

VILLAGE OF



KENILWORTH, IL

**Village Board Special Meeting
January 26, 2026**

Call to Order

President Kaz called to order the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Kenilworth at 7:00 p.m. on January 26, 2026.

Roll Call

President Kaz then requested that the Clerk call the roll and the results were as follows:

Trustees:	
Trustee Tim Ransford	Present
Trustee Christopher Ottsen	Present* (Remote, Voting)
Trustee Amy Hannus	Present
Trustee John Gottschall	Present
Trustee Matt Lojkovic	Present
Trustee Joseph Vitu	Present
President Cecily Kaz	Present

**Trustee Ottsen experienced audio difficulties and re-established connection at 6:13 pm.*

The Board was in receipt of a request from Trustee Ottsen to attend the meeting electronically in accordance with the Electronic Meeting Attendance Policy. As a quorum physically was present, the Trustee will be authorized to attend electronically unless a motion is made and passed by a two-thirds majority of those physically present to deny the request. Hearing no such motion, the Trustee was deemed Present as a voting member.

A quorum was present in person and via video conference.

Others recorded as in attendance in person or via video conference:

<i>Village Officials and Staff:</i>	
Michael Gagnon	Village Clerk
Kathy Thake	Village Manager
Heather McFarland	Assistant to the Village Manager
Greg Jones	Village Attorney
Donicio Silva	Chief of Police

1 Jordan Schmidt Management Analyst
2 Molly Burns Management Analyst
3

4 **Others, signing in as displayed in Participant List:**

5
6 Jeanne Keiler Rob Wiebking
7 Eric Miller Bill Tribe
8 Matthew Reuter Mike Kelly
9 Anna Simpson David Joyce
10 Dave Olbrisch Alice Read
11 April Palin Ian Fisher
12 Bob Dold Rich Gordon
13 Laura Fitzpatrick Danielle Dold
14 Chad Engle Drew Paul
15 Laura Divecchio Lois Stanley
16 Justin Mohr NL
17 Louis Keiler Margie Zander
18 David Rader

19
20 President Kaz introduced consideration of Regular Scheduled Business.

21
22 **Regular Scheduled Business**

23
24 **A. Presentation and Discussion – Green Bay Road Enhancement Project**

25
26 President Kaz reviewed the recent discussions regarding the ongoing Green Bay Road Enhancement Project
27 (GBREP) and felt that a reiteration of the history and goals for this project would be constructive. She then
28 asked Village Manager Kathy Thake and Assistant to the Village Manager Heather McFardland to present on
29 this agenda item.

30
31 Manager Thake reviewed the 20-year history of the GBREP and its focus on safety, parking, and economic
32 vitality. Ms. McFarland cited the Village of Kenilworth Comprehensive Plan authored in 2008, the Green Bay
33 Road Conceptual Transportation and Streetscape Plan (“Streetscape Plan”) submitted to the Board in
34 October 2013, the Visioning Process conducted in 2021, and the 2023-2024 Enhancement Study as providing
35 many of the ideas and concepts regarding the GBREP presently. In 2023, the villages of Kenilworth and
36 Winnetka entered into a joint agreement with Ciorba Group, Inc., an engineering consulting firm, to initiate a
37 study of Green Bay Road between Kenilworth Avenue and Winnetka Road. The purpose of the study was to
38 explore the feasibility and desirability of roadway reconfiguration concepts and identify streetscape
39 enhancements before pursuing a formal project plan with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).
40 Staff from both communities worked with Ciorba to develop potential concepts inspired by the Streetscape
41 Plan to share with residents. In 2024, several open houses were held to gather public input on potential
42 streetscape and alignment concepts for Green Bay Road. Ciorba subsequently submitted a recommendation
43 to the Village in September 2024. The Village Board directed staff to proceed forward with Ciorba’s
44 recommended path. The goals for the GBREP presently are as follows:

- 45
46
- Improved safety (e.g. reduced lanes, slowed traffic, crosswalks)

- Improved walkability (e.g. wider sidewalks, crosswalks)
- Increased parking (e.g. diagonal parking)
- Beautification (e.g. landscaped bump-outs, trees)
- Places to gather (e.g. wider sidewalks for outdoor dining)

During this time period there were many improvements made that were aligned with these goals including the Sterling Road realignment in 2019, the Richmond Road parking area in 2020, pedestrian safety improvements in 2021 and 2022, the development opportunity at 604 Green Bay Road, a variety of Zoning Code amendments, and initiating an ongoing program for adding decorative planters on Village walkways in 2024.

Manager Thake continued the discussion of additional enhancement concepts including a reduction of traffic lanes on Green Bay Road, the widening of pedestrian sidewalks, the addition of bike lanes, the installations of protective “bump outs” in areas where diagonal parking was configured. She assured the Board that final decisions around any of these alternatives have yet to be made. She then outlined the three phases of pursuing a project involving IDOT, the agency with ultimate responsibility for any changes to Green Bay Road. She was seeking the Board’s approval of a Phase 1 engineering study conducted by Ciorba in cooperation with the Village’s Department of Public Works to provide a more precise engineering analysis of potential enhancement alternatives, an in-depth traffic and safety review, and to enable staff to engage Village residents for feedback and suggestions. Approved enhancement possibilities would then be submitted to IDOT for approval to enter into Phases 2 and 3 of the GBREP. She reviewed the duration, the estimated cost, and the impact on Village budgeting of Phase 1 and went on to briefly describe Phases 2 and 3 of the IDOT process suggesting that construction of any plans would not commence until roughly FY 2030. She suggested that the likelihood of obtaining substantive financial relief through outside grants was high and staff intended to pursue those possibilities aggressively.

Trustees discussed the need for land acquisition, the status of the Village of Winnetka’s participation in this process, the prioritization of the multiple goals listed for the project, the process and cost for achieving approval of plans from IDOT, the use of Tax Increment Funds for this project, and identified all stakeholders in the project. Hearing no further discussion from the Board, President Kaz opened the floor to comment from the public.

Resident Lois Stanley asked for clarification of the possible transfer of ownership of Green Bay Road from IDOT to the Village of Kenilworth. Resident David Joyce expressed concern about the impact on parking in the area. Resident Bill _____ requested more information to help stakeholders choose among multiple options for GBREP. Resident Jeanne Keiler related anecdotal information concerning parking and traffic concerns and asked the Board to consider them during their deliberations on this project. Resident David Rader expressed support for the GBREP and looked forward to participating in the public discussion when appropriate. With no further discussion, the Board gave its approval to Manager Thake to pursue a Phase 1 Study for IDOT to be conducted by Ciorba Group, Inc. with costs shared by the Villages of Kenilworth and Winnetka.

Old Business

1 President Kaz then turned the Board’s attention to a matter first considered at the Board of Trustees meeting
2 held on January 20, 2026 and continued for further consideration presently.

3

4 **B. Ordinance Approving of a Certificate of Appropriateness and Granting a Special Use Permit to**
5 **RED3 Development LLC for a Preliminary Planned Unit Development (*Continued from January***
6 ***20, 2026*)**

7

8 President Kaz reviewed the discussion of this item that took place at the regularly scheduled Board of
9 Trustees meeting on January 20, 2026, highlighting the events occurring during the Public Hearing conducted
10 that evening which included a presentations by the Village Planning Consultant as well as representatives of
11 RED3 Development LLC (RED3), and concluding with public testimony on the item. It was decided at that time
12 to continue the discussion among the Board before choosing among three options available to the Board to
13 respond to the zoning code variance requested in the PUD proposed by RED3. She then reviewed the options
14 the Board has for responding to the PUD as presented: 1.) approving the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)
15 and granting the Special Use Permit (SUP); 2.) denying the COA and the SUP; 3.) remanding consideration of
16 the COA and SUP back to the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) and/or the Plan Commission (PC) with
17 specific instructions on aspects of the requested COA and/or SUP for further review and consideration.
18 Before opening the floor to Board members to resume their deliberations, President Kaz assured meeting
19 participants that there would be time devoted during the meeting for registering further public comment on
20 the item.

21

22 At Manager Thake’s suggestion, the Board’s discussion began with a review by Village Attorney Jones of
23 “findings of fact” associated with PUD request. Attorney Jones stated that there were three sets of “finding of
24 facts”. One set, authored by the Architectural Review Commission addresses the COA. Another set, authored
25 by the Plan Commission addresses the SUP. And a third set, authored by Village staff addresses both the COA
26 and the SUP. Reflecting their recommendations to deny the PUD variance request, the ARC and PD findings of
27 fact present negative aspects of the request. Findings of fact prepared by staff present a draft of positive
28 aspects of the request for consideration by the Board in the instance of approval. While the Board is expected
29 to take all of these presentations under advisement, it is not bound by findings of fact from any one source.
30 Trustees clarified the impact of the three decision options under consideration, the preliminary status of the
31 PUD request, the process the applicant would follow to submit an alternative proposal, and the nature of
32 recommendations that should accompany a decision to remand. They went on to examine the 2022 Village
33 Vision Statement for the Green Bay Road Corridor and offered opinions regarding how the PUD variance
34 request aligns with it, discussed the weight to be given to ARC and PC recommendations, declared the
35 importance of attracting development to the Village, opined on the attractiveness of the PUD and the lack
36 development in recent years, discussed the prospects for development in the future and strategies for
37 encouraging development, offered suggestions for changes to the PUD, reviewed the origins of the zoning
38 requirements that prompted the PUD variance request, clarified the scope of options related to each of the
39 three resolutions available to the Board, and took time to indicate individually which of three decision options
40 they would most likely support. At the behest of the Board, Attorney Jones reviewed the timeframe for when
41 the process of reviewing the PUD variance request would expire, clarified, in the case of a decision to remand,
42 the nature of recommendations to be made to ARC and PC. At the behest of the Board, Manager Thake
43 reviewed a recent meeting of the Zoning Code Update Workgroup, the subject of which was the appropriate

1 height requirements for a Zoning Code generally. Plan Commissioner Anna Simpson was recognized to discuss
2 the aspects of new construction that are attractive to retail businesses. She suggested that market demands
3 by these businesses with regard to space height combined with market demands by individuals with regard to
4 the height of residential development, will challenge the ability of developers to offer both and still comply
5 with the Village Zoning Code's existing height limits.

6
7 President Kaz stated that engaging in the PUD discussion during a time when the Village is undergoing a
8 comprehensive overhaul of its zoning code complicates deliberations. Making a decision bound by zoning
9 code restrictions that might change in the near future could result in stifling a possible development
10 opportunity unnecessarily. That notwithstanding, the PUD developer deserves a prompt response under
11 existing zoning regulations and processes. She pointed out that design specifications for the PUD which the
12 Board are reviewing presently differ from those that were denied by the ARC and PC. She suggested the Board
13 might pursue a consensus around a motion to remand the item to the ARC with instructions to review revised
14 design specifications that could eliminate the need for a height variance and open the possibility for a change
15 in their recommendation regarding the PUD. Attorney Jones suggested that these same changes should be
16 reviewed by the PC for a similar reaction. Trustees clarified with Attorney Jones the language to be used for
17 these instructions specifically regarding the height of the structure and its contribution to the public good.
18 After a discussion of outcomes from this strategy, President Kaz invited the developer to comment on the
19 current discussion. Michael Freiburger and Reed Edwards of RED3 indicated that design changes to the
20 present PUD that could eliminate the need for a height variance and open the possibility for a change in their
21 recommendation regarding the PUD are unlikely. They went on to exhibit a heightened sensitivity to serving
22 the public benefit, suggested additional efforts they could make, and reviewed the history of the process
23 RED3 followed prior to reaching the Board that could impact the decisions made by the ARC and PD should
24 the item be remanded. Trustees clarified their position relative to possible language to be used in a motion to
25 remand.

26
27 President Kaz asked for more discussion of what motion could be made that a Board consensus could accept
28 and opened the floor for comment from the public. Resident Mike Kelly expressed frustration with the
29 process available to variance petitioners and felt rules set in place to manage this process were being broken.
30 He cited aspects of project duration, child safety, population density, and the lack of direction as to tenants
31 for the retail space to be built as being overlooked, making the PUD proposed unworkable. Resident Jeanne
32 Keiler cited actions taken by the developer during the approval process which she felt undermined public
33 acceptance of the proposed PUD and commented that public participation in ARC and PD meetings on this
34 matter was not given a time limit. She reviewed the history of occupancy for the Park Drive properties and
35 expressed frustration that the properties in question are not being properly marketed for alternative uses.
36 She then expressed skepticism of claims that a PUD conforming to present zoning regulations was financially
37 unfeasible. President Kaz thanked Ms. Keiler for her comments and took time to reiterate that the present
38 public comment period should be focused specifically on the Board's deliberation of the three options
39 available to them regarding the PUD as previously stated. In the interest of having time to hear all who have
40 comments to make, she reminded commenters to summarize their thoughts on the topic as stated, and to
41 keep their commentary under three minutes long. Resident David Joyce reviewed his personal history with
42 the Village of Kenilworth as both an observer and a resident, He described the attributes of the Village that he
43 saw as the strongest as being antithetical to aggressive development. He suggested that proponents of

1 development in general and this PUD in particular were pursuing greater property tax revenue which would
2 benefit the limited Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in the Village disproportionately to the whole of
3 Kenilworth. He felt that there were Village priorities outside of the TIF District that would be neglected. He
4 concluded his comments by reviewing his recent history of property tax assessments which led him to
5 conclude that Kenilworth receives enough tax revenue already and does not need to promote development to
6 receive more.

7
8 Resident Ian Fisher, a member of the Plan Commission, acknowledged the existence of two reasonable
9 primary perspectives to be considered: From residents who are focused on scale, density, and neighborhood
10 character and from a developer who is trying to make a project economically viable subject to physical and
11 regulatory constraints. These perspectives are at odds and need to be reconciled. He encouraged the Board to
12 be realistic about the choices available for reconciling them. He suggested that because the community has
13 taken time to express support for addressing vacant space in the business district through development in the
14 Village, an outright denial of the request was not a neutral position for the Board to take. He expressed
15 skepticism that alternative development concepts that satisfy zoning restrictions would provide an outcome
16 that a majority of residents would prefer over the PUD in question. He offered a definition of “the public
17 good” in this case as keeping density and scale down while still achieving development, while at the same
18 time, recognizing that there is a cost to not developing the site at all. He wondered if a narrow-tailored, time-
19 limited tax incentive could be a way for the Village to incent the developer to propose a three-story, lower
20 density project that was economically feasible but does not violate height restrictions in the zoning code. The
21 Village would be investing in outcomes that they prefer rather than defaulting to outcomes that technically
22 comply with regulations but don’t reflect present neighborhood priorities. He hoped that framing the
23 discussion in this manner could lead to reconciling those conflicting perspectives more acceptably.

24
25 Resident Anna Simpson, also a member of the Plan Commission, encouraged the Board to vote to remand in
26 order to consider some of the ideas raised by the previous speaker, Mr. Fisher. She expressed support for
27 changes that would enhance the public benefit of the project, and a willingness to address the height variance
28 constructively. She felt that the Village should be more aggressive around negotiating terms for approval of
29 the variance that enhances the spaces afforded to Village residents. She advised the Board to vote to remand
30 the variance request to the PC with instructions for it to find ways to enhance the public benefit derived from
31 an approved PUD request. Resident Mathew Reuter of 708 Roger Avenue voiced support for the project and
32 suggested there are ways to improve it. He related personal history during his time as a resident that stoked
33 his enthusiasm for development in the Village and his subsequent disappointment in the lack of progress in
34 that area. He urged the Board to remand the item to the ARC and PC for further refinement. Resident Rob
35 Wiebking of 526 Melrose did not support the project and did not want the Board to remand the item without
36 a height maximum of 35 feet as stipulated in the zoning code. He felt that pursuit of development in business
37 district was misguided and expressed pleasure with its current configuration. He felt people did not move to
38 Kenilworth to experience aggressive development.

39
40 Resident Rick Gordon of 530 Melrose Ave. expressed concern about the size and scale of the PUD as
41 presented. He asked the Board to seek a better balance between prevailing retail space desires and the limits
42 of lot size and configuration in the Green Bay Road business district. He did not think the PUD as proposed
43 was a realistic addition given those constraints. Resident April Palin reviewed her history of living in

1 Kenilworth and how she likes the present condition of the business district. She urged the Board to restrict
2 any new development to the 35-foot height restriction listed in the zoning code. Resident Tyler _____ of
3 Earlston Road expressed support for development generally but did not support the PUD, as proposed, as
4 keeping with the character of the Village. Resident Bo Palin reviewed the number of extended family
5 members living in Kenilworth and expressed concern about the impact of the proposed PUD on them. He did
6 not believe there was a clear public benefit for granting the variance for the project. Alice Read of 546
7 Melrose Avenue thanked the Board for taking the time to listen to public comments. She recounted the
8 history of a discussion had in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin about development she felt was germane to the PUD
9 discussion. In 2005, officials of that village granted a variance to their zoning code which resulted in four-
10 story condominium building that residents now regret being granted. She felt granting RED3 a variance would
11 be a source of regret for Kenilworth residents in the future. She asked the Board to deny the variance
12 request.

13
14 Resident Danielle Dold recounted her extended family involvement in the Village of Kenilworth. She
15 expressed support for development but felt the 35-foot height limitation should be enforced and without that
16 stipulation, the Board should not remand the item for further consideration. Resident Dave Olbrisch felt that
17 the Board should not engage in granting financial incentives to developers asking for zoning variances, that
18 there was not sufficient contribution to the public good to grant the variance, and that granting the variance
19 could lead to litigation in the future. Resident Paul O'Connor at 550 Melrose Avenue supported denying the
20 variance and asked the Board to consider the impact of granting the variance on development of adjacent
21 properties. He advocated using TIF funds to incent the developer to reconfigure his project using adjacent
22 properties that would otherwise be undevelopable and still comply with the zoning code. He felt the
23 likelihood that a reduced project could still be viable economically was high. Resident Lois Stanley felt a
24 compliant project was possible and urged the Board to not grant the variance. Resident Margie Zander felt a
25 project with a fourth floor is a non-starter and advocated starting over with a new project that complies with
26 the zoning code that the Village might help finance.

27
28 President Kaz noted the contributions from two members of the Plan Commission and the introduction of the
29 concept of the Village investing in a compliant project that best meets everyone's concerns. She
30 characterized the instructions to be included, should the Board choose to remand to the ARC, as soliciting
31 changes that would soften the impact of the height variance as it presently exists, acknowledged some
32 trustees are not in support of any project configuration that includes a fourth floor, and noted calls for
33 remanding the request to the PC for a further examination of the public benefit achievable from the project.
34 Trustees clarified with Attorney Jones the ability of the Board to use TIF District funds to subsidize the
35 developer, reiterated their unwillingness to approve a project that includes a fourth floor and their support
36 for one that observes the 35-foot limit, and clarified with Attorney Jones the impact on the status of the
37 proposal of choosing among the three options available to the Board. Upon being recognized by President
38 Kaz, the developer expressed a willingness to make changes that work for the Village and requested as much
39 substantive feedback as possible. Attorney Jones then offered guidance as to the phrasing of any motion
40 made.

41
42 Hearing no further discussion, President Kaz asked for a motion from the Board. Trustee Gottschall moved to
43 remand the item to the Architectural Review Commission and Plan Commission to evaluate possible design
44 changes to mitigate the impact of height, including and without limitation, removing the penthouse, altering

1 the setbacks for the fourth floor, eliminating the top floor, and reaching a maximum building height of 40'.
2 And to solicit additional feedback on potential public benefits the development provides the Village. Trustee
3 Vitu seconded the motion.

4
5 **A roll call vote was taken as follows:**

6
7 For: Gottschall, Lojkovic, Vitu, Kaz

8
9 Opposed: Ransford, Ottsen, Hannus

10
11 The roll call tally was four votes in favor, and three opposed. President Kaz declared the motion approved.

12
13 **Business from the Public**

14
15 President Kaz then asked whether there was any business from the public. Resident Lois Stanley asked for
16 clarification of the directions given to the ARC and PC to consider when agenda Item III. B. is remanded back
17 to them. Attorney Jones addressed this to her satisfaction.

18
19 **Adjourn**

20
21 With no further business, President Kaz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Lojkovic so
22 moved, and Trustee Gottschall seconded the motion.

23
24 **A roll call vote was taken as follows:**

25
26 For: Ransford, Ottsen, Hannus, Gottschall, Lojkovic, Vitu

27
28 Opposed: None

29
30 The roll call tally was six votes in favor, and none opposed.

31
32 President Kaz declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

33
34