

**CITY OF LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS
CODE OF ORDINANCES**

2022 S-6 Supplement contains:
Local legislation current through Ord. 2020-057, passed 12-7-2020

Balancing Development and Historic Preservation

Laura Luce

My name is Laura Luce. I live at 111 Ridge Lane and my property abuts the CBD “inner ring.” While I applaud the CBD working group’s many references in its draft to balancing development and historic preservation, I am skeptical. I am skeptical because the city’s approach to development has been piecemeal at best, and bait and switch at worst. I hope that “following the Historic Preservation Ordinance” and application of the 17 standards aren’t just lip service, but given recent events, I am wholly unconvinced. The City DID set precedent by overturning the unanimous vote of the HPC and allowing big box development in the historic district. This can absolutely happen again if the city doesn’t follow established guidelines (the 17 standards) and consider adopting form-based codes to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods and control the shape of new development. Conveniently for the building department, the small section of Oakwood being explored for redevelopment, lies sandwiched between the East Lake Forest Historic District and the Green Bay Road Historic District, almost as if it had been gerrymandered that way and provides cover for development that would otherwise be deemed incompatible with the neighborhood.

What are the “realistic expectations” to which the draft refers? Congestion? Multi-family residential, parking structures, replacement of buildings, and how expensive adaptive reuse is. Threats? Warnings? These sound like wholesale changes to the very fiber of our being. It was never more apparent to me that we are moving too fast with the potential for doing irreversible damage to the brand that is our town than last week when I reached out to a neighbor to let her know about this meeting. She lives across the street from the Baptist Church. She didn’t know anything about the working group, the update to the comprehensive plan, or “suggestions” for development in and around HER STREET. She then contacted a few of our other neighbors who were similarly uninformed and shocked.

So if the city hasn’t gathered from or shared information with neighbors whose homes abut the CBD then surely it isn’t offering full transparency, participation, input, accountability, or collaboration. We are stakeholders and you need to engage us. Because of the debacle of bldg 3 on Westminster, I am on high alert. So, no cheap assurances, no project creep, no diversions or denials, no back room deals with developers.

Let’s Get Our City Right. Hire an independent Urban Design Consultant recommended by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation to develop a master plan of the needs of the city as a whole, employ and UPHOLD our 17 design standards, invite the neighbors of the CBD to participate, and manage our development as stewards of the unique, internationally recognized, world-class town that is Lake Forest. Or to quote the draft, “pause” “preserve” “protect.”