

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
JOINT PLAN COMMISSION & ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 21, 2018**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Chair Kraus called to order the regular meeting of the Joint Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA) of the Village of Lake Bluff on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue).

The following members were present:

Members: Sam Badger  
Leslie Bishop  
David Burns  
Mary Collins  
Elliot Miller  
Gary Peters  
Steven Kraus, Chair

Absent: Ben Schuster, Village Attorney

Also Present: Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)  
John Scopelliti, Administrative Intern

**2. Approval of the January 17, 2018 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes**

Member Bishop moved to approve the January 17, 2018 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Member Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

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

Chair Kraus stated the PCZBA allocates 15 minutes during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the PCZBA on any matter not listed on the agenda. Each person addressing the PCZBA is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three minutes.

There were no requests to address the PCZBA.

**4. Approval of the November 18, 2017 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes**

Member Burns moved to approve the November 18, 2017 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes as presented. Member Collins seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

AVA Cole said the Committee of the Whole will continue its discussion regarding short term rental regulations on Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup> and he anticipates the draft ordinances will be deferred to the PCZBA for further review. He recommended scheduling a special meeting to allow for maximum public participation and allow the PCZBA an opportunity to deliberate.

In response to a question from Member Burns, AVA Cole said there will likely be multiple options and the PCZBA will be asked to provide a recommendation for each draft ordinance. A discussion followed.

**5. Comprehensive Plan Workshop (Open Space, Parks, and Recreation)**

Chair Kraus introduced the item and requested an update from Staff. AVA Cole commented on the material provided in the packet which is a preliminary look at the distribution of land use in the Village. The hierarchy starts by separating land that could be developed for commercial or private use, and non-development land such as open space (public or private) land owned by public entities as well as rights-of-way (everything left after public parcels are removed). For non-development land, it further divides what is being taken up by right of way, active public space, infrequently used public space, mixed spaces, and passive spaces as defined by the Park District's group studying this. On the development land side, land is classified by zoning districts. The estate and low density classifications amount to about 20% of the town, residential and medium density single family amount to about 20% of the town, and all the commercial classifications sum about 10% of the town. He reviewed other hierarchies the PCZBA may consider, which include openness, impervious versus natural surface, economic value, and so on.

Chair Kraus said the chart can be used to plan a number of different places. The chart shows that 20% of the land area within the Village is located in the three Estate Zoning Districts, 18% within the six residential districts by calculations. A combined 38% percentage of the Village is residential by definition. The open space analysis shows that 39% of the land area within the Village is either open space or devoted for recreational purposes, 20% is active recreational spaces (parks, beaches, etc.) and the remaining 19% is permanent active or passive green space.

In response to a question from Member Burns, AVA Cole stated that areas identified as open space were removed from any tabulations based on zoning district. To illustrate, some of the estates with substantial conservation areas were also excluded.

Chair Kraus said it is important to differentiate between the readily accessible public open space and inaccessible or private open space.

As there were no further questions on the summary table, Cole proceeded to give an overview of land usage based on owner and on current use, both as documented by the Park District group studying these issues.

Member Collins said Armour Woods is programmed as mixed use, whereas, Tanglely Oaks is passive and asked if there was a difference between the subdivisions. AVA Cole said some areas are wooded and it is difficult to access or use some of the property. Member Peters said the areas are wooded to some extent, 5 of the parcels are just retention ponds or something similar which take up a fair amount of acres for those parcels.

Member Burns asked if it was possible to highlight publicly accessible areas. A discussion followed.

Member Collins said passive sounds really negative to her, like the land is sitting idle waiting to be developed. She said much of the land has been consciously mentioned in the conservation areas or open lands. Much of the land is purposefully reserved and she wonders if that is a good

distinction to identify. Member Burns said Lake Bluff Open Lands Association owns a couple of the properties but maintain other properties throughout the Village. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus introduced the February 1<sup>st</sup> packet materials regarding open space and questioned if it should be a big or small section. He said he does not think we want additional space. Then it would become a question on how to maintain what we have, which is the approach the current plan takes to some extent. Chair Kraus said that, from a planning perspective, discussion should include the entranceways to the Village, what they should look like, and if there are any deficiencies that should be addressed. He also thinks there is potential additional unused land, larger parcels that the Plan may recommend be maintained as open space or used for different purposes.

Member Burns asked if it would be too detailed for the PCZBA to review each of those parcels. Chair Kraus said there are approximately 123 parcels identified in the study some of which are located outside the Village boundaries. A discussion followed.

Member Collins said she thinks the PCZBA is the appropriate commission to discuss entranceways to the Village. However, it is on the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee's agenda, including the Route 176 Corridor Study Proposal, which is part of their community enhancement study. She asked if this is an overlap and should the PCZBA bow out of this arena. Chair Kraus said from a land use planning perspective he thinks the PCZBA should be considering the matter.

In response to a comment from Member Collins, Chair Kraus said the PCZBA has discussed the Route 176 Corridor, green space on both sides, and how to enhance the area. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus said the PCZBA should determine if the current plan's objectives and policies still apply or if there is a need to delete, add, or alter these items. The current plan addresses open space that includes unimproved private and public open space. Staff has been directed to differentiate between the categories. It is important to identify parks as separate and recreation would primarily be non-Village owned facilities such as golf courses. Chair Kraus said open space inventory chart is worth keeping with the plan and should be updated based on the statistics presented. Also, it would be nice to look at open space to see what 10 or so parcels, 1/2 acres to 124 acres, are separately identified.

In response to a comment from Member Miller, Chair Kraus asked Staff to validate the existing plan against the 2015 Park District report.

Member Burns asked if disposition of land should be considered. Chair Kraus said this is the inventory of all the existing open land recreation and parks. The PCZBA can be more specific – for example, identify the easements suggested by the PCZBA to be part of the master bike plan. That certainly is open space, it is passive unused open space which we have use for.

Chair Kraus said the purpose of the master bike plan exercise was to determine if it should be recommended to preserve those easements and should funding become available to improve them for bike/pedestrian paths. Member Miller noted the Bath and Tennis Club, listed as a recreational area in the current plan, no longer exists. Chair Kraus said currently the total open space, parks

and recreations spaces appear to total 23% of the Village and that, at some point, those numbers need to be validated.

Chair Kraus said the goal in the existing plan is to preserve and protect the parks and open space within the Village and assist the Park District in meeting the recreation needs of Village residents.

In response to a comment from Member Collins, Chair Kraus said there is a separate objective for the beach and appearance in general and he thinks each of those items gets separate attention. However, the existing plan implies that there should be adequate open space within the Village. The consensus of the PCZBA is to preserve open space and maybe we should recommend that all the entities within the Village maintain and preserve open space.

Member Burns said he would not mind something to the effect of saying that these parties should “optimize land for its intended use” because he thinks some of the open spaces are great but others could be better utilized. He asked if there a way to encourage or work with the Village partners to get open space in the most optimal form so we can all benefit sustainably. Chair Kraus said yes and the context of the last meeting is most likely to have a recommendation as to what the best use of that land should be.

Chair Kraus said it is now 7:00 p.m. and he asked that the PCZBA proceed to consider agenda item #6, a public hearing, and then return to this discussion.

**6. A Public Hearing for 501 E. Center Avenue and 517 E. Center Avenue**

Chair Kraus introduced the item and requested an update from Staff. AVA Cole said tonight’s discussion is for a proposed subdivision for 501 and 517 E. Center Avenue which is owned by the Andersens and the Gottshalls. Currently, there are five lots and the Petitioner proposes to subdivide the existing lots into three buildable lots. The action required is subdivision and variation approval but due to the absence of both a complete application and the Village Attorney, Staff recommends continuation of this item, without discussion, to the March meeting.

AVA Cole said Staff thinks there are a few variations necessary but noted that an application has not been submitted by the applicant identifying the variations they request. Staff believes the subdivision requires variations for existing non-conforming conditions that are not brought into conformance by the subdivision. In the absence of Legal Counsel, AVA Cole shared Staff’s opinion regarding non-conforming conditions through subdivision and described the identified variations.

Chair Kraus said discussion is speculative at this point because no application has been received.

In response to a comment from Member Badger, Chair Kraus said the variations will be clarified in the initial application. The original suggestion was that because it has been noticed, we wanted to continue this item for another month, so we will continue the public hearing. However, Brad Andersen wanted to make a presentation in the spirit of a workshop session, so we are not going to have discussion around the item, but background information would be great and give us a better understanding when the item appears on the agenda next month.

Chair Kraus opened the public hearing and administered the oath to those individuals present to testify.

Mr. Andersen provided the PCZBA with a copy of the survey and advised that he was only recently informed that the zoning application had not been submitted. The proposal is to re-subdivide the Gotshall subdivision located at 501 E. Center Avenue, on the corner of E. Center Avenue and Moffett Avenue. The property directly to the east is a buildable 7,500 sq. ft. lot, and the lot east of that is another 7,500 sq. ft. buildable lot. Mr. Andersen provide background history regarding the properties and discussions regarding recent options for the properties. They found a prospective buyer seeking a larger parcel of about 9,200 sq. ft. and discussion ensued among the owners as to how to subdivide the properties. The survey presented shows that the proposed subdivision creates a lot more consistency in the lot size as opposed to what is currently there. The plan is to add 18 ft. to lot one at the corner, and 12 ft. to 517 E. Prospect Avenue to create the 9,200 sq. ft.

Mr. Andersen said they think the subdivision will provide adequate space for the Gotshalls backyard, and create a larger side yard for Dave and Mary thus eliminating the need for the previous variance granted for the side yard setback. This will also create a streetscape more consistent from Center Avenue going east as far as lot size, by eliminating the possibility of two houses built between 501 E. Center Avenue and 517 E. Center Avenue as well as create more air and light and less bulk on the street. Mr. Andersen said he met with Staff to determine why there would be a need for a bulk variation for the Gotshalls house on the corner because when it was built no variations were required. The plan now is to add 18 ft. which will reduce the square footage FAR on the lot. There is a variation required and he has sought legal advice which he will share at the next meeting. Mr. Andersen said he believes there is a variation request for the Gotshalls house which was built with an attached garage connected by a covered porch. Previously, the building code allowed this but since then the allowance has been changed. There will be no changes to the Gotshalls house, we are just adding property. He said pursuant to the current code the house is an existing non-conforming structure. Then, Dave and Mary's house has a garage which is an allowed variation and we are proposing to add 12 ft. to that which would eliminate the need for a variation on that lot.

Mr. Andersen said there was a public notice mailed to everyone within 300 ft. of the subject property. In addition, Dave and Mary were proactive and put a letter in the surrounding mailboxes of the immediate areas and have received a lot of positive feedback from people expressing their preference for one house as opposed to two between the two existing houses.

Members Badger and Bishop had no questions.

Member Collins said it seems the larger lots are compatible with the neighborhood and it seems reasonable to create these three equal size lots. She said one goal is to try and maintain the scale of the neighborhood and expressed her preference to have an aerial photo of the area. Chair Kraus asked Mr. Andersen to submit visual documentation of the adjacent lots for similarity comparison.

Member Peters said he does know if Mr. Andersen had a chance to look at the two proposed lots, and asked pursuant to FAR what size house would be maximized on lot two. Mr. Andersen expressed his belief that a 3,200 sq. ft. house could be built on a 7,500 sq. ft. lot and a 3,600 sq. ft. house on a 9,200 sq. ft. lot.

Chair Kraus opened the floor for public comments. There were none.

Member Bishop discussed infill and subdivision in the east side and the effect this development would have on stormwater in the Village.

AVA Cole provided an answer for the previous question noting a FAR of 4,082 sq. ft. is the maximum for lot two. Member Badger asked what is the FAR if two homes were built. AVA Cole said it is 40% of the first 9,000 ft. and then 20% after that approximately 5,000 sq. ft. for two homes. A discussion followed.

Member Bishop asked if the new construction regulations were adequate for the Village.

Member Collins moved to continue the public hearing to the March 2018 PCZBA meeting. Member Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Member Collins asked if the amount of impervious surface for residential lots is too generous. There is a relatively new home behind her lot and she is amazed at the amount of pavement on the property.

AVA Cole advised of the actions being taken regarding flooding, flood studies and stormwater regulations.

#### **7. Resumed - Comprehensive Plan Workshop (Open Space, Parks, and Recreation)**

Chair Kraus continued the discussion regarding Comprehensive Plan Workshop (Open Space, Parks, and Recreation). He said there are 123 parcels identified as open space, most of them are privately owned. The big undeveloped residential potential parcel is what the PCZBA have decided it will not be accountable for, as well as tiny acres (1/4 acres) properties. He explained what actions are needed, if the PCZBA wanted an in-depth level of details, to review every open space parcel. A discussion regarding how that level of detail would be incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan followed.

Chair Kraus continued with the goals for open space. He said he believe there is an agreement that the amount of green space in the Village is adequate. Member Peters said he would say adequate but not excessive. Member Miller said we do not want less open space but he is okay with the amount of open space.

Member Burns said that goes to opposition to what was discussed at the previous meeting. Previously discussed was the possibility of putting in transit oriented development on the east side of Sheridan Road, north and central. Also, the open lands east of CLCJAWA could be a future development and said the discussions need to be consistent. If we are considering possible annexation then shrinking open space should not be considered. Chair Kraus said the annexation/development of open space sections should have a common ground in terms of future development.

AVA Cole said that, assuming change happens, one of three things will happen: 1) develop what open land that is not already developed, 2) develop where there is development in the form of infill or 3) tear down what is there and build something else. He opined that, right now, the status quo is #3 at the expense of the Village's historic housing and, arguably, its character.

Member Collins made a comment on the map provided for the various parks and noted all the northern areas up to and beyond Crabtree Farm and L-1 District lacks any public parks. The rest of the areas seem to be well served with a park within reasonable walking distance, and she asked if a goal should be to get some public areas in those two zones. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus said he is not worried about the commercial park and Crabtree Farm because there are different demographics for those areas. The Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency (CLCJAWA) parcel was an interesting potential solution. He also noted the proposed Stonebridge Development has a park element proposed. He agreed with Member Collins that it would be an appropriate goal “that every resident in the Village has adequate access to parks”, this could certainly be one of the objectives for parks.

Member Peters said the West Terrace subdivision should certainly receive strong consideration for a formal park.

Chair Kraus said the preliminary draft previously discussed changed the terminology from open space/parks and recreation to natural spaces and sustainability and if the commissioners are still okay with the change there should be two goals.

Member Miller said he does not like “natural spaces” because to him “open lands” make more sense due to it being more specific to our needs. A discussion regarding the terminology followed.

Member Collins said there should be other goals in the Comprehensive Plan, not just land use, because it’s a visionary plan for the Village. She said anything that impacts what gets built is fair game and should be discussed. Chair Kraus said it comes down to what this commission and the Village anticipates as happening in any portion of the Village. A discussion regarding use followed.

Member Bishop commented on the existing and proposed terminology. The fact that everyone in the Village should have some natural space near them, Armour Woods and Tangley Oaks would certainly qualify because it is beautiful natural open land not like ball parks. Chair Kraus said the existing plan identifies open space as separate areas compared to parks and recreation. A discussion regarding terminology followed.

Chair Kraus read two sentences and said the concepts would be to have adequate open space and recreational facilities available to residents within the Village and asked if everyone agreed. He said the goal would be to optimize the existing inventory of open space within the Village and the Village should be aware of and coordinate with the multiple owners that make up the open space percentage within the Village. He thinks a more extensive list of who actually own parcels within the Village is necessary.

Member Bishop asked if the current areas should be residential housing because she feels new residential housing should be included in the plan. Chair Kraus said he thinks that is an objective not a goal. The goal could say “it is generally adequate within the Village”. Also, we want to optimize the available use of these parcels for residents and business owners within the Village, and direct the Village to understand the multiple ownership that is involved and work through that matter then identify the objectives.

Chair Kraus read the existing plan objectives and policies:

- Preserve and protect adequate open space to maintain the character of the Village (yes);
- Maintain and enhance the appearance of the Village; and
- Maintain existing open space buffer utilizing density control, preservation and conservation techniques to preserve areas which are ecologically fragile such wetlands, flood plains, and ravines.

Chair Kraus suggested looking at PO2-3 and PO2-4 addressing the entryways to the Village. He thinks there could be an objective around enhancing the entryways and open space.

Member Collins expressed her belief that a goal is associated with funding and many municipalities are classifying roadways and coming up with a streetscape. Chair Kraus said he thinks that is a good idea and there should be an objective for right of ways and streetscapes throughout the Village. Member Collins said she would research the matter and provide a goal sentence for consideration at the March meeting.

Member Burns asked if the bike path overlaps this area and if the two sections should address the same issues. He asked if that would be a separate objective to take the easements and right of ways and use them for transportation and asked how they would fit into buckets.

Chair Kraus said easement preservation should be under PO-1 objective and one of the policies could be “when practical moving open space to enhance the Village” or maybe “as appropriate activate use of passive open space”. A discussion regarding the removal of Crabtree Farm from the current policy and leaving the remaining language as is.

The discussion continued and it was recommended that PO1-2 and PO1-3 be removed as policies. Possibly combine PO1-4 and PO2-3 which addresses entranceways to the Village (Sheridan Road entrance north, south, and IL 176 west frontage, and Green Bay Road).

Member Burns said the PCZBA can only encourage partnering entities to work toward maintaining those open spaces and he asked if there was anything else that could be done. Chair Kraus said no, which is why we want to look at them separately. Certainly the western entrance from the railroad tracks to Green Bay Road has the preference that this area be improved as green space, the utilities lines buried, so as to form a landscape corridor entranceway to the Village (IL 176 from Waukegan to Greenbay Road). Chair Kraus said he thinks they agree that from the northern Village boundaries to Blodgett Avenue there should be a green corridor. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus said what about Scranton Avenue from Green Bay Road to downtown and under the viaduct noting there was a request made to paint the viaduct. He asked what we want to say about the entranceway to the Village from Green Bay Road. Member Bishop said a streetscape should be maintained. Chair Kraus said we can say for all of Green Bay Road where possible, or practical, maintain as much of a green buffer as possible on this entranceway into the Village. It will matter on Green Bay Road north of the buffer on both sides, it will not change on the east side, but could on the west side of those properties if developed. He expressed his agreement that not much can be done on the south side of Greenbay Road.

Member Collins asked if the green space on Waukegan Road south of IL 176, the properties with the 100 ft. setbacks, should be discussed. She said it should be a requirement to maintain the setbacks and green space/pedestrian access.

Chair Kraus asked if this is where we put the language around the bike path. Member Burns agreed and said in absence of a park that a walking and/or bike path would be a great use. He recommended language such as urge development in the L-1 District for open space or bike/walking paths.

Member Bishop said the swale area on the southern portion of the Target complex could be developed. This was supposed to be developed into a beautiful naturalized area with a detention pond, but this has not been done, so that area could be part of the bike path because there is land available for use.

Chair Kraus said for the purpose of the open space portion, reference the full discussion with the bike/pedestrian corridors in the connectivity section that includes the commercial property. We also talked about the loop through the commercial park, so the reference here is we want to preserve the open space and easements for future development of planned bike paths and pedestrian corridors.

Member Collins asked if the bike plan only applies to public owned property. Chair Kraus said everything we have talked about is public land, he does not believe there is any private land.

Member Collins said that is where she thinks the streetscape in L-1 District would come into play because there are fairly generous right of ways in that area for bike paths to follow the loops. The goals for that area should be to make it much more walkable for anyone. It would be more problematic getting a bike path going north/south along Waukegan Road. Chair Kraus said there is an undeveloped area east of Waukegan Road and that is where the Park District plan identified a potential bike path.

Chair Kraus summarized the discussion regarding PO1 Objective, Preserve and protect adequate open space to maintain the character of the Village, he has four things:

- As appropriate, activate use of passive open space;
- Thinking about conservation easements and trying to promote greater public use of those easements. Identify all the conservation areas within the Village;
- Dealing with the entranceways to the Village (IL 176, Sheridan Road, Greenbay Road and Waukegan Road); and,
- The concept of memorializing/saving the easements for a potential bike path.

Member Peters said he is troubled by the first bullet because from his perspective, passive use can be a public benefit depending on your perception. He said he is also troubled with the term optimistic.

He summarized PO2 Objective, Maintain and enhance the appearance of the Village, we decided the following:

- Remove PO2-1 and PO2-2 policies;

He summarized PO3 Objective, Maintain existing open space buffer utilizing density control, preservation and conservation techniques to preserve areas which are ecologically fragile such as wetlands, flood-plains, and ravines.

Member Bishop asked if this should be put in a sustainability area of the plan and speak about enhancements for future use. A discussion regarding existing and possible terminology for objectives/policies followed.

Member Badger expressed her concern regarding density in relations to open space and he said the tool should be retained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Kraus suggested including the concept of maintaining adequate access to parks. He asked if there was a need to link future development with additional open space. Member Badger said yes because impervious surface and flooding are major problems.

Chair Kraus asked if there could be a PO2 Objective which addresses future development within the Village. There could be a corresponding recognition of the needs for additional active or passive open space. A discussion regarding parks/pocket parks followed.

Member Bishop said she thinks, the Village should consider purchasing lots in the future, when they come up for the sale and take the house down to open up parks throughout the Village. Member Peters said land acquisition should not be discouraged. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus summarized PO1 and PO2 Objectives, and said pocket parks and existing open space buffers could be considered as a policy for future development.

Member Collins said she is strongly against putting in “pocket parks”, she is opposed to that language. Chair Kraus said for example, this potential policy would apply if the former Children’s Home property was developed. He said it would be nice to have some kind of open space as part of that development. A discussion followed.

Chair Kraus said PO3-1 and PO3-2 should be removed, and PO3-3 included in the PO3 which will address ecologically fragile areas.

Member Collins said the Village has a rather weak ravine ordinance and she would prefer an update or review of the ravine ordinance.

Chair Kraus summarized the three objectives and noted he will put together the policies based on the discussions for review.

Chair Kraus read the Parks and Recreation Objective – PO4, Preserve and assist in maintaining the public parks within the Village.

Member Bishop asked if the Village has done any ravine erosion studies. AVA Cole said we have nothing as of this point, and the Village is getting ready to do emergency stabilization reconstruction work of Moffett Road which runs along the ravine. Member Bishop asked if the Plan should encourage the study of erosion mitigation in the Village.

Chair Kraus continued the parks and recreation discussion. Member Miller inquired of the parks and recreation space at Shore Acres Country Club. Member Collins suggested that it not be developed for something other than open space.

Chair Kraus asked if parks and recreation should be two separate topics because this would allow separate policies around the conservation and golf course areas. A discussion followed.

**8. Staff Report**

AVA Cole had no report.

**9. Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the PCZBA, Member Collins moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Burns seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole  
Assistant to the Village Administrator