

Statement of Principles Regarding Land Use, Development and Zoning

For more than 30 years, the Roscoe Village Neighbors has dedicated itself to serving the unique “Village Within the City” that is Roscoe Village. Through its Zoning and Land Use Committee, RVN has worked in a spirit of good faith with generations of elected officials, property owners, developers and City staff to preserve the essential character of the Village while encouraging responsible residential and commercial development. Written principles established in RVN’s Statement of Principles Regarding Land Use, Development and Zoning have been the foundation of the Committee’s work. Originally adopted in 2001 with broad community input, the Principles were updated in May 2008 and again in April 2019.

The current Principles are set out below and can be downloaded from the link at the bottom of this page:

As Adopted May 14, 2008 and Amended April 2019.

Roscoe Village Neighbors Statement of Principles Regarding Land Use, Development and Zoning

Roscoe Village is an urban community located on Chicago’s North Side. Bounded by Belmont Avenue to the south, Addison Street to the north, Ravenswood Avenue to the east and the Chicago River to the west, our community has a unique mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses. Its historical characteristics and essential attributes combine to make it truly a “Village within the City.”

1. We support effective public policies and responsible private development that maintain the essential attributes of Roscoe Village’s built environment and enhance the overall quality of life and work in our community. These attributes include a vital mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses essential to an urban environment.
2. Because a diverse mix of affordable building stock is an essential attribute of Roscoe Village, we encourage and support the preservation, renovation and, whenever appropriate, adaptive reuse of existing buildings in Roscoe Village.
3. We urge that new construction be responsibly developed and creatively designed in ways that harmonize with, and respond to, the character and context of our community. We encourage the use of quality materials and craftsmanship in building construction and renovation. For example, we encourage the use of brick or stone exteriors, rather than exposed concrete block.
4. We encourage development of affordable housing that complies with the Affordable Requirements Ordinance and the Transit Oriented Development Ordinance.

5. Most of our residential streets are zoned for detached single, two, three and multiple family homes. To maintain the character of these streets, to promote appropriate rehabilitation of older buildings and to accommodate new development, we are committed to preserving the existing RS-3 zoning that predominates in our community.

6. We seek to maintain and enhance the pedestrian-oriented scale of our principal commercial streets, notably Roscoe Street and Belmont Avenue. We especially support efforts to preserve and enhance the character and use of Roscoe Street between Damen Avenue and Leavitt Street as a designated "Pedestrian Street" under the 2004 Zoning Ordinance. We support strict enforcement of the Pedestrian Street requirements for Roscoe Street, which include provisions concerning building facades, entrances, windows, parking and prohibited uses.

7. We support strict enforcement of the SD-10 Roscoe Street Special Character Overlay District, which is intended by the 2004 Zoning Ordinance to conserve the existing low-density, multi-use commercial and residential character of Roscoe Street between Damen Avenue and Claremont Avenue. The Overlay's requirements supplement underlying zoning for new construction on this portion of Roscoe Street.

8. We support strict enforcement of the public notice requirements for all zoning amendments, administrative adjustments, special uses and variations, and for new construction generally. We encourage efforts to improve the effectiveness, transparency and fairness of notification procedures.

9. We support maintaining and expanding open green space in Roscoe Village, including Fellger and Clark Parks and other pedestrian amenities along the Chicago River.

10. We support efforts to improve and expand public transportation serving Roscoe Village, as these efforts preserve our community's pedestrian-oriented character, reduce demand for parking and enhance commercial vitality and access to services. We also encourage the use of bicycles and other environmentally friendly transportation options in Roscoe Village.

11. We oppose the introduction of permit parking in Roscoe Village. We also oppose the creation of new curb cuts on any of Roscoe Village's streets.

12. We encourage environmentally responsible building and development appropriate for the existing urban built environment in Roscoe Village. We strongly believe that building "green" is consistent with Roscoe Village's existing zoning.

13. We reaffirm our support of the reform process that resulted in the 2004 Zoning Ordinance, particularly as it applies to Roscoe Village. We will support a zoning change only when it is otherwise consistent with these Principles and when it represents the least intrusive zoning solution.

We intend for these Principles to help guide land use, development and zoning in our community. We seek to work cooperatively with community residents and business owners, our aldermen, other city officials and developers to assure that projects proposed for Roscoe Village reflect and incorporate these Principles to the fullest extent possible.