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Village Board to review development proposals for key downtown sites

Development proposals for the corners of Lake Street and Forest Avenue, and Harlem Avenue and South Boulevard will be reviewed by the Village Board in special meetings this month.

The board is scheduled to meet with representatives of Sertus Capital Partners LLC at 7:30 p.m., Wed. June 13, to discuss development of the northeast corner of Lake and Forest, and with representatives of Morningside Equities Group, Inc., at 7 p.m., Mon., June 25 to discuss a proposal for the corner of Harlem and South. Both meetings will be held at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

Sertus is expected to present a preliminary proposal that incorporates property owned by Grace Episcopal Church, the corner property that includes the Original Pancake House and Certifiedland Grocery, and the existing Lake and Forest public parking garage, a facility that would be replaced and expanded as part of the project.

Redeveloping the Lake and Forest corner is among the *catalyst* projects called for by the Greater Downtown Master Plan, which recommended several key steps to help spur private investment in Oak Park's central shopping district. The site also was the subject of a public meeting in March to gather community input on bringing more great architecture to Oak Park. The Sertus presentation is expected to focus on the program in general, with discussion regarding design to follow in subsequent meetings with the Village Board and community.

The meeting with the Morningside Group is to revisit a proposal to build a mixed-use, residential and retail development with public parking across from the CTA/Metra train station. The Morningside proposal was the preferred of three submitted through a formal bid process last fall. The property is owned by the Village.

While both meetings are open to the public, they are not intended to solicit community input at this time. Future community meetings for public input will be scheduled if the projects move forward.

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