

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 3, 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 April 3, 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
 Julie Wehmeyer

Absent: Bob Hunter, Chair

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

Member Russ volunteered to serve as Chair Pro Tem and a motion was duly made and seconded. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

2. Consideration of the March 6, 2018 ABR Regular Meeting Minutes

Member Dahlmann moved to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2018 ABR meeting as presented. Member Kerouac seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

3. Consideration of a Sign Permit Application for 71 Waukegan Road

Chair Pro Tem Russ introduced the agenda item and invited the applicant to the podium.

Mr. Jeremy Hall introduced Mr. Mike Kinsella of Poblocki Sign; he then spoke on behalf of Northshore University Health System, a tenant at 71 Waukegan Road. He said the request is not for a larger sign but to change the existing sign ban color from blue to red and add "Immediate Care" shown in white letters. The size and shape of the existing sign will not change nor any other characteristics such as push through lettering and internal illumination.

Chair Pro Tem Russ asked for comments from the commissioners.

Members Wehmeyer and Deegan had no comments.

Member Danly asked if "Immediate Care" would be on all North Shore signage. Mr. Hall said there will be a handful of sites, depending on the service area, that will be badged "Immediate Care".

Member Danly asked if the function would be different than the facility in the City of Lake Forest. Mr. Hall said both sites will continue to operate as a typical Primary Care Physician's office but

the hours of operation may change. The badge “Immediate Care” is mainly a brand for the building to indicate that walk-ins are welcome at the facility.

Member Danly said she noticed during her onsite visit that a lot of landscaping had been removed for the new sign, and it is her hope that it will be replaced. Mr. Hall said the goal is to replace the landscaping underneath the sign columns and also add additional landscaping for the site.

Member Dahlmann and Chair Pro Tem Russ agreed with replacing the landscaping.

As there were no further comments, Member Wehmeyer moved to approve the sign permit as presented. Member Kerouac seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

4. Consideration of a sign permit application and a fence for 37 Sherwood Terrace

Chair Pro Tem Russ introduced the agenda item and invited the applicant to the podium.

Ms. Zhuming Smith, of Apex Sign Company, spoke on behalf of the property owner at 37 Sherwood Terrace to request approval for a permanent ground sign in place of the temporary signs. The proposed sign does not comply with two aspects of the Village Code (i) it includes a changeable message screen and (ii) it exceeds the allowable 64 square feet of sign area. Ms. Smith said it is a challenge for small business owners to reach more customers in the immediate area, and the sign could help business growth as well as be a part of the vibrant Lake Bluff community. The businesses are located in a “U” shaped area and the sign posted on Route 41 will be visible to potential customers. Ms. Smith said she thinks the community can benefit from the proposed sign as well as the other small businesses located in that area.

Member Dahlmann said he drove from Lake Bluff to Highland Park and there were no signs like this one along his route. The readability amongst the various signs along the route varied and it is his opinion their sign fits into the category as one that could not be read from the roadway. Ms. Smith commented on a chart which illustrated readability of letter size in coordination with motor speed. The proposed digital sign will be programmed at sufficient intervals, with larger font, to allow drivers traveling north/south to view the information being conveyed.

Member Danly commented on digital age wayfinding such as GPS. The existing sign has three bands and a scale which is a lot for the eye to focus on while driving. The new Ferrari sign, which complies with Village Code, is one of the most powerful signs in Lake Bluff. She hears the applicant’s plea and understands the hardship associated with the location but she doubts a large digital sign is the solution. Ms. Smith said she agrees but the proposed digital sign will be programmed to operate individual time slot for each respective business.

In response to a comment from Member Danly, Ms. Smith said it is important to make potential customers aware of their existence because this is a barrier that must be overcome and a high volume of potential customers travel Route 41. The proposed sign is discreet and will accommodate the existing tenants as well as serve as an ongoing revolving tool to identify new businesses.

Member Deegan said he thinks the request is trying to achieve too many goals. He understands their challenge, but the proposed sign will not work aesthetically because this is not who we are,

Lake Bluff does not have flashing digital signs. The charge of the ABR is to regulate aesthetics. Member Deegan said the digital sign concept does not conform to Lake Bluff standards and would create a confusing sign. The business nature for “Owen Wagener & Co” will be unknown to potential customers because the business type is not identified and its address is the smallest element on the sign. He does not know if this is the appropriate time to allow digital changeable message screens on Route 41. The proposed sign design could be taller and proportioned on both sides to attract north/south bound travelers. Ms. Smith said a taller sign was considered but it would not accommodate tenants desiring to be on the sign. A discussion followed.

Member Deegan said Staff stated currently there is no precedent for this type of sign.

Chair Pro Tem Russ said there were previous requests for a changeable digital reader board which were denied pursuant to Village regulations. Also, the Village had acquired a billboard, through annexation, and the owner was given a sunset date to remove the billboard. Since that time the Village has resisted advertisements and reader boards, of any kind, pursuant to Village regulations.

Member Wehmeyer asked if there was another sign on any part of the building that identifies all the tenants. Ms. Smith explained how she maintains the existing tenant signs which are no longer effective because of the letter size, speed of travel and visibility from the roadway.

Member Wehmeyer said to her the sign would appear as a flashing billboard on Route 41 and would not direct people to their location.

Chair Pro Tem Russ said there seems to be a lot of consistency in the commissioner comments and she understands it is a challenge for drivers to turn into the business park from Route 41. The ABR cannot solve proportional allocation on tenant signs, but it is discussed quite often. The reason there are limitations is so there is consistency. Chair Pro Tem Russ said the feedback provided is consistent and the ABR would love to help, but existing ordinances are in place to ensure no one receives an unfair advantage.

Member Deegan said this appears to be an advertisement sign for Owen Wagener not a directional sign for all the tenants and there needs to be another way to identify the businesses. Ms. Smith said she is open to suggestions but Owen Wagener deserves a portion of the sign for advertisement.

Chair Pro Tem Russ said monument sign are allowed, and this is a very creative solution but just not one that is flying. A discussion regarding the design followed.

In response to a question from Ms. Smith, Member Deegan said the maximum sign area, 64 square feet per side, is something that the ABR has been willing to approve for everyone thus the proposed size is not an issue.

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the ABR that the applicant should revise the proposed sign and return to a future meeting for approval.

Chair Pro Tem Russ invited the petitioner to the podium to address the proposed wooden fence.

Mr. Timothy Wagener, property owner of 37 Sherwood Terrace, said the property is branded the Mercury Corporate Center and explained the business concept offered to high end and small businesses. Mr. Wager said he is proposing a fence because the proper owner to the south, Chevy Exchange, removed bushes and trees which had previously provided screening along the property line. The proposed 6 foot cedar, board on board fence will have the same appearance on both sides, restore the property line, block debris from the adjacent property and match the garbage enclosure. Mr. Wagener said he feels the Chevy Exchange detracts from his business and provided photographs showing the property configuration, previous and existing conditions, while further explaining the incidents that occurred on his property.

In response to a question from Chair Pro Tem Russ, Mr. Wagener said he intends to replace the landscaping.

Chair Pro Tem Russ asked for comments from the commissioners. Members Wehmeyer, Kerouac, and Deegan had no comments.

Chair Pro Tem Russ said she feels terrible about what occurred on his property.

As there were no further comments, Member Dahlmann moved to approve the fence as presented. Member Deegan seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

In response to a question from Member Dahlmann, BCS Croak said he will speak with Staff to see if the Village could investigate the matter. A discussion followed.

5. Staff Report

BCS Croak had no report.

6. 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