

#080740
District #144

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
REQUEST FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION
For Inclusion on Board Agenda

Resolution or Ordinance (Blue) _____
Waiver of First Requested
Recommendations of Boards, Commissions & Committees (Green) _____
Other Business (Pink) _____
X

TO: PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FROM: David A. Huliseberg, Village Manager *John*

DATE: November 25, 2008 (B of T) Date: December 4, 2008

TITLE: Union Pacific West Line Upgrade Project - Environmental Assessment

SUBMITTED BY: Department of Community Development *WV*

BACKGROUND/POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The Department of Community Development transmits for your consideration Metra's Environmental Assessment Report for proposed upgrades to the Union Pacific West Line and requests concurrence of staff's comments.

Please place this item on the December 4, 2008 Board of Trustees agenda under Separate Action.

Fiscal Impact/Funding Source:

Review (as necessary):

Village Attorney X

Finance Director X

Village Manager X

Date

Date

Date

11/25/08

NOTE: All materials must be submitted to and approved by the Village Manager's Office by 12:00 noon, Wednesday, prior to the Agenda Distribution.



MEMORANDUM

TO: David A. Hulseberg, Village Manager

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP, Director of Community Development *WJK*

DATE: December 4, 2008

SUBJECT: Union Pacific West Line Upgrade Project – Environmental Assessment

Staff has received a copy of an environmental assessment report for improvements to the Union Pacific West Line from URS, Metra's project consultant. The report also identifies additional parking options within the downtown Lombard area. Metra is requesting comments on the draft report from the affected municipalities. Staff has prepared a number of comments regarding the report and is also seeking concurrence of the comments with the Village Board prior to transmitting the comments to Metra.

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff is requesting that this item be placed on the December 4, 2008 Board agenda under Items for Separate Action. Staff will present each of the items noted within this summary and will seek comments from the Village Board on the recommendations set forth within the report and staff's memorandum. The Board's comments will then be transmitted to Metra accordingly.

**URS METRA – UNION PACIFIC WEST LINE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REVIEW**

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The Union Pacific West (UP-W) Line Upgrade Project involves transit improvements along the Metra line between Ogilvie Transportation Center and Elburn that will result in additional passenger capacity and reduced travel times. Through Lombard, these improvements include upgraded signal systems, additional crossovers, and expanded commuter parking. The track improvements include additional crossovers to facilitate passing train movements and sub- to- suburb service and upgraded signals which will allow trains to operate at higher speeds and with closer headways. These improvements would allow for 14 additional daily commuter trains that are intended to meet the needs of the UP-W line through 2030. Some of these 14 trains, including six additional AM peak trains, may be express trains that may or may not stop in Lombard. In Lombard, there are two types of actions proposed: track improvements and parking expansion.

The report states that the improvements are not anticipated to have a noise impact in Lombard, but a total of 25 homes will experience a “moderate” vibration impact from the proposed changes (eight homes on the north side of the tracks between Grace Street and Edgewood Avenue, and 17 homes on the south side of the tracks between Martha Street and Grace Street). A detailed vibration analysis will be performed in the later stages of the project.

STAFF COMMENTS

Staff offers the following concerns that should be addressed in the analysis:

- The report does not offer any indication to the level of service increase for Lombard commuters that can be expected as part of the track improvements.
- The proposed track improvements allowing more trains, closer headways, and shorter travel times will also benefit freight trains along the Union Pacific tracks. The study does not specify what increase in freight traffic could be anticipated as a result of Metra’s improvements and what the impacts of the additional freight traffic, if any, will be.
- The study does not sufficiently address how the increased train traffic will affect the Grace/St. Charles Road intersection or the Elizabeth Street crossings.
- Further identification of the projected “moderate” vibration impact to single-family homes is needed and specifically what this will mean for the residents.
- Separate from this report, staff has been made aware that the Union Pacific plans to raise the railroad track height by nine inches near the Grace Street crossing. This information is not identified in the report.

- Past staff reviews have found that a significant number of Glen Ellyn residents have utilized Lombard parking spaces in the past. The study does not address the demand impacts of the additional trains on this situation. Staff suggests that the report review Lombard's unique location at the end of a current fare zone range and determine how the service increases impact spill-over parking from other communities.

PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

The report identifies seven areas for additional/modified commuter parking facilities, two of which were previously considered by the Village as part of the 2007 Commuter Parking Study and the Downtown Lombard Community Vision. These seven areas would need to be acquired by the Village or by Metra, but the plan does not address who would pay for the acquisition and construction of the parking lots. The study does state that Metra is seeking federal funding, but it does not specify what that funding would cover and if there would be an expected local match. Although the study assumes that the proposed commuter parking spaces would be constructed and in use by 2011, staff confirmed with Metra that there is no timeline established for land acquisition or construction.

The expanded parking is based on ridership forecasts. Lombard was grouped in with all stations between Lombard and Maywood, and it was determined that this zone will need a total of 405 additional parking spaces.

The plan identifies a total of five potential property acquisitions. According to the study, the expanded parking would require variations for parking space dimensions (seven areas), conditional uses for commuter parking (five areas), and one zoning change.

Up to 353 of these spaces could be established, as detailed in the following table and on the attached map:

Parking Area (by priority)	Description	Ownership	Lot Size (acres)	Action Type	# of new spaces
1	11-37 E. St. Charles Rd	Village	0.8	New	70
2	7 E. St. Charles Rd	Bartel	0.3	New	24
3	Parkside-West lot	Village, Metra	0.7	Restripe from 9' wide to 8.5' wide	5
4	Fifth Third Bank	Fifth Third Bank, Village	0.3	New	23
5	Maple Street lot	Village	0.5	New	38
6	24-28 W. Ash St	First Church of Lombard, DuBrown, St. John's	1.2	New	92
7	324-330 S. Main St	Pontikes, Kovar, Burdeaux, Geroullis	1.4	New	101
Total	-	-	5.3*	-	354*

* Metra's totals of 5.3 acres and 354 spaces are slightly higher than the 5.2 acres and 353 spaces detailed in Parking Areas 1-7.

The proposed 354 parking spaces would add 907 new trips to Main Street and St. Charles Road. This would mean an increase in average daily traffic of 5% to Main Street (south) and St. Charles

Road and an increase of 8% to Main Street (north) for the 2011 design year. The study states that in 2011, all roads will be at acceptable service levels (LOS D or higher).

PROPOSED PARKING AREA COMMENTS

The environmental assessment is intended to identify those properties that could be acquired and utilized for commuter parking purposes. Therefore, the Board should review each of the properties and determine whether each should or should not be included as part of this analysis. Staff offers the following comments regarding each parking option:

Parking Areas 1 & 2

The study states that Parking Areas 1 and 2 are Metra's highest priorities. In 2007, the Village applied for a Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) grant for Parking Areas 1 and 2, which estimated 92 spaces at a cost of \$1.6 million. Although the original Hammerschmidt lot was built using FY2004 CMAQ funds, the lot expansion was deemed by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee to not have a sufficient cost-benefit ratio. In October, 2008, the Village re-acquired Parking Area 1. However, discussions by the Village Board suggest that the Board may not wish to see the property developed as a surface parking lot. If this is the case, there may be a potential conflict between the report and the Board's desire.

Parking Area 3

The proposed restriping of the Parkside-West lot (Parking Area 3) would be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance, which allows publicly-owned commuter parking spaces to be no less than 8.25 feet wide. Although there is a minimal benefit to be obtained (five additional parking spaces), this is a nearly zero-cost option that could be implemented immediately.

Parking Area 4

This site consists of a small portion of Michael McGuire Drive and the landscaped area separating McGuire Drive from the Fifth Third Bank and Sprinkler Park properties to the north. A buffer should be maintained between the Sprinkler Park and any commuter parking lot.

Parking Area 5

It is unclear why Parking Area 5 is included in this study, as it already owned by the Village and operated as a Lombard resident-only commuter parking lot with ancillary parking for the Historical Museum. Additional capacity could be created through restriping and the use of the drive aisle on the adjacent Calvary Episcopal Church property (as detailed in the Downtown Lombard Community Vision and 2007 Commuter Parking Study). However, Calvary has not been receptive to this concept in the past.

Parking Areas 6 & 7

As both of these areas involve numerous private property owners and existing structures and are furthest from the station itself, these are the most challenging of the proposed options.

Parking Areas 6 and 7 about residential properties, so special concern is warranted with regard to parking lot design, landscaping, and lighting and impacts on adjacent uses. Area 7 is adjacent to Main Street and the Illinois Prairie Path.

Area 6 is currently improved with a single-family residence and portions of both First Church of Lombard and St. John's Lutheran Church, each separate planned developments. Staff raises concerns about the impacts of additional commuter parking on the daily operations of each of these institutions, which was not identified in the report. Parking Area 6, along with Area 5, has also been envisioned as a potential location for off-site library parking in the event that the Helen Plum Library expands at its current location. Given these issues, staff recommends that the report state that while an opportunity may present itself for additional commuter parking in Area 6, no acquisition efforts should be undertaken without additional dialogue with the Village regarding our long range intent for the area.

Additional Parking Option

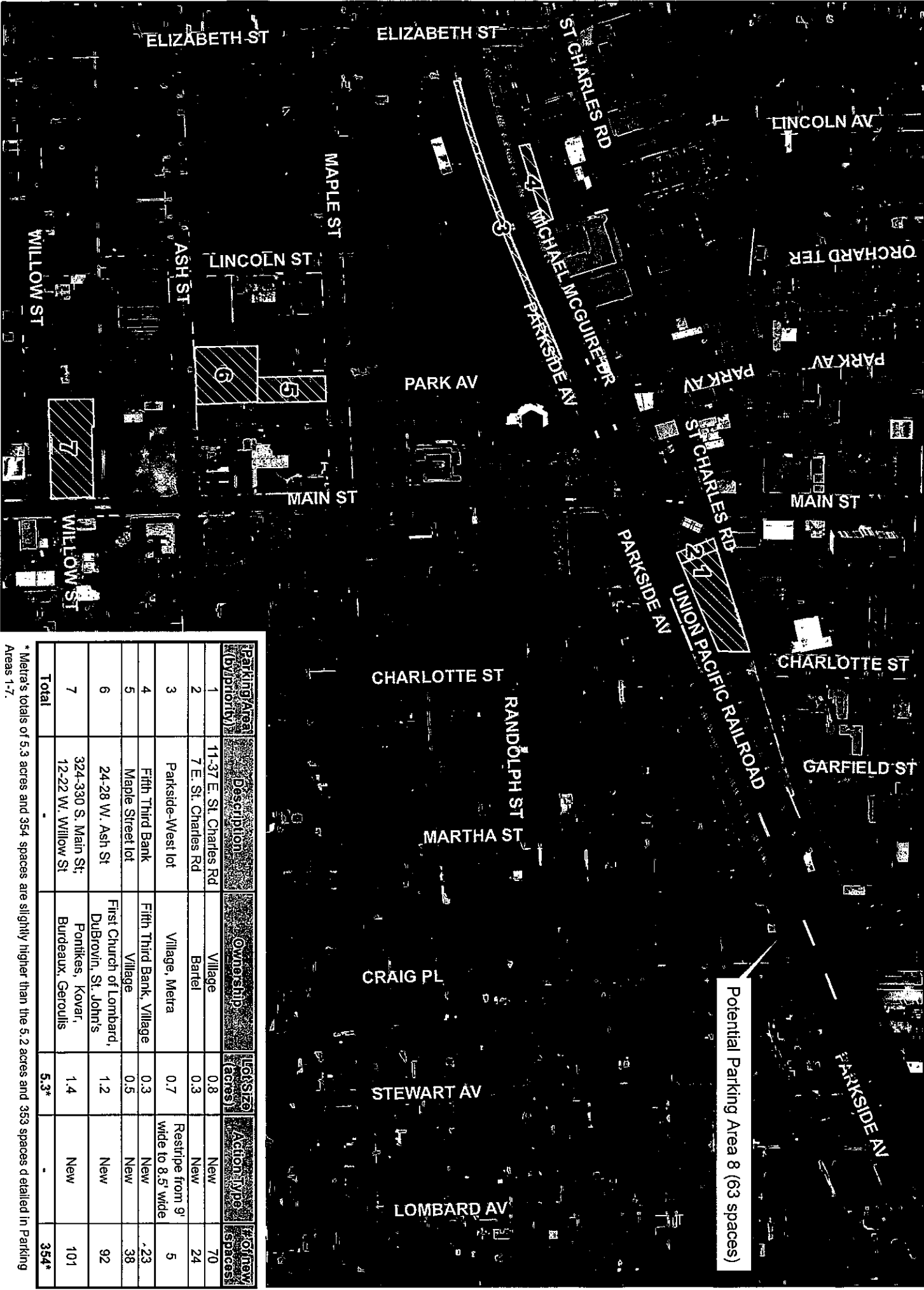
Another parking area could be considered in the Parkside Avenue right-of-way to the east of the existing Parkside-East commuter lot. In the 2007 Commuter Parking Study, staff estimated that an additional 63 spaces could be created at a minimal cost since no land acquisition would be necessary.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CORRECTION/CLARIFICATION

The information in the study about Lombard's zoning designations and regulations is not entirely accurate. No variation would be needed for publicly-owned commuter spaces to be 8.5 feet wide, but variations would likely be requested for parking lot and transitional landscaping and open space. Also, Parking Area 6 stated that the property is zoned B5 (it is actually B5A), and Parking Area 7 does not mention the R5-zoned property that is included on the map.

As a last item for concern, the report identifies Metra's land acquisition and displacement authority procedures. While the report states their authority to acquire property, it also notes their statutory authority to condemn property if deemed necessary. Staff raised its concern that the report's identification of the properties, while denoting their condemnation authority, does not send a favorable message. The report should denote that it is the intent of Metra to work collaboratively with the Village to select appropriate locations for commuter parking and that acquisition efforts must also be consistent with local plans.

Proposed Commuter Parking Areas



Potential Parking Area 8 (63 spaces)

Parking Area (Priority)	Description	Ownership	Lot Size (Acres)	Action Type	# of New Spaces
1	11-37 E. St. Charles Rd	Village	0.8	New	70
2	7 E. St. Charles Rd	Battel	0.3	New	24
3	Parkside-West lot	Village, Meira	0.7	Restripe from 9' wide to 8.5' wide	5
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