

PROPERTY AND LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT TO THE LAKE BLUFF PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

JULY 21, 2015

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Note: The appendixes are a key element of this report. On first reference in the report, an appendix is **[bolded, underlined and in blue text \(color may change if link has been used\)](#)**. Assuming an internet connection is available, clicking on the text will take the reader to the associated appendix.

I. Background: Purpose, Objectives and Process

On January 27, 2014, the Lake Bluff Park District Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to create the Property and Land Use Advisory Committee. The Committee consists of nine members: two co-chairs; one representative each from the Board of Commissioners of the Lake Bluff Park District, Lake Bluff's Village Board of Trustees, Board of Education of Lake Bluff School District 65 and Lake Bluff Open Lands Association (LBOLA); and three at-large residents. Committee chairs were appointed in February, 2014; Committee members by April, 2014.

Purpose

The purpose of the Advisory Committee, as stated in the enabling resolution, is as follows:

- a) Identify opportunities to make the Park District economically and strategically efficient.
- b) Review the Park District's property and land holdings and recommend to the Park District Board any potential sale, vacation or other disposition in accordance with Park District policy and State law.
- c) If necessary, provide guidance and input to the Park District Board on the terms and conditions of any recommended sale of Park District assets or acquisition of new property.
- d) Interact with the Park Board and other stakeholders including the Village of Lake Bluff, School District 65 and LBOLA on all matters that will materially enhance or change Park District-owned lands and public facilities.

Objectives

The Objectives identified for the Committee, which formed the initial scope of the Committee work plan, were:

- a) Identify all property and public land in the Park District boundaries with or adjacent to property with substantial open space and review any relevant Village and County Ordinances or Partnership Agreements.
- b) Compare number and acreage of Park District property, facilities and public land versus current national and state guidelines.
- c) Evaluate other recreation agencies and nearby communities' properties.
- d) Evaluate all property and public land owned by the Park District to ensure that its current use is appropriate and in the best interests of the residents for the short and long term.
- e) Provide a written recommendation of changes in use and submit a document to the Park Board.

Process

The Committee assembled on May 15, 2014 and generally met once per month. Agendas and Meeting Minutes are maintained in the Park District Offices.

The work of the Committee resulted in modifications to the original scope and objectives of the work plan. There were four key revisions that are worthy of highlighting.

- a) The Committee did not conduct any extensive economic evaluation of any of the parcels, but did recommend that such evaluations be part of a Park District land acquisition and disposal policy. The Committee concluded that it was premature to conduct economic evaluations pending additional stakeholder discussions regarding long-term planning.

- b) After further consultation with the Park District Board of Commissioners, it was determined the Committee would not evaluate the alternative uses of the Lake Bluff Golf Course as the Commissioners desired to conduct more preliminary planning and assessment on their own.
- c) The Committee did not conduct public forums to solicit input from various community groups and stakeholders. This decision was made in recognition that discussing open land and Park District parcels absent the golf course analysis may have proved unproductive.
- d) Given the Land Use Committee's conclusion that overall Park District facilities and land areas were generally appropriate in scale and use, specific assessments of neighboring park district parcels were determined to not be required although comparisons to state and national standards were performed.

The Committee maintained the view that the core of its mission remained viable. Specifically, this was to provide a reliable reference point for stakeholders looking to plan for or incorporate the use of real estate, especially open space, in a manner consistent with the values and desires of the community. The review incorporated the premise that real estate is a limited asset and its usage is a key factor in how communities perceive themselves. The sometimes competing desires for open space and development can create tension among various stakeholder groups.

The aims of the Committee were:

- a) **To assemble a detailed database consisting of maps and fact sheets of public land and open space parcels within the Park District boundaries.**
- b) **To develop a discussion framework that would provide sufficient guidance for governmental bodies to reference and incorporate in their own plans as changes in land use are considered.**
- c) **To highlight immediately executable issues and provide a framework for long-term planning in regard to:**
 - o **Sufficiency and quality of Park District assets;**
 - o **District and Village boundary misalignments;**
 - o **Sufficiency of Village, Park District and School District storage space;**
 - o **Connectivity improvements; and**
 - o **Environmental stewardship.**

The Committee viewed real estate as an asset that requires clear articulation of current and potential alternative uses. To develop a framework of guiding principles and concepts that reflect the desires of community members, the Committee consulted various materials available from local government entities and Lake Bluff Open Lands Association (LBOLA). These included strategic, comprehensive and master plans, as well as mission statements and results of community-wide surveys.

The Committee attempted to assess Lake Bluff Park District's facilities and acreage of Park District land compared to average levels within the state and nationally. The intent was to assess the relative scope and size of Lake Bluff's park system and as a proxy to highlight the area of open space within the community relative to other communities. The Committee was able to source national and state standards/guidelines. The standards/guidelines were not as robust as the Committee expected in terms of being supported by a detailed dataset collected from other park districts. Further, they were not as expansive as the Committee expected in terms of addressing standards for natural areas and trails that are a critical component of Lake Bluff's recreational assets. Therefore, the Committee was unable to perform as meaningful of a comparison of Lake Bluff to these standards and guidelines as we desired.

Originally, the scope of the Committee was to include identification of material expense reductions and revenue enhancements to assist in the long-term financial viability of the Park District. Subsequent feedback from the Park

District Commissioners indicated that this effort was not required and would be difficult to accomplish absent a full assessment of the golf course. Therefore, the Committee did not undertake an economic evaluation of individual parcels, although any consideration of alternative land uses would certainly require this financial analysis. Such review could be accomplished for individual parcels, for contiguous groups of parcels or as part of an exercise to determine the feasibility of enhancing Park District revenues, reducing debt or reducing operating expenses.

The participation of representatives from the main local government entities and LBOLA allowed the Committee to gain an enhanced level of insight on the scope of strategic plans produced by these entities beyond what could be gained from a simple review of available materials. The inclusion of a long-term and active resident of Knollwood allowed the Committee to gain perspective on the major region in the Park District that is not part of the Village of Lake Bluff.

In general, the Committee viewed the mix and dispersion of commercial, residential, park, active open land and passive use lands to be consistent with the vision and desires of these key stakeholders. Further, the Committee perceived that community residents view the Park District facilities and significant open space throughout the community as a highly valued attribute. However, a number of specific wants and needs were identified and are discussed below.

II. Methodology

Individual Parcel Review

In order to facilitate orderly discussion of public open space, the Committee divided the geography to be studied into six sectors; North East, North West, North Central, South East (including the Central Business District), South Central, and the Commercial Park. (See summary sector map in [Appendix C-1.](#))

Within each sector, the following analysis was performed:

- Each parcel of open land was identified, mapped, and given a parcel identification number based on known property ownership within each sector (Village, Park District, School District, Township, Illinois Department of Transportation, Forest Preserve, etc.).
- A detailed location map was prepared for each identified parcel.

A parcel fact sheet was compiled for each identified parcel that included sector, map reference number, location, tax map and PIN, ownership, parcel size, current zoning, and current use.

A Sector Summary Review Form was created for each sector, summarizing the mapping, parcel fact sheet and Committee discussions. These forms include: sector, parcel ID, size, current ownership, current maintenance, common description/current use, improved/unimproved status, active/passive/infrequent use, zoning and comments/restrictions.

The sector overall map, detailed parcel maps, parcel fact sheets and summarized Sector Summary Review Forms can be found in the Appendixes:

- North East Sector. See [Appendix C-2](#)
- North West Sector. See [Appendix C-3](#)
- Commercial Sector. See [Appendix C-4](#)
- South Central Sector. See [Appendix C-5](#)
- North Central Sector. See [Appendix C-6](#)
- South East Sector. See [Appendix C-7](#)

A total of 123 parcels (some representing groups of contiguous legal parcels) were identified and reviewed using the procedures identified above.

A compendium of the Sector Summary Review Forms sorted by ownership/maintenance is located in [Appendix C-8](#). Other iterations of these summary forms can be easily developed.

Border Analysis

While completing the sector summary review forms and individual parcel reviews, the Committee also took note of areas where borders of the Park District, the Village and the School District were not aligned. Misalignments were noted and the findings are included in *Section IV. Findings and Recommendations* beginning on page 8 of this report.

Themes and Guiding Principles for Analysis

To aid in the selection, analysis and/or recommendation of potential alternative land uses to the appropriate governmental bodies, the Committee developed these Guiding Principles. Each Principle is defined in [Appendix D](#).

Sense of Community

- Community Defined
- Connectivity
- Linkage
- Wants and Needs
- Impact

Efficiency and Feasibility

- Financial Impact
- Financial Feasibility
- Technical Feasibility and Development Timeline
- Efficient Use of Resources

Stakeholder Impact

- Definition of Stakeholders
- Fit with Strategic Plans of Public Entities
- Stakeholder Wants and Needs
- Coterminal Boundaries
- Alternative Uses
- Access to Amenities
- Safety

The Guiding Principles/Themes that have been developed are meant to facilitate discussions on alternative land uses, but by no means do they constitute an exhaustive list. Robust community input, appropriate financial analyses and a forward-looking feasibility analysis are also critical components of land use discussions.

III. Park District Holdings: Inventory and Comparison

The three appendixes detailed below present a comprehensive look at open space within the greater Lake Bluff community and compare such to established state and national guidelines. The data presented includes facilities and acreage for Park District-owned parcels and also includes selective recreation-related parcels such as the bike path network that are within the community but are owned by other entities. The distinction between Park District and other owned parcels is important in many planning exercises. However, in terms of taking stock of the outdoor recreation-related facilities in the community, the Committee found the distinction to lack meaning, particularly in comparing to state and national standards that encompass data where ownership of recreation-related facilities may be driven by different factors than is the case in our community.

1) Parks and Properties Matrix – See [Appendix E-1](#).

The Matrix captures the acreage of park land and recreation-related open space as well as noting the specific facility types found at each location. Total acreage of parks and related open lands is roughly 313 acres with the golf course representing nearly 48% of the total. The Lake Bluff Park District owns 70% of the total acreage and 41% of the acreage excluding the golf course. The 160+ acres, excluding the golf course, is comprised of 53 acres of traditional parks, 103 acres of natural areas and 9 acres other recreation-related other open space.

2) Facility Need Assessment – See [Appendix E-2](#).

The Facility Needs Worksheet captures the number of facilities in the community and converts them to a number per 1,000 residents (8,500 residents is used for Lake Bluff Park District). The level of service per 1,000 is compared to statewide norms known as “IDNR SCORP” ratings as determined by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The surplus/deficit reflects Lake Bluff’s position relative to the IDNR SCORP and is expressed in the number of facilities. The comparison of Lake Bluff to these standards is one of the important factors in assessing grant requests; therefore, the Lake Bluff Park District remains mindful of the standards, but does not use them as key input in its planning process. The data did not raise any material concerns from the Committee. The areas where Lake Bluff shows a deficiency are generally ones where nearby facilities compensate (football fields in Lake Forest, marina slips in Waukegan, horse trails in Mettawa), multi-use open space such as Artesian Park provides sufficient flexibility to fill demand on near real-time basis (volleyball courts) or perceived demand is low (snowmobile trails).

3) Level of Service Analysis – See [Appendix E-3](#).

The Level of Service Analysis compares the volume of Lake Bluff park land to national guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The NRPA guidelines are based on acreage per 1,000 residents. At a summary level, NRPA guidelines suggest communities should have 10 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. Applying the NRPA level of service to Lake Bluff suggests we have a 32-acre (37%) deficiency when one only considers traditional parks. The NRPA does not establish standards for recreational areas beyond traditional parks. Lake Bluff has considerable recreational areas beyond traditional parks (e.g., Skokie Preserve, Belle Foret and Oriole Park) and if such were considered, Lake Bluff would exhibit an 80-acre surplus (excluding the golf course). The appendix highlights Park District only and community-wide park-land as the Committee views ownership and management of recreational facilities as tertiary in the minds of community members when they assess the level of service available.

The Committee notes three key observations on the national and state guidelines. The first observation is the standards/guidelines appear to be built on a fairly thin dataset and such data may not have direct

applicability to a community like Lake Bluff. The state guidelines are primarily based on periodic surveys of park districts and residents regarding the current stock of facilities, and expectations and desires for public recreation facilities. The NRPA guidelines partly incorporate underlying data from communities. However, the depth of the data in terms of number of communities appears quite shallow as there is no formal requirement to report or collect such data. The earliest record of national guidelines dates back to 1906 where it was recommended playgrounds provide 30 square feet for each child. This standard evolved over time to 10 acres of parks per 1,000 residents and the Level of Service standards highlighted in the exhibit.

The other two observations stem from the review of reports published by other park districts that attempt to use NRPA guidelines to establish some context for assessing their own level of service. A review of these reports notes that the communities had difficulty categorizing their park lands into the mini, neighborhood and community park framework established by the NRPA. They compensated for this challenge by establishing their own definitions that helped create reasonable differentiation of their inventory. Second, nearly all of the reports reviewed indicated a level of deficiency to the NRPA guidelines.

IV. Findings and Recommendations

After reviewing each of the 123 parcels located within the study area as well as the Park District holdings and park space benchmarking studies, the Committee developed the following recommendations:

- Park District Holdings
 - **Adequacy of Park Space:** The Committee does not view Lake Bluff as having a significant deficiency in park land dedicated to traditional parks as may be suggested by the nearly 42% shortage to the NRPA guideline for traditional parks. However, the deficiency may be considered in context of the residents in the southwestern portion of the community (West Terrace) having a longer distance or a travel path that involves crossing busier roads than residents in most other portions of the community to a traditional park. This does not need to be addressed by the addition of a park, but does highlight the need for continued attention to safe passage issues. Lake Bluff possesses more than enough acres of open space and other recreation areas that could be converted to traditional parks that would allow Lake Bluff to meet or exceed the NRPA acreage standard for traditional parks. The Committee believes that future planning should continue to seek creative use of open space that meets the demands of the community for active and passive use offerings while preserving the character of the open space itself and maintaining flexibility to meet future changes in needs and demands.
 - **Benchmarking and Planning:** State and national guidelines are a component of accreditation programs that the Park District may wish to obtain. Further, the state guidelines are an element used in the evaluation of grant requests that can provide important funds to the Park District. Thus, the Committee recommends that the Park District continue to measure itself against these standards. The Committee urges the Park District to establish a framework of self-assessment for its land holdings, land usage and facilities. This self-assessment should incorporate demands and desires of the community for active and passive open space, the ability to retain flexibility to respond to changing demands and desires, budgetary needs for maintenance of current resources and long-term capital investment needs current and future facilities. The Park District should include other government entities in this planning process to the extent such entities own or control important elements of the recreation facilities and open space.
 - **Capital Planning:** When reviewing inventory, the Committee recommends that, prior to the consideration of changes to the Park District's footprint, facilities or amenities, the Park Board review its 20 Year Capital Plan, an updated Community Wide Survey, economics, its financial position, participation trends, and dynamics of recreational activities along with the data included in the aforementioned three appendices.
 - **Acquisition and Disposal of Property:** The Committee determined that a Park Board land acquisition and disposal policy document, which would codify the Board protocol under which such actions would be undertaken, could facilitate Board discussion, promote transparency within the community, and provide a decision-making roadmap. See [Appendix F](#) for a proposed "Lake Bluff Park District Policy for the Acquisition, Inventory, Sale, Lease, and Retention of Public Property" drafted by Park District staff and attorneys with input from the Committee. Such policy, if adopted,

would help to balance the wants and needs of the community with the flexibility necessary for the Park Board to fulfill its mission. The Committee highly recommends that the Park Board establish detailed procedures outlining how the community and adjacent property owners will be notified of meetings pertaining to plans for the acquisition or sale of real estate. These procedures should ensure the most effective means of communication are used and that ample notice is provided. The intent of the notification process should be directed at maximizing awareness of the meetings to help ensure the community has a reasonable opportunity to participate in the process. It is expected that the Village and School Boards will also give serious consideration to adapting similar policies and procedures for their real estate planning process.

- Village, Park District and School District Borders

With the exception of the Knollwood community (which is not within the municipal limits of the Village), the Park District, Village and School District boundaries generally overlap, but are not identical. (See [Appendix A](#)) Several boundary anomalies were identified: (see [Appendix B](#)). In general, local boundary issues have long and convoluted histories. Boundary changes, while making “map sense,” may not be worth the time, effort and public expenditure of dollars, unless community members are deprived of community services as a result of otherwise arbitrary “lines on a map” (i.e. west end of Knollwood and north end of Shore Acres). The areas and parcels identified in Appendixes [G-2](#) and [H-1](#) and mapped in [Appendix B](#) are presented in order to document the boundary anomalies in a manner that could facilitate additional research and governmental action. The following is a summary of the specific boundary issues that the Committee identified.

- Homes in the area north of the Shore Acres Country Club east of Sheridan Road are all within the Lake Bluff School District, and most of the homes are within the Village, but none of the homes are within the Lake Bluff Park District.
- An apartment complex east of Green Bay Road is in the City of North Chicago and the Park District but not in the Village or School District.
- Approximately 55 homes on the west side of Knollwood are in the School District but not the Park District. This area is west of Bayonne Avenue.
- The Park District includes the southern portion of the residential community in Great Lakes that is bordered on the east by Green Bay Road and on the north by Route 137. This area is outside the northern boundary of the Village and School Districts.
- The west border of Knollwood Park extends into Libertyville Township (outside of the Lake Bluff Park District boundaries).
- There are some commercial properties along Route 41 that are not in the Village but are in the School and Park Districts.
- All of Arden Shore North and South residential areas are in the Park District and School District but not in the Village.
- The cemetery located in the northeast section of Lake Forest (east of Sheridan Rd. and north of Spruce Ave.) that is primarily accessed from Lake Road, extends over the border between Lake Forest and Lake Bluff.

- Overall Open Space Land Uses

- **Consolidate ownership or control of small governmental parcels:** Many areas of open space within the community have overlapping governmental ownership. For example, Sunrise Beach, Mawman Park, and the IL 176 and Sheridan Road greenways are each represented by a group parcels, some of which are owned by the Park District and others by the Village. Time, effort and money could be expended to consolidate ownership of these and other parcels into one governmental entity. What ownership or control consolidation could be pursued should be determined by the government entities involved. Ease of operation, maintenance and clear delineation of liability were viewed by the Committee as factors the government bodies should consider.
- **Maintain green space corridors.** The Committee recommends that primary entranceways into the community be maintained as open green space, specifically the Sheridan Road corridor (north to south) and the IL 176 corridor (north and south sides). Ownership and maintenance responsibilities are now shared between the Village, Park District, LBOLA, various transportation agencies and private land owners, and may need to be rationalized/consolidated to ensure future land use for these gateways can be controlled.
- **Ensure viability of lakefront assets.** Given the importance of the lakefront to the community, the Committee recommends that, as land use changes are considered, the Park District maintain a high level of transparency and public input. Further, the Committee recommends that long-term conservation needs be incorporated into the final plan to ensure these assets remain viable for future generations. Given the multiple uses of lakefront assets (sailing, kayaking, wind surfing, paddle boarding, swimming, etc.) the Committee recommends that the long-term plan for this area consider access and storage needs. The Committee also recommends the continued study of the feasibility of linking the north end of the beach to Lillian Dells Drive in order to create another access point to beach facilities. The Committee recognizes that such link could be prohibitively expensive, but believes that its inclusion in a long-term strategy of redevelopment is appropriate.
- **Maintain and enhance open space.** In general, the Committee recommends that, with the exception of special study areas noted below, existing forest preserve, parks, conservancies, open space easements and the like be maintained and, as possible, enhanced. Existing privately owned open space should be monitored for possible conservancy initiatives.
- **Utilize LBOLA resources.** The Committee appreciates the initiatives of LBOLA through the years and encourages the Park District, Village and private property owners to use their resources for parcel management and maintenance as well as community education. See [Appendix H-2](#) for a LBOLA-created document that identifies parcels where the organization could potentially offer value-added services. The ultimate decision on how and when to utilize LBOLA services rests with the owners of the respective parcels.
- **Establish a new zoning classification for park land.** Nearly all Park District properties are zoned as single family residential. The Committee recommends the Park District work with the

Village to establish more appropriate zoning classifications for these parcels. The Committee also encourages the Village and School Boards to consider appropriate zoning of their properties.

- **Address priority issues.** The Committee has established a list of priority issues that it believes should receive more immediate attention from the various government entities. These are provided in [Appendix H-1](#).
- Specific Open Space and Storage Spaces
 - Additions to Parks or School District Property or Transfers to Residents. (See [Appendix G-3](#)) The Committee identified a number of parcels that are generally under private ownership or are underutilized under public ownership that would complete or clarify the footprints of a number of parks. Additionally, a number of rights-of-way may more appropriately be reverted to private ownership. The Committee recommends additional study of these parcels to determine appropriate plans for future ownership and control.
 - Conservancy and Open Space. (See [Appendix G-4](#)) The Committee has identified a number of parcels that should be reviewed, either because a conservancy agreement has not been put in place or because land acquisition would enhance adjacent open space.
 - Community Storage/Meeting Facilities. The Committee determined that a community storage/meeting facility would be welcomed by many governmental entities (although not the Village) and presumably by many of the community's non-profit organizations. The number of available parcels for new storage is limited (see [Appendix G-5](#)) but more analysis is required to determine the true need and investment that would be required.
 - Bike and Pedestrian Path Additions. The Committee identified a large number of utility easements, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, and unimproved right-of-ways that could form the backbone of extensions to the community bike/pedestrian path system (see [Appendixes G-6 and G-6M](#)). The development of these paths would be costly (involving a number of bridges/tunnels over/under railroads and roads), but the Committee believes documentation of these paths (along with other bikeway strategic plans that have been developed in the last decade) would enhance the quality of life in the community, and that pursuit of appropriate funding is a reasonable ask of local government.
 - ✓ Northern Avenue Path. This path will start in the for north-central section of Knollwood at Atkinson and Waukegan roads. The path will proceed to the east along Atkinson and then turn south on the Northern Avenue right-of-way and terminate on the north side of IL 176. This will require some form of safe passage over the Canadian National tracks that cut across Northern Avenue. This proposal envisions providing a primary path for the residents of Knollwood to connect to the established path network on the south side of IL 176 as well as providing safe access to the emerging commercial corridor on IL 176 related to the Target development.

- ✓ West Blodgett Path. This path would link Lake Bluff Elementary School and Blair Park to the already established bike path system to the east, extending from Green Bay Road to the east along the Blodgett right-of-way to the Union Pacific tracks. A lane separation of Green Bay Road at W. Blodgett/W. Washington or a tunnel or bridge at Blodgett and Green Bay Road and another at Blodgett and the Union Pacific tracks or train crossing gates would enhance connectivity and safety.
- ✓ Mawman Union Pacific Path. This path would be an extension of the West Blodgett path. It would run west of the Union Pacific tracks and behind the homes on Mawman Avenue. It would cut in front of the Montessori school and continue to IL 176. A tunnel under IL 176 could provide safe passage to existing paths on IL 176 and a short ride to the Sheridan Road path, though the current bridge over IL 176 may prove sufficient.
- ✓ West Terrace & Sunset Terrace Path. Two connected paths are being proposed. The first would run east from the existing Skokie Valley path through the Skokie Preserve and then continue east on the north edge of the Stonebridge development, crossing Green Bay Road east to and through Mawman Park with a connection to the existing Sheridan Road path. (Two bridges over the Union Pacific freight tracks and passenger tracks would enhance connectivity and safety.) The second would involve establishing a path on the Sunset Terrace right-of-way from West Hawthorne Court to West Prospect Avenue. This would connect the West Terrace Path with the existing North Shore Bike Path on the south side of IL 176.
- ✓ Artesian Park Path. This proposed path running east to west through Artesian Park just south of the tennis courts would supplement the new path about to be constructed by the Village along the far northwestern edge of the Public Safety Building and the far northwestern edge of Artesian Park. The proposed Artesian Park Path would provide a westerly continuation of the current path that connects the Artesian Park tennis court parking lot with the entrance on the south end of the tennis courts. The completed east/west Artesian Park Path would provide a direct connection with East Prospect Avenue and an improved overall bike/pedestrian route connection between the lakefront and the Village areas west of Sheridan Road.
- ✓ Tunnel North Under IL 176 West of Green Bay Road. This would provide safe passage from the existing North Shore Bike Path on the south side of IL 176 to Blair Park and Lake Bluff Elementary School via Eva Terrace.
- ✓ North Extension Path. Support LCDOT plans for the Skokie Valley Bike Path to extend northerly from its current terminus at Illinois Route 176 to and beyond Route 137 along a route parallel to the Union Pacific freight line located westerly of the Lake Bluff golf course.
- The Committee identified a number of parcels that are currently under review by the local governmental entities. These parcels should be considered special study areas since either land use changes or additional governmental costs are involved ([see Appendix G-7](#)). The Committee hopes that the parcel inventory, the Themes and Guiding Principles, and the Acquisition/Disposal Policy recommendation developed as part of its review process will be helpful in sorting through the competing land use options.

- ✓ Stonebridge Development. As part of the redevelopment of the Stonebridge estate property, the current developer has proposed the development of a community park within the conservancy area. The developer has also proposed a Park District property along the south side of the Stonebridge Manor Home. The Committee, while applauding the proposed addition of park facilities to the West Terrace neighborhood, recommends that the Village and Park District analyze the financial responsibilities that would inure to their entities if the proposed parks were to be developed.

- ✓ Village-Owned Parcel South of IL 176 East of the Water Treatment Plant. The Committee discussed a number of alternative uses for this parcel, and agreed that current usage (open, passive, undeveloped) was not optimal. A wide variety of alternative uses were discussed but, without guidance from the governmental entities (concerning, among other things, the commercial value of the parcel), no recommendation is forthcoming. However, to stimulate future land use discussions, the following are among the alternative uses discussed; eradication of invasive species was deemed to be a necessity in all cases. This parcel is large enough that a number of these alternative uses could be accommodated at the same time:
 - Passive open space
 - Addition to Skokie Preserve property
 - Active open space (baseball or soccer fields, etc.)
 - Community garden
 - Housing; senior or alternative, with appropriate retail support
 - Single family housing
 - Community gathering place

- ✓ Blair Park and Golf Course. The largest parcel owned by the Park District, the future of the varied uses at Blair Park will certainly be the subject of debate and discussion in coming years. Without guidance as to the desire/need to change current uses in order to reduce Park District debt/increase revenue, the Committee discussions were merely speculative. However, a number of baseline paths are apparent and should be the subject of a special study. Most of the discussion will be around the future use of the land now occupied by the golf course; the Park District strategic plans should guide that conversation. Discussion paths could include the following:
 - No change. Blair Park and the golf course would remain as is
 - Close the golf course and determine future land use
 - Passive/active open space
 - Sale of all or part of the golf course property
 - Convert golf course into a nine-hole course and determine future land use for the balance of the property;
 - Passive/active open space
 - Sale of all or part of the remaining property

For list of parcels with no recommended action see [Appendix G-1](#).

V. Next Steps

This report has been approved by the Property and Land Use Advisory Committee members identified below at its meeting on July 21, 2015 and the Committee requests that it be submitted to the Park Board shortly thereafter. The co-chairs of the Committee would like to formally present our findings and engage the Board in discussion at a future date.

The Committee members thank the Park Board for their consideration of this report.

The Committee members also thank the staff of the Park District for their guidance and assistance during this 18-month journey.

Respectfully Submitted

Steve Kraus, Co-Chair

Jim Moss, Co-Chair

Rob Douglass, Representative Park District Board of Commissioners

Mark Dewart, Representative Lake Bluff Village Board of Trustees

Julie Gottshall, Representative Lake Bluff School District Board #65

Bill Nordeen, Representative Lake Bluff Open Lands Association

George Russell, Representative Community-at-Large

Nicki Snoblin, Representative Community-at-Large

Dan Reidy, Representative Community-at-Large

Ron Salski, Staff Liaison

VI. List of Appendixes

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