

**To: Harvard Steering Committee**

From: Ricardo Lopez and Nora Beck, CMAP

Date: November 2, 2015

Re: Outcomes of the Public Open House

The third public meeting of the Harvard Comprehensive Plan was held on Thursday, October 29, 2015 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Harvard Diggins Library. There were approximately 41 people in attendance, including several members of the steering committee. The goal of the meeting was to present the draft Comprehensive Plan recommendations and garner feedback from residents and stakeholders.

Attendees were asked to review posters around the room, place stickers next to recommendations to voice their support or lack thereof (Table 1), and submit more detailed comments using post-it notes or comment forms (Table 2). Emailed comments were also added to Table 2.

After cross comparing the comments with the existing draft comprehensive plan, we are recommending **eight changes**, which are highlighted in red in Table 2. We believe these help to better illustrate the ideas in the plan and/or help to make the plan more accurate / easier to read. The remaining comments were either identifying a need or issue that the Plan also recognizes and has attempted to cover or are identifying issues that can be difficult for a Comprehensive Plan to address.

**Table 1. Support or lack of support for specific recommendations in the plan.**

	Support	Do not support
<b>7.2 Expand the sidewalk network.</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>4.1 Support the agricultural economy and local food system.</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>3.1 Work with agricultural landowners to protect farmland.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3.2 Encourage sustainable agricultural best management practices.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>7.3 Connect regional bikeways.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>7.4 Enhance South Division Street corridor.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
5.4 Design new housing to protect community and natural assets.	6	0
3.4 Promote water resource protection and conservation.	5	0
5.2 Enhance existing housing stock through rehabilitation.	5	0
3.3 Promote open space and natural resource preservation.	4	1
3.7 Adopt sustainable practices in municipal activities.	4	0
5.1 Maintain and promote homeownership.	4	0
6.3 Organize community building activities.	4	0
5.5 Enhance existing neighborhood parks and open spaces.	3	1
4.3 Utilize existing workforce development programs.	3	0
6.2 Address communication barriers.	3	0
Make public engagement accessible.	0	0
Enhance communication between Latinos and emergency services.	0	0
Improve language access.	0	0
7.5 Support transit expansion.	3	0
7.1 Adopt a complete streets policy.	3	0
4.4 Support existing commercial nodes.	2	1
3.5 Enhance stormwater management.	2	0
3.6 Ensure adequate wastewater service.	2	0
4.2 Maintain a supportive business environment for industrial development.	2	0
4.5 Enhance coordination between the City and business owners.	2	0
5.3 Maintain and enhance rental housing.	2	0
6.1 Build local capacity.		
Expand partners.	0	0
Organize a Citizens Leadership Academy.	2	0
Create a Latino advisory council.	1	0
Encourage participation in municipal elections	2	0
7.6 Coordinate with trucking industry on local truck routes.	1	0

**Table 2. Written comments, response and proposed actions.**

	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Proposed Action</b>
1	Allow more of a mix of housing within developments	This is an important concept that provides all residents housing options within the community. Given the existing housing market, it was not identified as a priority in the current draft.	CHANGE: Update Recommendation 5.4 to reflect this idea by highlighting how the different future residential land use categories can provide a mix of different housing types.
2	Multi-family housing is segregated [in the future land use map].	The future land use map shows the existing multi-family residential land uses and the new downtown mixed use land use category which is envisioned to include multi-family residential – which would hopefully be more integrated given the central location.	
3	Start a "Neighbors helping neighbors" like the Village of McCullom Lake for home repairs	Recommendation 5.2 hints at this idea by suggesting that neighborhood home and garden tours could be useful in sharing techniques and resources.	CHANGE: Update Recommendation 5.2 to reflect this idea.
4	Sidewalk repair and road repair on city streets!	In recommendation 7.2, both sidewalk maintenance and expansion of the network are discussed.	CHANGE: Update the title of this recommendation from "7.2 Expand the sidewalk network" to "7.2 Maintain and expand the sidewalk network"
5	On figure 10.4 and 10.5 there is a reference to Town of Alden Watershed - this area is actually part of Nippersink Creek Watershed. (NW of City) Additionally, the map is labeled up on the Wisconsin border as being Nippersink Creek Headwaters, but that is actually the North Branch of the Nippersink Creek watershed.	The watershed maps in both the Plan (Figure 3.3) and the Existing Conditions Report (Figure 10.4 and 10.5) have labels for the River basin (HUC 8) and the sub-watersheds (HUC 12), but not the middle level watersheds (HUC 10).	CHANGE: These maps (in both the Plan and the Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report) will be updated to properly name the watersheds.
6	Also, there is a reference in the text to Harvard's planning area being in four watersheds, but it is actually in 5 watersheds because it does extend into the Nippersink.	This is highlighting an issue with the Existing Conditions Report and should identify 5 watersheds.	CHANGE: This section will be updated in the Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report
7	Figure 2.2 shows railroad tracks heading E-W across Boone County, but those tracks were removed and are now a trail managed by the Boone County Conservation District.	This is highlighting an issue with the Existing Conditions Report and should be corrected.	CHANGE: This section will be updated in the Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report

8	Two edits on page 101 - spelling of USDA (not UDDA) and hydrologist in one of the foot notes (spelled hydrologits)	This is highlighting an issue with the Existing Conditions Report and should be corrected.	CHANGE: This section will be updated in the Appendix B: Existing Conditions Report
9	Is safe routes to school funding still available?	The State of Illinois maintains their Safe Routes to School Program with funding from the federal transportation alternatives program. However, other funding listed in this section is not accurate – the TAP and CMAQ funds are unlikely to be spent on this type of project. STP and the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program are the best outside sources of funding.	CHANGE: Update the potential funding sources listed in Recommendation 7.2.
10	Prevent any future growth of low-income residential / apartment / rental units with a goal of encouraging construction of single-family homes to attract middle class families.	Main priority of the plan is to complete the existing subdivisions, many of which are already designed to be single-family residential. Plan also recommends multi-family residential in the downtown to provide for the preferences and needs of a range of residents.	No action needed.
11	How do you get people to move into Harvard? If you look at Zillow for housing, our overall rating is 3 (1-10, 1 is low). Marengo rates a 7, so why would people want to move here if the school district rates are low. Affordability is not the only answer. Laura Lucy.	We believe this is in reference to school quality, which is a difficult topic for the Comprehensive Plan to address. However, the plan does recognize several opportunities where partnering with the schools could be helpful in implementation.	No action needed.
12	Need crosswalks with flashing yellow during school before and after for kids crossing Rt 173 by Lincoln and Garfield and Grant	The plan recommends investigating the use of pedestrian beacons in two locations – IL 173 and Garfield Road and US 14 and Harrison – which would hopefully address this concern.	No action needed; included in Plan.
13	Better visibility at intersections downtown.	This comment is unclear as to which travel mode they are referring to and what is causing the issue. The Plan recommends adoption of a complete streets policy (recommendation 7.1) to guide street design so that it includes the perspective of all users of the road.	No action needed.
14	Maintain Metra Parking lot better in the winter. It's awful [due to snow and ice]. Also maintain after 5 pm too.	This scale of recommendation is not typically considered in a comprehensive plan. However, Recommendation 3.7 highlights the need for using green deicing techniques.	No action needed.

15	Build faster track from Crystal Lake to Harvard to speed up travel time.	Recommendation 7.5 highlights continued City support for the expansion of transit service to the city. This is a larger, regional issue as the City does not have direct control -- but it is something the community can support.	No action needed; included in Plan.
16	More express trains out from the City.	See above response.	
17	Shared parking	Shared parking is a good use of resources. Shared parking has not been recommended in the plan, largely because the availability of parking was not identified as an issue earlier. However, if parking does become an issue, shared parking is a good technique.	No action needed.
18	Build another lot for Metra parking next to Bopp's	The Existing Conditions analysis shows that there is 81% utilization of the parking lot as of 2014. Before building a new lot (and spending money), changing the pricing of the existing lot and / or using shared parking strategies could be utilized.	No action needed.
19	The streets and curbs need improvement in the older parts of town, especially the streets by the high school and hospital.	The Plan does not currently address road and curb condition overall; sidewalks are specifically called out because of the gaps in the network itself and the number of comments received on this issue. Regular road maintenance is something the city is focused on and will complete as funding allows.	No action recommended at this time.
20	When will there be a grocery store in Harvard? We need an Aldi, Dollar Tree, Steak and Shake. That would be great.	Recommendation 4.4 supports the addition of a grocery store, specifically at Division and Brink Street as identified in a separate grocery store analysis.	No action needed; included in Plan.
21	Aldi		
22	A better grocery store is desperately needed.		
23	No more gas stations or auto parts stores. [need] Aldi, fresh produce.	The plan does not restrict gas station or auto parts stores. However, it does recommend the development of design guidelines for South Division Street (recommendation 4.4) which could help to ensure that those uses are designed to fit the desired community context.	No action needed.

24	When will there be an assisted living facility with apartment living?	The Plan's housing section focuses on actions to stabilize and strengthen the housing market. Nothing in the plan restricts an assisted living facility from being developed. Locating such a development in the mixed use category downtown could be ideal as it would put residents in close proximity to existing services and businesses.	No action needed.
25	Retail stores?	The plan supports the addition of retail stores.	No action needed.
26	Note the location and benefits of the new Harvard/Woodstock Enterprise zone.	Recommendation 4.2 notes the recent passage of the enterprise zone, recognizing it as a useful tool in attracting new businesses to the community.	No action needed; included in Plan.
27	Industrial areas? Who owns them? Single owner means fewer possibilities for businesses to come and expand in town.	Noted. A number of owners operate industrial businesses in the Arrowhead Industrial Park.	No action needed.
28	Is US 14 the only place we want retail? How about west on 173? Near the new school?	<p>The plan recommends focusing on the vacant parcels and buildings in Downtown and S. Division Street before expanding commercial uses to new areas. Given the housing market, the Plan does not foresee a large expansion of retail, which makes the placement of any new retail critically important. The amount of retail that can be supported in the community is finite – i.e. new development elsewhere will likely mean that existing vacancies remain vacant.</p> <p>The Plan supports a clustering concept so that new businesses help draw traffic to existing businesses and vice versa. Once these areas are complete, the community could consider expanding commercial uses elsewhere.</p>	No action needed.
29	How can we attract businesses where people can work a full time job with benefits for more than \$10-12 / hour?	The Plan has a number of recommendations that are focused on improving the job situation in Harvard, from the agricultural strategies to the recommendations focused on continued support of the industrial businesses.	No action needed.

30	Re: Motorola Facility: This facility should be dedicated to some form of educational use, possibly a branch of Northern Illinois University or McHenry College. This use would develop the area economically and culturally. Students and faculty have money to spend.	In recommendation 4.2, the plan identifies a higher education facility as a potential tenant. However, it does not get into specific educational tenants and does not prescribe an educational tenant as the only option.	No action needed.
31	I discussed with the mayor how Harvard needs a theme, such as “Harvard – Last Stop - Best Stop” and a picture of a family on a farm in the Metra station in Downtown Chicago. Why not make Harvard the organic farming capital of the world, as Harvard once called itself the “Milk Capital of the World”. Crystal Lake was built and advertised for Pilot’s that worked out of O’Hare to raise their families.	The Plan also recognizes this potential, given the farming history of the surrounding areas. Recommendation 4.1 focuses on supporting the existing agricultural economy and local food system. It specifically mentions agritourism as something the City could pursue.	No action needed; included in Plan.
32	You did touch on local workforce training on one of the display posters, but there was no mention of bringing/building a tech school (high school – STEM or a business tech college) for the workforce to be trained.	The Plan currently does not discuss a technology focused high school or college; but does not restrict an educational facility like that. It focuses on utilizing existing resources present at the McHenry County College and partnering with the County Workforce Network -- which could identify this as a missing ingredient.	No action needed.
33	There is a vacant lot in town on Ayer Street – why doesn’t the City buy it, put a Gazebo and benches in it? Turn it into part of the Park District.	Recommendation 5.5 identifies the need to establish a central outdoor gathering place for community events. While the plan identifies the existing Ayers Park as a potential location, it also recommends the use of a vacant lot or underutilized parking lot in the downtown. Given ownership situations and funding constraints, the plan does not prescribe a specific location as this will require further investigation.	No action needed.
34	I was very glad to see the sidewalk/bike-path expansions proposed.	Noted.	No action needed.

35	Design new housing to protect community and natural assets -- by who's standards?	<p>The Plan recommends following traditional neighborhood design principles for infill housing, which would follow the design concepts that were used when the City was first developed. For new subdivisions, conservation design principles -- which are described in the plan.</p> <p>The upcoming ordinance update will work through these issues and include community involvement.</p>	No action recommended at this time.
36	The City needs to be willing to communicate via email / facebook and even -- phone calls!	Recommendation 6.2 highlights the use of social media to reach difference sectors of the community.	No action needed.