

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

**SEPTEMBER 17, 2018**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

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

Chair Peters 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, September 17, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue).

The following members were present:

Members: David Burns  
Jill Danly  
Elliot Miller  
James Murray (arrived at 7:08 pm)  
George Russell  
Gary Peters, Chair

Absent: Sam Badger

Also Present: Ben Schuster, Village Attorney (VA)  
Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)

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

Chair Peters 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.

**3. Approval of the August 15, 2018 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes**

Member Miller moved to approve the August 15, 2018 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Member Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**4. Chair Peters Administered the Oath to Those in the Audience**

**5. A Public Hearing for 700 East Center Avenue**

Following Chair Peters introduction of the agenda item, Member Danly advised that she had done a preliminary sketch with the applicant then recused herself and took a seat in the audience.

AVA Cole said four affirmative votes is needed to make a recommendation to the Village Board. He stated the applicants request is to construct an approximate 29' x 9' accessory structure to be used as a shed. The new structure will be built upon a lot currently non-conforming to floor area ratio (FAR) and will reduce the existing floor area nonconformity in this area from 2,645 sq. ft. of building on the site to 2,240 sq. ft. AVA Cole said the proposed work was reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Chair Peters invited the applicant, Christine DeYoung, to the podium.

Ms. DeYoung provided a brief overview of the proposed project noting the plan is to construct a rectangular stucco copper steel shed to be used for storage. She commented on the flooding issues associated with the property.

Member Murray arrived at 7:08 p.m.

Chair Peters thanked the applicant and he noted the standards for variation were addressed and incorporated by reference into the record. Chair Peters opened the floor for questions from the commissioners.

Member Russell commented that the site plan shows a walk way leading to the west side of the new shed and asked if this was a mistake in the site plan rendering. Ms. DeYoung confirmed there will be a bluestone chip access pathway across the front area leading to shed. Member Russell said he was totally in favor of the variation as the older structures were completely in disrepair and the FAR on the property will be reduced; therefore, he has no objections.

Member Burns had no objections and said he thinks overall it is a great project as it will reduce bulk and improve the property; therefore, he is in favor of the project.

Member Miller said this project is something that should be done.

Member Murray said the project has been well considered, well designed, and the aesthetics look quite nice for the structure and he is in favor of the variation.

As there were no further discussion, Member Russell made a motion to recommend Village Board approval the variation as presented. Member Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (5) Russell, Murray, Miller, Burns and Chair Peters  
Nays: (0)  
Absent: (1) Badger

Member Danly returned and resumed her position at the dais.

**6. Pre-Application Workshop for 999 and 1001 Sherwood Drive (Smedbo Property)**

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from Staff.

AVA Cole said the workshop participants are proposing to demolish the existing improvements and construct a two-story, 30,000 sq. ft. medical office building on the site located at the southern end of Waukegan Road, the gateway to the Village. The use is allowed as of right in the Village L-1 Light Industry District. There are parking and height issues that need to be addressed by the PCZBA. The applicants are aiming for a desired ratio of four to five parking spaces per thousand feet which is above the PCZBA requirement but when they cannot fit into the site without potentially parking extending toward Waukegan Road or narrowing the parking stalls on the side to make more efficient use of the property. AVA Cole said in regards to height, the zoning regulations provide that the maximum height is 25' or 2 stories. The workshop participants

believe a slightly taller building is needed to accommodate mechanical systems and specialty diagnostic equipment.

AVA Cole reviewed the PCZBA actions to either give the site variations, amend the code for some or all of the issues specifically parking, or consider the planned development tool.

Chair Peters invited the workshop participant, Mike Fitzgerald, Director of Architecture OKW Architects in Chicago to the podium.

Mr. Fitzgerald introduced Brian Howard and Jeffery Wallach, of State Equity Partners, representatives for the clients then provided background information regarding their work and firm. He said the purpose of tonight's presentation is to determine if the project is consistent with the Village vision. Mr. Fitzgerald expressed his understanding that Teska has done a corridor study for this part of the Village to set what the zoning ordinance would require for use, setback, FAR, bulk, etc. The plan presented is for a two-story office building, geared toward medical office users, either a single or multi-tenant which will be dictated by the market. There would be parking that rings all four sides of the building approximately 126 parking spaces, which is just over four spaces per thousand, a significant number of accessible spaces as typically this type of use requires a number of additional accessible parking spaces than what is the norm or there could be a valet service where one would not require handicapped or accessible parking spaces. The current building is approximately 15,000 sq. ft. footprint, the façade or western end of the building that fronts Waukegan Road is 120 ft. off Waukegan Road. What is illustrated in the setback is a 50 ft. landscape setback and a double loaded row of parking that takes up approximately 60 ft. and then probably another 10 ft. offset with a sidewalk and landscaping up against the building.

Mr. Fitzgerald provided the PCZBA with a color schematic of the proposed parking. The plan is to have three or four zones of ten parking spaces with a landscaped island as opposed to continuous parking spaces fronting Waukegan Road. Also, some of the parking spaces could be permeable paver which will help with stormwater management and dress up the asphalt. The other parts of the north, east and south ends of the site will conform to the zoning and have parking on all three sides of the building. There was a change to the sketch and the current sketches show parking along the south property line, maintaining a 20 ft. setback. There is a public utility and drainage easement along the south edge of the property and they will adhere to the 20 ft. setback requirement. Staff feedback was to ensure the facility will provide for a loading zone and trash which will be enclosed (hidden) at the south end of the property. The plan is to adhere to the 10 ft. landscape setback on the east side of the building to ensure sufficient landscaping. The size of the parking space was also noted and the Village ordinance requires a 9.5x19 ft. space in order to obtain the north end of four per thousand parking spaces within this development to make it marketable we are asking if a 9 x 18 standard parking space, typically used with a 24 ft. drive isle, would be considered.

Mr. Fitzgerald said this is proposed to be a two-story building and from a technical/mechanical standpoint it is not uncommon from the first to second floor dimension to be in the 13 maybe 14 ft. range. A two-story building would be in the 28 ft. range which would breach the 25 ft. height limit. He elaborated on some other factors associated with height such as mechanical equipment screening. The plan is to work on the aesthetics of the building depending on the feedback. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked the PCZBA for conducting the workshop.

Chair Peters opened the floor for comments from the commissioners.

Following a comment from Member Miller, a discussion regarding reducing the 100 ft. setback to 50 ft. ensued. It was the consensus of the PCZBA to reduce the setback requirements.

Member Russell said should the plan move forward he would hope that the driveway entrance to the facility stay at the easterly end as shown in the civil drawing, to keep it away from the Waukegan Road intersection. Also, that the trash dumpster enclosure does not end up on the visible southwest corner of the building but in the extreme southeast corner of the site where it could be more easily serviced and totally screened. Mr. Fitzgerald said in the initial sketch the entry drive was shown further to the west. The existing property has two curb cuts one at the eastern end and one as illustrated in the sketch and Staff suggested the entrance be moved as far easterly down Sherwood Drive as possible. This can be done and will work really well and this curb cut is similar in location to where the existing curb cut at the eastern end of this property is located but is better aligned with the curb cut across the street. Mr. Fitzgerald said their civil engineering firm conducted a turning radius to ensure emergency vehicles are able to traverse the entire site.

Chair Peters said he was impressed that the participants had contemplated the extra foliage in the parking lot and he thinks having the 10 space allocation and trees will enhance the intrusion into the 100 ft. setback. He commented on the residential area to the south and inquired of the proximity of the residential homes to the southeast corner of the property. A picture of the area was used by Mr. Fitzgerald to review the surrounding area.

Chair Peters said he does not have a problem with the proposed parking stall sizes. The building is the first visual establishment into Lake Bluff from the south end of Waukegan Road and should the project move forward, he hopes it will have a positive visual impact on the gateway.

AVA Cole discussed next steps for the project regarding height restrictions and it was the consensus of the PCZBA to amend the height restrictions. AVA Cole said Staff will present a text amendment packet for consideration regarding height restrictions, 50 ft. setback, parking restrictions, with additional language regarding screening and landscape requirements subject to ABR review. The amendments presented should ensure the development can potentially proceed without having to come back to the PCZBA for review.

Mr. Fitzgerald commented on their next steps regarding the project which included marketing, building design, preliminary pricing, and stormwater management requirements. He said if the plans start to align we would probably be looking at after the first of the year to be involved in an entitlement process.

In response to a comment from Chair Peters, Mr. Fitzgerald said the proposed building footprint and the parking around it, there have been some preliminary calculations done, it amounts to about 1/2 acre or just less of additional impervious surface noting the 100 ft. setback constitutes about 1/3 of the property. The additional impervious surface, not counting permeable pavers, is approximately 19,000 sq. ft. of additional impervious surface.

Member Russell said there might be an issue with the current regulations for the setback along Sherwood Drive and the parking based on current regulations, which should be included in the proposed text amendment packet.

Mr. Fitzgerald thanked the PCZBA for their time.

**7. Public Hearing for Text Amendments Concerning Swimming Pools**

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from Staff.

AVA Cole said the PCZBA previously recommended a text amendment concerning swimming pools to the Village Board, the Board remanded this issue to the PCZBA with a request it review the treatment of above ground swimming pools. There were questions asked which included if above ground pools should be permitted; and, if so, should they be subject to different setbacks or visual requirements. He commented on the surrounding communities requirements regarding above ground pools noting Glenview requires screening and Wilmette has an escalating setback.

Following a brief discussion, Member Murray made a motion to recommend Village Board approval of the proposed ordinance as presented. Member Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (6) Miller, Murray, Burns, Russell, Danly and Chair Peters  
Nays: (0)  
Absent: (1) Badger

**8. RIO (Institutional Zoning) Workshop**

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from Staff.

AVA Cole said an updated redline version was provided at the dais then provided an overview regarding this matter pursuant to the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Village Attorney Ben Schuster provided an overview of the proposed process for RIO District users. If an applicant was to apply to date under the normal residential standards, they would need to request a variation to seek relief from the bulk standards. This brings the inevitable questions of how do you meet the standards for a variation and what is the hardship. It creates this somewhat artificial situation where whether it be a Church or another type of religious institution, Park District or School District, the question is do the standards make sense in the same way which the standards applies to a single family home. VA Schuster said by placing it in a separate district you can create bulk requirements which make more sense for those uses but then it also allows us to create this idea of a master plan. Instead of applying for a variation you apply for a modification to the bulk standards without going through the hardship discussions or strict rules about the variation, this will allow more flexibility. The benefit of the modification allows for non-static long term planning and the applicant would not have to continue coming back to the PCZBA as they build toward their vision.

VA Schuster said one of the major issue was should the use be considered special uses. The PCZBA can make all the uses a special use but it should consider its analysis of whether or not to grant a special use those factors overlaps a lot with the factors of whether to grant the master plan. The initial idea was to create a streamlined process that allowed for long-term planning. The

applicant could employ a master plan and not have to come back for every change. He said if we made the uses a special use there would be two parallel tracks, one the master plan tract which would require the applicant to come back for an amendment to a special use permit for every change and this was the intent for making these uses permitted uses. The use chart shows the only uses that are special use deals with electric and cellular utility infrastructure.

VA Schuster stated the PCZBA recently went through the process of changing what was a special use versus permitted use with solar energy systems. As written we have the building mounted system as a special use but he thinks the idea was to make it a permitted use to be in conformance with what we just did recently, but this was not incorporated in the draft ordinance.

Chair Peters and AVA Cole lead a discussion regarding RIO (Institutional Zoning) and list of RIO outstanding issues and the following was considered:

- Amend section 10-16-7(f) to include de minimis (minor change) exemption provision;
- Use Table – permitted uses and use the tool to regulate the use;
- Exemptions – PCZBA okay with exemptions;
- Setback – change was made
- Lot coverage – table the sliding scale versus flat 20%

A discussion continued regarding Section 10-16-2- Prior zoning relief in the RIO District, Section 10-16-5 – Parking, New Sign Language, and the Exceptions List specifically exterior changes. The PCZBA concurred that provisions should be made for de minimis changes.

VA Schuster said the next step in the procedures it to publish a public hearing notice, hold a public hearing on this ordinance, notices mailed regarding properties that needs to be moved from their current zoning districts into the RIO District, recommendation Village Board approve/disapprove the ordinance and map amendments.

Member Burns asked if it was still in the plan to share a draft ordinance with the other public entities before conducting a public hearing. AVA Cole said the Park District has requested a 30 day advance notice, in advance of the public hearing, but each entity will participate in the public hearing. A discussion regarding feedback and potential action followed.

Member Murray inquired of the public notice procedures and asked if social media platforms could be used to advertise public hearings subject to good governance provisions. VA Schuster said it is a policy direction on behalf of the Village on how it desires to communicate. Other than the minimum standards set forth in the Illinois Municipal and Village Codes regarding notice. The State has never addressed social media in terms of notice or email notification. It is not part of the State Law or Village Code. A discussion regarding publication notice followed.

## **9. Staff Report**

AVA Cole reported on the upcoming agenda packet.

## **10. Commissioner's Report**

There was no report.

## **11. Adjournment**

As there was no further business to come before the PCZBA, Member Burns moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Murray seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole  
Assistant to the Village Administrator