



August 05, 2019

Dear Fellow Residents,

At our July Village Board meeting, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance establishing a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) in the Village's Business District. The Trustees and I believe that this economic development instrument will give the Village a valuable tool to encourage appropriate development in our business district. My goal for the TIF District is fourfold: to improve the quality of our business district to the benefit of all residents, to establish appropriate housing, restaurants, shops and professional services for a family based community, to improve the infrastructure and amenities and to stimulate private investment at a controlled pace in our business district, leading to an expanded tax base.

The Village Board has been exploring TIF as an option to revitalize the business district for over a year. After multiple opportunities for public comment, the Board revised the draft ordinances to address many resident concerns, providing guarantees that the Village would not use its power of eminent domain to acquire residential property within the district and limiting the amount of outstanding bonds that could be financed with TIF funds to \$5 Million. While we don't have any plans to issue bonds, I have also personally committed to not pledge the Village's full faith and credit against any bonds issued for the TIF district.

While the schools will still receive increases in their requested tax levy, some expressed concern that the schools may be negatively impacted. Therefore, the Trustees also committed to enter into negotiations with both the Joseph Sears and New Trier School Districts to address potential funding gaps between subsidies from the TIF district and the true financial impact of new students from within the TIF district.

Ensuring for smart development was also important to the Village Board. The Trustees also voted to establish an ad hoc committee that will review the business district section of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan section and offer recommendations to update the document. If you are interested in serving on this committee, I encourage you to send an email to me at president@vokil.org. I have also asked our Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals to review the Village's regulations and evaluate whether, as currently written, they provide both the flexibility and appropriate protections for our community now that a TIF district is in place.

Despite us evaluating the option of a TIF district for over a year, one of the very important lessons learned during the TIF discussion was that we didn't communicate as effectively as we should have at the beginning of the analysis. I will be working with our Village staff and the Board to develop a communication strategy that will better inform our residents of upcoming proposals early in process. One way to help stay in touch is to sign up for our Kenilworth Contact newsletter. The link is on the left navigation of our website – vokil.org.

I recognize that with change comes uncertainty that can be unnerving and upsetting. Change, however, also brings new opportunities to create something better for our community. Our Village has seen many improvements over the last few years. We have upgraded our beach amenities and have found attendance there has increased. We've improved the safety of a previously dangerous intersection at Roger and Sterling. We've completed the first phase of major infrastructure improvements and are planning the second phase. We've begun to outline a vision for the decommissioned water plant and will be refining that vision in the near future. While it may take some time to see progress, I'm optimistic that a TIF District will help us reach the goals for our business area. I look forward to working with many of you as we continue to enhance life in our community for both current and future generations.

Warmest regards,



Ann Potter

Village President

