



VILLAGE OF WINNETKA PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

Megan Pierce
Assistant to the Village Manager
847-716-3543
mpierce@winnetka.org

For Immediate Release

October 7, 2015

Village of Winnetka Kicks Off Downtown Master Plan



The Village of Winnetka will formally begin its Downtown Master Plan on Monday, October 12th. The plan will include evaluation and consideration for enhancements to the three business districts in Winnetka: Downtown Elm Street, Hubbard Woods, and Indian Hill. Each is considered by the Village to be unique and will be addressed as such by the plan process. Ultimately, recommendations will focus on land uses, development regulations, zoning, circulation, parking, urban design and potential new development.

A Steering Committee and six Working Groups, established for the project by the Village Council, will hold a joint kick off meeting on the 12th at 7:00 PM at the Winnetka Community House (620 Lincoln Avenue), Room 101. The meeting will be preceded at 6:00 PM by a walking tour of the Downtown Elm Street Districts. The meeting and tour will set a context for the upcoming process and begin preliminary discussion of issues and opportunities for the districts. All meetings in the planning process are open to the public.

The fall months were chosen to kick off the project to maximize public participation in the process. The summer months were used to formalize a Communications Plan that will facilitate public input and also defined the Steering Committee and Working Groups for the project. The Steering Committee is comprised of eleven community members and includes three members of the Village Council. The Steering Committee will meet monthly through next summer to address plan issues (typically the last Monday of the month). After the kick-off, their next meeting will be Monday, October 26th and will focus on reviewing existing conditions in the districts. The committee is chaired by Meg Benson, longtime resident and past chair of the Village Zoning Board of Appeals. In regard to the plan she notes:

"I'm very pleased to be part of the Downtown Master Plan process. This is a very important undertaking for the Village. I'm looking forward to working with the Steering Committee, Working Groups, and the whole community to move us thoughtfully and efficiently through the topics to be addressed."

Working Groups of Village residents, business persons and commercial property owners will be integrated into the planning process to draw on their insight and expertise regarding the community. Working Groups were established for each of the following categories: Business Districts, Property Owners, Design Character, Real Estate Development, Community Organizations, and Residents At Large. The groups will provide their perspectives on those topics and share them with the Steering Committee. They also will be asked to play other formal roles in informing the community about the plan and helping to ensure community feedback is incorporated into the process. These groups will be scheduled to meet prior to regular Steering Committee meetings.

The Plan is expected to be completed by next August. Materials related to the Downtown Master Plan will be maintained and available to all through a project website: www.winnetkadowntownplan.com. Meeting dates and agendas are also available through the Village website at: <http://www.villageofwinnetka.org/agendas-minutes/?CategoryId=1020>.

###