



# VILLAGE OF BARTLETT COMMITTEE MINUTES December 5, 2023

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## CALL TO ORDER

President Wallace called the Committee of the Whole meeting of December 5, 2023 of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 7:32 p.m.

## ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chairmen Deyne, Gandsey, Gunsteen, Hopkins, LaPorte, Suwanski, President Wallace

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Village Administrator Paula Schumacher, Sr. Management Analyst Samuel Hughes, Finance Director Todd Dowden, Public Works Director Dan Dinges, Village Engineer Bob Allen, Civil Engineer Nick Talarico, Planning and Development Director Kristy Stone, Grounds Superintendent Matt Giermak, Chief Geoff Pretkelis, Deputy Chief Rob Sweeney, Deputy Chief Will Naydenoff, Village Attorney Kurt Asprooth and Village Clerk Lorna Giles.

## TOWN HALL:

None

## **BUILDING AND ZONING COMMITTEE, CHAIRMAN GUNSTEEN** **Sign Code Discussion**

Chairman Gunsteen introduced the item.

Ms. Stone stated we started looking at the sign code updates, and we wanted to give the board an update on what was recommended by the Economic Development Commission. They felt wall signs should be permitted on all building elevations that are not directly abutting residential property, which is more lenient than what our current code allows. They felt the changeable message board signs like Culvers and the car washes were an appropriate size, and there was no need to increase them. They suggested strictly limiting the 25% size for window signage. That was something where enforcement has not been consistent over the years. For advertising flags, they felt we should allow businesses to have the flags two times per year, with each being a 30 or 60-day time limit. They wanted us to limit the number of flags on a property based on the amount of frontage the property has. They also want us to require permits. The unified business plan should be simplified so it is more uniform overall with the village. They also suggested we create some specific findings of fact to allow sign exceptions or variations because they felt signage should be looked at on a more case-by-case basis. We are looking for feedback from the board on these items.

Chairman Gunsteen stated the signage on the elevation should be limited to the square footage of the elevation.

Ms. Stone stated that is how it currently is, but it does allow you to count the aggregate as well. It has been enforced differently over the years based on how the aggregate is calculated and distributed. For



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example, on MORE Brewing, they have linear display frontage on Oak Ave. They also have some on Railroad Ave. Because part of the wall on the east side is visible on Oak, that was considered frontage. They were allowed to have more signage overall based on their frontage. So some of the signage that would have been allowed on Oak was able to be transferred to Railroad Ave.

Chairman Gunsteen stated by carrying the square footage from one side to the other allows you to take the entire square footage of three sides of the building and saying they are allowed “x” amount of square footage of signage. It should be based solely on that elevation because a rectangle building is going to have smaller sides on the smaller side of the building. The sign on More’s east elevation would have been smaller and not have looked so out of scale.

Chairman Hopkins asked if Ms. Stone agreed with this.

Ms. Stone stated she did agree. Being able to take an allotment from one wall and transferring it to another wall defeats the purpose of trying to keep the signs in scale of the elevation.

President Wallace agreed.

Chairman Hopkins asked if it would be a special use if they wanted to have a larger sign.

Ms. Stone stated it would be a variation or design exception.

Chairman Deyne stated he agreed with this.

Chairman Gunsteen stated most villages only allow two sides of signage unless you are on a corner where your third side faces the intersection. We are allowing it on 3 sides. Just because you have a tiny bit of your building sticking out on one side doesn’t mean there should be a sign on it.

Ms. Stone stated for MORE Brewing specifically, they were able to transfer the extra square foot from the front to their side and she would like to eliminate that piece.

Chairman Gunsteen stated the next section is the changeable message centers.

Chairman Gandsey asked if there was interest in going with something larger.

Ms. Stone stated Moretti’s wanted something twice the size. Everyone wants to go bigger than what we have. They can always ask for a variance though.

Chairman Gunsteen asked the square footage of a monument sign.

Ms. Stone stated we allow up to 10’ tall but it varies on site.

Chairman Gunsteen stated so they could potentially put in a full message center instead of a monument sign.

Ms. Stone stated a message board is limited to 32 square feet. They can still have another sign above it.

President Wallace asked if the chalk board signs are part of this.



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Ms. Stone stated those are considered temporary.

The board was okay with keeping it at 32 square feet.

Chairman Gunsteen asked staff to clarify window signage.

Ms. Stone stated its any sign in the window or window clings, etc. Right now, our current limit is 25% of the total aggregate of your windows. If you have four 10'x10' windows, you have 40 square feet.

President Wallace stated he knows he has discussed visibility into the building with the police department. He is torn on if this is okay. There are some businesses that use it more as signage.

Chairman Gandsey asked if the 25% was standard.

Ms. Stone stated other towns are between 20-25%. Originally when this was written it was for grocery stores with the paper signs.

Chairman Gunsteen asked if we have had any issues enforcing that.

President Wallace stated there are two businesses in the village that have at least 70% covered now.

Chairman Suwanski asked if we would be able to apply the new changes to the two businesses that are not currently in compliance.

Ms. Stone stated typically we have had businesses take them down like the Dogfather. At one point you could not see in the building at all. Enforcement lacked during COVID so he brought it to staffs attention that he felt he was treated unfairly previously.

President Wallace stated for some businesses it is a distinct disadvantage. Especially for one business that happens to be a workout center, he primarily believes he has at least half of it so people cannot peer in.

Ms. Stone stated we are not saying they cannot have blinds or some other opaque covering, it is more the fact that they are using it as advertisement for the business.

President Wallace stated that does not solve the problem of safety then.

Chief Pretkelis stated generally when we do our patrols and we pass by the businesses we try to look inside. You had mentioned that people have cell phones now, but we still do try to make contact and visually see the clerk inside the store or see what's going on.

President Wallace stated so if it doesn't control blinds, anyone can put blinds up and cover everything.

Ms. Stone stated that is not considered signage so we would not regulate it.

Chairman Gandsey stated she feels it is more the look. If there is constant advertisement all over the place, covering it, it doesn't look right.

President Wallace stated he has a tendency to be more lenient on this subject.



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Chairman Gunsteen stated if it looks bad, its only hurting their business. If the gym doesn't attract new customers, it's because people are being encouraged to come in by seeing someone else do it. It is on the business to figure it out.

President Wallace asked if it makes sense to leave the code at 25% and if someone wants to cover their whole thing with a sign, we have a public hearing for their neighbors to speak out against it.

Ms. Stone stated we can do that, we just have to make sure everyone is aware it is not content based.

Chairman Suwanski stated we do have an ordinance for the spas, right.

Ms. Stone stated the massage parlors are not allowed to have their blinds closed at all. We have to be able to see inside.

Chairman Gunsteen asked what the Economic Development Commission thought about advertising signs.

Ms. Stone stated that each business should be able to have two flags, two times per year for either 30 or 60 days each. They should have to get a permit so we could enforce whatever time limit is on it. We should also determine the distance between the flags, so you do not have 50 flags in front of one shopping center.

Chairman Gunsteen asked if we are charging for this permit.

Ms. Stone stated, yes.

Chairman Gunsteen confirmed if the permit duration was 30 days.

Ms. Stone stated that is what we are looking for direction on, they wanted 60 days.

President Wallace asked how many businesses we have in town, ballpark. 200-300? How many people are going to go around looking for flags up after 60 days. That is just another thing for us to track.

Ms. Stone stated it is just so we know when the flags have been out so they can argue.

President Wallace stated he disagrees with the village trying to track whether it is a 30 or 60-day time limit.

Ms. Stone stated we were willing to prohibit them because they can be an eye soar due to it being fabric.

President Wallace stated Carol Stream allows a 1 week or 2 week permit then you have to take it down so it is not a permanent fixture like a few of the businesses here on Oak have.

Chairman Gandsey stated they should be used for a promotion.

Chairman Suwanski stated she doesn't have a problem with them having them out there for 30 days if they are promoting a brand-new business.

President Wallace stated he thinks that is a good point. New businesses can put out a banner for 30 days then you have to come back for a permit.



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Ms. Stone stated that potentially gets into the advertising.

Village Attorney Kurt Asprooth stated that is a concern. It has to be based on the physical characteristics and the location of the sign. The courts have put a lot of restrictions on us.

Chairman Suwanski stated a new business is a new business.

Mr. Asprooth stated the problem is you have to read the sign to determine if it's a new business or not, and that's what the courts say we cannot do.

Chairman Gunsteen stated he thinks all new businesses should be allowed to put signs up no matter what. He does not have an issue with it. He has a business that has flags, signs, and they take them down at night to prevent people from stealing them or being damaged. He doesn't want them to be a permanent fixture.

Ms. Stone stated we can say if they are ripped, torn, or in disrepair, they can be removed.

The President wanted that included. He asked if Open Gov can be used as a timing mechanism to let us know.

Ms. Stone stated if they applied for a permit, our code enforcement would get a list of when the flags expire.

Ms. Gandsey asked if they applied for a permit, would it automatically inform the business of when they have to get the signs in.

Ms. Stone stated we can do that.

President Wallace wanted to keep it at 30 days.

Chairman Gunsteen asked if we are allowing multiple 30-day periods for each address. Technically, they could do it every month for the whole year.

President Wallace stated he doesn't have a problem as long as they are nice signs. He does not want 5 of them in front of a building.

President Wallace asked staff to draft a few options for the Planning and Zoning Commission to go through as part of this.

Chairman Gunsteen stated the unified business center sign plans are the next topic.

Ms. Stone stated we wanted to simplify these. Each shopping center has its own rules, including restricting sign colors, for example, and it is very random. We just want to make sure the signs are placed in a similar location on each building. Also, want them to follow the same codes so everyone has the same rights.

President Wallace stated this has been an ongoing problem.

Ms. Stone stated they read our code, then we have to tell them it does not apply to them because of the center they are in.



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President Wallace agrees with the unified code.

Chairman Gunsteen asked that to be included as well.

### **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, CHAIRMAN GANDSEY**

#### **Village Strategic Plan**

Village Administrator Paula Schumacher stated this is the kick-off to our strategic planning process. We do it so the board can give us direction on policy, gives us a game plan, helps us direct limited resources and is a great communication tool in order for us to express the direction of the community. We have been doing strategic planning in the village for the last 30 years. Strategic planning really has a much longer horizon than just one board. In 1994, we talked about building a new clubhouse at Bartlett Hills. In 1995 it was a goal to have some senior housing facilities and received applications in 2001 and 2004. The development of Brewster Creek Business Park in 1997 and the first building permit was given in 2000. In 2001, the development of the Town Center was initially discussed. In 2004, the first sale of the first condo building occurred. Many of the goals we put together are complex. In 2001 the goal for the bale fill project was aggressively fighting it and it went all the way to the supreme court. In 2001, we had a goal of developing the ball fields off Rt. 25. The West Bartlett corridor plan was in the plan in 2005 and project approved in 2007. In 2006, we finalized the agreement for the old train station to become a museum, and that was dedicated four years later.

Another aspect of our goal-setting is to be responsive to community needs. There is a number of examples on the screen, but it really helps us to adapt to changing needs of the village over time. Some examples include addressing stormwater, the changing needs of safety needs in the community. No one envisioned school shootings and other things we are faced with today.

Looking at where we are currently, our plan is divided into long and short-term goals. It's also divided into complex and routine. There are 24 goals in all, and I will review the short-term complex goals tonight. Goal #5 - continue the business development strategy focused on incentivizing a grocery store to town. This has been in our plan since 2013 when Dominick's closed. Over the years, we have contacted over 20 regional grocery stores and met with about 6 of them. When the development of the Streets of Bartlett happened, they got much more interested because they wanted a neighborhood store. They are scheduled to open in January.

#6 - Continue the business recruitment strategy to attract developers to invest in the downtown area and provide options for the businesses to locate in Bartlett. The economic development team has worked to bring new tenants into the Bartlett Town Center, Main Street Plaza, the Shops at 138 S. Oak. The barn behind Banbury Fair, an office tenant in the former tap location and of course MORE Brewing.

#7- Continue to act on the strategies for the development of Railroad Ave. vacancies. In addition to the new restaurants and State Farm building with the apartment above, the expanded Railroad Ave. parking lots were recently completed. The owner of site E is working with the various utilities to get the easements they need to break ground this spring. As you recall from the budget discussion, we have been working on sidewalk replacement and beautification along Railroad with partial funding from Metra.



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#8 Develop a community branding plan. The process started in November with an RFP and the selection of A-5 Branding and Digital to create the campaign. The first stage was data collection, and so far, the branding survey has captured over 1,000 results. A-5 is returning in January to report on the survey results and also prepare concepts for the multi-year marketing plan. Those additional phases will be part of the budget review for where you want to fund those.

Chairman Gandsey asked how the survey was going.

Ms. Schumacher stated it is going great. We have captured a lot of the targeted audiences as well as people clicking on the QR code.

#9- Work to improve the retail business profile of the village. We had a larger increase in our social media presence in this area. We also got some nice traditional coverage in the press as well. Bartlett is lucky to have an extremely low vacancy rate of just 6%. Most vacant places in the downtown are now full. We are going to be turning our attention to the shopping centers on Route 59. The new car dealership is expected to open for sales in the start of 2024.

#10- Revisit and refine our overall economic incentives. We have been working on fine-tuning the BEDA incentive program. That has resulted in over \$8.3 million dollars in private investment in Bartlett. We also waive fees, enter into sales tax sharing agreements as well as Cook County tax agreements which really are vital to some of the larger developments like McKesson and Colony Display. They also helped with Culvers, Aldi, More, and the dealerships. We are closing out the Brewster Creek TIF District which has grown from \$3 million to what we expect to be over \$100 million when it's all said and done.

#11- Developing a strategy to connect the east and west sides of Bartlett. That is one we still have some work to do on. The branding survey should give us some insight into that issue and maybe present us with some issues. The bike path connection under Rt. 59 connecting up with the Grasslands subdivision is also part of that. We are also working on a \$150,000 grant from Cook County that would cover phase #2 engineering for that underpass. If Cook County approves that, we would look to bring that intergovernmental agreement to the board relatively soon.

#12- To improve bike path and pedestrian pathway routes. In addition to the path on Rt. 59, the S. Bartlett trails were resurfaced, and that work was done with the park district to coincide with the adjacent path around their community park. Bike lanes from Lambert to Naperville were stripped, and the additional path along Naperville Rd. will be installed with the Grasslands development as well. We also received a \$500,000 grant for a path over the railroad on Naperville. The Bike and Run Committee supported a bike-friendly community designation application. The Brewster Creek bike path from Munger to Stearns was completed as well.

#13- Determine the need for a TIF District on Lake St. Teska Associates presented a TIF eligibility study, returned in November to discuss potential land uses and we anticipate hearing from IDOT on whether they plan to vacate the property on Oak and Rt. 20, in January.



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The remainder of those 24 goals and the update on where they sit is in the memo that Scott put together, but I just wanted to talk about that particular quadrant of the plan where the bulk of our action has been. Next Tuesday we will have the workshop to work on goal setting. We will either need another meeting or we can move to setting objectives from the staff. I anticipate it coming back to you the first meeting in February and approving the second meeting in February.

She gave the board four questions to think about for the goal-setting workshop. We also will talk about removing things off of the plan and reorganizing it.

Chairman Gunsteen asked how many hours we spent putting the ALDI project together and what do we think changed for them to come here.

Ms. Schumacher stated a lot of it was the arc from growing from the 90's and reacting to that growth. Now we need to figure out what next 50 years looks like where we will not see the huge boom but covering the infill and maybe the fringes.

Chairman Suwanski asked if it was possible because their philosophy changed coinciding with our growth.

Ms. Schumacher stated we flirted with them for a long time, and it was the reinvestment in that center that got their attention.

Chairman Gunsteen stated the BEDA has certainly worked. It may not be directly, but the long term and how many hours you put in, that Aldi's was a result of some of that.

President Wallace stated that is absolutely true. There is no way Aldi was going to look at the location unless it was totally revamped and the previous owners never would have revamped it.

Ms. Schumacher stated MORE, 120 live, etc. all are positive results of BEDA in those sleeper areas of town. We have talked for a long time about feet in the streets and we are seeing those plans pay off.

President Wallace stated we have been talking for a long time about what the secret is to getting more businesses downtown. It's development, incentives, feet in the street, and then more businesses come down.

Chairman Gunsteen stated they need consumer confidence.

Chairman Gandsey stated we will have the results of that survey in January so we can use that for strategic planning.

Ms. Schumacher stated we can make sure it is a part of the review in February to make sure we did not miss anything.

President Wallace stated it is good to review that every once in a while, to see how we are accomplishing items.

Chairman Deyne moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting and that motion was seconded by Chairman Gandsey.





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ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

PRESENT: Chairmen Deyne, Gandsey, Gunsteen, Hopkins, LaPorte, Suwanski

ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Samuel Hughes  
Deputy Village Clerk