

**STATEMENT OF PATRICIA MEYER ON BEHALF OF
THE NAHC LIAISON COMMITTEE REGARDING
ZONING AND PLANNING ON JULY 25, 2007**

I don't think there is any question that the properties in the Water Street area could be put to better use when redeveloped. The Water Street Vision Statement provides guidelines which encourage development that compliments the downtown core and encourages commercial entities which may be lacking in the specific area and, frankly, could bring **significant** tax revenues to our City in the coming years. The Vision Statement is a good plan. There are however concerns regarding the proposed project.

As chair for the NAHC Liaison Committee regarding Zoning and Planning, we have met with the developer, attended meetings with Staff and TAB, and we continue to educate ourselves and our membership on this proposed project. The NAHC has taken no position either in support of or in opposition to the Water Street Development project. We have however some concerns and questions.

I will limit myself to Traffic and Congestion. We are all aware of the traffic and congestion issues throughout the City but the focus here is the downtown core.

The Vision Statement promotes mixed use development. Mixed use development, when done successfully, will bring traffic (be it pedestrian and/or vehicles) and add to congestion. This is a reality. As a City we want our developments to be successful so we should assure our infrastructure is in place and is able to handle this increase. As a City planning for our future, we need to go one step further – not only handle this specific increase but also consider the increase of future development in this area. It is safe to assume

if this project proves successful, it will be a catalyst for future development.

On July 7 TAB voted against the traffic related components of the proposed project and questioned the Water Street Traffic Impact Study. From what I have been told and understand, the wrong questions were being asked. Whether it was the wrong questions or whether TAB has additional questions, I am uncertain.

Questions **do** have to be asked as this project may have significant impact on our congestion issue.

My concern is that the Traffic Study may not be as accurate as we need it to be. We need this Study to encompass all aspects of traffic patterns both in the present and which are probable in the future; to take into account the usage of Aurora Ave as both a “gateway” into the downtown core and as an “alternate route” around the downtown core.

The most striking missing component noticed in the Traffic Study was the exclusion of the school year traffic. Most significantly – the added traffic from Central High School (consisting of students, staff, and buses) but also of the elementary schools and North Central College were not included as the study was done during the summer and on a Saturday.

Many of us are well aware of the high usage of the Aurora Avenue section from Eagle to Washington. Recent modifications to traffic controls have improved the traffic flow. I travel that area on a daily basis – it is not uncommon to wait 2-3 traffic signal changes to get through the area especially coming from the west. Any development in the Water Street area will impact Aurora Ave and Main Street.

This development proposes a parking garage for just over 400 cars, on-street parking for about 25 vehicles, not to mention the delivery trucks which will be necessary and the refuse removal. I am confident in saying that Aurora Avenue along with Main and Webster will be highly impacted with this increase in traffic.

A couple of items we are considering and I ask you to consider: this project is for just about half of the Vision Statement area. The proposed garage provides 147 spaces beyond what is required for this project alone. Does this project take into account how the surrounding properties (also bound by the Vision's guidelines) will develop or could develop to fit the Vision Statement guidelines? Traffic and parking is a major concern.

Does the traffic study and the impacts this development may have take into account other developments such as possible changes in traffic patterns at Central High School and at Naper Settlement? Aurora Avenue is key in all these developments.

At what point will we reach "grid-lock"? At what point will consumers decide not to endure the congestion? Unlike other developments in the downtown core, there are 2 legal ways out of the Water Street area – Aurora or Main (Main loads traffic either onto Aurora or into downtown). How is grid-lock going to be avoided? According to recent studies Aurora/Washington is "near-failure" now.

This project alone addresses many of the goals and desires of the Vision Statement. Is it too much? Is it too intense? What will be the end result for the area?

Specific to the Preliminary Drawings and details provided to date, there are some questions:

- The tightness of turns onto Water (11ft lane) and onto Squaw (10-11ft lane). Truck drivers seem to prefer wide turns (wider than what has been designated often times). Pedestrian traffic is directed to these intersections. If this is a tight turn (by truck preferences), should pedestrians be directed to that area?
- Where is the dedicated delivery zone for the proposed mixed use building on Webster? Will on-street parking spaces be designated as delivery zones (similar to the Tower Building)? While delivery times may be regulated, will it be practical or enforced? i.e. FedEx and UPS usually do not follow the schedule of delivery trucks. Where is the refuse area and collection for this building?
- Where is the delivery zone (FedEx, UPS, etc.) for the proposed office building on Webster? There is no dedicated parking in front of or on the side of this building?
- Where is the delivery zone for the proposed Loggia Building and the Theatre Building? Across the street? The street parking is planned to be 7ft feet wide – my Expedition is 7ft 9 inches wide mirror to mirror and delivery trucks are even wider I would think.
- How can double parking or illegal parking resulting in blockage of Water, Webster and Squaw be avoided? Blockages such as these could result in a domino effect onto surrounding roadways and cause backups. A good example is deliveries on Washington – how can we avoid this?
- Has the feasibility of exiting from Squaw and getting into the left turn lane on Main at Aurora and Main been considered? How many cars can be in the “Q-ing” on Main? How many cars can be in the “Q-ing” on Aurora and Washington? Is this practical?

- What type of traffic control is planned for Squaw/Main and Water/Main? This development proposes adding a significant number of pedestrians and vehicles into a relatively small area while “normal” circumstances would not support additional controls, does this proposed development support it?
- Will Webster be changed to “right turn only” or will we have and need traffic signals/controls at every intersection on Aurora from Eagle to Washington?

I realize many of the concerns and questions I have raised may be more appropriate for TAB. TAB has made its decision and I asked that you also consider their reasons. I ask you to consider these items as I believe they are directly related to this project and will impact current life in Naperville and future planning and development in Naperville.

Under the Vision Statement we are attracting both vehicles and pedestrians to this area – in order for this to have long term viability, both vehicular traffic and pedestrian access/friendliness must be thoroughly addressed and accounted for.

The Water Street area can be a tremendous asset to Naperville. This project has many merits and benefits – the questions is: is it too much and how does it fit now and in the future?

Please consider an additional traffic study which encompasses possible/probable future development in the immediate Water Street area and along shared roadways in addition to this development and which takes into consideration not only the projected number of consumers to the area but also the passing through traffic and somehow determining a projected number of other traffic which will result.

As a City we have provided a Vision for this area. We have a developer who has proposed a development for a significant portion of the area which they believe to be in accordance with the Vision. We need to determine how much can this area actually handle and how it is going to be done.