

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 6, 2018**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on February 6, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue) and the following were present.

Present:       Jill Danly  
                  Neil Dahlmann  
                  Edward Deegan  
                  Matthew Kerouac  
                  Carol Russ  
                  Bob Hunter, Chair

Absent:         Julie Wehmeyer

Also Present:  Mike Croak, Building Codes Supervisor (BCS)

**2. Consideration of the December 5, 2017 ABR Regular Meeting Minutes**

Member Dahlmann moved to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2017 ABR meeting as amended. Member Russ seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment Time)**

Chair Hunter recommended omitting this agenda item because there was no audience present. There was no objection from the ABR.

**4. A Public Hearing to Consider a Site Plan to Review a Proposed Second Floor Addition to the Community Church at 117 East Scranton Avenue**

Chair Hunter introduced the agenda item then administered the oath to those in attendance.

Chair Hunter opened the public hearing and invited the Petitioner to the podium.

Mr. William Strum a volunteer at the Community Church of Lake Forest & Lake Bluff said the proposal is to enclose the second floor balcony to create a small office space, approximately 6 x 10 ft., for a Church Administrator. The materials used will match those of the existing building. Also proposed is the addition of two downlights under the balcony to illuminate the existing entranceway.

Chair Hunter opened the floor for comments.

Member Russ commented that she loves this building. She expressed her appreciation for the matching exterior materials and said she has no concern about the proposed lighting because of the dark colored brick. Member Russ said this is a straightforward project and thanked Mr. Strum for volunteering to do the project.

In response to a question from Member Russ, Mr. Strum said any fundraising group worries about raising the appropriate funds but they seem to be in good shape to move forward with the project. The Church has grown becoming more vibrant and their administrative records needs to be kept in a private location. Member Russ said she likes the fact the Church is not about brick and mortar. Also, she is glad the building is being maintained instead of the parcel being redeveloped.

Member Kerouac asked if the balcony would be re-clad. Mr. Strum said the plan is to keep the existing material. Member Kerouac suggested adjusting the window sill height to create a continuous ban. However, this would require re-cladding the balcony and he would like to recognize the funding consideration for this project.

Member Deegan said it looks nice to him and had no further comments.

Member Danly said she thinks it is excellent and she is in favor of the proposal.

Member Dahlmann said he is in favor of the proposal. He also likes the fact they plan on keeping the existing cladding because it blends well with the rest of the building. In response to a question from Member Dahlmann, BCS Mike Croak said the entire proposal is being considered, including the peace pole.

Mr. Charlie Clarke (resident) and Community Church Board Member said the peace pole was a gift to the Church and installed a year ago. The Church would like to keep the peace pole and discussed the matter with Staff whom recommended it be included in the request.

Member Dahlmann said he has no objection with the peace pole but it seems the wording could potentially be changed in the future. Mr. Clarke said he is unsure if the wording could be changed. Member Dahlmann asked if the peace pole would need approval if it remains a temporary sign.

Member Danly said the peace pole should be considered. The ABR is working hard as a committee to establish guidelines regarding proper signage, scale, proportion and to have clarity in our town. The message reminder on the peace pole is appreciated, but the pole should have been reviewed by the ABR. She expressed her concern regarding the prayer flags and asked if the ABR was okay with that many flags in town. Member Danly said sometimes art and religious tone could be subjective.

BCS Croak commented on the Supreme Court decision regarding all signage noting the ABR should not be critiquing the contents of the signage but looking at the appearance.

Member Russ said she thought of the peace pole as a temporary sign installed as of right. She asked if the ABR should consider the peace pole if it is a permanent sign.

Chair Hunter said he does not have a problem with the peace pole or flags because of the organization they represent.

Member Russ said the ABR should consider if the peace pole needs a sign permit. She used Bluffington's Café as an example noting the ABR granted a variance for their interior window signage because it was not considered art but permanent signage.

Chair Hunter commented on Member Kerouac’s suggestion and noted the existing balcony is kind of a bookend as opposed to a continuation.

Member Kerouac moved to approve the addition to the second floor balcony and recessed lighting to the soffit as submitted. Member Dahlmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Russ, Kerouac, Deegan, Danly, Dahlmann and Chair Hunter  
Nays: None  
Absent: Wehmeyer

Chair Hunter asked if the commissioners had any issues with the peace pole or flags.

Member Russ said there was no petition submitted, therefore, the ABR was not able to comment on the color, maintenance, square footage or use of the sign. She said we are not trying to evaluate the intended use of the peace pole but how it appears in the public space.

Mr. Strum said he considers the peace pole to be a statue or element not a sign. He is sure the community would be willing to adhere to the contents on the peace pole and any changes to the contents would have to go through the ABR process. Also, he said the flags are not continuously posted.

Member Russ expressed her preference to receive additional information regarding the peace pole. The ABR should follow the variance requirements if needed.

Member Danly read Wikipedia definition of signage and said the peace pole should be considered a sign because it is communicating a message. Mr. Strum said he has never see a community look at statues, etc. as signage and he has always thought of it as a sculpture. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Member Dahlmann, BCS Croak said the sign code allows Churches to have one sign not exceeding 20 sq. ft. but there are two onsite signs at this location.

Member Russ asked how the exempt sign in the sign ordinance originated and if the ABR should be considering the matter. Chair Hunter said he cannot image the Church would have a changing message pole. The current message is meant to convey a thought and he does not see the message changing.

BCS Croak said it seems the request complies with the sign code because the peace pole would be considered a ground sign and the blade sign a wall sign. However, the peace pole would need an exemption because it exceeds the ground sign height requirement. In response to a question from Mr. Clarke, BCS Croak said temporary holiday decorations are allowed for prayer flags.

Chair Hunter asked how the peace pole was erected. Chair Hunter tabled the agenda item to allow the applicant an opportunity to obtain the peace pole measurements.

Chair Hunter said the Village Board approved a sign exemption for the revised version of North Shore University Health System sign. BCS Croak said the revision proposed to eliminate the brick base and use poles to install the sign so that it is within the allowable 64 sq. ft.

Chair Hunter said the sign is against the spirit of what the ABR was trying to accomplish. He suggested the entire process be re-evaluated beginning with the 64 sq. ft. per side. Should the 64 sq. ft. per side be allowed, he recommends it be measured from the ground to prevent this type of action.

BCS Croak said currently Chevy Exchange has pole signage which are categorized with ground signs. He asked if separation of the two categories should be considered.

Member Danly asked Staff to follow up with North Shore University Health System regarding the proposed landscaping around the sign.

In response to a comment from Chair Hunter, BCS Croak said the ABR tried to be user friendly by not requesting the Petitioner come back to the ABR with the proposed sign. A discussion followed.

Chair Hunter reconvened the Community Church public hearing. Mr. Clarke said the peace pole measured approximately 6 ft. 6 in in height, and the white panels were 32 in. tall and 3 in. wide.

As there were no comments from the audience, Chair Hunter closed the public hearing.

Member Kerouac made a motion to recommend Village Board approve a 3 ft. 6 in variance from the required 3 ft. for a total height of 6 ft. 6 inches. Member Dahlmann seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Dahlmann, Danly, Deegan, Kerouac, Russ and Chair Hunter  
Nays: None  
Absent: Wehmeyer

##### **5. Discussion of Proposed Sign Code Revisions**

BCS Croak showed the commissioners a copy of the approved North Shore University revised sign and noted the brick base was replace with two poles.

Chair Hunter said the approved sign is an embarrassment to the Lake Bluff community. BCS Croak said the ABR could have requested the applicant come back to the ABR for final review but chose not to at the time. Although the signage met the code requirements the appearance should have been approved.

Chair Hunter led a discussion regarding computation of sign area, pole signs and box methodology.

Following its discussion, Member Kerouac made a motion to recommend an amendment to the sign code to limit all ground signs to 64 sq. ft. from existing preconstruction grade, so the overall height and width does not surpass 64 sq. ft. per side for up to two sides per sign. That pole signs be limited to car dealerships consistent with current practice. Member Russ seconded the motion following a brief discussion regarding verbiage. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Russ, Kerouac, Dahlmann, Danly, Deegan and Chair Hunter  
Nays: None  
Absent: Wehmeyer

**6. Staff Report**

BCS Croak said he, Chair Hunter and Member Kerouac will be attending the February 12<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss the ABR's recommendations regarding residential design standards, proposed sign code revisions, and proposed revisions to the site plan review process.

Chair Hunter said there is a sale sign attached to the Knauz building as well as vehicles parked under the existing oak trees and he asked Staff to contact them regarding the violations.

Chair Hunter advised that he will not be in attendance at the March or April 2018 ABR Meetings.

Member Danly recommended review of the awning guidelines and a tour of the Village because currently there are no conforming awning signage within the Village.

BCS Croak reviewed his notes regarding awning signage taken after the request from Whitehead Studio: 1) recommend to allow signage on the main portion of the awning not just on the descending skirt, 2) limit awning text size to 5 in. tall, 3) allow graphics, and 4) require landlords of multi-tenant buildings to obtain ABR approval for a consistent color scheme for all the tenant awning signage on their building. A discussion followed. It was a consensus of the ABR to postpone the previous awning recommendation.

In response to a question from Member Danly, Chair Hunter reviewed how the Park District signage works within the Village.

Member Russ said the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee (SEC) might consider dark sky regulations. She thinks it would be beneficial to inform the SEC on how the ABR has addressed dark sky. She asked if the ABR was in favor of a model ordinance and she wonders what the context would be for the ABR if the SEC considers working on a dark sky ordinance. A discussion regarding dark sky standards, awareness and incentives followed.

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business to consider and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Croak, CBO, CBCO  
Building Codes Supervisor