

Appendix C

Summary of Public Comments

Summary of Public Comments from 1/22/02 and 3/20/02 Silver Spring Master Plan Meetings

WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM SILVER SPRING MASTER PLAN

OPEN HOUSE (1/22/02)

POSITIVE COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Doesn't think plan goes far enough; would like new commercial buildings
- Looks forward to more opportunities to see plans and eventually vote for progress
- Once in a lifetime opportunity – be bold! Adopt PDI recommendations virtually in their entirety.
- Looks good; go for it!
- In favor of making the downtown more interesting and useful
- Don't waste money on "façade window-dressing."
- Increase in parking is a must.
- Creating more professional and retail space would be positive.
- Enhancement with streetscaping would be welcome.
- Create green space; add lots of trees on streets and parking lots; add benches and flowers, convenient parking.
- In favor of condos/housing (low rise) facing Beaumont, parking at Dominican, visual unification of existing facades, green space at Sendik's
- Would like multi-level (2-3 story) parking off Silver Spring (behind Fox Bay/Katz buildings); no street parking on Silver Spring
- Increase walking space on Silver Spring with wider sidewalks and brick walking areas (such as State St. in Madison, downtown West Bend)
- Would like 2-3 story buildings along Silver Spring interspersed with green space, fountains, landscaping
- Sendik's should be on the street rather than set back with a large parking lot in front (comment on 2 surveys).
- Streetscape needs updating. More trees.
- Would like additional stoplights on both Marlborough and Silver Spring.
- More attention to building façade improvements
- More green space and more landscaping.
- Keep building height at 3 stories or less.
- Likes the angle parking (comment on 2 surveys)
- More uniform facades
- Likes "2nd picture of park-like changes to clock area with iron fencing"
- Upgrade current businesses first.
- Improve parking at Sendik's
- Plan needs to provide increased safety for pedestrians on Silver Spring
- Village needs to adopt policy to force merchants to keep properties clean (trash and litter – Warehouse Shoes parking lot hedge and Kent side of Peabody's are examples).
- Short term, low cost parking solution – issue employee parking passes to allow employees to park a quarter of a block away from Silver Spring. Would solve "plugging the meters" and would make area more attractive to workers (from a businessperson).
- Likes two green spaces and many trees.
- No building should be more than 3 stories "on average" (i.e., building could be combination of 2 and 4 stories).
- Sendik's with little shops on the street or maybe with angled parking would be good.
- In favor of [more] off street parking

CONCERNS

- In general, residents seem happy with most of the downtown as it is.
- Greatest asset to downtown is its pedestrian-friendliness; does not like idea of a re-done downtown featuring a parking lot in front of Sendik's. Downtown is for people, not cars (that's why we live here).
- Does not want expanded business district in his/her residential village community. Whitefish Bay is a village, not a city, and business is not a priority in residential area.
- Plans for Bay Shore, expanded JCC and now Silver Spring will continue to deteriorate not enhance our neighborhood and decrease desirability.
- Very concerned that character of Silver Spring (and Whitefish Bay) will be changed. Village is old and charming and should maintain that. Very opposed to a massive change, feels it is very unnecessary. Already have plenty of "green spaces."
- Very disappointed in preliminary plans. Arrangements weigh in favor of businesses, are unfavorable to nearby residents.
- Whitefish Bay is a small village which should maintain a quaint downtown with shops, not large stores, large apartments or condos. Keep things in proportion to the village.
- Opposed to 4-5 story building behind Fox Bay
- Opposed to increase in taxes
- Will businesses on Silver Spring pay for the project?
- Does not want a 3+ story apartment building "on the proposed site."
- Has safety concerns about impact of development on traffic in alley serving E. Beaumont Ave. east of Lake Dr. Children use alley to access their homes. Would like alley blocked to traffic on Lake Dr. and have only one entry off Shore Dr. Many on block would agree. Discourage alley access from office building tenants and visitors through landscape, speed bumps, etc., or preferably block it off.
- Plan for apartment building across from St. Monica is disturbing. Does not want more apartments or condos in Whitefish Bay. Whitefish Bay is essentially single-family dwelling community. Would also exacerbate already hazardous street-crossing for St. Monica School students.
- Lives on Lake View and is very concerned about traffic.
- Fears drivers will exit Silver Spring and use Birch as a shortcut, creating a new traffic and safety problem. There already is a lot of traffic on Birch (including 18 wheelers) by drivers using it to avoid Silver Spring.
- Idea of a 6 story condo across from a school, increasing traffic, is "hideous."
- A lot of new parking plans but amount of new businesses remains about the same; there is enough parking now.
- Not enough consideration for safe pedestrian crossing.
- Opposed to proposed buildings on Beaumont, which would increase traffic on Lake View and nearby alleys.
- Opposed to adding any residential buildings to the downtown. Retail is needed, not housing.
- Feels a lot of improvement can be made for "relatively small amount." Does not want taxes raised to pay for any of it.
- Protecting residential properties is important; property values need to be maintained.
- Keep traffic slow.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE MASTER PLAN

About need for restaurants

- Deli or another restaurant would be nice.
- Would like some good restaurants (grant a liquor license or two).
- Need 1-2 nice restaurant/delis with liquor license.
- Restaurant ideas are good.
- Attract a moderate scale restaurant, open until 9:00 p.m., serving wine

About “signature building” on Kealty property

- Prefers residential use, possibly elderly housing
- Opposed; plan is “way out of scale”
- Does not want bank or office building on corner
- Unsure about office building; concerned about building façade
- Would like retail/office development, no more than 3 stories, brick only

About creating cul de sacs on residential streets

- Foresees problems, traffic would be routed onto a few streets; people will object
- Would like to see Berkeley Blvd. at Silver Spring closed off. Presently very difficult to turn onto Silver Spring. With added traffic, would be nearly impossible at certain times of the day.

About removing houses for parking spaces

- Very concerned about this proposal; would destroy character of neighborhood and reduce neighbors’ property value.
- Is very concerned about demolition of housing.
- Likes plan to take only the first house on the block and deed half of lot to adjoining homeowners with a fence and shrubbery buffer. Concerned about Village maintaining shrubbery.
- Ease of use is most important aspect to make area attractive to businesses and customers (from business person). Likes idea of removing houses to put in parking. Does not like idea of parking structure in front of Dominican; it would be ugly, expensive and not solve problem. Prefers putting in parking places on west side of Dominican.
- Must include fences and trees for barrier.

Would like more information

- Would like information on cost projections and tax implications. Would like a more formal presentation of proposed changes.
- Would like financial projections. Tax base should increase enough to justify the project cost.
- Would like survey results (including written comments) posted on the web or otherwise made available.
- Keep public informed.
- Should survey residents again before official vote, notify residents of results

COMMENT SHEETS FROM SILVER SPRING BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING – MARCH 20, 2002

Parking

I am curious why additional parking, parking ports, expanded rear eastside alley, etc., are being considered when the highest parking occupancy was 60%! It is particularly odd when 75% of people surveyed reported walking to the area! The angled parking concept seems reasonable – it would reduce speed and, I assume, increase parking options. Tearing down houses to put in more parking when current parking is not fully utilized is penny wise and pound foolish!!

I'm 100% in favor of FREE parking! I enjoy that in Shorewood and when I visit other village retail areas. Even though I walk to Silver Spring, if Shorewood can have free parking, why can't we?

We live at 5577 North Shoreland (property proposed being torn down): 1) When will you know if you are going to acquire? 2) Should we continue to improve our house? (new roof is needed!!) 3) Legally, we have to disclose the fact that our house may be torn down – that DRAMATICALLY decreases the value of our house. When will you have the funds to acquire? 4) What is the method used to determine the fair market value? 5) Will moving costs, closing costs, etc. be provided?

Why would you consider condos behind the Fox Bay if parking is at a shortage now? This doesn't make sense.

I am against removing homes to expand alley parking – Peabody's should have a receiving warehouse in an industrial park and then use a smaller truck to enter the WFB area. Their huge trucks delivering now are a danger to pedestrians as well as cars, fences etc. that they barely miss. These huge trucks are a big eyesore for the area. Why on the plan is the first house on Bay Ridge south of Silver Spring on the east side of the street not shown? Is it already sold? Why can Peabody's have ½ the yard south of their store blacktopped now?

Traffic

It is very difficult to make a left turn onto Berkeley Boulevard when you are proceeding west on Silver Spring. The sidewalk widens, taking up more of the street, cars can't pass you on the right (no room to do so) and traffic is blocked. I think that the sidewalk should be narrowed and the street kept the same lane width from Lake Drive to Santa Monica (and beyond).

Enhancements

Streetscaping, façade improvements, increased public space, public art are all steps in the right direction.

Would like to see more trees on Silver Spring – makes the street more user friendly, and the user makes the street successful. Note that Highland Park, Illinois has its main street lined with many trees, and the trees are trimmed so storefronts show. The signs are placed at bottoms of windows – very attractive.

The best news was that the whole plan would not be implemented at once. Those portions that can be quickly done should be addressed ASAP so as to engender support from some skeptics and greater enthusiasm from proponents: street enhancements, landscaping, light fixtures. Then move to building fix-ups, then to renovation and finally to tearing down and erecting structures. Meanwhile, as in "now and forward" basic codes need to be written – e.g. maximum building height, signage, etc.

Corner – Lake Drive and Silver Spring

Please address, more quickly than slowly, the issue – ongoing for the last year – of the extremely unsightly and rundown vacant lot at the northeast corner of Marlborough and Silver Spring.

Instead of the “signature” building for the northeast corner of Silver Spring and Marlborough, could it rather be on the opposite northwest corner, retaining Sendik’s parking to the north, and the “green” area be on the northeast corner, which is difficult to exit and enter already? Otherwise, the west entrance to the alley will be compromised further than it is now.

Don’t be afraid to put a fabulous building on the northwest corner of Silver Spring and Lake Drive. I think that creates more of a true gateway to the street than the northeast corner. Whitefish Bay already has some great green spaces – which it really uses! – but I think the northwest corner of Silver Spring has great potential as an anchor for the commercial district. But the architecture must enhance the village feeling that’s already here.

The northeast corner of Silver Spring and Lake Drive should not be in a TIF area. This is not a corner that would not otherwise be developed.

To facilitate pedestrian use along Silver Spring, please, please address the “race-track” crossing at Marlborough and Silver Spring. This is an extremely dangerous pedestrian crossing of and at the northeast corner (going east to west). Cars do not stop (most of the time) for pedestrians and seldom slow down, in traveling north along Lake Drive.

Business Mix

Was there some very good, but not obvious, reason to allow a new and unproven “coffee shop” restaurant to open in the adjoining space to the very familiar and long-established, well-known Heinemann’s Restaurant??? I propose this was a somewhat ill-conceived notion and possibly viewed as negative and disrespectful to a village “landmark” that has earned loyalty and a good reputation in its many years of existence.

I definitely would not want any “big box” retailers on Silver Spring – that would destroy the intimate character of the street. I would want restrictions like that written into the plan.

Financing

I would favor a method of financing that would have commercial businesses and property owners bearing some of the cost burden of redevelopment.

Cul de sacs

As a resident of the 5500 block of Kent, I am concerned about the various proposals to supposedly limit non-residential traffic on the streets off of Silver Spring. I feel this is necessary as do most, if not all, of my neighbors; however, we are almost all also in agreement that the methods you propose WILL NOT work and may, in fact, make things worse. a) A sign will be ignored. B) A chain would not be attractive. c) Choking down of the street essentially already happens (with two parked cars) and causes traffic backups. Having talked to a majority of my neighbors, it seems most are in favor of a cul-de-sac blocking access to Silver Spring except via a wide sidewalk for use of emergency vehicles only. Please give this GREAT consideration. Any feedback as to if this has been or is being considered would be appreciated.

Miscellaneous

How does it happen that the village board is able to want to move ahead with the Silver Spring planning – a rather quick decision, which will affect and have great impact on the surrounding homeowners, when they can’t make a simple decision about the Armory? A decision that they have stalled on for several years. They made one commitment and then changed their minds. Why should we trust them now? Condos or private homes would generate income to the Village at the Armory site and be well within the compatibility of the neighborhood. Much more so than the Armory.

Have there been any plans to establish any other Community Development Agencies to deal with other projects that are unresolved in the village, i.e. 1) the Armory development 2) the old incinerator 3) improvements required to accommodate the Jewish Community Center? Can you give a tax impact figure for each on any contemplated improvements?

At the next meeting for villagers – please show slides so we can read all the words – or none. Print an agenda on an easel. Have presenters speak to the point from prepared remarks. Speak in bullet points: idea, rationale, next step, time frame, dollar range.

VERBAL PUBLIC COMMENTS TAKEN FROM SILVER SPRING BUSINESS DISTRICT MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING – MARCH 20, 2002

- What is the TIF money used for?
- If we raise southern alley properties, we will have 70,000 in lost revenue.
- Since we have empty parking spaces already, why do we need additional parking?
- Why have condo's behind the Fox Bay if we already have a parking problem?
- Why can't Peabody's use a warehouse for their main deliveries and use a smaller truck for local deliveries?
- We don't need condos – take it out of plan – we already are very dense.
- Is there anything to prevent bigger businesses and keep the smaller ones?
- You should keep benches back from the curbs so people aren't interfered when parades happen.
- We need more trees on Silver Spring!
- Major changes are not needed! Keep the village small!
- How can we encourage more bike and foot traffic? Concerned with safety.
- You give us more traffic and then sell us more parking!
- What does uncertainty do to property values?
- Urban blight on the Lake drive/Marlborough property – clean it up!
- Silver Spring should become a destination spot.
- TIF: how can we do this without lots of new development?
- Safety of children with Condo's?
- Parking Ramp in Dominican? Is this still moving forward?
- TIF:
 - I see a risk – if the improvement does not work, village will lose money.
- We need to have vision and support the village efforts in the Silver Spring project. We must compete with Glendale and Shorewood – we have to remain consistent with their downtown areas.
- We need to have faith in our community leaders!
- We don't need more condo's or apartments!
- We need more of a charming atmosphere.
- People like WFB because of its residential charm, not its business district.
- If we don't plan, planning will be done for us less wisely. Let's trust our village officials.