in the East side. Village should try to have activities in different locations.
- A friend of mine bought a house and wasn't aware of the transfer tax and got very upset when she found out. Real estate agents should make people aware of that beforehand.
- Parking for IHOP was a bad trade-off, financially and otherwise.

- I was dead-set against Eden's; it was too monstrous and the Village "helped them out." I don't want that to happen with a project I don't like in the downtown.
- I'm glad we took down the IHOP--the roof was ugly.
- I hope the new strip mall looks very, very attractive. It better be a great addition or there will be a great deal of criticism.
- We all think the new strip mall was an "insider's deal"--someone is making some money on this.
- The area west of Green Bay is exceptionally unattractive.
- There should be a pool closer to the East side of town--it seems more things are concentrated on the West side.
- As soon as we sold our building on Greenleaf many years ago, the Village started offering all of the incentives to the owner for trees, to fix up the store fronts, etc. I don't think it was fair.
- I do think we're getting good dollar value for our tax money.
- Some of the newer homes are too big for their lots.
- I've lived here for 20 years and I love the Village.
- The library is wonderful!
- We don't object to any of our taxes because we realize that they are being put to such a good use. For example, the water bill tax is high, but the sewers are great and there are no flood problems.
- The zoning regulations and Village Board were asinine when I built my house 6 years ago.
- I've been really disappointed lately with the Village and how they've been spending their money. They didn't plow streets last year and haven't picked up leaves the past few weeks. I think the Village has lost its focus and should rethink their priorities. You've got plenty of money and you're just "playing it away."
- Kids shouldn't be playing on the streets.
- People tend to speed when driving.
- Facade Improvements was a waste of money; it didn't make much of a difference.
- I think people feel very burdened by taxes.

- It's nice to see the presence of our police department everywhere--they keep things orderly.
- I object very strongly to the promotion of the Gilson Park activities. Residents are crowded out by non-residents and there is not even a user-fee.
- Parking lot at old IHOP is a good idea.
- Some areas of the Village get more attention than others, in terms of street and sewer improvements.
- I'm a senior citizen on a fixed income. Senior citizens are having a rough time especially with property taxes.
- Curbing is pretty but kind of strange.
- All people want from Wilmette is a safe place with good schools and prestige.
- Buses cause traffic problems.
- The railroad tracks divide Wilmette and interrupts the continuity.
- The Village is trying too hard to act like a big city.
- The Village should eliminate all restrictions and taxes and let free enterprise take place.
- I think we lost loads of income from Eden's because the Village fathers pushed small business out.
- We need to hear more "inside information" in the Communicator as to what businesses have done for our Village, not just that our water bill has gone up.
- I'm glad that they're doing this instead of just concentrating on Eden's.
- The Village should survey the residents more.
- The way the Village condemned the IHOP so the guy in the Plaza could have it and more parking was unbelievable.
- Buses should be eliminated. They're dirty and drive too fast.
- I don't understand why there is so many taxes; we didn't used to have to pay for all of this. Where is all of the money going?
- The library asks for too much money.

- The Pancake House was the biggest bummer ever--it was a good business and now it's a parking lot and a big, gaudy building.
- Taxes are so high here we are thinking of relocating.
- Tearing down IHOP was a fiasco. It was a fairly decent restaurant and Moss's new stores will take up even more public parking.
- The Village does a good job in maintaining their streets and sidewalks.
- I would like to see an "exit" tax on residents who move out.
- Ban smoking in restaurants and ban sale of tobacco. It should be consistent with the ban on handguns because tobacco is more dangerous.
- Speed limit is inconsistent along Lake St.; why is it 35 m.p.h. on the west side and 30 m.p.h. on the east side?
- The taxes are so high that it is prohibitive for young people to move here and they do a lot of the shopping.
- A lot of people feel that Joe Moss should have paid for the parking lot that was given him and that the people were "shafted."
- The Village gives too much to libraries and schools and wastes too much money.
- I would like to know in The Communicator where exactly the recycled materials go to in the end.
- The Village needs to explain the pro's and con's to the public on major decisions, publicize them, and then let the very articulate residents here express their views.
- I think word gets around whether a Village is "friendly" toward new businesses depending on the number and severity of the ordinances.
- Rollerblading should be forbidden.
- Don't let panhandlers stay on the streets.
- You got rid of the major eyesore--IHOP--which is good.
- The Village is too petty about signs.
- The timing of Ridge Road lights is terrible and the lights on Wilmette Ave. should be longer during rush hour.

- This survey makes me apprehensive because the government is always trying to change things. I like downtown the way it is; I hope they don't "screw it up."
- "No picnics on the beach" is not enforced and picnics bring bugs.
- There should be a network for seniors who need shopping, groceries and live in their own home.
- I was surprised to see that tax dollars were "blown" on advertising on the radio for some of the businesses.
- I think the aesthetics committee stinks--who are they to say what a building should look like? They don't do a good job.
- I think they are paving over everything--it's awful.
- Wilmette should concentrate on the youth in town and give them a place to go.
- Village officials should listen to what residents want and prioritize instead of spending money on the downtown.
- Whenever the Village tries to improve something, they screw it up: tile in lays which get slippery in the summer, hazardous curbing sticks out, big lights look like a highway.
- The Village is pretty tight with their budget and don't overspend; they are good about that.
- It seems every Village department has its own agenda--there is no overall plan to spend wisely. There should be prioritization on how to spend the Village funds overall--don't just allot a certain amount to each department each year.

## SECTION II SHOPPER SURVEY

Total surveyed: 280 people

### 1. When not shopping in downtown Wilmette, where else do you shop?

<u>answer</u>	<u># of responses</u>
-Old Orchard	132
-Evanston	92
-Northbrook Court	74
-Downtown Chicago	45
-Eden's/Carsons	43
-Winnetka	28
-Chicago-other	28
-Plaza del Lago	25
-Golf Mill	23
-Lincolnwood Town Center	22
-Wilmette (other than downtown and Plaza del Lago)	12
-Highland Park	10
-Gurnee Mills	8
-Hawthorne Mall	8
-Woodfield	7
-Skokie	5
-Glenview	5
-Glencoe	5

#### Other answers under 5 responses

- Kenosha-malls
- Northbrook, general
- Randhurst
- Village Crossing

### 2. Why do you shop elsewhere instead of downtown Wilmette?

-Convenient location	132
-Better variety	116
-Larger selection	72
-Department stores/larger stores	61
-Lower prices	37
-Like a particular store	36
-Particular items that can't be found in Wilmette	34
-More familiar with stores	15
-More appealing area/layout	9
-Better quality merchandise	7
-All stores under one roof	5

#### Other answers under 5 responses

- Easier parking
- Better store hours
- More popular

3. What kinds of businesses do you think would be most successful in downtown Wilmette?

A. Antiques	3
B. Book store	15
C. Children's clothing	6
D. Clothing store	41
E. Department store	6
F. Drug store	1
G. Food court/"quick-eats"	3
H. Gift store	12
I. Gourmet food store	6
J. Grocery store	10
K. Hardware store	3
L. Health food store	4
M. Men's clothing	16
N. Men's shoes	0
O. Newsstand	0
P. Record store	14
Q. Restaurant	57
R. Shoe store	15
S. Toy store	14
T. Variety store	17
U. Wine and cheese store	0
V. Women's clothing	24
W. Women's shoes	0

Other stores receiving responses:

-Unique--can't find in malls	15
-Fast food	12
-a GAP store	11
-Coffee shop	10
-Sports store	8
-Small stores	7
-Particular kind of service	7
-Art gallery	5
-Boutiques	5
-Jewelry	4
-Chain stores	4
-Better bakery	3
-Video rental	3

4a. What type of women's clothing store do you think would be most successful in Wilmette?

-Don't know	75
-"GAP"	27
-Casual	27
-Sportswear	24
-Upscale--higher priced	23
-Dress store	17
-Moderately priced	15
-Boutique	14

4a. continued

-Conservative	13
-"Ecclectic"	12
-Modern/stylish	9
-"The Limited"	9
-Nothing new	9
-Variety	8
-Geared toward a younger crowd	7
-"Banana Republic"	7
-"Ann Taylor"	6
-"Talbot's"	6
-Higher quality/lower price	5
-Chain stores	5
-Department store	5
-"Victoria's Secret"	5

Other answers under 5 responses

- "Lord and Taylor"
- "Laughing Iguana"
- lingerie
- large-sized
- petite
- geared toward mature adult

4b. What type of men's clothing store do you think would be most successful in downtown Wilmette?

-Don't know	75
-Casual	38
-Sportswear	29
-"GAP"	28
-Business attire	21
-Jos. A. Banks	14
-Upscale	13
-Nothing new	13
-Moderately priced	12
-Variety	10
-Conservative	10
-"Eddie Bauer"	9
-dressy clothes	7
-Modern/stylish	6
-"Banana Republic"	5
-"Fell Co."	5

Other answers under 5 responses

- "J. Crew"
- "Mark Shale"
- Formal wear
- Geared toward a younger crowd
- Anything
- "Field's"
- "Land's End"
- Department store

4c. What type of restaurant do you think would be most successful in downtown Wilmette?

-Family-oriented	24
-Upscale/fine dining	24
-Casual	23
-Sit-down place	22
-Don't know	21
-Italian	20
-Have enough already	18
-Moderately priced/inexpensive	17
-Sandwich shop/deli	16
-American	14
-Mexican	14
-Ethnic--general	11
-Like what is here now	10
-Lunch place	9
-Fast food--general	8
-Cafe	8
-Outdoors restaurant	8
-Anything new	7
-IHOP/Pancake House	7
-Pizza	7
-Take-out	6
-Small	6
-Coffee Shop	6
-Health food	6
-McDonald's	6
-Thai	6
-Homemade food	6
-Gourmet	5
-Vegetarian	5
-Seafood	5

Other answers under 5 responses

- Quick sit-down place
- Taco Bell
- Middle Eastern
- Chinese
- Japanese
- Place that serves alcohol

5. What town do you live in?

A. Wilmette, east of Green Bay	75
B. Wilmette, west of Ridge	54
C. Wilmette, between Green Bay and Ridge	37
D. Evanston	33
E. Winnetka	9
F. Glencoe	4
G. Kenilworth	4
H. Chicago	21
I. Glenview	8

5. continued

Other towns shoppers live in

-Northbrook

-Skokie

-Highland Park

-Northfield

-Out-of-state

8  
5  
2  
2  
2

COMMENTS FROM FINAL PAGE FROM SHOPPER SURVEYS

- I really don't shop here.
- I don't come here often.
- Need nicer clothing stores--not resale.
- I'm not sure what's here because there isn't much advertising.
- The stores are too expensive here.
- I'm a discount shopper so I hardly shop here.
- I don't like that Eden's is expanding--the population is the same but they keep adding stores.
- I hardly come here anymore.
- I only come here for the laundromat..
- I shop here every Saturday.
- There are too many banks.
- I come here for the services. There isn't any retail--especially clothing.
- I believe in shopping in Wilmette for the tax base.
- I don't miss IHOP.
- The new coffee shop is a great idea.
- I live in Wilmette and always try to shop here first.
- Eden's will bring tough competition.
- Need an upscale restaurant on Linden.
- I don't shop here much because there are no good stores or family restaurants.
- Some of the merchants here are rude.
- Need fewer used clothing stores.
- I just moved here.
- Wilmette should be more like Central St. in Evanston.
- I won't go to C.J. Arthur's because it is too smoky.

- This town is losing a lot of money not having a McDonald's here.
- There isn't anything for more moderate income--like a J.C. Penney's.
- You have some good grocery stores.
- There needs to be a rec. center or somewhere for children to "hang out."
- There are a lot more pressing issues than downtown. When I read about this in the paper I laughed.
- I try to support the downtown at all costs.
- I never buy clothes in Wilmette--there isn't a good selection here.
- Get rid of the pawn store.
- Need to work on more parking.
- We don't need any more dry cleaners.
- I don't think business here has been too good.
- No businesses would have a chance here because taxes are too high, parking is limited, and there is no "pizazz."
- I only go to Wilmette for specialty items like The Crystal Cave.
- I wish there was no smoking in restaurants--many people feel C.J. Arthur's needs a non-smoking section.
- When the movies in the evenings let out, there is no where to go to eat and drink.
- I love Meat 'N' Shoppe, resale shop on Central, bookstore, and Chuckwagon.
- Keep Wilmette as it is--especially the quaintness.
- I would like a gourmet coffee shop that is open in the evenings at the old train station.
- Small clothing stores won't work--too high priced.
- Need more variety and selection.
- There aren't enough retail stores here.
- I never shop here because parking is terrible.

- The merchants should be nicer. That is why I go to Winnetka.
- Do you know how many times I've done a survey like this? The Village does what they want--they never listen.
- Store owners should remodel the inside of their stores.
- The movies that the theater shows are good.
- I like the laundromat.
- Trendier stores are needed.
- Too many Realtors.
- The Depot is OK.
- The charm of Wilmette is keeping it small--people can go elsewhere to do big shopping.
- The Plan Commission should help some of the merchants and keep the rent down. Many stores have left because rent is too high.
- I grew up in Wilmette. It's a boring town and there is no diversity in the stores.
- The old train station at 4th and Linden is an eyesore.
- Some kind of attraction--like miniature golf--would be nice.
- I only go back to the store if the merchant is friendly.
- We'd love to come here if they made the shops more attractive.
- I like the assortment of businesses here.
- Downtown Wilmette caters to older people, not youth.
- I think for some business owners, this is not their main job. They don't care whether they get more business. They don't need it.
- I hate downtown Wilmette. Highland Park has more retail and not as ugly store fronts and not so many cleaners.
- The last time I was here was for a sidewalk sale.
- It was nasty to take down the IHOP.
- The bricks in the sidewalks are dangerous for children and the elderly.
- Don't let teens take over with skateboards.

- The Japanese restaurant is a big draw.
- Should have more sidewalk sales to advertise what businesses are here.
- Should try to grab the attention of commuters with flyers at the train station.
- Put advertising in the library.
- Have more fairs.
- I come here for the movies.
- Parking is terrible with the islands sticking out.
- Should have less service and more retail.
- Should have better appearance of stores and buildings like Winnetka. Wilmette looks tired and outdated.
- Wilmette has the worst downtown on the North Shore. Wilmette should pattern after Highland Park.
- I shop here often.
- People come here just for particular items, not to shop around.
- It is ridiculous to have 3 bakeries and no retail clothing.
- I like the WilBus.

SECTION III MERCHANTS SURVEY

Total responses: 17 merchants

1a. What do you think could be done to attract more residents to the Wilmette Village Center, in terms of aesthetics?

- It is becoming apparent that our sidewalks in the Village Center need some help.
- The flexibility that has allowed the merchants to put flowers in front of their businesses has been a help and could be encouraged.
- The awnings have given some very different style buildings more continuity.
- Remove knuckles, remove and replace sidewalks including pavers.
- Modernized street lighting.
- Modernized planters.
- Restart the Facade rebate program for storefronts, eliminating the often times unreasonable Village conditions.
- Directional signage on Lake, Green Bay, Skokie Blvd., and Wilmette Ave.
- Get rid of the tiles and replace the sidewalks with new cement and real bricks.
- The awnings have brightened the area and shops are looking more up to date. Is overall improving.
- The store fronts should be better (awnings, window display); some buildings look like junk.
- Sidewalks are a depressing disgrace and sometimes an outright hazard.
- Put a stop sign at corner of Central and 11th to make it safer for pedestrians.
- Clean up Green Bay Rd. from Linden to Wilmette Ave.
- Encourage use of awnings.
- Have planters in front of stores.
- Have a directory of stores (including type of merchandise stocked or services performed).

1a. continued

- Show where parking (directory includes map) is available.
- Fix the sidewalks--loose bricks are dangerous.
- Make some businesses fix awnings--many look terrible.
- Make all restaurants non-smoking.
- Clean the streets much more often. It is nearly always a messy scene downtown. It looks messy, messy, messy!
- Remove that deplorable tile, which was a mistake from the first.
- Fix up Lyman Sargents--12th street.
- Update barbershop window--Central.
- Update the overall look of business fronts, for example, the drug store front window is poorly presented.
- The area north of Central on Wilmette Ave. is poorly organized.
- It is attractive now--particularly the Village Hall area.  
More benches would be a plus.
- There needs to be stores with merchandise in windows--not desks! People like to window shop and feel there are several places to stop at not just a single destination.
- Continue to promote the restoration of private shops and buildings back to the richness in design so many originally had. Select a design theme for a master plan of public design elements that would eventually create a cohesive appearance; street lights, stop lights, sidewalk material, uniform tree street scape, truck traffic restrictions, detailing attractively the street signage, seating and tree trunk protection.

1b. What do you think could be done to attract more residents to the Wilmette Village Center, in terms of Marketing/Promotion?

- Encourage the businesses to dress up their buildings and storefronts.
- Encourage merchants to participate in the sidewalk sale--put merchandise in front of their stores.
- I have little faith in this topic. One can pour money down a hole and achieve very little.

**1b. continued**

- Welcome Wagon does well for us--you need to offer a real gift. Direct mail is the best.
- Promotion in sidewalk sales.
- Joint promotion such as east side/west side in the Pioneer Press by the Chamber.
- Include news about stores in newsletter sent by residents.
- How about a "Why not buy it in Wilmette" campaign?
- Have a monthly advertising insert in Pioneer Press for Wilmette store owners only.
- Promote the "personal service" the customer receives when shopping at a small business in one's own neighborhood.
- Monthly ads in local/regional print media promoting Village of Wilmette shopping districts(s).
- Radio ad campaign to tout Village Center as the place to shop.
- Pole mounted banners.
- Promotion books distributed to residents offering discounts at Village Center shops--no need to go to Old Orchard, etc.
- Keep the windows interesting. They are one of our best marketing and promotional tools.
- Promote leisure and relaxation by using benches along the sidewalks. Have several vendors selling light snacks.
- Saturday noon performances at Central and Wilmette directed toward children.
- Allow/encourage restaurants to be open later, especially in summer (look to downtown Highland Park where people will go to walk at night).
- More "street fair" type events to get people into the area.

**1c. What do you think could be done to attract more residents to the Wilmette Village Center, in terms of parking?**

- At one point you discussed options for the corner at 11th and Central--I work there and I feel the real problem occurs when you are going north on 11th. If there was a sidewalk extension I feel there wouldn't be a problem. You could easily see both ways--and not feel "exposed" in the intersection and no parking would be lost.

1c. continued

- Do not allow merchants or office workers to use street parking--it is almost impossible to park and run in a store.
- Remind owners and employees not to park on the street.
- The movie theater creates a problem when it has matinees and really popular films. Their customers clog up our whole block during afternoons and Saturdays. People don't try terribly hard to find parking--they want to be right in front.
- Get employee cars off the streets. Most spots are filled by employee cars.
- At each parking lot have a map showing all stores and where they are relative to parking lots.
- Village parking lots are too far from downtown--employees park on the street and take customer parking.
- Build a \$300,000 parking lot for each store like you did for the new building at Wilmette and Greenleaf.
- Seems OK now.
- There is plenty of parking or the Village Board would not have allowed a building to be built where the only parking is the lot built with public money.
- One good sized, 2 tiered parking garage.
- We do have some available parking, but it seems in a small village district that if the customer cannot find a spot in front of your business "there's no parking."
- Reduce parking time in front of the shops from 2 hrs. to 30 minutes.
- Provide bike parking racks at various locations.
- If there was a stickered lot for employees it would open up street parking and stop charade of employees running down to move cars every few hours.
- Unless one is on foot, parking is a big negative. Instead of trying to build additional retail space, some type of convenient parking facility should be constructed.

1d. What do you think could be done to attract more residents to the Wilmette Village Center, in terms of other items?

- Hours open. I think the 9-5 hours do not meet the community's needs nor the commuters' needs. They're closed when people would access them the most.
- The Village is too inflexible in allowing creative presentations, for example, dining al fresco, liquor served, outdoor cafes. Other suburbs thrive on this. Look at downtown Naperville.
- Perhaps some sharing of mailing lists between businesses--for a fee or not--would help build on the people who actually come here to shop. Also a list of all employees of businesses--they're here to work--they can also shop! Everyone used to give a 10% discount to fellow businesses in the past.
- I think the only improvements needed in Wilmette are different, more interesting businesses to attract people. Ever walk down Central Street in Evanston? It's bustling because they have fun, interesting places occupying the store spaces.
- Plan now to make shopping in downtown area more appealing prior to opening of new stores where IHOP used to be.
- Meat 'N' Shoppe parking lot is very ugly and a waste of land. Buy it and develop it.
- Continue to discourage kids from hanging out. (How about police foot/bicycle patrols from 2:30-4:30 p.m.?)
- Promote people to shop Wilmette and keep sales tax in town.
- There seems to be a fair amount of discontent among the merchant/property owners concerning the Village staff, i.e., the Village staff is viewed as being "anti-business." Some positive public relations and sensitivity training of the staff is in order.
- Direct through truck traffic to use Lake and not Wilmette, Central or Greenleaf.

2. Please list specific types of businesses that you think could be successful in downtown Wilmette, and briefly explain why.

- A kids/teens hang-out (where they are welcome) to eat sitting down (pizza?) and to spend money (candy, toys?).
- Deli Food Shop.

2. continued

- Specialty Food Store.
- Hobby shop.
- Ask the residents what they are interested in and would actually support in big enough numbers to be successful. We serve a very narrow geographic area for the most part.
- Remember--national franchises do not join the local chamber--they don't have local connections. They can't begin to care about "their" town the way a small business does.
- No more resale stores, banks, dry cleaners, cafes. Too much service industry, not enough retail.
- The Gap
- Men's Clothiers
- Records and CD's.
- Restaurants were in your comprehensive plan before, but to date there is only 7 "restaurants" in the downtown area. One more is to be added. I believe this is enough.
- Music store which includes CD's and tapes.
- Hobby shop/craft store (i.e. Leewards).
- An interesting restaurant! Not another diner or coffee shop. A fish place or an upscale place like Betise in the Plaza del Lago--bar, class, good healthy food.
- How about another store like Concrete Select--unique while still selling useful, practical, tasteful items--it's very attractive and a pleasant place to be.
- Get creative--don't let in the boring and practical--Insurance places in a storefront? What a waste. Christian Science Reading Room in a storefront? Another huge waste--they can occupy other spaces without windows for display easily. How about an interesting upscale grocery store like The Oak Street market in Evanston or Fresh Fields?
- The present balance is good. Work to maintain occupancy and improve aesthetics.
- Name shops such as: The Gap, Banana Republic, Victoria's Secret, to attract teens and young people to the area.
- Men's shop (Eddie Bauer type)--Men and teen boys. Up-to-date, label conscious younger crowd. Also young business man.

## 2. continued

- Dance Wear--Ice Skating (wear and equipment): Capezio brands. There is nothing from Hubbard Woods to Chicago.
- Up-to-date Women's clothing store.
- "Dinner" Restaurant.
- One additional upscale children's store similar to Lad & Lassie. Many more children are coming along of late and many of the families have disposable income for such upscale clothing.
- Buffet/delicatessen style restaurants. Promotes family/business ambience.
- Mrs. Kays/Habitat store. High end, low price decorator window and vail treatment store could generate much foot traffic and is sorely needed.
- Joseph Banks--which is coming to the new development at Greenleaf and Poplar should do very well. Tailored, classic style clothing is always a good seller around here and would fill a gap left by the retirement of the owners of the Hamilton shop.
- I think a music store which carries CD's and tapes would do well. It would be a draw for all age groups, and has products which are affordable to younger clientele, not to mention a desirability factor.
- Personally, I would love a dime store. It is one of the reasons I end up going to Central St. in Evanston.
- I think we need a store for the kids such as Deacons over on Central St. in Evanston.
- Specialty/art store places people would come to just look.
- Gourmet food store/carryout like Food Stuffs.
- Clothing Store.
- If you people would lighten up and allow fast food (McDonald's, Burger King, etc.) into the area in a manner such as the downtown Evanston McDonald's (which is primarily "on foot" access), foot traffic in the area would be tremendous and would certainly help the other merchants.
- Casual restaurants that stay open longer than 9:30 on a weekend evening since there is a movie theater right in town that seems to be successful.

2. continued

- Women's apparel store might do well--a store with Lord and Taylor type merchandise might draw women who might leave the Village to shop in similar shops in Country Classics in Glenview.

3a. What do you think are the Village Center's greatest assets for the residents?

- I think most merchants in town are friendly and eager to please and are anxious to see customer loyalty.
- Location is convenient; however, this is negated by the lack of decent parking. It's a lot easier (especially for errands) to go to strip mall locations.
- Small town atmosphere where people know each other and you get service.
- Convenient access to services and goods in a centralized location.
- The Village Hall to work out the political issues.
- Merchants who know them, and their families, and long-standing relationships with the merchants. Not many "fly-by-night" businesses. The small-town feel, it's a more personal way of shopping.
- The theater has better movies. It's a hopping place in the evening for a dinner or a movie or ice cream.
- People enjoy sitting in Veterans Park and in front of the Village Hall. It is kind of Mayberry-ish. That's a positive in my book.
- Plenty of banking, dry cleaning and coffee shop alternatives.
- Adequate parking, good quality retail shops, good transportation.
- Good snow plowing and the Village offices are centrally located.
- I believe people are and will return to the personal touch a small business has to offer, but the shops must carry a 'name' or merchandise that caters to a younger generation.
- Plentiful, fine parking makes access easy and there is a good selection of stores.
- The Village Hall.

**3a. continued**

- Gold Medal, Strange Brew, The Noodle, Concrete Select, The Laundromat, The Theater.
- Perennials and Dog Wash are not in the Center but are still a great draw.
- Cafes and restaurants--a place to gather. Residents like to go for walks in this area--give them a place to walk to.
- Convenience of close-to-home shopping, friendly above-average merchants, jobs provided for local teens.
- Enhancing property values of homes, financial support of local charities.
- Convenience, wide variety of services.

**3b. What do you think are the Village Center's greatest assets for the business owners?**

- The Chamber of Commerce is the best and seems to be the only thing going for businesses. I think this survey is a good move on the Village's part.
- Safe area to work, attractive physical setting, fairly adequate parking, customer base with disposable income--but fewer hours to spend it.
- Access to whole North Shore (in fact, merchants ought to be encouraged to keep directories of stores throughout North Shore).
- Sidewalk sales, Farmers' Market, activities to promote downtown (Santa Parade, Easter Egg hunt).
- Plentiful, fine parking makes access easy.
- The reasons why people come here to shop (Gold Medal, Strange Brew, The Noodle, Concrete Select, etc.).
- Friendly attitudes--communication between customer and shop owner gives a special neighborhood feeling of care.
- I'm not sure the business owners feel that the Village Center offers them any great assets.

**3b. continued**

- We really get the chance to know our customers. It is a very accessible shopping area. We get an opportunity to know the other merchants as well. Many of our merchants are in family businesses and care very deeply about the community's success as well as their own. We think it is a great asset when a business feels like it wants to give something back to the Village it exists in.
- The Center is the location for residence to congregate for the goods and services they need.
- The Village Hall. So many residents use it that they filter out to the surrounding area.
- The residents, I think would shop more in Wilmette if there were more stores that provided the goods and services that they need. Most people like to purchase goods and services in the Village in which they reside given the opportunity.

**4. To the best of your knowledge, please estimate what percentage of your clientele reside in:**

- Wilmette: 60, 20, 80, 20, 45, 90, 30, 60, 80, 60, 2, 70, 25, 90, 75,  
=average 53.8%
- Winnetka: 5, 20, 20, 15, 2, 10, 10, 10, 2, 10, 5, 3,  
=average 9.3%
- Glencoe: 5, 2, 5, 3, 5, 10,  
=average 5.0%
- Chicago: 2, 5, 5, 2, 25, 5, 2, 1,  
=average 5.9%
- Evanston: 25, 25, 5, 5, 15, 5, 10, 1, 10, 5, 60, 3, 15,  
=average 14.2%
- Kenilworth: 10, 5, 10, 10, 3, 5, 5, 10, 1, 10, 3, 3,  
=average 5.5%
- Glenview: 5, 5, 5, 5, 10, 1, 5, 2, 3,  
=average 4.6%
- Other: 20, 7, 30, 3, 2, 10, 55,  
=average 18.1%

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM MERCHANTS SURVEY

- Have businesses with later hours.
- The trends over the last ten years: There are fewer shoppers available during the day; more women are working during the day and their children are supervised and not able to shop on their own as much as in the past afternoons; more older residents mean smaller sales as older people do not have as great a need for goods and services as they did when they were younger.
- Many new people moving into town may not be oriented to the ambience of an old downtown. Where they come from may be all mall shopping. They may naturally carry old ways of shopping with them.
- The trend of shoppers to look at price above any other factor has substantially affected every industry. To compete with deep discounters a small business does not have many weapons. Renting or owning a shop in Wilmette means high rent, high property taxes (commercial property is taxed at rates 2 to 3 times the residential rate), difficulty in finding adequate help, and plentiful competition.
- When Edens Plaza and Old Orchard reopen, downtown Wilmette will be greatly affected. Old retailers told of the problems that occurred when Old Orchard originally opened. It gave significant trouble to the downtown for about five years. Then the novelty wore off and shoppers started to return. At this time there will be even more effect.
- There continues to be more places for consumers to spend their money than there is money to spend. The growth of retail space in the area is far ahead of the growth in population. The total amount of business to be had is being cut up into smaller and smaller pieces for all the businesses to share. Not all shops and shopping areas will be able to survive. Wilmette will have to determine where it fits in the whole picture.
- It is going to be very difficult to keep a high percentage of Downtown shops in retail in use. The high cost of doing business here, the greatly increasing near-by competition, the waning pool of available shoppers, the infatuation of people with off-price retailing, the apathy of local residents to the idea of shopping locally in "their town", all these things need to be addressed in the plans which are laid out for the near future.
- I don't think the business district or the community gets enough information about community events such as "variations" in the planning of the downtown. The bank at 1145 Wilmette is an example. After months of deliberation about the bank and

pictures and articles in the Pioneer Press, many people still have no idea what is going into the storefront. Residents must be made aware so that they have a change to change things.

- We must find ways to encourage land/property owners in Village Center to spruce things up. If the Village starts with the sidewalks, it would be a good start.
- Banks, Cleaners, Diners, and Barbers are in too much supply and are boring, boring, boring. If the Village has significant input in to who can do business around here--be picky and creative--I have no idea how it all works but I do know what I hear from people.
- Merchants don't want to be in Wilmette if there's nothing cool in Wilmette to be with. The Plaza del Lago is the best part of Wilmette and it still could be a lot better. Downtown is boring--there must be some way to regulate the number of cleaners and coffee shops that go in around here and who takes what spaces. The landlords of the buildings need guidance. If they choose their tenants, they need serious guidance.
- You know what else we need? A big, huge Ace Hardware--no one likes Millen's anymore--it's mean to say, I know--we still go there a lot! The only reason is they're close. They have very high prices and lousy stock. I'm not sure that I need to go on anymore. I'm sure you don't want me to but I feel my opinion is hugely important--I am a merchant and I talk to residents all day--we exchange opinions and ideas and I know many people feel as I do. I know we have our share of faults, believe me!
- After 22 years of success as a business (service) in Wilmette, I find the personal touch is what my customers enjoy most. Keeping up with current styles even in the dance world, brings the younger generation coming. A combination of new and traditional styles welcomes all. Fortunately or unfortunately our new generation of consumer has been exposed to "in" labels--merchandise--large mall shopping--impersonal attitudes. They are again beginning to want that personal feeling--"she remembered my name," "She also knows what I like and want!"
- We want to thank the Plan Commission for this survey as well as the way you conducted your meeting with the business owners. Your commission really listened, was not the least bit intimidating and was respectful of those who took the time to come and did not talk down to the business owners, giving lectures like ones we have received from other boards. The way your commission worked was very much appreciated. Thanks for asking our opinions and for actually listening to them.

- The Trustees study for a traffic configuration on Green Bay Road is most interesting and we are greatly in favor of the idea.
- The various "bumps" in the pavements in east Wilmette relating to the new sewer system might be identified with SLOW/CAUTION signs.
- If a store is not on Wilmette Avenue or the 1100 block of Central, I don't think people realize it exists--there needs to be a way to attract shoppers area on Greenleaf and area North of Wilmette Avenue on Central.

# APPENDIX D

## Summary and Recommendations

- **Existing Capacity in Study Area**

On-Street	482	21%
On-Street		
Public Lots	483	21
Private Lots	<u>1,359</u>	<u>58</u>
Total	2,324	100%

The parking distribution is similar to other suburban downtowns with a large Metra commuter rail station.

- **Existing Conditions**

There is currently a Metra commuter parking shortage of about 68 spaces. Otherwise, the overall parking supply in the Village Center is adequate to meet current needs. However, there are specific locations where the parking supply is used to its effective capacity at peak times during the day for one or two hours. A summary of the key findings from the parking counts is shown below.

Thursday, December 1, 1994

***On-Street***

- Overall peak occupancy: 62 percent at 3:00 P.M.
- Block faces with peak use of 90 to 100-plus percent for one or more hours:  
Block 9: Washington Avenue/Green Bay to Park

Block 2: Washington Avenue: Park to Green Bay  
Block 2: Central/Green Bay to Park  
Block 8: Wilmette Avenue/Lake to Central  
Block 8: Central/Wilmette to 12th Street  
Block 9: 12th Street/Washington Avenue to Central  
Block 11: Central/11th Street to Wilmette  
Block 12: Central/Wilmette to 11th Street  
Block 12: Wilmette Avenue/Poplar to Central

***Off-Street***

- Overall peak occupancy: 75 percent at 11:00 A.M.
- Maximum accumulation: 1,365 vehicles/1,842 spaces.
- Metra lots used to capacity.
- Three village lots heavily used or full at peak times.
- The maximum occupancy at the new village lot at Poplar and Wilmette Avenue was less than 50 percent.

**Saturday, December 3, 1994**

***On-Street*** (Note: count included Green Bay Road south of Linden Avenue)

- Overall peak occupancy: 59 percent at noon.
- Block faces with peak use of 90 to 100-plus percent for one or more hours:
  - Block 2: Central/Green Bay to Park
  - Block 3: Green Bay Road/Central to Wilmette
  - Block 3: Wilmette Avenue/Green Bay to Park
  - Block 4: Wilmette Avenue/Park to Green Bay
  - Block 8: Central/Wilmette to 12th Street
  - Block 11: Central/11th to Wilmette
  - Block 12: Central/Wilmette to 11th
  - Block 13: 11th/Greenleaf to Linden

### *Off-Street*

- Overall peak occupancy: 42 percent at 10:00 A.M.
- Maximum accumulation: 795 vehicles/1,875 spaces.
- Metra lots very lightly used.
- Village lots less heavily used than during the weekday:
  - Lot north of Central: lowest use
  - Lot at alley across from Wilmette Theater: nearly full at 11:00 A.M.
  - Lot at 11th south of Central: lightly used until 1:00 P.M.; much higher after 1:00 P.M.
  - New village lot at Poplar and Wilmette Avenue: full at noon.

These results do not show a compelling need to add capacity to the parking system, except for commuter parking.

- **Parking Turnover Survey**

The majority of vehicles parked for two hours or less, as shown below:

Time	Thursday December 1, 1994	Saturday December 3, 1994
0 to 1 hour	51.3%	53.2%
1 to 1.5 hours	21.6	21.2
1.5 to 2 hours	<u>9.9</u>	<u>9.1</u>
Subtotal less than 2 hours	82.8%	83.5%
2 hours or more	<u>17.2</u>	<u>16.5</u>
Total	100.0%	100.0%

The majority of the surveyed spaces had two-hour time limits. These results suggest that the majority of patrons of the curb spaces and the public lots are parking for less than two hours, as intended by the regulations. There were some vehicles parking in the two-hour spaces for extended periods, but the overall number is small.

- **Parking and Transportation Questionnaires**

#### **Employer and Employee Survey Results**

A total of 29 employers with a total of 321 employees responded to the questionnaire. About one-third of the employees (104) worked for a single employer, Bank One, one of the larger

employers in the Village Center. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that approximately 76 percent of the total employees are present on a typical weekday. Most employees (85 percent) drive to work. Seventeen of the 29 employers that responded to the survey provide some parking for their employees. On a typical weekday, approximately 70 to 76 percent of the total employees are present. On a Saturday, only 29 percent are present. The survey results indicate that for a typical weekday there would be 3.3 employees per 1,000 gross square feet of floor area.

A total of 78 surveys were received, 41 from employees of Bank One. The majority of employees (86 percent) drive, and most arrive as the sole vehicle occupant. Virtually all employees park off-street. Only one employee parked at an on-street curb space. These results are consistent with the responses to the employer surveys.

### **Visitor Survey Results**

#### **Thursday, December 1, 1994**

- The majority of visitors were in the Village Center for shopping. East of Green Bay Road, the next highest trip purpose was personal business; west of Green Bay Road, going to the library was the second-ranked trip purpose.
- East of Green Bay Road, the majority of visitors (70.2 percent) drove. West of Green Bay Road, the driving percentage was lower.
- A majority arrived by car, but in both areas many people walked: 21.4 percent east of Green Bay Road and 34.1 percent west of Green Bay Road.
- The average vehicle occupancy was 1.12 east of Green Bay and 1.50 west of Green Bay.
- East of Green Bay Road, 54.8 percent of the respondents were Wilmette residents. West of Green Bay Road, slightly less than half the respondents (47.7 percent) were Wilmette residents.
- East of Green Bay Road, about two-thirds of respondents live east of Ridge. West of Green Bay Road, slightly more than half the respondents (52.4 percent) live east of Ridge Road.

#### **Saturday, December 3, 1994**

- The majority of visitors to the Village Center were shopping. East of Green Bay Road, shopping was the predominant trip purpose. West of Green Bay Road, shopping was also the predominant trip purpose; however, the library and post office combined were also significant destinations.

- East of Green Bay Road, the majority of visitors drove, with about 12 percent walking; west of Green Bay, approximately half the visitors drove.
- East of Green Bay, 78 percent parked on-street; west of Green Bay, 54.3 percent parked on-street.
- The average vehicle occupancy was 1.14 east of Green Bay and 1.65 west of Green Bay,
- About 65 percent of the respondents east of Green Bay Road were Wilmette residents, while west of Green Bay the resident percentage was 54.
- East of Green Bay Road, about 60 percent of respondents live east of Ridge Road; fewer than half (44.4 percent) of respondents on the west side of Green Bay live east of Ridge Road.

- **Metra Commuter Parking**

Wilmette is one of the busiest stations on the Chicago & North Western North Line. In 1993, weekday boardings were 1,465. The next highest station was Central Street in Evanston, with 1,226. Weekday boardings at Wilmette increased by about 25 percent between 1983 and 1993.

Wilmette has one of the lowest ratios of parking spaces per 1,000 daily boardings on Metra's North Line. Wilmette and Highland Park are the only two suburban stations on the North Line with fully occupied commuter parking facilities. Wilmette is one of three North Line stations with a deficiency of 50 spaces or more, based on the Metra study.

Wilmette residents account for about 63 percent of the users of Metra parking. The next highest community is Glenview, with 12 percent of the users.

- **Parking Revenue and Expenses**

There are two primary sources of parking revenue in the village: (1) meter revenue from commuter parkers and (2) permit revenue. The total revenue from the parking system was \$123,308 in 1994. The operating expenses for that same year were \$96,378, resulting in a net surplus of \$26,930 before transfer of \$25,000 to the village's general fund to pay for previous parking improvements. Thus, at the present time, the parking system revenue is adequate to fund current expenses and provide surplus funds, \$25,000 of which are transferred to the general fund. Though revenues meet current expenses, the revenue stream as it currently exists is not adequate to fund any major changes or improvements to the parking system.

- **Zoning Ordinance**

The current zoning ordinance was completed before enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Standards for accessible parking spaces need to be changed to accommodate the provisions of the ADA. In addition, the current parking standards for multifamily dwellings and townhouses (two parking spaces for each unit plus 0.5 spaces for every additional bedroom over two) are too high. The following multifamily parking standards are recommended:

- Studio: 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit.
- One bedroom: 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit.
- Two or more bedrooms: 2.0 spaces per dwelling unit.

A requirement of two spaces per dwelling unit is recommended for townhouses, the same as is required for detached dwellings.

The parking requirement for commercial retail use is 1 space per 200 square feet, or 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet. The requirement should be reduced to 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet in the Village Center.

- **Proposed Parking Program and Recommendations**

#### **Metra Parking**

The village should consider reconfiguring the two existing Poplar Street parking lots from angled parking to 90 degree parking, with access on Poplar, to add about 40 spaces to the commuter parking supply.

#### **Expanded Municipal Lots**

The village lot south of Central and east of 11th Street should be expanded by combining the two existing village lots with two private lots. This would create a much better circulation pattern and make the lot easier to use. An agreement would need to be reached with the two business owners to obtain the use of their lots and to provide some accommodation for their patrons and employees in the new combined lot.

#### **Additional Employee Parking**

Additional parking for employees on the east side of Green Bay Road is desirable to make more convenient short-term spaces available in the village lots. The village should explore the possibility of leasing space from institutions with very low parking use during weekdays. These institutions include:

- Trinity Methodist Church
- St. John's Lutheran Church
- Masonic Temple

### **Financing Parking System Improvements**

Present options for financing parking system improvements include:

- Parking Fees
- General Fund Revenue
- Special Assessment Districts
- Grants (federal, state, or other sources)

At the present time, parking fees are adequate to offset expenses, with an approximate \$25,000 surplus that is currently being used to pay back the general fund for past improvements in the Metra lots.

A special assessment district can be used to support specific projects by levying a tax on all property within the district. This requires approval by district property owners and can be politically difficult to implement, depending on the project.

# APPENDIX E

## THE RETAIL REPORT

**THE RETAIL REPORT**, presented within this document, was specifically prepared for Downtown Wilmette, and presents information concerning the characteristics of the 1/2-mile retail trade area served by Downtown Wilmette. The report was prepared by HyettPalma, Inc., in association with CACI.

**THE RETAIL REPORT** presents:

- The current demographic and socio-economic characteristics of customers in the Downtown Wilmette – 1/2-Mile retail trade area;
- A five year projection of changing demographic and socio-economic conditions in the Downtown Wilmette - 1/2-Mile retail trade area;
- A projection of the number of retail dollars that residents of the Downtown Wilmette – 1/2-Mile retail trade area spend on retail goods; and
- A projection of the total retail spending potential for 24 classes of retail goods sought by customers in the Downtown Wilmette – 1/2-Mile retail trade area.

- Trinity Methodist Church
- St. John's Lutheran Church
- Masonic Temple

### **Financing Parking System Improvements**

Present options for financing parking system improvements include:

- Parking Fees
- General Fund Revenue
- Special Assessment Districts
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At the present time, parking fees are adequate to offset expenses, with an approximate \$25,000 surplus that is currently being used to pay back the general fund for past improvements in the Metra lots.

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- A projection of the total retail spending potential for 24 classes of retail goods sought by customers in the Downtown Wilmette -- 1/2-Mile retail trade area.

WILMETTE, IL  
CENTRAL & WILMETTE  
0-0.5 MILE

SITE: Circle  
Latitude: 42,04,36  
Longitude: 87,42,26

Radius: 0.50 miles  
Degrees North: 42.08  
Degrees West: 87.71

SNAPSHOT	1990 CENSUS	1994 UPDATE	1999 FORECAST
Population	4384	4490	4581
Households	1556	1595	1629
Families	1156	1183	1206
Median Age	37.3	38.4	37.9
Per Capita Income	\$ 32753	\$ 35864	\$ 35423
Median Household Income	\$ 67513	\$ 75583	\$ 74134
Average Household Income	\$ 88846	\$ 98860	\$ 97562
Average Household Size	2.77	2.78	2.78

### ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE FOR 1994-1999

TRENDS	Area	State	National
Population	0.40	0.65	1.04
Households	0.42	0.64	1.05
Families	0.39	0.67	1.07
Median Age	-0.25	0.85	0.83
Per Capita Income	-0.25	0.10	0.35
Average Household Size	-0.02	0.02	0.02

HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$15,000	118	8	101	6	108	7
\$15,000-\$24,999	90	6	86	5	90	6
\$25,000-\$34,999	156	10	127	8	133	8
\$35,000-\$49,999	185	12	191	12	198	12
\$50,000-\$74,999	287	19	286	18	294	18
\$75,000-\$99,999	239	15	223	14	226	14
\$100,000-\$149,999	239	15	287	18	288	18
\$150,000+	234	15	295	18	294	18

POPULATION BY AGE	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	387	9	365	8	336	7
5-14	649	15	745	17	829	18
15-19	233	5	238	5	321	7
20-24	165	4	181	4	177	4
25-34	559	13	473	11	454	10
35-44	846	19	764	17	661	14
45-64	910	21	1040	23	1151	25
65-74	311	7	360	8	330	7
75-84	203	5	228	5	220	5
85+	122	3	99	2	105	2

RACE AND ETHNICITY	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
White	4254	97	4318	96	4372	95
Black	35	1	32	1	37	1
Asian/Pacific	81	2	121	3	147	3
Other Races	14	0	18	0	25	1
Hispanic (any race)	74	2	65	1	66	1

NOTE: 1990 census income is in 1989 dollars. 1994 and 1999 income amounts are in 1993 dollars.

# HyettPalma

## DT WILMETTE'S 1/2-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND BY INCOME GROUP

Household Income	# Hlds.	\$ Per Hld.	Total \$ Demand
< \$15000	101	5,345	539,845
\$15000-24999	86	8,686	746,996
\$25000-34999	127	9,998	1,269,746
\$35000-49999	191	12,455	2,378,905
> \$50000	1,091	18,459	20,138,769
<b>TOTAL DEMAND FOR PRODUCT</b>			<b>= \$25,074,261</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

### DEFINITION OF PRODUCT:

Food at home, food away from home, alcoholic beverages, household textiles, furniture, floor coverings, major appliances, small appliances and miscellaneous housewares, miscellaneous household equipment, men's apparel, women's apparel, boy's apparel, girl's apparel, children's apparel, shoes, other apparel products and services, prescription drugs and medical supplies, entertainment fees and admissions, televisions, radios, sound equipment, toys, playground equipment, entertainment equipment, personal care products and services, reading products, tobacco products and smoking supplies.

# HyettPalma

**DT WILMETTE'S 1/2-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA  
COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND  
BY PRODUCT TYPE**

PRODUCT	DEMAND
Food At Home	5,473,161
Food Away From Home	4,332,750
Alcoholic Beverages	800,890
Household Textiles	256,015
Furniture	931,590
Floor Coverings	155,894
Major Appliances	346,586
Small Appliances & Miscellaneous Housewares	236,365
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	1,270,845
Men's Apparel -- 16 and Over	936,840
Boy's Apparel -- 2 to 15	210,346
Women's Apparel -- 16 and Over	1,639,971
Girl's Apparel -- 2 to 15	248,766
Children's Apparel -- Under 2	182,493
Footwear	553,385
Other Apparel Services & Products	768,034
Prescription Drugs & Medical Supplies	695,283
Entertainment Fees & Admissions	1,248,630
Televisions, Radios & Sound Equipment	1,179,358
Pets, Toys & Playground Equipment	701,540
Other Entertainment Supplies & Services	1,026,345
Personal Care Products & Services	965,129
Reading	438,875
Tobacco Products & Smoking Supplies	475,170
<b>TOTAL DEMAND BY PRODUCT TYPE</b>	<b>= \$25,074,261</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure  
Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

HyettPalma

1600 Prince Street • Suite 110  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Phone 703 683 5126  
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## THE RETAIL REPORT

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- The current demographic and socio-economic characteristics of customers in the Downtown Wilmette -- 1-Mile retail trade area;
- A five year projection of changing demographic and socio-economic conditions in the Downtown Wilmette - - 1-Mile retail trade area;
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- A projection of the total retail spending potential for 24 classes of retail goods sought by customers in the Downtown Wilmette -- 1-Mile retail trade area.

WILMETTE, IL  
CENTRAL & WILMETTE  
0-1 MILE

SITE: Circle  
Latitude: 42,04,36  
Longitude: 87,42,26

Radius: 1.00 miles  
Degrees North: 42.08  
Degrees West: 87.71

SNAPSHOT	1990 CENSUS	1994 UPDATE	1999 FORECAST
Population	19096	19696	20185
Households	7468	7713	7912
Families	5465	5687	5824
Median Age	38.9	38.7	38.1
Per Capita Income	\$ 39470	\$ 44307	\$ 43709
Median Household Income	\$ 71375	\$ 77240	\$ 76032
Average Household Income	\$ 103244	\$ 113142	\$ 111510
Average Household Size	2.52	2.52	2.52

TRENDS	ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE FOR 1994-1999		
	Area	State	National
Population	0.49	0.65	1.04
Households	0.51	0.64	1.05
Families	0.48	0.67	1.07
Median Age	-0.29	0.85	0.83
Per Capita Income	-0.27	0.10	0.35
Average Household Size	-0.01	0.02	0.02

HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$15,000	478	6	427	6	455	6
\$15,000-\$24,999	500	7	401	5	426	5
\$25,000-\$34,999	642	9	595	8	625	8
\$35,000-\$49,999	869	12	888	12	926	12
\$50,000-\$74,999	1415	19	1417	18	1462	18
\$75,000-\$99,999	1171	16	1085	14	1106	14
\$100,000-\$149,999	1146	15	1365	18	1375	17
\$150,000+	1272	17	1533	20	1535	19

POPULATION BY AGE	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	1540	8	1572	8	1457	7
5-14	2609	14	3108	16	3470	17
15-19	1009	5	1052	5	1370	7
20-24	774	4	901	5	893	4
25-34	2269	12	2084	11	2134	11
35-44	3487	18	3275	17	2768	14
45-64	4401	23	4684	24	5124	25
65-74	1480	8	1590	8	1523	8
75-84	1069	6	1020	5	987	5
85+	456	2	414	2	457	2

RACE AND ETHNICITY	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
White	18384	96	18738	95	19017	94
Black	126	1	172	1	200	1
Asian/Pacific	525	3	704	4	854	4
Other Races	61	0	82	0	114	1
Hispanic (any race)	278	1	288	1	293	1

NOTE: 1990 census income is in 1989 dollars. 1994 and 1999 income amounts are in 1993 dollars.

# HyettPalma

## DT WILMETTE'S 1-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND BY INCOME GROUP

Household Income	# Hlds.	\$ Per Hld.	Total \$ Demand
< \$15000	427	5,345	2,282,315
\$15000-24999	401	8,686	3,483,086
\$25000-34999	595	9,998	5,948,810
\$35000-49999	888	12,455	11,060,040
> \$50000	5,400	18,459	99,678,600
<b>TOTAL DEMAND FOR PRODUCT</b>			<b>= \$122,452,851</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

### DEFINITION OF PRODUCT:

Food at home, food away from home, alcoholic beverages, household textiles, furniture, floor coverings, major appliances, small appliances and miscellaneous housewares, miscellaneous household equipment, men's apparel, women's apparel, boy's apparel, girl's apparel, children's apparel, shoes, other apparel products and services, prescription drugs and medical supplies, entertainment fees and admissions, televisions, radios, sound equipment, toys, playground equipment, entertainment equipment, personal care products and services, reading products, tobacco products and smoking supplies.

# HyettPalma

DT WILMETTE'S 1-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA  
COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND  
BY PRODUCT TYPE

PRODUCT	DEMAND
Food At Home	26,637,015
Food Away From Home	21,167,375
Alcoholic Beverages	3,915,525
Household Textiles	1,253,150
Furniture	4,565,700
Floor Coverings	760,229
Major Appliances	1,690,722
Small Appliances & Miscellaneous Housewares	1,157,691
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	6,219,025
Men's Apparel -- 16 and Over	4,584,030
Boy's Apparel -- 2 to 15	1,029,951
Women's Apparel -- 16 and Over	8,031,117
Girl's Apparel -- 2 to 15	1,215,976
Children's Apparel -- Under 2	889,988
Footwear	2,701,092
Other Apparel Services & Products	3,763,376
Prescription Drugs & Medical Supplies	3,376,231
Entertainment Fees & Admissions	6,129,460
Televisions, Radios & Sound Equipment	5,758,194
Pets, Toys & Playground Equipment	3,428,630
Other Entertainment Supplies & Services	5,020,712
Personal Care Products & Services	4,713,236
Reading	2,146,070
Tobacco Products & Smoking Supplies	2,298,356
<b>TOTAL DEMAND BY PRODUCT TYPE</b>	<b>= \$122,452,851</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

HyettPalma

1600 Prince Street • Suite 110  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Phone 703 683 5126  
Fax 703 836 5887

## THE RETAIL REPORT

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- A five year projection of changing demographic and socio-economic conditions in the Downtown Wilmette - - 3-Mile retail trade area;
- A projection of the number of retail dollars that residents of the Downtown Wilmette -- 3-Mile retail trade area spend on retail goods; and
- A projection of the total retail spending potential for 24 classes of retail goods sought by customers in the Downtown Wilmette -- 3-Mile retail trade area.

WILMETTE, IL  
CENTRAL & WILMETTE  
0-3 MILES

SITE: Circle  
Latitude: 42,04,36  
Longitude: 87,42,26

Radius: 3.00 miles  
Degrees North: 42.08  
Degrees West: 87.71

SNAPSHOT	1990 CENSUS	1994 UPDATE	1999 FORECAST
Population	110282	112700	114819
Households	39359	40304	41132
Families	27515	28113	28657
Median Age	36.5	36.2	36.3
Per Capita Income	\$ 31110	\$ 34273	\$ 33944
Median Household Income	\$ 54648	\$ 59995	\$ 59068
Average Household Income	\$ 85588	\$ 94164	\$ 93117
Average Household Size	2.57	2.57	2.57

TRENDS	ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE FOR 1994-1999		
	Area	State	National
Population	0.37	0.65	1.04
Households	0.41	0.64	1.05
Families	0.38	0.67	1.07
Median Age	0.05	0.85	0.83
Per Capita Income	-0.19	0.10	0.35
Average Household Size	0.00	0.02	0.02

HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$15,000	4623	12	4062	10	4254	10
\$15,000-\$24,999	3852	10	3276	8	3410	8
\$25,000-\$34,999	3896	10	3831	10	3954	10
\$35,000-\$49,999	5639	14	5657	14	5814	14
\$50,000-\$74,999	7424	19	7527	19	7673	19
\$75,000-\$99,999	4362	11	4740	12	4786	12
\$100,000-\$149,999	4718	12	5362	13	5369	13
\$150,000+	4909	12	5848	15	5870	14

POPULATION BY AGE	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	6803	6	7148	6	6741	6
5-14	12823	12	14240	13	15412	13
15-19	8724	8	6008	5	7858	7
20-24	9827	9	10816	10	7056	6
25-34	14402	13	16218	14	18326	16
35-44	16791	15	16357	15	15674	14
45-64	23998	22	24471	22	26097	23
65-74	9035	8	9520	8	9203	8
75-84	5465	5	5564	5	5917	5
85+	2417	2	2361	2	2538	2

RACE AND ETHNICITY	1990 CENSUS		1994 UPDATE		1999 FORECAST	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
White	89625	81	89795	80	89232	78
Black	11919	11	12428	11	13150	11
Asian/Pacific	7751	7	9305	8	10903	9
Other Races	986	1	1172	1	1534	1
Hispanic (any race)	2852	3	3183	3	3661	3

NOTE: 1990 census income is in 1989 dollars. 1994 and 1999 income amounts are in 1993 dollars.

# HyettPalma

## DT WILMETTE'S 3-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND BY INCOME GROUP

Household Income	# Hlds.	\$ Per Hld.	Total \$ Demand
< \$15000	4,062	5,345	21,711,390
\$15000-24999	3,276	8,686	28,455,336
\$25000-34999	3,831	9,998	38,302,338
\$35000-49999	5,657	12,455	70,457,935
> \$50000	23,477	18,459	433,361,943
<b>TOTAL DEMAND FOR PRODUCT</b>			<b>= \$592,288,942</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

### DEFINITION OF PRODUCT:

Food at home, food away from home, alcoholic beverages, household textiles, furniture, floor coverings, major appliances, small appliances and miscellaneous housewares, miscellaneous household equipment, men's apparel, women's apparel, boy's apparel, girl's apparel, children's apparel, shoes, other apparel products and services, prescription drugs and medical supplies, entertainment fees and admissions, televisions, radios, sound equipment, toys, play-ground equipment, entertainment equipment, personal care products and services, reading products, tobacco products and smoking supplies.

# HyettPalma

DT WILMETTE'S 3-MILE PRIMARY TRADE AREA  
COMPUTATION OF TOTAL RETAIL PRODUCT DEMAND  
BY PRODUCT TYPE

PRODUCT	DEMAND
Food At Home	132,277,067
Food Away From Home	102,021,200
Alcoholic Beverages	18,802,270
Household Textiles	5,953,980
Furniture	21,491,800
Floor Coverings	3,710,369
Major Appliances	8,241,767
Small Appliances & Miscellaneous Housewares	5,480,671
Miscellaneous Household Equipment	29,639,940
Men's Apparel -- 16 and Over	21,827,920
Boy's Apparel -- 2 to 15	4,876,136
Women's Apparel -- 16 and Over	38,014,807
Girl's Apparel -- 2 to 15	5,830,426
Children's Apparel -- Under 2	4,363,524
Footwear	13,149,983
Other Apparel Services & Products	17,734,935
Prescription Drugs & Medical Supplies	17,078,076
Entertainment Fees & Admissions	28,456,730
Televisions, Radios & Sound Equipment	27,897,679
Pets, Toys & Playground Equipment	16,485,935
Other Entertainment Supplies & Services	23,924,872
Personal Care Products & Services	22,820,480
Reading	10,278,145
Tobacco Products & Smoking Supplies	11,930,230
<b>TOTAL DEMAND BY PRODUCT TYPE</b>	<b>= \$592,288,942</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Expenditure Survey; CACI; and HyettPalma, Inc.

