

Glenview Values Project Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 6, 2018
Glenview Public Library

Welcome

Gayle Curcio opened the meeting at 7:37 a.m. with introductions.

January Minutes

Distributed electronically in January.

Announcements

Glenview's housing assistance program is open

(<http://glenview.il.us/Documents/Senior%20Services%20Housing%20Assistance.pdf>).

Medicare cards will be changing starting in April. It will bring about new scams so people should be diligent. There will be no telephone calls from Medicare seeking that information.

Glenview Police Department is seeking candidates for its entry level exam until the end of March.

North Shore Village is trying to become more a part of and support to the community. Anyone involved with seniors will be contacted regarding friendly visitors for at-risk seniors in the community.

February 16th Glenview's service clubs and social service organizations will be presenting to Leadership Glenview. Gayle will represent the Glenview Values Project.

Civic Awards Night will be April 20th. Nominees are currently being sought. Information is available at the village's website.

Reps. Fine and Gabel are having forums on Feb. 21 on cybersecurity (location TBD; 7 – 8:30 p.m.) and March 21st on net neutrality (Evanston Civic Center from 7 – 8:30 p.m.). More information is available from Rep. Fine's office.

Glenview's resident open house will be February 17th from 8 – 11:30 a.m.

District 34's annual parent partnership event in cooperation with Family Service Center and Youth Services with 26 different sessions will be held on February 10th.

The Glenview Park District has reduced its proposal for a referendum that will appear on the March ballot. Mike McCarty will be happy to speak to groups about the proposal.

Eyes on the Street

No reports.

Program

Chuck Balling, Bill Attea and Jeff Brady talked about Amtrak's proposed Hiawatha Service expansion.

Chuck talked about his commitment to preserving Glenview's natural environment and how it dovetailed with his work in parks. After retirement, his family moved to a development which is adjacent to the tracks where the proposed freight holding track would be. He was surprised to know

how little awareness there was among residents. He asks that each Values Project member make her or his group aware of the proposal since now is the time to express concern. His group wants an environmental impact study done prior to any changes.

Jeff Brady, Village of Glenview Development Director, showed a video of the existing Amtrak and freight traffic in Glenview. He distributed information on the existing and proposed lines. There are intersecting tracks behind Costco which include Union Pacific tracks. Canadian Pacific's trains run on the Hiawatha Line from Wisconsin and then the UP tracks. Between Willow Road and West Lake Avenue an extra set of tracks (the third) would be used to park the CP trains in either direction. There is already so much traffic on the Hiawatha/Metra line going to and from the Bensenville yard that there are delays for CP trains using UP tracks. The CP trains sometimes back up across the Hiawatha/Metra line because the freight trains are so long. The holding line would reduce delays for freight.

Amtrak claims that during peak times there is standing room only on their Hiawatha line and that more opportunities would bring more riders. There would be three additional round trips daily. Those can't be added without mitigating the delays caused by freight trains on the Hiawatha line.

Glenview is concerned about the lack of transparency evident in this proposal. Illinois Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation would fund the new track. Federal Railroad Administration would also be involved. There are very often few riders on the Amtrak trains. Glenview suggests looking at adding trains during peak times, such as holidays, but not daily. Removing freight traffic would reduce delays for Metra, which currently carries far more passengers. The freight trains are for-profit businesses so delays cause lost dollars. The freight railroads' incentives are clear but how many trains there are, what they're carrying, and actual delays are not clear.

There was a public comment period during which the Village of Glenview and its residents requested additional information but that has not been forthcoming. When the village asked for alternatives, IDOT and WisDOT did not provide viable alternatives.

Information is available on the village website (www.glenview.il.us).

Allowing for the third track would require expanding the railroad right of way, bringing a 20-foot wall closer to residents' homes. The noise and pollution would be in back yards. The trains starting up sound like sonic booms. Currently the trains go through at 25 – 30 mph. With the holding track, they would move across the at-grade crossing on West Lake Avenue far more slowly because it takes them about 10 minutes to get up to speed. That would impact traffic to and from Glenbrook South High School and Glenbrook Hospital. Residents knew they were buying near train tracks but not near a holding track, which brings more detrimental effects.

The proposal includes a universal crossover track which could be put in just south of Dewes Street. That is a noisy proposition. There is a quieter way to do it but it's more costly so not currently being considered. There have been three significant Amtrak crashes in recent months, at least one of which involved a crossover track problem.

The village continues to work with legislators to get more reliable and complete information. A group of residents of Glenview, Northbrook, Deerfield and Lake Forest are working together to protest the proposal. Bill Attea distributed information, which is available at www.nothirdrail.com, on the residents' group. They are working with legislators on holding a community forum on March 12th at the high school, at which the legislators will push for a real environmental study. Chuck reminded the group of the Shermer Road rail bridge collapse several summers ago which killed two residents. Local legislators have been very helpful but it has been more difficult to get attention

from Senators Durbin and Duckworth and Governor Rauner, so anyone with contacts in their offices could be helpful.

Bill pointed out the alternatives that the village has proposed which would alleviate any Amtrak crowding without the significant negative community impact we are facing. Residents and the village are asking for consideration of these possibilities. Jeff talked about the financial incentives for the freight carriers to move trains through the Chicago area more quickly. Because freight was the first use of the railway system in the U.S., passenger trains have to use freight tracks. The freight companies' best interests and profits would be better served by the additional track but it would be at the impacted communities' expense.

The railroads wanted this to be completed by mid-2017. Because of public response, it was extended. Railroads have not committed to any public meetings. As soon as the environmental assessment is released, the rail companies must address any identified issues but do not have to resolve them. They will then request a finding of no significant environmental impact. If the FRA finds no significant environmental impact, the process can move very quickly with no additional public input.

Chuck and Bill asked for resident support for the action committee and for organizations to join the action alliance.

Character Counts

No report.

Social Service Subcommittee

Next meeting will be February 20th at 9:00 a.m. at Youth Services. All are welcome.

Respecting Differences Working Team

This group is looking at ways to celebrate Glenview's diversity. Pastor Kyle Severson talked about the group's work.

Upcoming Meetings

March 6th, 2018, 7:30 a.m. at Glenview Public Library

Program ideas are always welcome. Please contact Gayle Curcio (gaylec@twp.northfield.il.us) or Kyle Severson (pastorkyle@stphilipglenview.org).

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Brickman