



Community Information & Input Meeting #3 Results

April 15, 2021

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Overview

On April 15, 2021, the Village of DeForest conducted a virtual (Zoom) community meeting associated primarily with the Housing & Neighborhoods chapter of its Comprehensive Plan update. There were 13 community members in attendance (not including Village staff). Input was garnered through a few multiple choice poll questions and open-ended comments using the chat function in Zoom but also providing a chance for verbal comments at the end. Listed below are the questions, responses, and other participant input and advice from the meeting.

Poll Question #1: In which part of the Village of DeForest do you live?

- 11% live northwest of Western Green Park and Main Street
- 11% live south of Western Green Park, including Sunnybrook and Woods Glen, but not in another part of Conservancy Place
- 22% live in Conservancy Place, except for Woods Glen
- 34% live south of the High School and Middle School, but north of Windsor Road
- 22% do not live in the Village of DeForest (one was a former resident who owns a new business in Windsor)

Poll Question #2: Which community in Dane County had the greatest percentage increase for existing single-family homes over the past decade?

- 25% responded "Waunakee-Westport"
- 17% responded "Sun Prairie"
- 50% responded "DeForest-Windsor" [The correct answer; 71% increase 2009-2019 per MLS]
- 8% responded "Cottage Grove" 8%
- 0% responded "Middleton", "Verona", or "Oregon"

Poll Question #3: What percentage of households moving into a brand new home in the DeForest Area School District move from outside of the District?

- 0% responded "Less than 20 percent"
- 45% responded "Between 20 and 40 percent"
- 18% responded "Between 40 and 60 percent"
- 27% responded "Between 60 and 80 percent" [This is the correct answer; 72% per 2018 survey of new home buyers]
- 9% responded "Over 80 percent"

Chat question: What of the information we have shared so far do you find most useful as you think about DeForest's future housing & neighborhood policies?

- One participant asked "What benefits do you think come from continued growth of housing in DeForest?". A second participant responded: "More businesses coming to DeForest!"
- "Keep in mind growth but not becoming Sun Prairie or Madison."
- "Will anyone listen to neighborhood residents anyway? Comp plan opposed the 4 story apartment due to land use. Staff had it all pocketed before even coming to public hearings."



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Why? Money. What about residents who invested in their neighborhood? They pay taxes too. For years. A huge apartment building doesn't support 75 % ownership ratios...show us the numbers. Ironically I'm in Cottage Grove by the 4 story monstrosity right now. It's crazy."

- "The growth of the senior population."
- "We need affordable housing so people who work here can afford to live here, likewise, attract higher paying jobs to enable living and working in the same Village."
- "A concern is how we define 'affordable'."
- "Starting pay for a DeForest police officer is 57K a year. Someone with a couple years of seniority is making 75K. They choose not to live in the community they police."
- "How do we ensure or protect that those who currently serve or work in the community have the opportunity to these potential growth opportunities before drawing others [to] these areas."
- One respondent asked: "If homes are so expensive, why are they sold within 30 days on the market at asking or above asking? The Veridian homes going up in Conservancy Place are sold as soon as they are built at a price of 380-410K." Another respondent answered: "Selling market. In Dane County there are minimal for sale and with interest rates low things have been flying off the market."

Poll Question #4: Which of these potential initiatives should be the Village's highest priority for housing and neighborhoods? (Respondents could select more than one initiative)

- 29% selected "Maintain current housing mix policy"
- 21% selected "More flexible housing mix policy"
- 64% selected "More affordable senior housing units"
- 57% selected "More affordable workforce housing units"
- 29% selected "Better siting and design criteria for higher density housing"
- 14% selected "New neighborhood development plan for West River Road corridor"
- 7% selected "Other", with these responses listed in the chat room by one individual: "Do not ruin existing neighborhoods the way they have developed. No TIF for residential construction incentive."

Final Chat and Discussion Questions: What are your thoughts on these potential initiatives? Are there others that we ought to prioritize through the new Plan?

- One participant commented with reference to a recent residential/mixed use zoning approval in Conservancy Place: "I am just curious why we are doing a Comp Plan update after making a decision on apartment building and giving TIF for residential construction that was against the previous Comp Plan. Why didn't we go backwards when there was conflicting land use? Windsor turned away a quarry because of the Comprehensive Plan while DeForest thinks they can just do whatever they want instead and go against Comprehensive Plan?" Village consultant explained that zoning approvals for Conservancy Place and a couple of other planned developments in the Village preceded the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, so the Plan's reach into those developments is



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limited. Same participant then commented: "And then the Board gives TIF? They didn't need to give TIF. No more TIF for residential. Make that a policy."

- "My question is... that the affordable housing for seniors... will they be rent controlled? So, we have the 98 units now... those are somewhat that way... people pay a certain amount. Or is the need for more housing for people downsizing and just need a 1- or 2-bedroom duplex or home? The Oregon example, is that something that is in consideration or do-able for DeForest? For Habitat or other developers?" Village consultant responded that most affordable housing programs for low income persons require control on rents to any household so they do not pay more than 30% of their income on rent.
- "We came to Wisconsin 4 years ago and found ourselves in Conservancy Place renting in the condos... needed a place between the Dells and downtown Madison... we found ourselves moving to Sun Prairie for housing... not finding housing in our price range in DeForest where we needed to be... now opening a business in Windsor... wish we had a house in DeForest with the business in Windsor... I understand where it is frustrating to be somewhere and new buildings come. I do appreciate having affordable housing with a business and our employees able to live and work in the same community."
- "How do we ensure or protect that those who currently serve or work in the community have the opportunity to these potential growth opportunities before drawing others to these areas?" Village consultant responded that the best Village may be able to do is make sure local residents, employees, and employers are away of new housing developments first.
- [With reference to recently approved residential/mixed use project in Conservancy Place]
"Change in preliminary development plan that allowed that apartment to violate the Comprehensive Plan, it is important that the Village lets residents know when there is a change to a Preliminary Development Plan that is more noticed to the public... I see no intent to listen to the people." The consultant responded that the Village may be updating its zoning ordinance, and it may make sense to include a broader public notice requirement in such update when a PUD Preliminary Development Plan is amended.