

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2019**

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Village President Joan Frazier on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. Village Clerk Stacy Sigman called the roll as follows:

Committee Members Present:

Trustee Tom Terrill
Trustee Charles Orth
Trustee Todd Fowler
Trustee John Goodwin
Trustee Tom Whittaker

Absent:

Trustee Greg Lungmus

President Joan Frazier

Others Present:

Village Attorney Mallory Milluzzi, Village Manager Stacy Sigman, Assistant to the Village Manager Melissa DeFeo

Approval of the July 16, 2019 Report of Proceedings

Trustee Whittaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Orth to approve the July 16, 2019 Report of Proceedings. Approval was unanimous.

Discussion on the Non-governmental Flag Policy

President Frazier welcomed Andre Juedes. Mr. Juedes indicated he teaches at New Trier and his family moved here about five years ago. As a member of the community and teaching at New Trier, he recognized an opportunity for Northfield to put up a Pride flag to recognize LGBTQ population not only in Northfield but those passing through and doing business here as well as the students attending our schools. He noticed the flag has been flown in other communities on private residences but also some communities have put them on flagpoles. He brought this matter up and he was proud that the Board responded. He hopes that something can be done in the future because it was last minute this year.

President Frazier said it might seem like a simple issue, but asked Village Attorney Mallory Milluzzi to address the Constitutional issues which might be implicated.

Attorney Milluzzi indicated that this request is specifically for a Pride flag, but given the Constitution and First Amendment, this has to be looked at from the perspective of opening up the forum speech to all potential speakers. Under First Amendment case law, there are different types of public fora. There's the traditional forum which are the streets and sidewalks in which people have almost unlimited free speech rights. Then there are non-public forums that are not open to the public and where speech may be restricted as long as those restrictions are reasonable. Then there are limited or designated public forums where you have opened up

speech for a limited purpose. The Committee of the Whole or Board meetings are a good example of that. You have a Board meeting and you open it up for speakers and members of the public come in and talk but it's for the limited purpose of the Village business.

Attorney Milluzzi said the request here covers a couple of different forums, i.e. the community events sign, for which the Village has a policy, and also on our flag standards and decorative light standards. Currently, the flagpoles and decorative light standards are not public forums. They are only used for the United States flag, the Village flag or for other Village events. It is not open to the public and the Village doesn't have to honor any request for their use. If the Village were to open it up to one group, then it would be opened up to more groups. The community events sign is currently a limited public forum. The Village has a policy to allow Village-oriented not for profit groups to promote scheduled events, meetings or programs which have the time, place and duration of the event or service provided placed on the sign. This is on a first come first serve basis for a two week time period.

The attached memo sets forth some of the Village's staffing concerns as to how much time and work it would take to change over all of the decorative light standards. Staff provided four options for the Board to consider. The Village can stay with its current position and not change anything. The Village could amend only the community events sign policy, and allow the installation of banners that celebrate special observances such as Pride month. The federal and state government often adopts proclamations designating days, weeks and months and other observances with specific language. The next option would be to allow Pride flags on Village flagpoles during the month of June whereby the Village would adopt a diversity resolution that expresses the community's commitment to being an open and welcoming community. Instead of opening it as a public forum, we would be conducting government speech as the Village of Northfield is determining to speak and state its official position. This approach does carry certain legal risks.

The final option would be adopting a diversity resolution with the commitment of being an open and welcoming community and install the Pride flags on the flagpoles and decorative light poles as well as amending the community events sign for the installation of flags and banners that celebrate special observances.

President Frazier asked Mr. Juedes to specify that he is asking to fly Pride flags at the Village Hall, the community event sign and on light posts along Happ and Willow Road (which would require 50 to 60 flags) during the month of June. President Frazier indicated that the Village's policy in the past has been to never endorse any type of social movement because once you let the cow out of the barn, there is no getting it back. No matter how strongly we may or may not believe in a particular cause, it puts the Village at peril. The Village doesn't get behind social causes. She said this year she made an exception because there wasn't time to discuss it at a meeting. That is not normally done in Northfield. If we put out a Pride flag, for the Constitutional reasons which were explained by Attorney Milluzzi, then if a society in favor or warlocks comes along, we have to put up their flag too.

President Frazier then asked the trustees what their opinions are. Her suggestion is that we follow the State of Illinois Flag Display Act and U.S. Flag Code and only put an American Flag on the flagpoles but that the trustees consider amending the community events sign policy to provide for the hanging of banners for certain recognized special events.

Trustee Whittaker agreed with President Frazier and liked addressing it through the community events sign. Right now, the American Flags go up Memorial Day and come down on Labor Day. Having crews go out on June 1st to replace the American Flag with a Pride flag and then changing them out again is a logistical nightmare. He is in favor of something on the community events sign.

Trustee Orth also agreed with Trustee Whittaker and President Frazier and didn't want it open up Pandora's box. This could get crazy where every week you have a different cause. He doesn't believe those types of flags should be on the flagpole. He agrees with what President Frazier stated and liked some sort of a banner at the community events location. He thinks it works well with the community by supporting these different causes. We embrace being diverse as every community in the region does, but at the same time we need to be conscious of what we create by having a lot of other causes be out there.

Trustee Terrill said that he is a flag person and has the American flag at his house. He agreed with what has already been presented here. He thinks that it would be opening up a situation that is far more intensive than what we would have time for.

Trustee Goodwin thinks the community events sign would be a good forum. It wouldn't be a lot of overhead and it controls the First Amendment situation and he would support that.

Trustee Whittaker added that there was a lot of positive feedback on this year's flag, even if it was for only 4 or 5 days.

Trustee Fowler concurred with all the thoughts given. President Frazier said that staff had to run out to Party City to get this year's banner. The requesting group usually provides the banner.

President Frazier then indicated this matter will be on the Board agenda in the next month or two. She appreciated Mr. Juedes bringing this to the Board's attention. Mr. Juedes thanked the Board for acting so quickly and for considering this matter.

Discussion on the Winnetka-Northfield Library

Rebecca Wolf, Director of the Library and Suzie Shoup, Trustee on the Library Board were present to update the Board on what is going on with the Library.

Ms. Wolf presented a slide show to the Board. The Library was started in 1884 as a department of the Village of Winnetka. In 1974, it joined together with Northfield to create the Winnetka-Northfield Library. In 1984, Kenilworth came to be served by them via a contract.

Ms. Wolf indicated the governance of the Library goes through the Library Board of Trustees of both Winnetka and Northfield are represented proportionately by population. There are seven people on the Winnetka-Northfield Board of Trustees, two trustees are Northfield and five are Winnetka residents. There is a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer and two trustees that report back to Northfield as well as Winnetka to give a brief summary of each of the communities. With those roles, the President conducts the meetings and the Secretary records the meeting consistent with State of Illinois and Federal policies.

Ms. Wolf said Deb Vandergrift is the other Northfield trustee and she is also the Treasurer. She handles all the audits. Ninety-four percent of their revenues are from property taxes. The other six percent comes from grants, the Kenilworth contract, and program fees. Seventy-nine percent of property taxes come from Winnetka and 21% comes from Northfield. The population breaks down to about 69% Winnetka and 31% Northfield. Ms. Wolf said that most of their budget is personnel because they are a service industry. Their fiscal year starts July 1st and ends June 30th. They spend about 57% on personnel, 10% on administrative services which is electrical and utilities and 18% are collections, 5% is for IT, and 2% for programming, and 8% is building and equipment. This is an operating budget; they also pay the rent to Northfield for their space in the building.

Trustee Terrill questioned what is under collections. Ms. Wolf responded collections are books, materials, DVD's, electronic books and things like that. Ms. Shoup added that two years ago they started a new renewal and tracking program. That it is a godsend because they can control the exact inventory and know exactly what is going out the door. It has also been phenomenal in that the librarians who are looking for a certain books can immediately know where it will be because everything is tagged. Trustee Terrill asked if that was because of the fines. Ms. Wolf indicated that they have actually decreased because of extending renewals by phone and renewing on line. The total population that they are serving is about 17,343 people. The households are about 6,639; 859 Kenilworth households by contract with Wilmette and the total number of cardholders are 11,963. That breaks down to two cards in every home. She said they are excited about seeing the number of people with cards go up and encourage people to use the library.

Ms. Wolf informed the Board that the Winnetka Library building is about 22,800 square feet and the usable space in Winnetka is about 14,800 square feet. The Northfield branch library is about 4,680 usable square feet. President Frazier asked Ms. Wolf about the contract with Kenilworth through Wilmette. She said that Kenilworth created its own library district, their own taxing district and they contract out services so that their cardholders get service with either Wilmette or Winnetka with that card. She said that residents of Northfield and Winnetka get the best services from 26 libraries that they are connected to and Kenilworth residents get to choose which library they belong to. The tax dollars are based on circulation between Wilmette and Northfield/Winnetka.

They are looking at options for maintaining the Northfield building which includes paint, lighting, etc. Ms. Wolf indicated the remodeling plans have been delayed to gather more feedback and input. They have some maintenance issues such as paint and lighting.

Ms. Shoup added that the two open houses that took place in March as well as meetings last week were to gather information from Northfield residents. They received a lot of renovation information in March, but are receiving more. Ms. Wolf pointed out that they will let the Village know after more community meetings.

President Frazier questioned how the money is allotted between Winnetka and Northfield in terms of the capital plans. Ms. Wolf indicated this was discussed and that the ratio is not tied to property taxes, but based on the needs. What they want to do in Northfield is not permanent so they could move it should there be another space in Northfield that opens up. If the Post Office decides to have a kiosk and move, Ms. Wolf is open to that discussion. They are looking at it now just based on maintenance. No renovation has taken place at the Northfield branch since 1990. There needs to be an investment in their space. They are considering what might be amortized over the course of the lease. Ms. Wolf added that there is a capital expenditure account paid for by the current taxpayers. You want to enjoy the tax dollars that have been set aside for the library for continual upkeep and renovation and the technology that keeps moving forward. There will not be a referendum to collect more money.

Trustee Orth asked if the Winnetka facility is owned or leased. Ms. Wolf responded it is owned and was donated by the Lloyds. Trustee Terrill asked about their plans for the Winnetka Post Office site. Ms. Wolf indicated the Board decided in 2008, not to go forward with that. It was just an exploration and no plans were drawn up. Another option would be a central location between the two branches. They are not looking at expanding at this time because of ADA codes and different building codes. The Winnetka branch has two bathrooms for patrons. Trustee Terrill asked with 12,000+ cardholders is the library at a maximum. Ms. Wolf indicated no and said that things change over time and collections change. The biggest concern for them is making sure the spaces are comfortable and places that people want to go to and that they are being good stewards of the taxpayer dollars. The Winnetka renovation removed asbestos and took care of the lighting and increased ADA accessibility. The Northfield bathrooms were renovated because of plumbing issues. Ms. Wolf said that the acoustics were addressed in Winnetka. The acoustics prior needed a glass wall for the area that needed to be quiet. There were sound studies done involving various scenarios. This renovation was something that wasn't seen, but it was a benefit.

Trustee Orth said that with the tax dollars received each year, how much goes into capital expenditures, savings and how much goes into running the library. How is it divided up between Northfield and Winnetka so that the bank account speaks for capital improvements grows? Ms. Wolf said they have a capital asset study plan and it tells them what to do and when. They are set to update that this year. It tells them what the life of their assets is and when they should look at replacing them. For instance, they replaced the roof at Winnetka and the HVAC in Winnetka. In Northfield, the Village took care of the HVAC and replaced the roof. Those are on a cycle and for their dollars and their taxes, they look at it as what is on the

replacement schedule and what needs to be done. The needs at the Northfield facility are a little less because they don't have the responsibility for the building. They do look at the furniture, shelving and carpeting every 8 to 10 years. The plan is for capital replacement. Trustee Orth pointed out that they don't own the building, yet the library wants money to be able to do interior improvements in the Northfield facility. Ms. Wolf responded that things done at the Northfield facility are more comforts for the patrons. Ms. Shoup added that it is patron driven and their goal is to present plans. When a plan comes in it doesn't mean it's a done deal, it means what do you think? This is a process. Trustee Orth asked if some of that is done through consultant based, staff based or through the community. Ms. Wolf responded it's all three. Architectural will draw the plans based on what's happening in libraries throughout the country, what's the latest in technology and you may need to increase your outlets, and accessibility for computer plugins. She stressed they are not doing anything right now.

Ms. Wolf indicated they recently sent out a community survey and they found that 62% of the patrons who answered go to both buildings. They want people to know the library is conveniently located in both communities. The nice thing about the Northfield library is how close it is to restaurants and shops. The patrons can pick up their materials at either location. They are excited seeing that people go back and forth.

Trustee Whittaker questioned how many surveys they received. Ms. Wolf responded just under 1,000 for this plan. Patrons responded that they visited the Winnetka facility 27%; Northfield 9%; visited both 62%; used only through website 1%; have not used the library at all 2%. Ms. Wolf said there are many people that don't do surveys. Ms. Wolf said if you have a library card you can check out materials, learn a language, stream movies and music, read and listen to the newest title from anywhere 24/7, create and bring ideas to life. In the Studio, you can read the New York Times, read magazines anywhere, and have free air conditioning all summer long. She said that e-audio digital online, you can bring up People magazine or the New York Times and many more. E-audio books and e-books are exclusively for their cardholders.

There are combined 700 – 800 items a day being checked out from both libraries. Trustee Orth said that even though Northfield is 31% of the population we're checking out at a much greater rate. These are site specific. A total for this year's circulation, which indicates the success of the automatic renewal program, is about 482,000 circulations. This does not include 13,000 items that they send out to other libraries from our library district. When you add that in, they are almost at 500,000 circulations. This is electronic as well which has gone up 40% and is an additional 40,000 checkouts. Some of the growth that they have seen in the electronic checkout is e-audio books. People are adopting that format because basically you are putting it on in their car or anywhere else. She said CD's are a thing of the past. Trustee Orth asked if that's what they attribute the CW increase from the last four years to 2019. Ms. Wolf said she considers that automatic renewals are a part of it as well as digitals. They still see high circulation of books and they are seeing circulation increase with the automatic renewals. The renewal policy was changed from 4 renewals to 3 renewals. They are continuously evaluating what is the trend for people keeping materials at home.

Ms. Wolf also indicated that there are 17,180 patrons that attended programs. They provide 1,102 programs a year for their patrons. There are 392 adult programs and 720 youth programs

including story times Monday through Friday which alternates at both branches. They also provide a quarterly newsletter showing current programs. The newsletter can be received electronically as well. It can be subscribed to on their website.

President Frazier thanked them and appreciates that they are keeping the libraries moving and robust. Ms. Wolf sees that there is even more call for e-books, e-audio books and e-materials for children because they are using their tablets and reading on them.

Discussion on the Skokie Valley Trail Phase III Grant Application

Assistant to the Village Manager Melissa DeFeo indicated that the Skokie Valley Trail has been a really hot topic lately, so she wanted to provide the Board with an update on the various components of the project and get some direction on how and when we move forward.

On the topic of the Village-owned ROW, or as it has been affectionately re-named the Nature Trail, per the Board's direction at last month's meeting, we are working towards opening the Nature Trail to the community so it becomes an asset for all Northfield residents. She has discussed the Trail with our insurance provider, IRMA, and they have made a number of recommendations to reduce our potential liability. IRMA indicated that because the Trail obviously predates ADA requirements, it does not have to be maintained to ADA standards.

Regarding maintenance, they have recommended doing an annual spring cut-back and leaving maintenance at that, to avoid further exposure to liability if a defect does not get addressed. IRMA also recommended installing signage at Trail access points and include the same information on our website, with statements like "Trail is not manicured," "Use caution as there are many trip hazards," and "Use at your own risk."

Before advertising the trail to the public, IRMA has recommended removing any potential hazards, including dead trees. Public Works has identified about 130 dead trees along the Nature Trail that we believe should be removed before advertising the trail for public use. Public Works is working on putting together a plan on how to efficiently and cost-effectively remove these trees. After these trees are addressed and signs are posted, we can begin to advertise the trail to the public.

Trustee Orth asked if there would be a cleanup drive like what Trustee Fowler discussed to clean up the stuff that magically appeared. AVM DeFeo said yes, after the meeting last month, a letter was sent to all of the residents who abut the trail saying that if you have dumped anything back there, please pick it up. The Village will be enforcing that soon and will involve conversations with the homeowners and citations if it is not cleaned up. Trustee Whittaker indicated that at the Go Green meetings, they discuss the possibility of adopting parts of the trail as well as the Skokie Valley Trail. AVM DeFeo indicated the residents have discussed putting together community volunteer cleanup days but then decided it was a bad time because poison ivy is at its peak.

President Frazier asked if all IRMA said we had to do is post signs, remove standing dead trees and an annual cleanup. VM Sigman added and clear the path. Trustee Orth asked if IRMA mentioned the debris or private dumping to be cleaned up before we advertise it as well. AVM DeFeo indicated IRMA said that we should remove hazards along the path. President Frazier asked what the time frame is for this work. VM Sigman responded that the biggest concern is the 130 dead trees. The Village doesn't have the equipment to get back there to remove some of the larger ones and there isn't any money in this year's budget to do so. Each tree needs to be looked at and then we can determine what percentage can we do with our staff and what it would take to outsource the rest. Once we get quotes, it can be put in next year's budget. If the cost isn't too high, we could look at doing them over the winter months.

AVM DeFeo then said that since the Board's July meeting, staff met with representatives from Union Pacific and outlined the three segments in Northfield which would require us to lease their land. Their representative indicated that they do not lease their land in segments. He made it very clear that their business model focuses on the entire rail "corridor," which would essentially become useless to them should a bike path be built on any segment, so the Village would likely have to lease the entire "corridor." He could not define what this "corridor" entails, and he didn't have the information available to him at the meeting. President Frazier asked if the corridor is from Winnetka Road to Voltz. AVM DeFeo said yes, the corridor could stretch from the Wisconsin border to Chicago so we don't know what that corridor is.

It was suggested to UP that a lease could include a "kick out" clause to remove us from their property should they want it back, and he indicated they have done that in other communities and kicking out a bike trail brings with it a lot of bad press, so they no longer do that. The representative then asked us to send him a detailed request indicating the desired segments and he would pass it on to his Real Estate Team for review and a response. The engineers have sent them email, and we are waiting to hear back on what they define as the "corridor" and a cost estimate.

Following this very discouraging meeting with UP, Wilmette is discussing modifying their plans to avoid needing their one proposed UP segment. If Wilmette changes their plans for this segment, Northfield would be the only entity left, in the consortium, with the need to use the UP right-of-way. That would make the process of obtaining a lease even more difficult and expensive. VM Sigman clarified that the reason we were trying to do segments is because UP generally wants so much money for their land, that we wanted to lease as little as we could. If we have to pay for the entire corridor, the cost will go up dramatically.

AVM DeFeo indicated that all of the communities that are participating in this project agree that adjusting the route to stay entirely within the ComEd right-of-way would be the best approach. For this reason, we have requested the engineers to prepare a proposal to determine if the trail can be designed to entirely avoid UP property and fit fully within the ComEd ROW. Should this study prove that construction is feasible in the ComEd ROW, we would move forward to amend the Phase I study to run along the ComEd property. Should this study prove that construction is not feasible in the ComEd ROW, we would need to wait for UP's response and evaluate if the

project is still economically feasible. We hope to have this new engineering contract on the agenda for approval at the September Board meeting.

At last month's meeting, the Board directed staff to work with the communities of Glencoe and Northbrook to review the segment from Tower Road to Voltz Road with the hope of moving the proposed path from the Nature Trail to the UP or ComEd rights-of-way. She pointed out that from Tower to Voltz, the Nature Trail is on Village of Northfield-owned property, but the adjacent UP and ComEd rights-of-way are actually in Northbrook and Glencoe.

We met with the Village Managers of Glencoe and Northbrook, who have indicated they are willing to fully cooperate with the Skokie Valley Trail project, but made it clear they are not interested in having to lease land from UP. We have provided them with a proposal from our engineer to review the ComEd right-of-way in their communities to see if the Trail alignment can be adjusted to avoid UP right-of-way. There is also a meeting with both communities scheduled for the first week of September, to discuss how to move forward with this study. There have also been conversations with Northbrook about transferring ownership and annexation of those two northern parcels. They have so far been receptive to this idea. Attorneys Hill and Milluzzi are reviewing the annexation and ownership history in order to see how we can get those shifted to Northbrook. Trustee Orth asked if that looks promising. VM Sigman said that everyone wants to understand how it came to be. We have land that is actually incorporated into Northfield that isn't contiguous to us. This doesn't seem technically possible. We are trying to unravel how we got it. Northbrook and Glencoe have intergovernmental agreements that came into place when the area was unincorporated. They have some annexation agreements between each other and they don't know how some of these changes may impact those. VM Sigman was told the Mercedes dealership is in Northbrook and they receive the property taxes, but the sales tax goes to Glencoe based on these longstanding agreements. Northbrook seemed receptive. Our Board would first have to approve a jurisdictional transfer. The portion that is not contiguous to Northfield would have to be de-annexed and then annexed into Northbrook. We could then do the jurisdictional transfer. This is not something that will happen fast.

Trustee Fowler asked if we can have UP crossings. AVM DeFeo said there are two separate processes. One goes to the State of Illinois ICC, if it is just the UP crossings and that is a much easier process than negotiating the use of entire corridor. We hope to get those crossings, but see what the cost will be.

The cohort of communities was awarded an Invest in Cook grant for 50% of the Phase II study cost. We won't find out if we received the other grant we applied for- an 80% ITEP grant until October. If we are awarded that grant, the engineers are confident we could leverage our Invest in Cook grant to fund 50% of the ITEP 20% match. The Phase II study will begin as soon as Phase I wraps up, and is expected to be completed by 2021.

Ms. DeFeo indicated the ball has really started rolling on this project with all of this news and excitement about the Phase II grant award. Now that it is, we wanted to come back to the Board to discuss how to move forward to construction, given the previously direction that construction funding must be paid for through private donations.

Skokie, Wilmette, and Glenview have expressed great interest in applying for an 80% ITEP grant to fund the Phase III construction this fall. Those grant awards will be announced this coming spring, and if approved, construction could commence as early as 2022 or whenever the Phase II study is finalized. The ITEP application requires that each community's Board adopt a supporting resolution that formally commits to paying the 20% matching funds, which is currently estimated at \$566,000. In Northfield that could change dramatically based on UP's response or if we discover we can fit the trail entirely into the ComEd ROW. VM Sigman had conversations with Glencoe and Northbrook as to whether they will also pay for their share of the trail for design work. Trustee Whittaker asked AVM DeFeo what she meant by significantly. She responded that if we do the common feasibility study to squeeze the path into the ComEd right of way, it would dramatically reduce the cost to do the project. The total cost in the UP rights of way is \$1 million and that's assuming that we can just do segment leases.

If the Village wanted to join the cohort's grant application for this fall, the Board would have to approve a funding resolution at the October meeting. If we are awarded the grant, the community would have two years to raise the matching funds, or the Village would be obligated to use Village dollars to make up any shortfall.

So, in order to respond to the request from the Villages of Skokie, Wilmette, and Glenview to partner on this October's ITEP application, we are looking for direction as to whether the Board is comfortable adopting a funding resolution and pushing forward, or if we want to wait and take an independent path once we have a better handle on the construction costs and private contributions have been raised.

President Frazier commented that her comfort level now is zero. We've done this project with the thought that it will be paid for privately. She is not comfortable in putting the Village up for these funds, especially when it could change dramatically and go up. She views these things conservatively and she doesn't see putting the Village up for this money when we can go out for the grant ourselves when we know what funds we're dealing with. She has asked Trustee Goodwin to chair the Skokie Valley Trail committee and would like the trustees' thoughts.

Trustee Goodwin indicated he is a big fan of the trail, but as President Frazier has said, we're not really sure what that amount would be. He pointed out that we don't have that kind of funding even if we know what the amount is. It's a risk and we need to be conservative and while it would be great to jump in right now, he doesn't believe there is enough information.

Trustee Whittaker agrees because we are gambling with the unknown and to commit financially is not being responsible. Until we know the facts and numbers and make an educated decision, it is not smart to commit.

Trustee Terrill agreed.

Trustee Fowler said he agrees and wants to understand the ITEP. If we don't do it with them can we do another grant application? If they get their grant application completed and funded,

would we potentially get turned down as a bad risk? AVM DeFeo said she and VM Sigman believe that without Northfield on the grant application, they're less likely to get a grant. They are encouraging us to join the application because they think it's a slam dunk with us involved. VM Sigman said just as the trustees have talked about, there are too many facts we don't have yet, to ask people to fundraise or the Board to commit when we don't know if we can do it on ComEd right of way is premature. The other towns don't have those complications so they want to go ahead and they want to get it done fast. She feels it is very unlikely that their grant would be approved without Northfield. If it is, it would just make our independent grant application even stronger. We would be the missing link. Trustee Goodwin believes that they would understand Northfield's position by putting ourselves in financial risk at this point without knowing, especially when we're the little guy. VM Sigman added that in 3 to 6 months we should know where we are and whether we can get this onto the ComEd ROW. We will also have a better idea of where Northbrook and Glencoe are and a better idea on the annexation or the vacation of that property. We may not have any clarity from UP. It took 2 years to get a 10 minute meeting with all four towns and engineers pushing.

President Frazier said it is important to be on solid ground before moving ahead with this project. We don't need to rush through it.

An audience member questioned the access points and where they are. AVM DeFeo said there aren't any yet. These locations will be evaluated before opening it up.

Trustee Terrill thinks we should get all the bikers we can get to be a collective sense of supporting this plan.

An unknown woman asked why the engineers said they had to remove 73 trees if the SVT went where the nature trail is but now they are saying 130 dead trees will be removed. AVM DeFeo responded that the engineering analysis counted living trees that had to be removed for the path. A lot of the 130 trees are dead Ash trees that we lost to the Emerald Ash borer years ago and were never removed. They were not counted in the engineer's numbers unless they were in the path. The unknown woman said that the engineer's study for that did not take it into account, at least they were not aware of, all the dead trees that were going to have to be removed in order to make that trail safe. The only reason for removing all the dead trees now is to make it safe. She said they were not aware of all the dead trees they were planning on taking out. If the SVT were put on there, the same thing would be happening. She asked if that was part of the 100 page Baxter Woodman report. AVM DeFeo didn't think the Baxter Woodman report discussed the removal of dead trees. They are doing a Phase I feasibility study. The trees need to come down because it is a liability issue for the Village. VM Sigman added that Baxter Woodman just looked at the zone where they were going to build and what would have to be removed in that zone. They weren't looking at the 40 feet on each side of that. The unknown woman questioned where the estimated costs were documented for the tree removal.

Trustee Whittaker said that IRMA, the risk management agency, will look at things completely different. They look at hazards. Doing our due diligence as a Village, if the path would have

gone in the right of way, IRMA would have come in and said what we would have to do but we never got to that point in the process. AVM DeFeo said that taking the trees down is a form of maintenance and maintenance costs are not included in the construction costs discussed at the meeting last month. This is a big culture shift for the Public Works team and the residents who live there. The Public Works team has never perceived this as a nature trail; they perceived it as the Village owned right of way that we use to access our pump station.

Trustee Orth indicated that some of the trees have died since some of the surveys and studies have been done. Over the last winter, there were a lot of trees that have died and so that number may have increased over the last couple of years.

Trustee Whittaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Goodwin to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.