

DOWNTOWN PLAN SUMMARY

To Members of the Glencoe Community,

The Downtown Plan was adopted by the Village Board in December 2016. It was prepared over a three-year period of engagement between the Plan Commission and the community, a process referred to as the Downtown TuneUp.

Among the observations, discoveries and rediscoveries made by the Glencoe Plan Commission during the TuneUp was that Glencoe has a rich history of planning for the Downtown, including work by known visionaries, (Mayer, Wright, Jensen, and others) and a history of community-wide involvement and discourse about improving Downtown. The Downtown Plan is consistent with past efforts to listen to the community, build on the good work and success of past plans, and to recognize the necessity of partnerships between the Village and property owners, business operators, residents, and other agencies (Park District, Library, School District).

The Downtown Plan is an amendment to the Village's Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1996, and is a replacement of Chapter 10 of that document, "the Downtown Sub-Area" as amended most recently in 2004. A decade later, the many changes in the economy, business practices, and the needs and desires of the Community invited this update. Early in the process, the Plan Commission restated that this is a tuneup, not a do-over. The plan remains consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and specifically reincorporates all of the language and principles of the 2004 update to Chapter 10. It enhances value of the document by building on analysis and recommendation from three whitepapers (on parking and transportation, on economic sustainability, and on urban form and community character), and recommends actions to safeguard, enhance and improve the character and vitality of Downtown.

The Downtown Plan, and its appendices, is documentation of the significant work of the Plan Commission, its partners and an engaged public. It is long and detailed, and will serve as a useful tool for the Village Board, the Village Staff, the Plan Commission and other boards and committees for years to come regarding land use decisions for public and private property.

From the Members of the Glencoe Plan Commission,
Caren Thomas, Chairman

Commissioners:

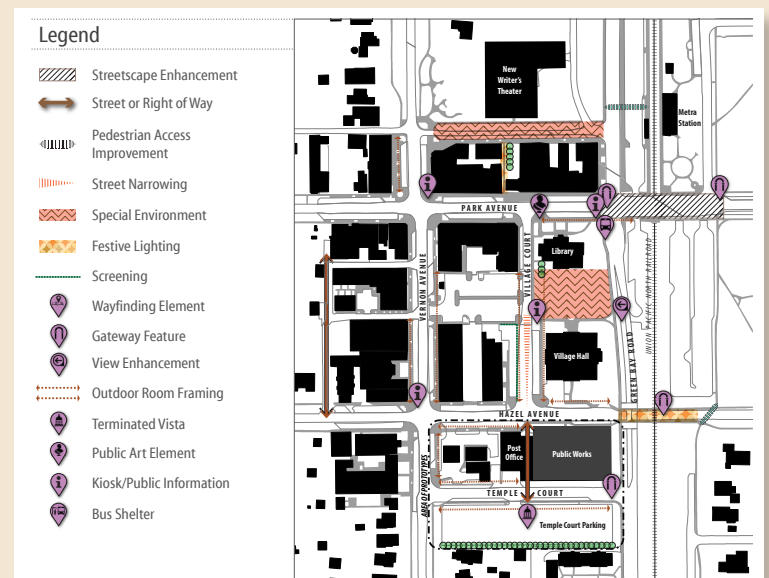
Barbara Miller, Vice Chairman	Marya Morris
Louis Goldman	Dudley Onderdonk
Ed Goodale	Gary Ruben
Bruce Huvad	Tom Scheckelhoff



One of two "Candy Chang" feedback boards on Wyman Green



Image from the plan's evaluation of urban form



Conceptual Urban Form / Community Character Enhancements

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DOWNTOWN PLAN



Glencoe loves its downtown and the Village embarked on the TuneUp to look for ways of enhancing, promoting and extending its best features.

Downtown Glencoe is the right size, both from the standpoint of economic sustainability and for its sense of place and character. The boundaries of Downtown should remain as they are today.

« Existing character in Downtown Glencoe »



The village's role includes maximizing access, visibility and walkability of downtown. Strategically placed signs, information kiosks, and gateway features can make finding stores, finding parking, finding places to sit and enjoy the downtown significantly easier for both pedestrians and drivers. Attractive pedestrian connections (such as between Tudor Court and Park Avenue, or Temple Court and Hazel Avenue) will enhance the use and convenience of parking.

« Example of "wayfinding" kiosk »

Downtown Glencoe is built at the right scale, particularly those blocks along Park Avenue and portions of Vernon Avenue where the width of the street and the height of the buildings creates a sense of a comfortable "outdoor room". Good urban design creates "outdoor rooms" that are **sensitive to the proportions of buildings and public spaces**, to induce not only visually attractive areas, but also this sense of comfort and personal safety.



The comfortable 3:1 ratio for the outdoor room »

Parking will always be a concern within a successful downtown. More can be done to **maximize the convenience and utility of existing parking** resources within and adjacent to downtown. The Plan suggests the review of existing time restrictions, the addition of wayfinding signage to aid in finding parking, and the recommendation that any reuse of property does not reduce the availability of existing parking.

Comparing downtown to Old Orchard »



Glencoe has a long tradition of support for arts, culture and civic engagement. The recent redevelopment of **Writers Theatre** and the expanding arts-business cluster is **a unique opportunity** to bring visitors to downtown businesses, particularly for additional arts-oriented or entertainment / restaurant businesses. Creating a special streetscape for Tudor Court will enhance these opportunities

« The new Writers Theatre »

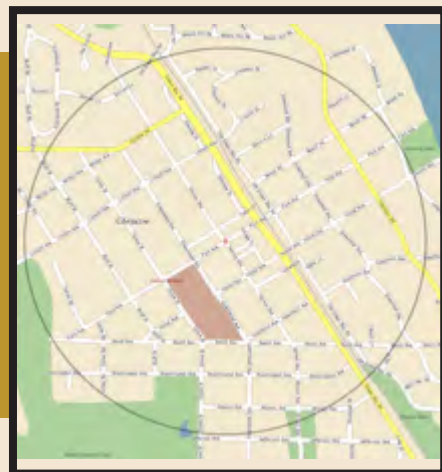


Improvement of public spaces, streetscape, wayfinding and other public infrastructure will **enhance community character and reinforce the strong sense of place**, and to accommodate special events and programming. Specific examples include Wyman Green and Tudor Court.

« Community character and sense of place »

Glencoe's downtown functions as its own economic "ecosystem". Four distinct markets support Downtown business (Convenience, Walk-in, Community-wide and Destination). The quality of service is key to maintaining high occupancy rates and business vitality. Flexibility with permitted uses of buildings will better position the Village to compete in today's changing retail and business environment.

Half-mile "walk in" market area »



Temple Court and the area south of Hazel and east of Vernon Avenue, is the most **unattractive area** and gateway into downtown. The Plan does **not** advocate for specific redevelopment of the publicly-owned properties in this location. However, **if** these properties were ever to be reused or redeveloped, they would need to exhibit the high quality, attractive character and comfortable scale of the most attractive areas of Park Avenue and Vernon Avenue. The Plan includes planning guidelines that should be used to evaluate the impact of reuse of publicly-owned property.

Temple Court, gateway to Downtown »



RECOMMENDED PLANNING GUIDELINES



No Massive Buildings: Multiple, smaller building footprints are more consistent with existing Downtown urban form than massive buildings that would dominate a block-face.



No Blank Walls: Any redevelopment should result in building height that put windows and entry doors on the street, and whose facades reinforce the positive “outdoor room”.



Comfortable Building Heights: Building height has a considerable influence on village character, and need not be uniform across Downtown. Dramatic changes to building height can be incompatible, especially along the perimeter of the Downtown adjacent to single family residential uses.



Parking Neutral: New development should not add to the burden of providing parking to serve existing activities in Downtown. Any residential use would be expected to include on-site, below grade or enclosed parking that meets its own demand, and makes up for any loss of existing parking in Temple Court Lot.



Every Side of Each Building is Attractive: Green Bay Road provides opportunities for “windows” into the downtown. In no case should the redevelopment or reuse of publicly owned property turn a backside, or otherwise ignore Green Bay Road.



Welcoming Gateways: Any redevelopment or property (publicly owned or private) should contribute to the creation of a welcoming and attractive southern entry into Downtown, as should streetscape and other public improvements within rights-of-way.



Attractive Signs: Signs contribute to (or can diminish) the character of the Downtown environment. Signs that are visible and legible by pedestrians on the sidewalk are of greater importance and more attractive than signs visible and legible by drivers in vehicles.



Pedestrian Comfort: Adequate space for street trees, well located outdoor seating, and other furniture in the right-of-way, and even awnings that provide some shelter (from rain or sun) can make for a more comfortable pedestrian environment.



Connected Streets and Walkability: Shopping, strolling, and getting around downtown must be easy to navigate and safe for cars and pedestrians. Extending the grid of streets and sidewalks, and making sure every property has adequate access will increase the value of all property and the enjoyment of Downtown.



Extend the Green Canopy of Trees: In addition to extending the lush canopy of trees that characterizes Glencoe’s great neighborhoods, street trees and on-site landscaping supports the human scale and comfortable enclosure of outdoor rooms, restful gathering places, and softens the impact of development on surrounding areas.



The Desired Outcome of Good Planning Guidelines is Pedestrian Traffic: As described in the section on Economic Sustainability, a healthy diversity of activities that keeps buildings and sidewalks full of users and visitors is the goal. The Village should retain the ability to limit unacceptable or incompatible uses, but zoning should be enabling and flexible to the changing business and residential market conditions.