

# CARPENTERSVILLE CONNECTION

*The Carpentersville Connection is specifically created for the Carpentersville business community by the Business Development Commission. If you have comments or news to share, contact Bill Hicks, Editor, at [whicks1070@comcast.net](mailto:whicks1070@comcast.net)*



## March 20<sup>th</sup> Referendum May Reduce Electrical Rates

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The Village will be placing a referendum question on the upcoming March 20<sup>th</sup> ballot that could lead to lower electricity rates for small businesses and residential customers. As a result of electrical deregulation in Illinois, municipalities now have the ability to seek bids from alternate electrical suppliers. This occurs through a process known as aggregation. For approximately a decade industrial and large commercial firms have been able to purchase lower cost electricity from suppliers. For this opportunity to be available to small businesses and residents, passage of a voter referendum is required.

As a result of long-term energy contracts, ComEd rates are presently higher than competing electrical suppliers and will likely remain so until 2013. Twenty Illinois communities obtained bids on the open market in 2011, successfully achieving reductions of 20-30% below the rate Com Ed charges for the cost of electricity.

If Carpentersville voters approved the referendum, the Village would proceed with the necessary steps to adopt a plan and seek competitive bids in mid-2012. Even if an alternate energy supplier was selected, Com Ed would remain responsible for delivering electricity to the community, repair of outages and customer billing. *Cont. p. 2*



***Carpentersville's Oktoberfest and Cyclocross Races were a great success with increased attendance over last year. An early rainstorm made the course "very interesting" for the more than 500 racers who participated, but did not delay the fun. The event was funded largely by area businesses.***



*Electrical Rates, Continued from p. 1*

The following list of *frequently asked questions* has been prepared to further address this topic:

**Q: Why is the opportunity for municipal electric aggregation available?**

A: In 2009 Governor Quinn signed into law Public Act 096-0176, amending Illinois' original electric deregulation legislation. This is the last part of the deregulation process. Until this Act was amended, only larger customers such as industrial, commercial, and governmental entities could participate. Three-fourths of this commercial load is currently purchased from sources other than ComEd. The new law allows municipalities to transfer their residents' and small business owners' electric accounts to alternative electric suppliers.

**Q: What is electric deregulation?**

A: In 1997, the State of Illinois implemented a plan to deregulate ComEd. Under this plan, ComEd no longer generates electricity for its customers, but continues to provide power generated by others through its distribution system. Deregulation means that power can be purchased through any Illinois Commerce Commission-approved power supplier.

**Q: What is electric aggregation?**

A: Electric aggregation is a process that allows local governments to bundle (aggregate) residential and small commercial retail electric accounts and seek bids for a cheaper source of power. Currently ComEd customers receive electricity at a price set each year by the Illinois Power Agency, a governmental body that secures electricity on the wholesale market on behalf of ComEd. By bundling residential and small commercial accounts, municipalities can go out into the open market and seek a lower rate for electric power. Large industrial and commercial customers have been using this option to reduce electricity costs since 1999.

**Q: How does electrical aggregation benefit small businesses and residents?**

A: Electric aggregation combines the power demands of customers in a community. By combining the power demand of its residents, the community can leverage the buying power of thousands of residents and small businesses. This combined buying power typically provides lower and more stable rates.

**Q: How is a small business defined?**

A: Small business is a commercial establishment with an annual peak electrical demand of 100 KW or less. This has been described as a business about twice the size of a McDonald's restaurant.

**Q: How does the program work?**

A: Under state law, the Village must place a referendum on the ballot to ask voters to give the authority to aggregate electric accounts and seek bids for power generation. If Carpentersville voters approve the referendum on the March 20<sup>th</sup> election, the Village will hold at least two public hearings to discuss and create an aggregation plan. Once the plan is in place the Village would seek bids from energy suppliers certified and regulated by the Illinois Commerce Commission.

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**Q: What would be ComEd's role in an electric aggregation scenario?**

A: ComEd distributes electricity, but does not generate it. As the local electricity distributor, ComEd is responsible for power line and distribution infrastructure that brings electricity into homes and businesses.

**Q: How much of my current Com Ed bill relates to the purchase of power?**

A: Approximately 60% of the electric bill covers the actual purchase of electricity. The remaining portion covers the distribution of electricity, metering, customer service and taxes. Any reduction due to aggregation would apply to the portion applicable to the purchase of electricity.

**Q: Will residents notice a difference in service?**

A: No, the only difference is the energy received from the selected supplier and lower, more stable prices. ComEd would continue to deliver energy to homes and businesses. If residents have an outage or need service, they would continue to contact ComEd.

**Q: What if my power goes out - will I need to call the company providing the power?**

A: No. ComEd is responsible for ensuring that electricity flows through its distribution network to all homes and businesses. Aggregation would not change how ComEd responds to outages.

**Q: If I participate, will I get two bills - one from ComEd for delivering the power and another from a company that provides it?**

A: No. ComEd will remain responsible for billing customers for all electricity, regardless of the electric supplier. The only change would be the name of the electricity provider on the bill's electricity supply item line.

**Q: What if small businesses or residents do not want to participate?**

A: Small businesses and residents may "opt-out" of the program if the referendum is passed. Before the aggregation program begins, all residents and small businesses would receive an opt-out notice in the mail and given a date by which they must return the opt-out notice or call a number to request to be opted-out of the program.

**Q: What is the referendum question that will appear on the ballot?**

A: Shall the Village of Carpentersville have the authority to arrange for the supply of electricity for its residential and small commercial retail customers who have not opted out of such a program?

**Q: Who do I contact for more information?**

A: Contact Steve Jones, Assistant Village Manager at (847) 426-3439 x 221, or via email at [sjones@vil.carpentersville.il.us](mailto:sjones@vil.carpentersville.il.us)

*A hundred and fifty years ago, the Catholic Church sought to help improve the deplorable condition of the Irish immigrants in the cities. The acknowledged experts claimed that the Irish were too backward, too ignorant, and "very poor human material". The experts were wrong. When people want to get ahead, it's amazing the skills they can acquire. -Malcolm Forbes-*

# Old Town Study: A Work in Progress



## Carpentersville Business Development Commission Appointed Members

Kay Teeter, Chairman  
William Hicks, Vice Chairman  
Mike Armato  
A. Morgan Bergquist  
Melissa Hernandez  
Frank Scarpelli  
Gerald Wille

## Ex Officio Members

Janice Murphy, Economic  
Development/Special Projects  
Coordinator

Ed Ritter, Village President

There was a burst of energy on the morning of November 16th in the Otto Engineering parking lot in Carpentersville as nearly 40 planners, architects, engineers and municipal, county and regional officials descended on the town. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) held a charette as part of a Partnership for Sustainable Communities grant to develop designs, and stimulate thinking for the downtown.

CMAP's Senior Planner, Trevor Dick, conducted the walking tour along Main Street across the Fox River, and then convened the group at the Carpentersville Middle School. CMAP staff divided those present into groups such as urban design, economic development, housing, and transportation; they were then asked to redraw the downtown, reconfigure intersections, and brainstorm ideas on how the town can attract local businesses based on assets like proximity to the Fox River and Illinois' longest bike trail. As one member said, "Disneyland goes to great lengths to recreate these kinds of places - Carpentersville already has them."

The meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup> was the second of CMAP's "visioning workshops" Public comment and input on the future of Old Town was received by CMAP at an earlier charette on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Although the same topics were introduced, the format of the discussion was less structured.

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, CMAP made a preliminary report to the Carpentersville Board of Trustees on the results of the workshops. Several of the "big ideas" that participants identified included better utilization of the riverfront including recreational and commercial uses, improvement of the intersection of Washington and Main, making the Old Town area and the parks more accessible to all forms of transportation, and seeking ways to connect Carpenter's Park with the river front.

Residents still have an opportunity to comment on the future of Old Town until January 1<sup>st</sup> by going to the CMAP website, <http://carpentersville.metroquest.com/>. CMAP will present its final report to the Board of Trustees later in January, 2012.

## Business Development Commission Attracts Business Leaders to its Ranks

Several new members have been added to the Carpentersville Business Development Commission (BDC) during 2010 and 2011, and they bring extensive business experience to the advisory group.

Gerald Wille joined the BDC in the fall of 2010 and contributed to the early discussions of streamlining the development process in the Village, which is now in the process of being implemented. Gerry began his career in 1964 working for the family-owned lumber, building materials and hardware business. In 1976, he joined Edward Hines Lumber Company of Buffalo Grove. By 1992, he was appointed Vice President of Operations, and in 2007, he became President of the Company. Retiring in 2010, Gerry has enjoyed his tenure on the BDC. Of his role on the Commission, he explains, "Our duty is to make it easier and more welcoming for businesses to locate in Carpentersville".

Also appointed in 2010, Michael Armato, the owner of Sign-A-Rama in Carpentersville, has contributed his expertise in helping the Village to revise its sign ordinances. Mike has a long history of volunteering for both municipal organizations and charities. During the 1990's, he was President of the New Century Partnership in Elgin and was a central player in the renewal of the riverfront. He also served in leadership positions with United Way and the Boys and Girls Club. Mike is plain spoken about his interest in the Commission. "I love working with municipalities; I probably should have made a career of it."

A. Morgan Bergquist, who joined the Commission in the fall of 2011, is an accomplished senior merchandising and sales professional; he boasts experience in both the hardware and lawn and garden supply industries. "As a resident of Carpentersville, I am very interested in seeing our community prosper and grow through the retention and expansion of existing businesses, as well as the attraction of new business," he states. To accomplish these goals, Morgan believes in "visionary economic planning" and "creation of a business friendly development process".

Frank Scarpelli also joined the Commission in the fall of this year and brings a unique perspective to the group. As manager of the Meadowdale Shopping Center, the largest retail development in the Village, Frank has a keen interest in seeing a revitalized business atmosphere in Carpentersville. A 1984 graduate of Elmhurst College, he began his career at Meadowdale (the family business) in 1986. By 1992, he was appointed Manager. His previous experience as a village trustee in Dundee provides further value to the BDC. His special interest is being an advocate for new redevelopment standards.

The Business Development Commission meets on the last Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Village Hall Conference Room. Trustee Kay Teeter chairs the Commission. The public is always welcome to attend.

Dialogue can occur only when a group of people see each other as colleagues in mutual quest for deeper insight and clarity. Thinking of each other as colleagues is important because thought is participative. The conscious act of thinking of each other as colleagues contributes toward interacting as colleagues. This may sound simple, but it can make a profound difference. —Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline; The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*