Name (first and last)	Address of residence or property owned	Meeting date	Agenda Item (Property address or description of agenda item)	Position on Agenda Item (as applicable)	How would you like to make your public comment?	If you are providing a written comment, please leave here:	Are you representing yourself as an individual or speaking on behalf of a group?	Please name the group of people for whom you are the designated speaker.
Tom Stanton	2755 Lawndale Ave		Zoning Code and Zone Map	Opposed	Written comment	The proposed zoning code changes are too much, too fast, and will lead to an overall net negative for the residents of Evanston and our communities within. The desired outcomes to be addressed can be achieved through less drastic measures.		
Frank Hill	827 Lincoln St	1/8/2025	Comprehensive Plan	In favor	Written comment	I am a homeowner in the 7th Ward and a member of the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation (JRC) where I chair the Racial Equity Task Force. I support Envision Evanston, Equitable Zoning, and affordable housing. The Land Use Commission should recommend the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code to City Council without any further undue delay.		
Rob Biesenbach	2011 Orrington Ave	1/8/2025	Comprehensive Plan	Opposed	Written comment	Beyond the substance of the proposed zoning changes, I feel the way it's being done is highly objectionable. Changing the definition/description of R1 without changing the label to actually match the description is bizarre. It's as if the FDA suddenly changed the definition of low-fat food, raising the standard from no more than 30% of calories from fat to 70% while still allowing food manufacturers to label their product "low fat." This is bound to be confusing to residents, which makes one wonder whether that's the point of doing it this way. The process seems very rushed.		
Lynn Gendleman	806 Milburn Street, Evanston IL 60201	1/8/2025	806 Milburn Street, Evanston IL 60201	Opposed	Written comment	My husband and I are completely opposed to the principles included in Envision 2045. More specifically, we oppose any attempt to abolish or even tinker with R-1 zoning. We purchased our home because we love the neighborhood THE WAY IT IS, and the thought of ruining it with 4-flats or even 2-flats is abhorrent. Please slow down the process of such a critical change to life in Evanston. Under no circumstances should any portion of Envision 2045 be passed prior to the municipal election in April. To do otherwise would fly in the face of the democratic process. Lynn Gendleman		
Michelle Chlebek	2207 Orrington Avenue	1/8/2025	Zoning changes	Opposed	In person		Self	
Betty Bogg	2121 Dewey Ave	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston 2045	In favor	In person		Group	Connections for the Homeless
Naqiy Mcmullen	1012 Austin St	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston 2045 Comprehensive Plan Update.	In favor	In person		Self	
Beth Lange	807 Davis Street, Unit 1805, Evanston 60201	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston 2045	In favor	Written comment	I support the proposed Comprehensive Plan and I urge this Commission to approve it. Evanston needs to update its Comprehensive Plan and I support the Envision Evanston 2045 proposed plan to provide a roadmap for future priorities and efforts in Evanston. This Commission can approve the plan and related ordinances (healthy buildings and inclusive housing) that will revise and simplify zoning and set important goals and priorities for increasing housing in Evanston. This governing body should also take action to initiate some of the implementation plan work that is identified in the Plan. Our city needs more affordable housing and updates to the City's plans, zoning and ordinances need to happen now. I'm a long-time Evanstonian. I'm currently a condo owner in the First Ward. For over 20 years I was a homeowner in the 3rd ward, and I grew up in the 8th and 9th wards. Over this time I've lived in numerous types of housing and I know how essential it is to provide many types of housing in our community. Thank you for your public service. Sincerely, Beth Lange		
Jim McKee	631 Forest Ave.	1/8/2025	Public comment on Envision 2045	Opposed	In person		Self	
Mark Karlin	442 Elmwood Ave	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston 2025 Zoning Reform	In favor	In person		Self	
Liz Nelson		1/8/2025	Public Hearing | Comprehensive Plan- Envision Evanston 2045	In favor	In person		Group	Joining Forces for Affordable Housing
Lee Greenberg	2207 Orrington Ave	1/8/0025	Proposed zoning changes	Opposed	In person		Self	
Sarah Petersen	2401 Hastings Ave, Evanston, IL 60201	1/8/2025	Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Reform/Affordable Housing	In favor	In person		Self	
Lori Keenan	2214 Colfax St	1/8/0025	Envision Evanston	Opposed	In person		Self	
Scott Roberts	320 Dempster	1/8/2025	Zoning reform	In favor	In person		Self	
Alf McConnell	2677 Orrington Avenue	1/8/2025	Proposed Evanston Zoning change	Opposed	In person		Self	

Cat Vielma	2738 Central Park Avenue	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston	In favor	Written comment	As a working parent, while I wish I could join your in person -- I'm likely either in the middle of a dinner meltdown with my two kids. That said, I want to provide a written letter of support on Envision Evanston. The reality is that we need more housing, of all types, all across Evanston. We need it to expand our taxpayers, increase D65's declining enrollment, and simply put - to position Evanston as a community of choice in the Chicagoland area. I recognize many of my neighbors are fearful of the proposed changes. There have been anonymous flyers (seriously people?) shared in my neighborhood, stating the "fabric of the community" will be destroyed and telling us that four-plexes will immediately appear. Here's the reality. We have a growing aging community, with nowhere to go, that is staying put in their Evanston homes. I appreciate and celebrate my senior citizen neighbors. But with their choice to stay put, our property tax for their home is static (thanks to the senior freeze) and we don't have as many young families nearby. We cannot solve every housing issue with EE2045, but it's a step in the right direction to allow up to four-plex homes. More neighbors are nothing to be afraid of, whether they are wealthy, single, a young family, lower-income, or a retiree. We need more neighbors. And to my neighbors who believe development will magically appear -- have you seen interest rates lately? Have you heard of the incoming tariffs on steel and lumber? Do you know that our country continues to under produce the number of homes needed -- totaling a deficit between 3M and 5M units of housing? The development and construction communities were decimated after 2008 and have not recovered. It is really hard to develop and build housing, of any kind. It will takes *years* for a new single family, duplex, triplex or yes, even a scary fourplex to be completed. And of course, the City will still retain its appropriate and rigorous review of any residential development - from civil, architecture, fire, and so on. Secondly -- even when these potential homes appear, we're talking about a few hundred lots that would allow the upzoning. I cannot claim this is 100% accurate, but I searched the Cook County Assessor's GIS Tool and a quick look makes it seem like we're talking about what -- three hundred lots at most? Those are the lots that are 1) 6,500 sq ft or larger and 2) currently a single family home or vacant. Use the tool yourself to map out your neighborhood. You will be surprised to find that the "fear" is not based in reality. Stop with the fear mongering. Let's welcome neighbors to support our small businesses, schools, and re-energize Evanston. Sincerely, Cat Vielma		
Luke Harris-Ferree	1425 Washington St. Unit 1 Evanston, IL 60202	1/8/2025	Comprehensive plan	In favor	In person		Self	
Adam Levin	809 Monticello Place	1/8/2025	Rezoning	Opposed	Written comment	Please postpone deciding about the Envision Evanston plan until after the election. Residents need more time to have input. I am against changing the zoning for single family homes.		

Jill W Graham	2439 Ashland Avenue	1/8/2025	2045 Comprehensive Plan	In favor	Written comment	KEY POINTS IN 1/8/2025 TESTIMONY FROM JILL GRAHAM TO THE EVANSTON LAND USE COMMISSION 1.I support goal to increase Evanston's supply of housing and thus its tax base; elimination of single-family zoning and allowing 2, 3, or even 4 dwelling units per lot in those residential districts where the lot size and setback requirements permit it (perhaps 40% of R1 and R2 district lots). 2.I am concerned that, if left only to the private market, this invitation to expand housing supply will negatively impact housing affordability because: a.Those in the most expensive residential districts, with the largest yards, may be most resistant to adding density to their neighborhood; but for any who are willing to sell (part or all of) their property for re-development in such expensive districts, the initial property acquisition cost will be so high that a project will be attractive to developers only if additional high-priced dwelling units are created, leaving the need for affordable housing unaddressed. b.Developers may seek to purchase and redevelop properties in residential districts that already have the most abundant supply of affordable housing, districts where the initial property acquisition cost is relatively inexpensive in Evanston. The risk in that case is that the new dwelling units built on such property will have the effect of gentrifying the neighborhood, and actually reduce the supply of affordable housing. 3.To address the concern that increasing Evanston's supply of housing should also guarantee that a significant portion of that supply be affordable, I urge the following revisions to the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO): a.Reduce the IHO's application from 6+ unit buildings to 5+ unit buildings and increase the percentage of affordable units required to 20%. b.In residential districts where up to four dwelling units per lot are a permitted use, wherever there is more than one dwelling unit, at least one of the additional dwelling units must be affordable. (E.g., a modest ADU a permitted use on R-1 lot; or at least one unit be affordable in a duplex, triplex or quadplex.) 4.To assure progress toward achieving the goals of growing the supply of housing, including affordable housing in Evanston, we need to set specific measurable targets and collect data over time, all to guide further changes to the IHO and the City's forthcoming strategic housing plan. In a previous submission, I suggested this be done by creating a profile of the city's housing stock (in terms of its affordability) and then adopting land use policies so that the city's housing stock gradually comes to match a profile of incomes earned by all those who are employed in Evanston. When employees live locally, their commutes are minimized, which limits the use of fossil fuels required for longer commutes and also its associated air pollution. The higher the proportion of those who work in Evanston who can afford to live in Evanston, the cleaner the environment. Land use policies can be designed and administered to create and maintain a supply of homes that are affordable to the full range of those who work within the city limits. The target outcome is a municipal housing stock of sufficient diversity, in terms enough homes of all sizes, at all affordability levels, both for sale and to rent, that workers at all income levels can find an affordable place to house their families in Evanston, if they choose to do so. Progress toward that goal can be assessed by measuring what proportion of Evanston's workforce lives in Evanston. 5.Perhaps that is what the 2045 Comprehensive Plan consultants intend with their recommendation to "Implement a comprehensive housing strategy." Certainly H1.2 ("Complete a housing needs assessment to determine the types and qualities of housing needed for Evanston's population") is a critical component of building a strategic housing plan. My suggestion is that the needs assessment be guided by data-gathering from Evanston's public and private employers (both profit and nonprofit) about the incomes earned by their respective workforces. Data about the current home addresses of workers, method and length of commute, and interest in/desire to move to Evanston (for those who do not already live here) also could be gathered. Using all that data, an "Employee Affordable Housing Gap" could be calculated. Closing that gap between the affordability of Evanston's current housing stock and the profile of what those who work in Evanston can afford could then become a measurable outcome target for the 2045 Comprehensive Plan. A schedule for measuring progress toward closing that gap (perhaps at five-year intervals) could be incorporated in the plan as a built-in assessment feature. 6.Some additional benefits of a workforce that lives close to work: a.Environmental protection by means of limiting fossil fuel pollution from long commutes to and from work b.Employees who live nearby are more able to arrive at work on time, a benefit to employers c.Workers and their families benefit from the many assets of living in Evanston, (schools, parks, lake, culture, etc.), raising employee satisfaction, which in turn may reduce worker turnover, another benefit for employers d.As Evanston residents, those who work here and their families also are shoppers and taxpayers, adding to the economic vitality of the City e.The City of Evanston maintains the economic diversity of its population, avoiding becoming another North Shore community accessible only to wealthy residents. Jill W. Graham Professor Emerita Quinlan School of Business Loyola University Chicago jgraham@luc.edu 2439 Ashland Ave. Evanston, IL 60201 847-328-5612		
Roger Williams		1/8/2025			In person		Self	
Pat Savage-Williams		1/8/2025			In person		Self	
Michael Zimmer	2881 Sheridan Place	1/8/2025	Comprehensive Plan	Opposed	In person		Self	
Thomas Kenemore	900 Chicago Avenue	1/8/2025	Envision Evanston 2045	In favor	Written comment	To Members of the Land Use Commission: We are homeowners in the 3rd Ward and members of the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation (JRC). We support Envision Evanston, Equitable Zoning, and affordable housing. We recommend that there be specific and measurable guidelines to ensure that the goal of affordable housing is met to meet the needs of a diverse population who can both work and live in Evanston. We also recommend limits to the number and heights of buildings in the downtown area to not exceed the height of the current tallest buildings. We encourage the Land Use Commission to recommend the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code to City Council. Sincerely, Ellen and Thomas Kenemore		
Evelyn Forstadt	2707 Euclid Park Place, Evanston			Opposed	Written comment	Please do not change the zoning laws currently on the books. I live in a lovely Evanston neighborhood of single-family homes. Two-flats and four-flats will ruin the character and aesthetics of my environment, plus destroy my property value. Don't do it.		

Lori Keenan		1/8/0025	Envision Evanston	Opposed	Written comment	Thank you for volunteering your time and your professional expertise to be on this commission. I know what an absolutely thankless task this can be, and I applaud your service. I have often said the brilliant Evanstonians I have worked with on various initiatives in town could run a small nation, and you are no exception, so thank you. I know that the recommendations of the Boards and Commissions in town are often summarily disregarded, and that your good counsel often goes unheeded. I understand how frustrating that can be. I have known entire committees to resign in protest over what they have witnessed -- as was the case with the ethics committee a few years back. In fact, a close friend of mine and former colleague of yours stepped down from this very committee. But I am here tonight, despite my cardiologist's recommendation, and my own promise to myself that I would never stand at this lectern again -- after spending years of my life in Evanston fighting for the things that were important to me, and to our community. Things that I and others believed in passionately. For those of you who don't know, I ran against Daniel Biss in the last Mayoral election, knowing full well that I wouldn't likely win against a career politician who had most recently run for Governor -- but wanting to enlighten Evanston about who Biss truly was -- and why he would be bad for our community. The rushed agenda surrounding the Comprehensive plan and simultaneous zoning changes before you are a case in point. I have NEVER seen Daniel Biss speak at this podium until I watched him address you at a recent meeting imploring you to accept this plan. In fact it's an open secret that there's a breakneck pace to get this passed before the election. We should ask ourselves why? Much of what is being touted, [and even the staged event before the meeting tonight] are in the name of "affordable housing," yet the plan itself includes no such language. None. As Parielle Davis, candidate for 7th ward Council seat said in a recent essay in the RoundTable, "If there is one thing Evanston's leaders are good at, it's clothing a mercenary agenda in a progressive disguise. The debate over Envision Evanston 2045 — the city's overhaul of its comprehensive plan and zoning code — stands as a prime example. Touted as a measure that will create more affordable housing, it will actually make it easier for developers to do what they want, regardless of community impact." We are told by Biss and others that those changes will be made in the future, and that it would be "immoral" to delay the process of passing this plan. Immoral. Well, to me that seems very much pot/kettle from a guy who literally convinced others against voting for a teacher's pension saying, and I quote, "As a matter of politics, I can get away with offending state employees…" Saying also, "I don't mean to sound so crass…" And later admitting his remarks regarding pension benefits were, "kind of a slimy thing to say." These are political calculations that were not only controversial, but ultimately deemed unconstitutional. Political calculations. This is who Biss is, and this is why he is rushing this process and forcing YOU to advance a proposal that you probably know, professionally, isn't right. This is what political expediency looks like. A recent RoundTable article states, "Significantly, the proposed zoning changes do not require developers to build any housing that is affordable for low-and moderate-income households. And the proposed zoning provides no incentives to do so." The theory instead is that density will increase the supply of "market rate" housing for higher income households who will move to new housing and open up the availability of older housing at more attainable prices – or trickle down. This is not typically how real estate goes on the North Shore of Chicago. At a recent 6&7th ward mtg, someone said this rushed agenda felt like building a plane while flying it. Writing a comprehensive plan and a zoning code at the same time? As a past president of the APA has stated, it's just not done. But I think it's somehow worse than that. And I suspect you know it, too. Sarah Flax admitted at a recent ward meeting that she had no professional experience doing a comprehensive plan. In fact, she very likely broke the rules, dismissing the first RFP without Council direction, and issuing a completely different RFP than had already been approved, as committee member Halik brought to light at one of your meetings. In a video of that meeting, Mr. Halik was visibly shocked when Ms. Flax responded that Council was unaware of the decision to issue a new RFP. I don't blame him. From its website, HDR, the new firm selected, also looks like it has never done a City's comprehensive plan. By comparison, another local respondent has done Comprehensive Plans for Lagrange, Lincolnshire, Wilmette, and more. Have any of you been to Wilmette lately? It's like springtime in Paris, while it's a dustbowl and tumbleweeds at Fountain Square in Evanston. We've seen the promise of density gut the charm of our downtown, and now we're willing to also gamble on our neighborhoods. The "Bold" plan that Biss would have you rush through before the election is a developer's dream, and there are no explicit recommendations or mandates requiring affordable housing. Developers aren't typically known for doing things out of the goodness of their heart. They are already approaching an older couple in my neighborhood on a corner lot with a two flat at the mere prospect of this plan. And I'm guessing it's not to provide multiple more affordable units. Make no mistake. When a developer bought a house at 2102 Harrison for $500k, they didn't then turn it into two affordable units for $250k – instead they maximized the profit and walked away with $1.6M each for the two units they built in its stead. So much for the trickle down theory. Until this plan has been properly vetted, and some real data is available, I urge you to do what I think we all know needs to happen here. Take the time to get it right, and ask for more information before making a decision to advance this plan to Council. Thank you again for your time and commitment! Lori Keenan 7th Ward Resident		
Hank Thompson	2721 Simpson Street	1/8/2025	comprehensive plan	Opposed	Written comment	Please slow down this review. The comprehensive plan has not had thorough citizen review and feedback		

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

To LUC Members

1 message

James McKee <jamckee2@gmail.com> Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 10:02 PM
To: mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Hi Meagan, I'm hoping you can forward this to the committee tomorrow so they can read before the 6PM meeting. Thank you, Jim McKee

Dear Committee Members,

I'm writing today to express my deep opposition to the Envision 2045 zoning remap, specifically with the part of the plan to change R1 and R2 zoning to allow/encourage the teardown of single-family homes and replacement of these with up to four new dwelling units.

To summarize, I strongly favor preservation and restoration and feel the existing housing stock is beautiful and one of Evanston's best features. Also, I believe we already have a good diverse mix of housing choices here, with single-family homes currently comprising only 32.1% of all housing units vs. all other multifamily categories at 67.9% (and rising, due to the larger new construction buildings underway.) Furthermore, tearing down a well-built single-family home and hauling it all off to a landfill is a terrible waste of resources, has a huge carbon footprint, and is not consistent with our stated climate action goals. A much better option in my opinion would be to expand and encourage the construction of ADUs/coach houses in the single-family districts, which could have the effect of adding housing without encouraging teardown.

I understand that the anti-single-family home initiative started in California where suburban sprawl is vast and highway congestion is out of control. California has a big shortage of rental housing, but this is not the case here. There are plenty of multifamily apartment buildings not only in Evanston but also in the adjacent communities of Skokie and Rogers Park. And with the population of Illinois and the overall Chicago metropolitan area shrinking, does it make sense to sacrifice our city's vintage character to try to capture a bigger share of a shrinking pie? To me it does not, nor does the dream that this would somehow lead to more affordable rentals— how could any sort of new construction project where a single-family home was torn down be inexpensive to build and then rented at low cost? More recently, I have been hearing supporters of this plan point to Minneapolis which has seen moderating rent increases after passing a similar zoning reform. *But correlation does not prove causation*: It only takes a quick Google search to reveal that large numbers of people are fleeing Minneapolis due to the rise in crime and disorder that followed the George Floyd protests and subsequent cutbacks in policing efforts. And as demand drops, prices must fall — that's Econ 101.

I lived in Rogers Park for many years and I saw how an ill-conceived zoning remap in the 1960s led to huge numbers of houses on larger lots being torn down and replaced through the 1970s with what are now widely regarded as poorly designed and constructed multifamily buildings. And then again in the late 1990s/early 2000s another slew of vintage homes came down for the then booming new construction condominium market. The overall feeling there was that there was no plan or cohesiveness for the community. My wife and I moved our family to Evanston in 2006 because the combination of walkable schools, parks, shopping, restaurants, lakefront, and well-kept neighborhoods of vintage homes was the "character" we were drawn to and which we realized Rogers Park would never have.

I want to share some pictures of a fairly recent new construction at 555 Michigan Ave. in Evanston, which demonstrates what I suspect this proposed zoning would likely lead to more of. This particular block has been zoned R3 as it has mostly apartment buildings but also a stretch of single-family homes. One of those vintage homes was torn down several years ago and replaced with a large two-family duplex, which is grossly out of scale with the remaining houses, like the one shown in the picture to the right. I can tell you that many people on that block are unhappy with the duplex's scale (and imagine what 4 units would look like!). As far as aesthetics, it does not compare with the quality of the solid brick and stucco homes and apartment buildings on the block. Clad in

white vinyl siding and towering over the remaining houses, this stands out like an odd misfit. And if there is some underlying hope that the zoning proposal would create affordable housing, this duplex would prove that theory mistaken because units here sold for $900,000 — and that was several years ago so they would probably be more now.

As you know, there is a push to get this plan approved before the April elections. Along with friends and neighbors I've spoken with, many of us think that this is way too short of a timeframe for a proposal that is not yet understood by many and which has the potential to so dramatically change the look of Evanston. We also hope that we should have a chance to fully discuss and debate the plan with the candidates running for aldermanic office and to then — at a minimum — have those views represented through an election.

In summary, I would say that this plan is a California-style solution for a problem we don't have. I am not against development. Although Evanston is mostly "built out", there are still opportunities to add housing, for example through the use of ADUs/coach houses. Also, opportunities will likely arise that make sense on a case-by-case basis. For instance, in the early 2000s, when a Dominick's grocery store became available at the corner of South Blvd. and Chicago Ave. in the 3rd ward, a very well-planned project was approved to build 90 3-story townhouses there, and this has turned out to be a type of housing which filled a need in the neighborhood. Proximity to CTA and Metra was also a plus here. I would hope that we could look for more possibilities like this rather than through sacrificing the character of our beautiful vintage neighborhoods. Because character — after all — is what brought many of us to Evanston to begin with.

Respectfully, Jim McKee
773-544-0888
jamckee2@gmail.com

2 attachments

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City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Evanston Envision Plan

1 message

Helen B Schwartzman <hsjsls@northwestern.edu> Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 10:10 PM
To: "Jones, Meagan" <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Dear Mss. Jones,

I have not been able to attend the 1st Ward meetings about the Envision Evanston Plan because of previous commitments but I want to make it crystal clear to you (and I have already written to Clare Kelly) that I am totally opposed to the Envision Plan and Zoning Code changes as described in the Envision documents. I have examined them and read about them, and I am particularly opposed to the proposed rezoning ("up-zoning") of R1 properties that will eliminate zoning districts that exclusively allow single-family homes, instead permitting buildings with two to four dwelling units per lot in those areas.

I am also totally opposed to Mayor Biss and the City Council trying to push this plan through before the election! This should not come up for a vote before the election on April 1. These are radical changes to the character of Evanston, and it is clear to me that there has not been enough input from citizens for this to go forward. In my opinion if the city really wants to improve its status, as well as tax revenue, the focus should be on improving and upgrading the downtown area which has been on the decline for several years. I believe that all efforts for city improvement should be focused on our downtown area. Why can Central Street be a relatively vibrant and growing area for retail and community life while the downtown area continues to deteriorate as it increasingly is populated by Medical facilities of various sorts but with no sense of community vibrancy!

Sincerely,
Helen B. Schwartzman
900 Lincoln Street
Evanston, IL
60201
hsjsls@northwestern.edu

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

6th ward resident NOT in favor of proposed zoning changes

1 message

Sarah Christon <schriston@gmail.com> Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 12:46 PM
To: mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Dear Zoning Committee,

I'm writing to express my concern over Mayor Biss's rezoning plan, especially the proposed R1 to R3 zoning changes. I am a 15-year resident of Evanston's 6th ward, moving to Evanston from Chicago. When we moved here, we selected our city and neighborhood because it supported our values, desires, and needs. There are many to choose from, but Evanston has a unique combination of diversity, value, and beauty. I fear that the proposed zoning modifications are over-indexing on affordability and do not consider many other factors contributing to community creation. Factors of increasing density and introducing inconsistent conformity will have a detrimental impact.

Overall, property values will decline within a micro-community. There will be an increase in the incidence of crime and demands on city services. While not as "popular" of an opinion as it may be, it will have a detrimental impact on the look and feel of a neighborhood. There is a reason that John Hughs and other filmmakers (e.g., the Bear) chose Evanston for film settings. It would be negligent not to value beauty as a factor in creating neighborhoods. Instead, there appears to be a singular view on increasing density and tax pins on a single lot. Additionally, I am not convinced that the presented argument will increase affordability. I encourage you and others to look at 2102 Harrison as an example. A single-family residence selling for 520,000 in 2018 was replaced with two residences selling for 1,629,00 and 1,649,000 in 2023. It created the opposite of affordable housing and benefited the city tax collector.

While I agree that affordability is a grave concern, I do not think breaking the composition of neighborhoods is the right approach. A comprehensive plan should be just that... comprehensive. I do not see a multi-dimensional review of impacts being addressed (e.g., impact on crime, impact on services, loss of knowing your neighbors due to changes in density). To maintain the beauty and hallmarks of Evanston, we must be more comprehensive and thoughtful in how we create a community that supports and attracts for years to come.

Please do not support the proposed zoning changes. I plan to attend a meeting in January to protest them in person.

Best,
Sarah Christon

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

LUC, EE45, and Minneapolis

1 message

Jeff Smith <jeff@jefflaw.com> Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 3:44 PM
To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>
Cc: Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>, Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>, sruger@cityofevanston.org

Meagan,

Please distribute to the Land Use Commission and include in the record of proceedings the attached research into the Minneapolis experiment and its applicability to Evanston.
Please note the most recent tracking of home prices by the Fed, included on the last page.
Links are provided in footnotes for most of the assertions/sources, tho I am limited by this being all unpaid work.
Thank you in advance.

Yours,

Jeff Smith

Minneapolis_research_JPS20250108.pdf
261K

The Minneapolis Myth

Jeff Smith
Jan. 8, 2024 (working pre-publication draft)

Documents coming to light through FOIA requests as well as comments by staff show that the entire planning process has been steered from the start towards a "Minneapolis model" of rezoning. This is significant, because it subverts claim of neutrality or objectivity in the ongoing process and evidences that a predetermined desired zoning outcome has been driving the Plan rather than letting a fair community-driven planning process first occur as is normal. What Minneapolis did was to first lower parking requirements and then, in 2019, to eliminate single-family zoning districts, along with other upzoning. The Minneapolis upzoning has been called "far and away the largest densification project ever attempted in all of North America."[1] So its recurrence in City communications, extending to before any single public meeting, is not an accident and is fairly viewed as an explicit call for upzoning and density.

The purpose of this writing, however, is not to dwell, for the moment, on the procedural implications of that, concerning as they are. The purpose of this research was to take a deeper dive into the assertion that Minneapolis has shown that upzoning and increased density will lower housing costs. Is that true?

Context

It should first be noted that Minneapolis is not an analogous city to Evanston. It is 5 to 6 times Evanston's size and is the largest city in a less urbanized state; it is also bordered by and considered part of the same metropolitan area with another smaller large city, St. Paul. Even so, Minneapolis even after considerable recent construction is considerably less dense than Evanston and began with more land per resident on which to build. Minneapolis has only 7,900 people per square mile compared with Evanston's 9,600-10,000. In order to be "as dense as Minneapolis," Evanston would have to *lose* about 15,000 residents, not add another 8,000. Conversely, Minneapolis would have to add about 80,000 residents to be as dense as Evanston.[2]

Nor does Minneapolis have a much larger city, analogous to Chicago, next to it, feeding demand as upwardly mobile families seek to move there. Minneapolis is more, itself, like the Chicago of Minnesota, only with less density, less wealth, and a lower student-population-percentage than Evanston. So it is not a good analogy and is limited in its predictive power.

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[1] Smart Growth Minneapolis, "The Problem," https://smartgrowthminneapolis.org/our-work/problem/

[2] Minneapolis does not plan to do that, it projects that it still needs to add housing for its existing population. But note, mathematically, any city that is adding population at the same time that it is building housing is making it more difficult to reach its goals. The target moves. That is one reason why it is difficult to build your way to sustainability or affordability.

Curiously, few studies compare Minneapolis with its twin, St. Paul. St. Paul's percentage of black population is like Minneapolis, but white percentage is lower, and St. Paul has a much higher percentage of Asian-Americans. St. Paul has significantly lower population density, a higher percentage of housing units that are single-family-detached, and was later to enact similar zoning changes. However, St. Paul, of the two, is the city that has lower median home prices, lower median rent prices, and, despite lower per capita income, a higher rate of home ownership.[3]

Interestingly, Minneapolis, less dense than Evanston, has a slightly higher black home-ownership rate than Evanston. I have not yet explored this angle but I suspect that density is negatively correlated with black home ownership rates. Illinois towns like Olympia Fields, South Holland, Flossmoor, Matteson and Lynwood with dramatically less density than Evanston have some of the highest black home-ownership rates in the country.[4]

Impact on Land Values, Prices, Rents

Drawing any hard conclusions from the Minneapolis experiment is difficult at best. Anyone who says otherwise either has not studied the literature or is not being forthright.

One complicating factor is that Minneapolis suffered more than some cities from the Great Recession. That downturn triggered a construction slowdown that contributed to demand-supply imbalance, but also, because of foreclosures, to having over 1,500 vacant residential properties on city rolls. By 2024 that number had been reduced to 311.[5] Obviously, an inventory of available cheap land facilitates building lower-priced housing, and the return of 1,200 residential lots to residency improves supply in and of itself, separate and apart from any zoning changes.

Two University of Minnesota researchers in 2020 examining impact on rents from new construction in Minneapolis, apart from zoning changes, found that new construction lowered values of *higher-priced rentals* close to new construction, but *increased* the price of lower-priced rental housing by 6.6% compared to the comparison group.[6] Thus, one interpretation of the

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[3] "Minneapolis, MN vs St. Paul, MN," https://www.city-data.com/compare/Minneapolis-MN-vs-St_-Paul-MN

[4] Ted Slowik, "South suburbs contain 5 communities with nation's top black homeownership rates," Daily Southtown (Dec. 13, 2018), https://www.chicagotribune.com/2018/08/26/south-suburbs-contain-5-communities-with-nations-top-black-homeownership-rates/

[5] Elliot Hughes, "Vacant Since the '90s? Minneapolis pushes to reduce number of long-empty buildings," Minneapolis Star-Tribune (July 18, 2024), https://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-proposal-would-mandate-annual-fines-of-up-to-24000-for-owners-of-vacant-buildings-that-go-unrestored/600381608

[6] Anthony Damiano and Chris Frenier, "Build Baby Build?: Housing Submarkets and the Effects of New Construction on Existing Rents," Center for Urban and Regional Affairs Working Paper (Oct. 16, 2020), https://www.cura.umn.edu/research/build-baby-build-housing-submarkets-and-effects-new-construction-existing-rents (Apr. 2020 draft), https://www.tonydamiano.com/project/new-con/bbb-wp.pdf (Oct. 2020 version).

modest-at-best results in Minneapolis is that rent "reductions" were achieved by lowering the desirability of units where, previously, owners had paid a premium for the lack of density.

This finding of differing impact depending on proximity and housing type is consistent with study of externalities of density and "empirical testing [which] finds that adjacent building height generates substantial negative externalities for surrounding building rents," which is a more academic way of saying that residents and buyers generally don't want to be overshadowed by taller stuff next door.[7]

The first academic examination specific to the Minneapolis 2018 "zoning reforms," by planner Daniel Kuhlmann, found similar results to the Damiano-Fernier study, in that compared to similar properties in surrounding cities, the plan change was associated with a 3% and 5% *increase* in the price of affected housing units, with some evidence that this price increase was due to the "new development option" available to landowners. Kuhlmann like Damiano and Fernier found that the plan-related price increases were larger in inexpensive neighborhoods and for properties that are small relative to their immediate neighbors.[8] This is similar to what experienced observers would expect in Evanston as targets for tear-downs responded to speculation.

For that reason, Kuhlmann warned of gentrification:

> "Although redeveloping single-family houses into denser 2- and 3-unit structures may do little to directly displace lower income families, if these changes alter patterns of investment and development across the city, they could contribute to larger trends in neighborhood change and, ultimately, displacement of people with low incomes from the city.
> "…[T]here has been little empirical research on how zoning reforms affect neighborhood change and investment. This is an important question, particularly because some of the most trenchant opposition to upzoning concerns the potential of such changes to lead to displacement of people with low incomes."[9]

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[7] Chuanhao Lin, "Do households value lower density: Theory, evidence, and implications from Washington, DC," 108 Regional Sci. & Urban Econ. (2024), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2024.104023, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0166046224000474. Lin found that the data suggested that externality costs depend on both height and building separation of adjacent buildings.

[8] Daniel Kuhlmann, "Upzoning and Single-Family Housing Prices: A (Very) Early Analysis of the Minneapolis 2040 Plan," 87 J. AM. PLANNING ASS'N 383-395 (online: 16 Feb 2021), https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2020.1852101

[9] Kuhlmann, *supra,* at n.5.

One subsequent review of the literature analyzing the Minneapolis experiment found that housing gains were "modest" at best.[10] Census data seems to bear that out. The 2022 census estimate was that median rent in Minneapolis was $1,267. The estimate in July 2023 was $1,328, *an annual increase of 4.8%.* Minneapolis news accounts also confirm that after the upzoning, home prices continued to rise,[11] which is confirmed by official studies.[12]

Even advocates of upzoning/deregulation concede that the results have been nuanced and complicated. For one thing, in 2018, the year before the single-family zoning elimination, "Minneapolis approved a record-breaking 4800 dwelling units, compared to an average of 3000 in the three years prior, and around 3400 in the three years since."[13] The author of that finding, an Australian upzoning advocate and blogger, cautioned that the Minneapolis results were not necessarily transferable to other jurisdictions, saying "single-family zoning abolition may not be the sole solution for increasing housing supply *in areas where multi-unit developments and apartment construction are already prevalent*."[14] Evanston is such a place.

The comments to that article are also instructive. Multiple commenters point out that Minneapolis population has actually declined in the past few years, which would tend to skew the market. However, that can't be attributed solely or even primarily to the zoning changes, because the civil unrest in Minneapolis after the death of George Floyd is assumed to be a contributing factor to residents leaving the city. It's possible that the upzoning was a contributing factor to exodus, because it was highly contested (see **Controversy**, below at p. 5) and may have soured some residents. Regardless of cause, however, the Census Bureau in 2022 agrees with the commenters to the above article, estimating that between July 2020 and July 2022 Minneapolis lost almost 5,000 residents; as of July 2023 that number was almost unchanged.[15]

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[10] April Towery, "Minneapolis Abolished Single-Family Zoning But is That The Answer to More Affordable Housing?" https://candysdirt.com/2024/01/01/minneapolis-abolished-single-family-zoning-but-is-that-the-answer-to-more-affordable-housing/ (Quoting Governing.com journalist Jake Blumgart, at https://www.governing.com/jakeblumgart).

[11] Greta Kaul, "Why home prices in the Twin Cities keep going up," MinnPost (Apr. 7, 2022), https://www.minnpost.com/economy/2022/04/why-home-prices-in-the-twin-cities-keep-going-up/

[12] "All-Transactions House Price Index for Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI (MSA)," Fed. Res. Bk. of St. Louis (Nov. 26, 2024), https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ATNHPIUS33460Q; "S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller MN-Minneapolis Home Price Index," Fed. Res. Bk. of St. Louis (Oct. 2024), https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MNXRSA#. See graphs p. 6.

[13] Matthew Maltman, "A Detailed Look at the Outcomes of Minneapolis' Housing Reforms," One Final Effort.com (Apr. 17, 2023), https://onefinaleffort.com/blog/a-detailed-look-at-minneapolis-housing-supply-reforms.

[14] *Id.* (emphasis supplied)

[15] U.S. Census Bureau, QuickFacts | Minneapolis city, Minnesota, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/minneapoliscityminnesota. The 2024 results have not been published. A .pdf of the 2022 estimates no longer appears at the foregoing link is available on request.

Controversy

The Minneapolis upzoning plan was opposed by activists of color, environmental groups, and smart growth advocates. The smart growth advocates labeled it "irresponsible planning."[16] Nekima Levy Armstrong, a black activist, said "Residents of color already face significant barriers to home ownership, which would have been exacerbated under the plan as a result of reduced access to and availability of single family properties."[17] Environmental criticism was that "by deregulating development, it puts the environment directly at risk through cumulative harm" from density-related impacts, a conclusion bolstered by an Initial Environmental Analysis conducted by an environmental engineering firm.[18]

Litigation.

The coalition opposed to the plan sued. The trial court agreed with them, finding that the plan conflicted with environmental goals, holding that "Increased population density is an affirmative feature of the residential portions of the 2040 Plan, a feature that has not been present in any previous comprehensive plan." The ruling was hailed by environmentalists.[19] The injunction by the trial court was reversed by an appellate court in May, 2024, not on factual grounds, but on the basis that the trial court did not have the power to enjoin the plan.[20] However, it should be noted, the litigation continued for years after the plan's adoption.

Conclusion

It would be a planning mistake to draw hard conclusions as to ultimate impact of Minneapolis upzoning on affordability, let alone to assume that it represents a workable template for Evanston. The Minneapolis gains in housing supply affordability are modest at best and the

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[16] Smart Growth, *supra* n.1.

[17] Susan Du, "Minneapolis cannot proceed with 2040 Plan, court rules," Minneapolis Star-Tribune (Sept. 5, 2023), https://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-cannot-proceed-with-2040-plan-court-rules/600302266

[18] Smart Growth, *supra* n.1. See generally Kirsten Pauly, et al., Sunde Engineering, "Environmental Analysis: Minneapolis 2040 Plan" (Nov. 2018), downloadable at https://smartgrowthminneapolis.org/wp-content/uploads/Sunde-Environmental-Analysis-Minneapolis-2040-Plan.pdf. The review found that environmental impacts on residents would include increased noise impacts, increased pedestrian traffic, increased vehicle traffic, increased vehicle congestion and idling, decreased air quality, increased parking constraints, negative impacts to existing viewsheds (landmark buildings, open spaces, water bodies), longer hours of activity, reductions in privacy, increased light and glare from buildings, greater impacts from construction if construction of larger buildings than previously permitted increases the duration of construction activity, decreased access to light for surrounding properties, shadowing of adjacent properties; and impacts to existing solar panels on neighboring structures. *Id.* at 10-11.

[19] Kevin Reuther, "Op-ed: Court got it right on 2040 plan: Minnesota Environmental Rights Act provides essential protection," Minn. Reformer, (Feb. 10, 2023) https://minnesotareformer.com/2023/02/10/court-got-it-right-on-2040-plan-minnesota-environmental-rights-act-provides-essential-protection/.

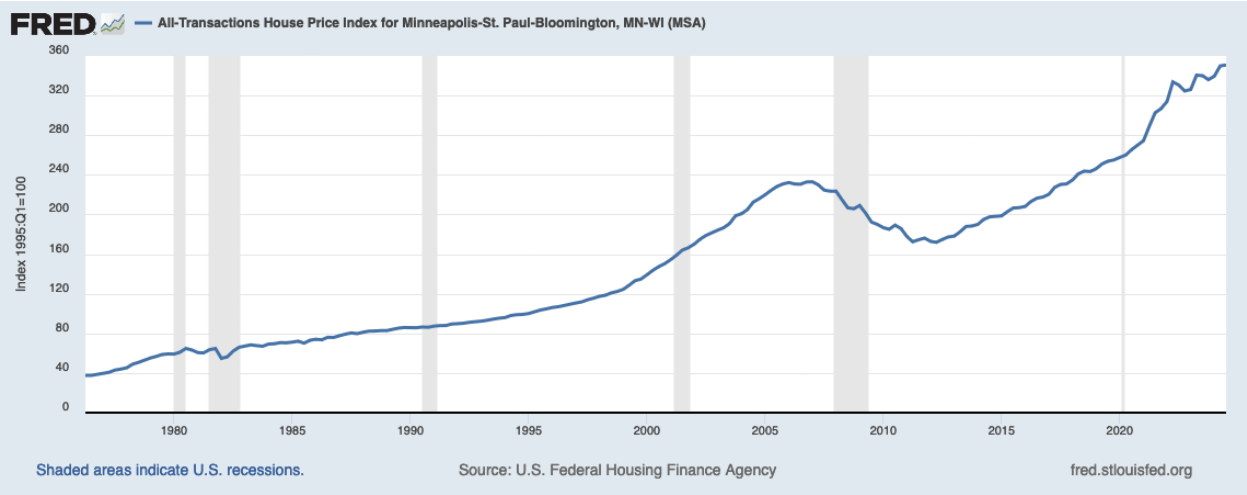
[20] Christopher Ingraham, "Minneapolis 2040 plan can once again go forward, appeals court rules," Minn. Reformer (May 13, 2024), https://minnesotareformer.com/briefs/minneapolis-2040-plan-can-once-again-go-forward-appeals-court-rules/

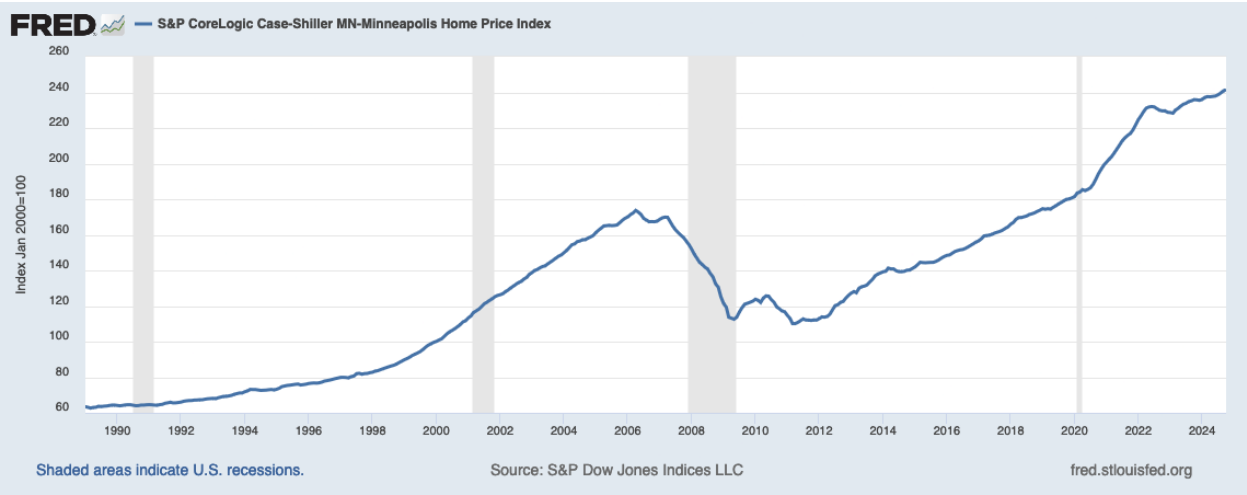
confounds of pre-existing housing vacancies, pre-existing incremental measures, and subsequent population loss in Minneapolis prevent any conclusive finding as to even modest benefits. Explanation of why less dense, more single-family-oriented St. Paul is more affordable is lacking. Moreover, the application of the Minneapolis model in a state's largest city to an already denser and more affluent inner-ring suburb like Evanston is highly questionable.

Weighing against the possibility of modest benefits are the likelihood of gentrification and displacement suggested by research and common sense, with "affordability" gains occurring primarily as some more desirable residences become less desirable as a result of crowding. Evanston is expensive because it is desirable. Increasing affordability by reducing desirability is something few if any Evanstonians have asked for, and would be contrary to stated goals of all other planning Evanston has ever done. A commitment to environmental sustainability also requires taking the environmental objections to Minneapolis upzoning seriously.

Given that the Minneapolis experiment in upzoning and densification yields no firm evidence of a successful model that can be applied to Evanston, the greatest significance of its recurring reference in the Envision Evanston 2045 planning is to suggest that the "solution" was determined before the planning, and that the planning process has largely been cover to achieve the rezoning desired by certain interests.

— JPS





City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Equitable Zoning Code Now

1 message

Nancy Mathyer - nmathyer@ameritech.net <nmathyer@ujoin.co> Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 3:06 PM
Reply-To: nmathyer@ameritech.net
To: Land Use Commissioners <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Dear Commissioners,

I am emailing today to urge you to support the City's efforts to create a more equitable zoning code during the Envision Evanston 2045 process.

Evanston's zoning code hasn't been updated in over 20 years, meaning many of our laws are outdated (such as, defining what a family is through zoning) and a source of many of the inequities we see in our community. Evanston has grown, and so our zoning laws must grow as well. We deserve a zoning code that prioritizes the safety and wellbeing of residents, encourages affordability and prosperity through innovation in design and development, and embraces our many diverse communities.

As the Land Use Commission begins to hold hearings on zoning revision, we urge you to prioritize and push for policies that promote housing affordability, encourage housing abundance, and embrace our City's vision for equity.

Sincerely,

Nancy Mathyer

Evanston, Illinois

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Eliminating single family housing

1 message

Isadora <isadora55@yahoo.com> Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 4:03 PM
Reply-To: Isadora <isadora55@yahoo.com>
To: "mmjones@cityofevanston.org" <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>, Daniel Biss <dbiss@cityofevanston.org>

Dear Ms. Jones and Mayor Biss,

I have yet to meet a single citizen of Evanston who is in favor of the proposed zoning changes.

To what benefit is it to destroy our Evanston community and quality of life? I attended an in person Envision 2045 session that was held at the main library. It had a quite good turn. Not a single attendee proposed ending single family housing or tearing down our beautiful homes to replace them with apartment buildings. At the end of the gathering I asked one of the facilitators what people have wanted. “Trees,” came her reply.

We absolutely need affordable housing. The female part of a young couple in my apartment building told me this past week that she was raised in Evanston and her sibling lives in Evanston as does her mother. She would very much like to continue living in Evanston, but said, realistically, they can’t see themselves being able to afford a home here when they start a family. So here is a prime example of how we’re losing people with roots in Evanston who love the community and very much would like to continue residing here. And how would the zoning change being proposed make it so there’s more oaffordable housing?

Change can be good of course but a change this monumental needs to be put to a vote by the citizenry of Evanston and certainly not rushed through or becoming a” special order of business”.

Please act with due deliberation and not hastily in this matter.

Thank you.

Isadora Tavens
718 Hinman Ave. Apt. 3E
Evanston, IL 60202

312-838-7394

Envision Evanston 2045 Comprehensive Plan Review

By David Galloway, 728 Noyes Street, H3, Evanston IL 60201

Introduction

David Galloway
Resident of Evanston since 1983
Practicing Architect since 1978, recently predominantly retired.
Member of Design Evanston since 1986

> **DE 501c3 non-profit corporation founded in 1980. Credo – Educate and inform the residents of Evanston about what constitutes good design and to reduce the burden of government in implementing good design.**
> **Professional members are composed of urban planners and designers, architects, landscape architects, interior designers, graphic designers, merchandising designers and experiential designers.**
> **Visit website designevanston.org**

Served on the Evanston Preservation Commission and a past Plan Commission

I love this city. I love its history, its architecture, its neighborhoods, its transit options, social and cultural diversity, the university and its students, the lakefront and even our four season climate. I believe it is one of the best places to live in this country, and that it is increasingly being perceived as such by people that currently live elsewhere.

I have reviewed the current Comprehensive Plan, the diagnostic Zoning report, and current zoning documents and maps. My comments will concentrate on the Comprehensive Plan chapters that include the Introduction, Chapter 1 – Future Land use strategy, Chapter 2 – Land Use and Chapter 7 – Housing.

Introduction Vision Statement

I agree with the vision statement and all the categorical vision statements in this chapter.

Future Land Use Strategy and Land Use

Frequently employs too much jargon
The Main Themes in Chapter 1 and the Policies and Actions in Chapter 2, while laudable can apply to any current town or city. Can they be more specifically referenced to Evanston? Terms used such as "Neighborhood Center", "Mixed-Use Corridors", "Mixed-Use Centers", "Downtown Centers" need further description, identification and reference to our city. More graphics and maps are typically needed to better understand the text references, and photographs of referenced types of urban areas should be provided of examples actually in Evanston, not Adobe stock photos, which are confusing at best.

There seems to be an over emphasis on the development of corridors and centers at the neglect of vacant and underutilized properties, rail transit node areas (mixed use centers) which are relatively unique to Evanston, and also areas adjacent to schools, and institutions which are frequently hubs for the surrounding neighborhoods.

Language can sometimes be vague, or unnecessarily provocative, e.g. "allowing up to four "HOMES" on an R1 site, or "there should be a LOT of tall buildings in the downtown, indicating "unlimited height" for buildings in the downtown and removing barriers to expedite projects. Some barriers are appropriate and by helping define the type of project that would be approved, reduce review and permit time and helps expedite construction.

The statement: "Housing is expensive and there is a lack of housing options that fit the lifestyles of younger or multi-generational families as well as other diverse demographics" is a great summation of the current challenge. But specific examples of the appropriate types of housing that might address this problem are not provided.

<u>Housing</u>

The current housing chapter has extensive data on housing statistics and puts forward comprehensive goals and strategies for addressing the current housing shortage. There is no doubt that here in Evanston, and across the nation in all cities, towns, suburbs, municipalities there is a lack of attainable and affordable housing. The Comprehensive Plans of other cities are predominantly concerned with addressing this situation. The recurrent term used to describe the category or type of missing and needed housing is "Missing Middle" housing. "Missing Middle Housing" is defined as a range of small-scale multi-housing types that span the chasm between single-family detached homes and mid- to high-rise apartment buildings. Such housing types can include renovated single-family houses that provide additional living units within them, ADU's (accessory dwelling units), new townhouses or double-houses, new duplex, triplex or fourplex buildings, small courtyard apartments, bungalow or cottage courts, multiplexes and various live/work buildings. It is odd that such a recognized nationwide trend and recognized housing policy is only referenced in one sentence in the entire Housing Chapter.

More concerning is the lack of any detailed investigations of how these types of housing might be employed in various varied residential districts and streetscapes throughout the city. No graphics. No drawings. No examples from similar cities. Instead we have zoning tables with allowable lot coverages, yard setbacks, and indicated maximum allowable heights of 35 feet that are evidently to be applied to

all R1 and R2 districts no matter what their unique or particular existing scale, massing, predominant height, or appearance might be.

While our city is not providing "Missing Middle Housing" this comprehensive plan is not providing a missing Middle Section or Process that graphically investigates the various appropriate manners in which missing middle housing might be incorporated into our varied single-family residential neighborhoods. Also, our R1 and R2 districts vary from each other in many ways. Solutions that might be appropriate for one area might not be appropriate for another.

At a minimum these investigations should be massing studies, but ideally, I believe, they should also include actual hypothetical schematic designs of units and unit configurations. There are Comprehensive Plans that include these things. There are urban and architectural design firms that provide these services. A picture is worth a thousand words. A picture is essential in making the proper decisions about our future housing. And a picture can also be a tool to expedite the permit and building process. Any town or city, particularly one so historical and complex as Evanston, deserves such a process.

Can four units be accommodated on a R1 or R2 lot anywhere in Evanston? Possible yes, if the size of the units incorporated into the building results in an overall size that is sensitive to the physical context of the neighborhood.

Hold up Missing Middle Housing book
"Thinking big and building small to respond to today's Housing Crisis"
As opposed to not thinking and building too big.

Similar investigations of the forms that other residential and mixed-use developments might take in R3, R4, and Mixed-use districts and corridors would be beneficial to our understanding of what their impact might be on their neighborhoods as well.

With proper modeling or form-defined requirements some simple developments could be closer to "by-right" or perhaps only subject to administrative design review. Other more complex developments should require a more formalized design review by an authorized (yet to be formulated) Commission. These are a very common entity in cities that care about design.

Thanks to city staff, the LUC

Think imaginatively
Investigate and model thoroughly and contextually,
Visually define your intentions
Build accordingly

Suggest reviewing:

Growing MKE – City of Milwaukee - Housing & Neighboring Element of the Citywide Policy Plan Draft April 4, 2024

"Missing Middle Housing" by Daniel Parolek Island Press 2020

KEY POINTS IN 1/8/2025 TESTIMONY FROM JILL GRAHAM TO THE EVANSTON LAND USE COMMISSION

1. I support the goal to increase Evanston's supply of housing and thus its tax base: elimination of single-family zoning and allowing 2, 3, or even 4 dwelling units per lot in those residential districts where the lot size and setback requirements permit it (perhaps 40% of R1 and R2 district lots; 58+% of R1 & R2 district lots won't qualify).
2. But I am concerned that, if left only to the private market, this invitation to expand housing supply will negatively impact housing affordability because:
    a. Those in the most expensive residential districts, with the largest yards, may be most resistant to adding density to their neighborhood; but for any who are willing to sell (part or all of) their property for re-development in such expensive districts, the initial property acquisition cost will be so high that a project will be attractive to developers only if additional high-priced dwelling units are created, leaving the need for affordable housing unaddressed.
    b. Developers may seek to purchase and redevelop properties in residential districts that already have the most abundant supply of affordable housing, districts where the initial property acquisition cost is relatively inexpensive in Evanston. The risk in that case is that the new dwelling units built on such property will have the effect of gentrifying the neighborhood, and actually reduce the supply of affordable housing.
3. To address the concern that increasing Evanston's supply of housing should also guarantee that a significant portion of that supply be affordable, I urge the following revisions to the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO):
    a. Reduce the IHO's application from 6+ unit buildings to 5+ unit buildings and increase the percentage of affordable units required to 20%.
    b. In residential districts where up to four dwelling units per lot will become a permitted use, wherever there is more than one dwelling unit, at least one of the additional dwelling units must be affordable. (E.g., a modest ADU be a permitted use on a R-1 lot; and at least one unit be affordable in a duplex, triplex or quadplex.)
4. To assure progress toward achieving the goals of growing Evanston's supply of housing, including a significant increase in affordable housing, we need to set specific measurable targets and collect data over time, all to guide further changes to the IHO and the City's forthcoming strategic housing plan. In a previous submission, I suggested this be done by creating a profile of the city's housing stock (in terms of its affordability) and then adopting land use policies so that the city's housing stock gradually comes to match a profile of incomes earned by all those who are employed in Evanston. When employees live locally, their commutes are minimized, which limits the use of fossil fuels required for longer commutes and also its associated air pollution. The higher the proportion of those who work in Evanston who can afford to live in Evanston, the cleaner the environment. Land use policies can be designed and administered to create and

maintain a supply of homes that are affordable to the full range of those who work within the city limits. The target outcome is a municipal housing stock of sufficient diversity, in terms of enough homes of all sizes, at all affordability levels, both for sale and to rent, so that workers at all income levels can find an affordable place to house their families in Evanston, if they choose to do so. Progress toward that goal can be assessed by measuring what proportion of Evanston's workforce lives in Evanston.

5. Perhaps that is what the 2045 Comprehensive Plan consultants intend with their recommendation to "Implement a comprehensive housing strategy." Certainly H1.2 ("Complete a housing needs assessment to determine the types and qualities of housing needed for Evanston's population") is a critical component of building a strategic housing plan. My suggestion is that the needs assessment be guided by data-gathering from Evanston's public and private employers (both profit and nonprofit) about the incomes earned by their respective workforces. Data about the current home addresses of workers, method and length of commute, and interest in/desire to move to Evanston (for those who do not already live here) also could be gathered. Using all that data, an "Employee Affordable Housing Gap" could be calculated. Closing that gap between the affordability of Evanston's current housing stock and the profile of what those who work in Evanston can afford could then become a measurable outcome target for the 2045 Comprehensive Plan. A schedule for measuring progress toward closing that gap (perhaps at five-year intervals) could be incorporated in the plan as a built-in assessment feature.
6. Some additional benefits of a workforce that lives close to work:
    a. Environmental protection by means of limiting fossil fuel pollution from long commutes to and from work
    b. Employees who live nearby are more able to arrive at work on time, a benefit to employers
    c. Workers and their families benefit from the many assets of living in Evanston, (schools, parks, lake, culture, etc.), raising employee satisfaction, which in turn may reduce worker turnover, another benefit for employers
    d. As Evanston residents, those who work here and their families also are shoppers and taxpayers, adding to the economic vitality of the City
    e. The City of Evanston maintains the economic diversity of its population, avoiding becoming another North Shore community accessible only to wealthy residents.

Jill W. Graham
Professor Emerita
Quinlan School of Business
Loyola University Chicago
jgraham@luc.edu
2439 Ashland Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
847-328-5612

Statement of Peter Kelly, 1640 Maple

Envision Evanston was a feel good process that afforded Evanstonians an opportunity to express their hopes for our city's future. The Comprehensive General Plan draft and the draft zoning ordinance and map changes were intended to reflect those desires. But in several Important respects there is a significant disconnect between those drafts and the community views. I will focus on only one of those disconnects.

In well attended December 3rd and January 7th meetings of downtown residents they expressed surprise and dismay about the passage on page 29 of the plan that stated "There should be a lot of tall buildings in the central downtown area." As one resident observed to applause from the rest, In the 80 Envision meetings no one asked for more high rises.

This pro-developer passage is all the more troubling because of new features of the draft ordinance and map. Those drafts expand the most intensively developed zone D3 by redrawing that zone to include all of current D3, all of current RP and parts of D2 and D4 resulting in a downtown dominated by D3. Moreover new D3 will have no maximum height limit (allowing buildings well over 100 feet in height as a matter of right). Finally, these drafts will free developments in the old RP zones from the constraints of the special rules that currently apply to research triangle.

Without changes conforming to residents' reasonable expectations, this commission will be obligated by the Comprehensive General Plan to tip the scales in favor of large high rises.

Downtown will have to absorb some increased density, but unfettered growth of building of 150, 200 or even 300 feet high are not the answer, the impact on our neighborhood will be too great. It is important to all of Evanston that the downtown continues to reflect structures that have human dimensions with natural light. The impact of too many tall buildings can be seen in Rosemount, downtown Chicago and the experience of driving or walking northbound over the seven blocks of Sheridan Road from the Hollywood Hill Lake Shore Drive exit

After last night's meeting with the developer planning a 301 foot, 27 story rental building at Clak and Maple, the downtown residents are concerned it may already be too late to reverse this trend. That developer explained it's right to build that high has already been confirmed by city staff and that entitlement does not require city approval because the developer intends to proceed based upon an amendment to an existing planned development agreement which does not require further city deliberations. If this is true, then please ask the city to advise us what other parcels in our downtown neighborhood already have plan development agreements or other entitlements that allow such fast track action without council action and public input.