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Welcome Good morning. My name is Mary Lou Wehrli. It's great to see so many of you willing to wear a thinking cap so early on a Saturday. I'm reminded of a story of a woman who was preparing a pot roast for the family's dinner.

A young girl watched as her mom took beautiful piece of meat, cut off one end and threw it away. Her mom then put the meat in a pan and into the oven. "Momma, why'd you cut off part of that meat and throw it away?" asked the little girl. "Well, honey, I don't know, that's the way my momma did it," was the reply. The little girl was puzzled and went to ask her grandma why part of the meat was cut off and thrown away. "Why, that's the way my mother prepared the meal," she said. The young girl was not satisfied. "I just don't understand it," the little girl replied. "I'm gonna call granny. She dials up her great-grandmother, "Granny, why did you cut the meat off one end and throw it away?" "Why darling," came the soft answer over the phone, "we didn't have a pan big enough."

We're not cooking meat here this morning, but we are pausing to think about how and why things are the way they are.

I'd like to thank, please stand, Gerry Cassioppi, Bob Hofmann, Judy Brodhead, Joe McElroy and Bruce Lund for joining me two weeks ago to discuss the Martin Mitchell properties as the lands and their uses relate to Naperville's present and future. We all expressed concern that the general public had not had the opportunity to offer ideas, but we also knew that the intergovernmental efforts to date intentionally focused strictly on landowners and tenants.

It is a remarkable and admirable occurrence when three units of local government - the City of Naperville, Naperville Park District and School District 203 - can come together to explore potential new boundaries and options that might enhance the overall quality of life in our community. Through intergovernmental cooperation, the hope has been that improvements can be coordinated and facilities may even be shared in an effort to provide an efficient land use pattern for the Caroline Martin Mitchell Property and perhaps other areas of our city. I thank them for their initiative.

I'd like to thank any elected officials and staffs that are able to attend today. As you will see when Nicki explains the guidelines, this morning's work is for individual, mostly written, participation. Elected officials are well aware and respectful of the fact that no more than two of them may gather to talk amongst themselves about the business of government in order to comply with the Open Meetings Act. It is my understanding that those elected officials have come in their capacity as interested individual citizens. Thank you very much for being here.

That Saturday morning meeting resulted in us asking the Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation and the League of Women Voters to co-host the public gathering held here today. Both organizations include in their mission statement a desire to foster open

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communication or to present unbiased information on issues. Both organizations have other activities, but it is in this capacity that we thank them for the opportunity to be here today: to foster open communication and to present unbiased information on issues. Both organizations have helped with logistics and outreach. Kathy Benson is a board member of the Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation – please stand. And Judy Brodhead, please stand, is president of the League of Women Voters.

Purpose The purpose of this gathering is to allow individual public opinion that is not confined to any particular agenda to be expressed on the future of the Caroline Martin Mitchell property and perhaps of our entire city.

Plan The plan is to present a visioning exercise where each one of you is asked to think about **what is** and **what can be**. The exercise will help capture issues and concerns of today as well as ideas and hopes for the future.

Payoff The payoff of your time here today – listening, hearing, seeing, thinking, sharing and individually participating in this exercise – is a broader appreciation of where Naperville is now, how it got here, and YOUR issues and ideas being captured to help frame the big picture of Naperville’s future quality of life. A copy of today’s results will be available to you and to the City, Park and School Districts and any other interested parties.

Background Naperville was founded by generous and thoughtful people.

- Morris Sleight donated a sheep pasture that became the site of North Central College.
- Lenore McDonald donated 60 acres that became home to the Conservation Foundation and Community Supported Agriculture.
- Caroline Martin Mitchell donated 212 acres for the public good. Her property became the site for Naper Settlement, Naperville Community then Naperville Central High School, Knoch Park, Sportsman’s Club, Garden Plots, the Barn and park district maintenance, Ribfest, and Von Oven Scout Reservation. Portions of her property were sold to private interests and to Edward Hospital and the Naperville Cemetery Association.

Believe it or not, but in the 1940s there were even plans to put an airport on this property. Out town has always had creative thinkers.

If you’d please refer to the maps in your handout. The first is a map identifying Tracts A, B, C, and D. These are portions of land that are mentioned in Caroline’s will. Tract D includes the land willed to the city by Emma Von Oven. A city ordinance was passed to honor her wishes that this land be made available to scouts.

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If I may quote our Illinois prairie poet Carl Sandburg:

“The rights of property and possession are guarded by ten thousand laws and fortresses. What’s yours? What’s mine? And, who says so?”

I won’t go into the ten thousand laws or fortresses or the many piles of documents that relate to the story of the Caroline Martin Mitchell property. Caroline’s desire was that her home - the mansion at the settlement - be preserved as a museum, and that the land around it be used for public purposes.

I will say that the history of Naperville has from the beginning been sprinkled with generous people who looked ahead to touch the interests of those who might come after them. Naperville has been favored with active, thoughtful people who have identified common values, wrangled over possibilities and supported actions to build their community. Thank you for being one of those people.

The second map in your handout shows the Tract C boundaries of today as well as a parcel owned by the School District. You will also notice two more maps on the back walls.

There are duplicate sets of maps on the back walls. One is an aerial photograph depicting the Martin Mitchell property and surroundings. This image is roughly bounded to the north by Ogden Avenue, to the east by Charles, to the south by Gartner Road, and to the west by River Road. The other is a map of the entire City of Naperville. It identifies the park and school sites, and the municipal and unincorporated boundaries. These two maps are meant to help put the Martin Mitchell properties in context with the uses of our entire 35 square mile community.

From Joseph Naper’s 1842 India ink layout of his settlement on file at the county recorder’s office to the computer assisted design of the map in your hand Naperville has always been active in deciding what it wants to be.

For 176 years Naperville has planned, invested, built, wrecked and rebuilt.

- The Plank Road gave way to the train and tollway. What remained was transportation.
- The wrecking ball and dump trucks came for Naperville High School at the corner of Washington and School Streets. Naperville Central High School, Naperville North High School, Waubonsie Valley High School and Neuqua Valley High School were built. What was valued was education.
- The cemetery was at the corner of Washington and Benton. It moved to the outskirts of town at Washington and Hillside and continues to provide a service to our

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community. What the cemetery leadership anticipated and planned for was growth and a changing community.

The background I am offering to prepare us for the work of today is to remind us that Naperville has always rolled up her sleeves to work at creating community. Naperville and its many organizations have a strong history of reinvention, of review and of commitment to the quality of life in the present with an eye to the quality of life for its future.

We have many common values and special places. The Caroline Martin Mitchell properties are one such special place. Here, anyone can find health, recreation, history, nature, education, sport, guidance, celebration and even eternal peace; all on the land so generously gifted to the public good.

On this fine November Saturday morning, in the comfortable chairs of the city council chambers, each of you bring personal experiences, knowledge, and values. Your time here is contributing to your life opportunities and the opportunities people who will come after you. I believe that Naperville is special because her citizens invest time, talent and treasure in their community. Today is one of those investments.