



Village of Westmont VILLAGE BOARD

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Community Development Committee Meeting Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 4:30 PM Minutes - Approved

1. **Trustee Scales Called to Order: At 4:30 P.M.**
2. **Community Development Committee Meeting Roll Call :**

PRESENT :	Mayor Gunter	<u>P</u>		
TRUSTEES:	Scales (Chair)	<u>P</u>	Barry	<u>A</u>
	Barker	<u>P</u>	Guzzo	<u>P</u>
	Liddle	<u>P</u>	Nero	<u>P</u>

Staff Present : Director of Community Development Joseph Hennerfeind, Deputy Director of Community Development Jason Vitell, Senior Planner Scott Williams, Planner Adam Walsh, Village Manager Steve May, Assistant Village Manager Spencer Parker, Public Works Director Amy Ries, Deputy Police Chief Thompson , Fire Chief Riley, Finance Director Allen Altic, Director of Governmental Services Patti Mielcarski, Community Development Specialist Jaime Hofmann, and Economic Development Partnership Director Larry Forsberg

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Public Comment** - None
5. **Approval of Minutes:** Trustee Liddle made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 23, 2025 Regular Meeting and Trustee Barker seconded the motion. Motion passed on a voice vote.
6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None
7. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **New Home Construction** - Community Development Director Joe Hennerfeind addressed the low number of new home starts in Westmont in the last year, noting that Westmont’s new home construction rate is significantly below other comparable communities. Hennerfeind led the discussion by highlighting Westmont’s unique development patterns and the age of its housing stock.

A meeting was held the day prior to the committee, where builders were asked to voice their concerns and reluctance to build in Westmont. The builders cited several key factors including restrictive stormwater detention requirements, lengthy approval times, mandatory public improvements, and stringent bonding requirements. They also noted a perceived “culture of no” in the permitting process. Additional concerns included fire sprinkler requirements, excessive heritage tree requirements (including surveys), and overly restrictive green space, lot coverage and set back requirements. They suggested that Westmont’s policies are overly expensive and complex.

The builder's comments highlighted Westmont's lesser-known status and resulting in a need for improved branding and marketing efforts. Economic Partnership Director Larry Forsberg noted that many potential home buyers are unaware of the high quality of Westmont schools, and that the Village needs to actively market its positive attributes, such as walkability. Assistant Village Manager Spencer Parker added that the Village actually does have money budgeted for branding in the current fiscal year.

Trustee Guzzo asked if tear downs or additions were discussed during the builder meeting since green space is limited. Hennerfeind replied that they did not get to that level of detail in the discussion.

The committee discussed the Village’s tree and fire suppression ordinances. They acknowledged that these regulations are important but questioned whether they are overly stringent compared to other communities. They asked staff to conduct research to compare Westmont’s ordinances with those of other communities.

The committee and staff discussed various solutions to attract new construction such as waiving impact fees for 2 and 3 lot splits, permit fee discounts, and re-visiting the lot coverage calculations. The committee considered loosening the restrictive stormwater requirements to match that of the County, also exploring the idea of comparing the amount of stormwater runoff generated by both single family homes and larger developments, and to determine the current capacity of regional facilities to handle increased runoff if lot coverage limits were relaxed. Public Works Director Amy Ries added that Naperville did a similar research project, and that she would try to obtain the findings. Manager May agreed it was worth looking into since variables have changed since the stormwater ordinance was written.

8. REPORTS

A. Committee Chair - None

B. Department Director - Hennerfeind provided an overview of the department's first quarter, highlighting the downtown incentive program. Hennerfeind noted only one application for a tier 2 grant had been received, and none for the \$100,000 grant, despite available funding. They encouraged wider dissemination of information about the program to increase applications.

C. Division(s) Reports

1. Permitting - Community Development Deputy Director Jason Vitell provided the committee with an online permitting status, and walked them through the steps of process on the portal. The committee mentioned it may be in the Village's best interest to explore passing on the convenience/credit card fees to the applicants. Finance Director Allen Altic said he would do research to see if permit fees and water billing could be separated, so the convenience fee would only be applied to online permit payments. Trustee Liddle wanted to know what the current credit fees are amounting to at the Village's expense, and if other communities are passing those fees on.

2. Code Enforcement - See [Year End Report](#) included in agenda packet.

3. Planning and Zoning - See [Year End Report](#) included in agenda packet.

9. MISCELLANEOUS - None

10. ADJOURN - Trustee Guzzo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 PM, and Trustee Liddle seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.