1. Call to Order & Roll Call
Chair Peters called to order the meeting of the Joint Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA) of the Village of Lake Bluff on Wednesday, June 21 at 7:03 p.m.

The following members were present:

Members: Jill Danly
          Debora Fischer
          Elliott Miller
          George Russell
          Anne Sorensen (via zoom)
          Gary Peters, Chair

Absent: Aaron Towle

Also Present: Courtney Willits, Village Attorney
              Drew Irvin, Village Administrator (VA)
              Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)

AVA Gable said that Member Anne Sorensen notified the Village Clerk more than 4 hours prior to the meeting that she desired to attend electronically (she is out of town for business) which has been forwarded to the presiding officer of the PCZBA.

Chair Peters said a notice was received from Member Sorensen in accordance with the Village’s Electronic Attendance Policy and that, unless there is an objection, Member Sorensen will be authorized to attend the meeting electronically. There were no objections from the PCZBA. Chair Peters announced that the request was approved and that Member Sorensen is present and entitled to vote on any matter as if she was physically present.

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 (3) minutes.

Bruno Abate, Chef and Owner of Tocco Restaurant in Winnetka, came forward and shared his background information then reviewed his proposed conceptual presentation, TOCCO in Lake Bluff. The presentation included a proposed location (former PNC Bank property), design, construction, interior/exterior seating, parking, menu, and hours of operation. Mr. Abate
elaborated on his vision for the restaurant with a desire to have an exterior drive through for pickup orders.

Chair Peters said it was a fascinating presentation; however, the PCZBA can not make an official decision this evening. Mr. Abate said he has approximately 60 days to secure the lease. A discussion followed.

Nike Stanford, Mr. Abate’s Zoning Attorney, came forward and expressed his appreciation for the restaurant concept and said that depending on the feedback from the PCZBA, the intent would be to move forward with the special use permit process. Chair Peters commented the need for dialogue with the neighborhood.

Member Russell asked if the plan was to acquire the bank property and not the two eastern parcels—Mr. Stanford replied yes. Member Russell expressed his concern regarding parking, especially during lunch hours, and said he thought they would have to build a parking garage to get 40 parking spaces on that lot if the site is developed as proposed. He asked if employees would be required to park at the Metra parking lot. Village Administrator Irvin said it is not uncommon for the Village to help solve parking problems; however, Staff had not reviewed the conceptual plans which were presented today. A discussion regarding parking followed.

Member Danly shared her personal experience with the restaurant. She said the neighborhood is very passionate about their town and Lake Bluff has limited parking and it is her opinion that the Italian restaurant would be well received, if there is a better understanding of the community and its limitations. A discussion followed.

Member Fischer said she thinks the restaurant plan sound fascinating and suggested minimizing the need for variances to help the matter. The discussion wrapped up.

3. Consideration of the May 17, 2023 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes
Member Fischer moved to adopt the May 17, 2023 PCZBA Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Member Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

4. Public Hearing- Residential Variations- 618 Maple Avenue
AVA Gable explained that the request is for variations to construct a second story addition on the existing detached garage at 618 Maple Avenue. The subject property is zoned R, Residence District and has been designated a local landmark. In order to construct the second story garage addition, the petitioners are seeking the following variations from the zoning regulations: minimum accessory structure height section 10-5-4 maximum floor area ratio, section 10-5-6 minimum rear yard setbacks sections 10-5-9 and 10-5g-2 and the requirement that an accessory structure be located at least five feet from the principal building. AVA Gable noted that the daylight plane variation listed on the agenda has been removed from this list.

The oath was administered to the owner’s architect, Rob Douglas, and the public hearing was opened.
Mr. Douglass came to the podium and provided the PCZBA with the additional letters of support received after the submittal then shared background information regarding the subject property. The property achieved Lake Bluff landmark status as of April 2023 then he shared information regarding the current structure and architect. Mr. Douglas said the objective is to create a home office by constructing a second-floor addition on the existing garage which will accommodate both the homeowners working needs and an opportunity to integrate a style of roof similar to the existing “prairie school” style home. Mr. Douglas continued the presentation by reviewing the existing zoning and site conditions as well as pre-existing non-conformance conditions. He noted the floor area amounts reflected the eave projection on the prairie style roof, which exceeds more than 2 feet, and pursuant to code must be added in the calculation. He stated the calculation included 870 feet of eaves on the new garage and existing house. He showed illustrations of the existing and proposed garage, noting the existing footprint would not change. Mr. Douglas asked if the eave calculation could be reconsidered in the zoning ordinance then commented on the existing and proposed square footage, noting again that the eave calculation had a significant impact on this property.

Ms. Clarke commented on how much they love the home and said they would like to continue living there for many years. Ms. Clarke shared information regarding the book she published about the house. Lastly, she commented on their love for the house and noted there is no comfortable space for an office because the bedrooms and basement are small spaces and there are few closets and no attic.

Following a request from Chair Peters, Mr. Douglass read the standards for variations submitted on the application. Chair Peters adopted and incorporated the standards of variations included in the packet then opened the floor for questions from the Board.

In response to a question from Member Danly, Mr. Douglass said he would have to consult with Village Staff to determine the requirements for the garage sprinkler system. Member Danly said the plans to renovate the garage structure compliment the architecture better than the current structures and noted pursuant to the presentation the Applicants are not requiring a lot. Member Danly said she wonder why homes with these types of hardships had to come before the PCZBA and shared her opinion that they should be streamlined or reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Member Sorensen, Mr. Douglass said there is no intent to install plumbing or bathroom in the addition. Member Sorensen said drainage and fireproofing needs to be determined going forward.

Member Fischer said she appreciate the Applicants being proactive in communicating the project to the adjacent neighbors. She said the scale of the garage is dramatically improved.

Member Miller agreed with the comments and said this is a very modest addition in regards to size and height.

Member Russell commented on the zoning calculations and said he agree with the comment regarding drainage on the south side of the structure. In terms of the height of the second story
addition, there is very little overall impact beyond what the code would allow for certain type of structures. A discussion followed.

In response to questions from Chair Peters, Mr. Douglass confirmed that the neighbors in close proximity (south and west) support the project. He said the construction will have no impact on the existing landscaping/arborvitae or ground surface around the perimeter of the garage. A discussion followed.

As there were no further questions, Chair Peters closed the public hearing.

Member Miller made a motion to recommend the Village Board approved the request with the conditions that drainage and fire retardation be addressed. Member Fischer seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

Ayes: (6) Danly, Fischer, Miller, Russell, Sorensen, Chair Peters
Nayes: (0)
Absent: (1) Member Towle

5. Staff Report
AVA Gable reported that the Village’s Consultants, Michael Blue of Teska and possibly Jennifer Settle of Opticos, will commence the Comprehensive Land Use Plan discussions on Thursday, July 13 (7:00 p.m.).

6. Commissioner’s Report
There was no commissioner’s report.

7. Adjournment
As there was no further business to come before the PCZBA, Chair Peters moved to adjourn the meeting. With a unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Irvin
Village Administrator