

PLANNING HISTORY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SUMMARY

The goal of the planning process is to develop a Plan that best represents a consensus of the Village's residents and is a reflection of the Village's history, traditions and values. The Plan was prepared utilizing a comprehensive and inclusive planning process to produce goals, objectives, and policies that reflect a communal vision.

PLANNING HISTORY

This Plan represents the current chapter in a history of planning in the Village which began with the adoption of a zoning ordinance on April 11, 1922.

The first Village of Plan was prepared by Jacob L. Crane, a planning consultant who had worked with Highland Park, Rockford and Glen Ellyn.

The Plan was created under the direction of the Village's first Plan Commission chaired by C. C. Rodenhausen. This plan included an aerial photo of the Village taken in 1923, and a map which is on display at Village Hall, entitled "The North Shore". While the Village does not have a copy of the original plan, the plan included the following items, according to an article which appeared in the Chicago Daily News in 1924:

- ◆ An ordinance regulating the architecture of all buildings erected in the business section.
- ◆ Designation of the approximate full mile of track (rail) frontage for parks and development of an attractive business and community center.
- ◆ Annexation plans to increase the size of the Village from one square mile to nine square miles.

This statement summarized the Village's first planning efforts:

"To many suburban communities a village beautiful plan means a long program of municipal dieting, surgical operations, mud baths and continued expenditures for municipal powder and rouge and manicure supplies. But Lake Bluff has no waistline to reduce, no wrinkles or warts to remove, no bad habits to overcome. She has the opportunity to grow up beautiful instead of trying to achieve beauty after it is too late." Chicago Daily News 1924.

Following the 1923 plan the first known "Comprehensive Plan" for the Village was adopted on April 11, 1961. A revision of this plan began in 1965 and was approved by the Village Board of Trustees on January 28, 1971. The next major planning effort was the preparation by the Plan Commission, at the request of the Village Board, of a report entitled "Lake Bluff Annexation Alternatives In School District 65, May 1974". The report was submitted to the Village Board on May 9, 1974.

The Plan Commission again embarked on a substantial revision of the Comprehensive Plan in the early 1980's. Due to the complexity of the issues concerning annexation of various unincorporated areas within the Village's planning purview, the Plan Commission decided to divide the revision process into two Phases. Phase I considered land uses and planned for areas within the Village while Phase II dealt with issues pertaining to annexation.

After almost six years of work, Phase I was adopted by the Village Board on September 22, 1986, and has since represented the Village's Comprehensive Plan. Phase II was "accepted" by the Village Board but never adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Plan Commission commenced work on this update of the Lake Bluff Comprehensive Plan in early 1994 and the Plan was submitted to the Village Board in February of 1997.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key to an effective planning process, is to provide the opportunity to gather and consider public input. In conjunction with the preparation of the Plan, resident input was sought and received on three separate occasions; through a community survey, a charette, and at public hearings.

1995 Community Survey

A community survey was developed by the Plan Commission to receive input regarding public opinions, issues, and opportunities. The survey was mailed to every household in the Village, slightly over 2,000. The responses were tabulated and published in 1995 as the "1995 Community Survey". The response rate was an outstanding 50%, with the Village also receiving numerous written comments. Some of the main topics covered in the 1995 Community Survey were Village characteristics, community satisfaction, transportation, and services. The results provided direction for the Plan Commission in preparation of the Plan. The following tables provide a summary of the 1995 Community Survey responses. The tabulated results of the 1995 Community Survey are included in the Appendix. Also, survey information is provided throughout the Plan under various Plan Element headings.

1995 Community Survey Results

Description of Respondents

The following tables describe the attributes of the respondents to the 1995 Community Survey: (percentages are rounded)

Number of Years in Lake Bluff?	
Under 5 Years	24%
5 - 15 Years	37%
Over 15 Years	39%

How much longer do I plan to live in Lake Bluff?	
Under 1 Year	2%
1 - 5 Years	13%
At Least 5 Years	16%
At Least 10 Years	17%
Through Retirement	30%
Not Certain	21%

Age	Percent Noting
0-19	28%
20-34	16%
35-49	24%
50-64	21%
65+	12%

Gender	Percent Noting
Male	51%
Female	50%

Description of Respondents (continued)

<i>Education (over 18)</i>	<i>Percent Noting</i>
High School	33%
2- Year College	5%
4- Year College	35%
Masters or Greater	28%

<i>Income (over 18)</i>	<i>Percent Noting</i>
<\$75,000	43%
\$75,001 - \$150,000	40%
>\$150,000	17%

<i>Career</i>	<i>Percent Noting</i>
Professional	23%
Retired	13%
Sales	10%
Education	7%
Other	45%
Unemployed	2%

<i>Work Location</i>	<i>Percent Noting</i>
Work at Home	13%
Work in Lake Bluff	8%
Work in Lake County (but not in Lake Bluff)	35%
Work In Cook County	31%
Other	12%

1995 Community Survey - Responses

The following tables detail the responses to the 1995 Community Survey:
(percentages are rounded)

Village Attributes

“Character” was identified as the number one reason mentioned why people moved to the Village. The respondents also felt that housing and the tax level have gotten worse since they moved to the Village, whereas services, character, schools, parks, and architecture have gotten better or remained the same.

- Attribute	“I Originally moved to Lake Bluff because of its...”	“Since I moved to Lake Bluff...”		
	Percent Noting	Better	Same	Worse
Character	73%	47%	42%	12%
Location	65%			
Schools	47%	45%	47%	7%
Safety	46%	25%	58%	17%
Close to Work	39%			
Architecture	29%	51%	30%	20%
Spirit	24%	37%	54%	9%
Housing	24%	12%	26%	61%
Transportation	21%			
Parks	20%	68%	29%	3%
Village Services	10%	43%	51%	6%
Tax Level	7%	6%	16%	78%

Special Lake Bluff Concerns

	Level of Importance		
	High	Moderate	Low
House Size/Bulk	66%	21%	13%
Lot Size/Subdivision	66%	24%	10%
Demolition of Historic Structures	62%	24%	14%
176/41 Interchange	50%	28%	22%
Traffic Volume - Green Bay Road	57%	25%	8%
Traffic Volume - Sheridan Road	65%	26%	9%

1995 Community Survey Responses (continued)

Lake Bluff's Future

	Agree With Statement
Preserve the unique Village character... ...even at the expense of growth ...even in the face of increased taxes	68% 28%
To reduce tax burden on homeowners... ...Lake Bluff needs to grow ...Lake Bluff needs to attract commercial establishments	32% 65%
Subdivision of lots should be discouraged.	63%

Charette

The second opportunity for public input occurred at a public planning workshop, or charette, conducted by the Plan Commission on July 20, 1995. A charette is a public planning process designed to solicit the opinions of residents regarding the Village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The information provided by the residents during the charette assisted the Plan Commission in the development of the Plan's goals, objectives and policies. The charette was attended by approximately 75 Village residents, the press and representatives from the Lake County Planning Department. The tabulated charette materials are included in the Appendix.

Public Hearings

Public comment was received during dozens of Plan Commission meetings and at the public hearing held on January 16, 1997. The Village Board then provided two readings of the ordinance to adopt the Plan, allowing for further public comment. These meetings were held on February 24, 1997 and June 9, 1997.