

**August 17, 2021**  
**City Council Meeting**  
**Comments and Position Statements**

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**PUBLIC FORUM**

**COMMENT**

Marilyn L Schweitzer

City Council and my fellow citizens: I believe City Council should not decide how they will vote until they are on the dais and have heard all that the public and their fellow members have to say. Otherwise, there is no need for an Open Meetings Act or even Council meetings. Members could simply vote at their leisure whenever they choose. There is great difference between stating "I am leaning to vote" and "I will vote". A vote, after all, is not a vote until it is cast. People tell me that Commissioners and Council often have their minds made up before public meetings. In a few instances with Council, I know this to be true. I know people for and against an issue try to tally the votes beforehand. Often this is done to tweak the proposal in their own best interest before the vote. Such tweaking, is not the problem. Getting a commitment or assuming a commitment is. Council's willingness to communicate on issues outside of council meetings is good. Their commitment to our community is far beyond showing up to vote on a Tuesday. I greatly appreciate this. But, although their intentions may be good, at times the results may be prejudicial to another party that they have not yet heard. Public hearing notices give the public between 15 to 30 days to get up to speed on an issue. For City Council meetings, it is less than a week. Information in the packet is often sparse or may change before the meeting. When communicating beyond the scope of a meeting, Commissioners and Council should be mindful and choose their words wisely. Regarding a development, I once tried to dispel rumors that speaking up was futile because the PZC and Council had already reached a conclusion before its public meetings. I tried to encourage residents to communicate and speak publicly. It was a tough sell. When the issue came before Council, I recommended in my public statement that Council and the PZC be wary of giving the impression that their minds had already been made up. After that meeting, I got a terse email from a commissioner objecting to my comments. I clarified that I was speaking of an impression people had and did not intend to be accusatory towards him. Despite his rebuke, I was pleased that at least someone felt as I did—that minds should not be made up nor should they be assumed to be. Recently, I've learned that many people believe Council should commit to how they will vote before a meeting. Some even view it as a betrayal and lack of integrity if the vote does not go as expected. As you are aware, a 5013c publicly expressed this against a candidate for this year's municipal election. I've heard rumors that some Council members have chastised other members for not voting as presumed. I hope this is not the case. A vote isn't a vote until it is taken on the dais. For people to believe it is a done deal ahead of time is wrong. It is committing an injustice towards our elected officials. For Council to commit ahead of time is wrong. It is committing an injustice towards their constituents. I respect and admire council members who have open minds and are willing to hold off making a final decision until they've read the council Q&A, read public forum submittals, heard public forum speakers, heard staff's responses, and listened to their fellow council members. I respect citizens who treat council fairly and do not put them in immutable situations. I hope council and other citizens will as well.

Philip Buchanan

Good evening Mayor, Council members, Mr. Krueger and Staff. I urge the City Council to approve Landmark status to the historic Peter Kroehler YMCA building. "The cornerstone was laid on Memorial Day in 1910. It remains a vital piece of downtown Naperville today" It included the first ever swimming pool in DuPage County. Included in the popular book "Downtown Naperville" by Joni Hirsch Blackman "It's served thousands of families over the years," said Tom Crowley Board Chairman Naperville YMCA's. "It's a sad day that it's closing, but it's also a day that should be celebrate because the YMCA continues to today, and has in the past, given so much back to the community." Before there was ever a park district in Naperville, the Kroehler Family YMCA served as a community hub for Naperville residents throughout its long life." "The Y was really the recreational hub for the community. " "After both World Wars, the Y supported ex-GI's. Swimming lessons continued to be popular for all ages. The YMCA continued to be a core part of the community, with programs changing with the times. " Many other Illinois cities have chosen to preserve their local YMCAs. Joliet YMCA Georgian revival NRHP 2006 Waukegan YMCA original Carnegie Library NRHP 2009 Wabash Avenue YMCA of Chicago (Black Metropolis Bronzeville Historic District) NRHP 1986 Contributing Property. 2002 National Preservation Honor award. As you know there are many benefits of Historic Preservation at the local level: • Multifold return on dollars spent when property owners have access to and qualify for federal and state incentives. • Municipal and private access to grant money • Enticement of outside investment in our community by others with preservation awareness. • Realization of local job creation through rehabilitation work and expanded employment in local businesses. • Economic Development through a cohesive building rehabilitation effort • Heritage tourism based on rehabilitated buildings and complimentary business uses. • Retention of an element of an authentic community identity and • Stabilization of and / or increase in property values through renewed residential and commercial buildings that add to local current tax revenues. Tax incentives: There are many Federal and State Tax incentives to help preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings, but to also promote the economic revitalization of communities. Sustainability Going forward Historic Preservation and Sustainability will become more important as we work on Climate Change. "Historic preservation is inherently a sustainable practice. "A commonly quoted phrase, "the greenest building is the one that's already built," expresses the relationship between preservation and sustainability. The repair and retrofitting of existing and historic buildings is considered to be the ultimate recycling project. Regarding the vote tonight for Public Arts Commission. I urge the Council Members to delay your vote until the new Public Arts Commission can provide guidance going forward regarding this Commission, SECA and Century Walk. Thank you

### **L17-Real property on Mill Street to the Naperville Park District**

#### ***COMMENT***

Marilyn L Schweitzer

Kudos to staff for their recommendation. It is nice to see matters like this cleared up in such an amiable and professional way.

### **L1-203 Center Street**

#### ***COMMENT***

Marilyn L Schweitzer

Please concur with staff and deny the variance. Yet again, this is an example of work being started without a building permit, especially in the Historic District. Requests for variances should not be taken lightly. Doing proliferates requests by other property owners and further weakens the intent of the code. I agree with staff that there is not a sufficient hardship or practical difficulty.

## **O1- Approve CY22 SECA City Obligation Allocations**

### **COMMENT**

Ray Kinney

City Council Members: Thank you for your service. I am writing today to express my concern about the desire to make Century Walk a permanent recipient of tax dollars through SECA. I won't go into the history of SECA and how it was started, the original intent and how - as many predicted - it has created significant tax revenues that are now used in ways never intended when the tax was created. That really isn't the point for today.

I have not been a fan of Century Walk as an entity for many years now - mainly because I was concerned over the financial management of the tax dollars along with private donations being administered through Century Walks loose administrative practices. The idea behind Century Walk was a decent one, but with the way the pieces were selected, installed and paid for is not the way an entity that receives public tax dollars ought function. At least 2 pieces have been removed due to demolition or redevelopment. Other pieces contain "easter eggs" that should not be included in publicly funded art.

I applauded the idea of the public task force to take a look at art in Naperville. Why the rush to make CW a permanent recipient? In the recent election, CW was politically involved in a very public way - could this be the reason for the rush?

This might be a great time to re-evaluate SECA - couldn't the position of SECA Administrator also be charged with the oversight of any public art installations? I urge you not to make a permanent financial decision on the funding of art - either through Century Walk or any entity - until the task force has completed their work and the public has had time for input.

Thank you for your attention - and service.

Sincerely,  
Ray Kinney

Marilyn L Schweitzer

A) Regarding all obligations and forthcoming grants: • Better oversight of all SECA recipients should be applied • The public needs more information such as access to all SECA applications in order to understand the SECA commission's and City Council's decisions. • The Final Reports of all SECA grantees should be made available so the public. B) Regarding the \$\$50,000 obligation towards "Century Walk Maintenance" Though described as "Maintenance for pieces located on public property", in reality 73% of the \$\$50,000 from 2018 through 2020 has been spent for upkeep of art on private property. Our business community and other civic organizations value public art and are capable of paying for maintenance of public art located on private property. That is what most communities do. I recommend the obligation be clarified and the agreement be amended to apply strictly for art located on public property and reduced to \$\$25,000 which should amply cover maintenance of art public property. I recommend that the terms of the obligation be strengthened for better financial accountability, asset management, ownership/licensing agreements are guaranteed. The terms under which the agreement may be terminated should be strengthened and enforced. C) Regarding the \$\$100,000 obligation towards "Century Walk Public Art Program" The request for this obligation should be denied. I am fond of what Century Walk has brought to the community, but granting an obligation must be fiscally responsible and this is not. Century Walk Corporation wants taxpayer funds to its problems, but they do not want oversight. Instead they wish to "alleviate the burden of public art administration from the City". There are several problems their desire: • Naperville taxpayers

should not take on the burden of art desired and owned by a single organization. • No single art organization should be the administrator of Naperville's Public Art Program. It is the City's responsibility, it should not be outsourced, and it would be irresponsible of Council to do so. • Naperville needs a Public Art Plan that is far more comprehensive than what Century Walk has proposed. Such sound plan such as those of Greeley, CO; Fargo, ND; San Luis Obispo, CA; and Alameda, CA would help public arts organizations such as Century Walk strive. • Century Walk does not have the wherewithal to manage public art for the city. Beyond financial needs, they are in organizational flux, struggling for volunteer support, and lack a discernible asset management plan. • SECA funds can't be applied towards fundraising, rent, salaries, and compensations. SECA funds may help Century Walk pay for art, but it's not going to help their organizational issues. For that, community support through volunteering and donations will help. • The city already gives Century Walk substantial support. Between 2014 and 2019, 70% of Century Walk support has come from government grants. The city pays for maintenance of all the art owned by Century Walk even if it is located on private property. • Despite what the city gives Century Walk, Century Walk retains ownership of most of the art and reports all of its assets as unrestricted. The public may love all or some of it, another organization may have a collaborator, but the public didn't chose it nor do they seem to own much of it. If there is an obligation for any public art, then the public who is paying for it should have a choice, the public should own it, it should be fiscally well managed, and it should have proper legal agreements. • Neither Century Walk nor the City have a clear understanding the ownership/licensing/maintenance agreements of the art. This is well known and long past due. There may be good intentions, but good intentions are not legally binding.

**O3 – Affordable Senior Housing and IDD on property near Route 59 and 103d Street**  
***POSITION***

Philip Meno - **SUPPORT**