

The City of Lake Forest
Zoning Board of Appeals
Proceedings of the January 28, 2019 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Monday, January 28, 2019 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Zoning Board of Appeals members present: Chairman Mark Pasquesi and Board members James Moorhead, Richard Plonsker, Nancy Novit, Kevin Lewis and Lisa Nehring

Zoning Board of Appeals members absent: Michael Sieman

Staff present: Michelle Friedrich, Planning Technician and Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

1. Introduction of Board members and staff, overview of meeting procedures.

Chairman Pasquesi reviewed the role of the Zoning Board of Appeals and asked members of the Board and staff to introduce themselves.

2. Consideration of the minutes from the November 26, 2018 meeting.

The minutes of the November 26, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. Consideration of a request for approval of a variance from the lot-in-depth setback to allow construction of a dormer on an existing garage at 987 Hawthorne Place.

Owners: Iain and Jennifer McKinney

Representative: Peter Witmer, architect

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Mr. Witmer introduced the petition. He noted that a dormer addition is proposed on the south elevation of the existing attached garage. He noted the house is nonconforming to the 50 lot in depth setback. He noted that the garage was designed to support a second floor area and by adding a dormer, the space will be useable as a bonus room for the children. He described the elevations and noted that the addition will not be visible from the driveway of property, only from the south and the west. He noted that the proposed addition will not encroach further into the setback than the existing.

Ms. Friedrich described that a variance is requested from the lot-in-depth setback along the south property line. She noted that the property is located in the R-4 Zoning District and explained that it does not have the minimum street frontage and as a result, is considered a lot-in-depth. She noted that the existing house and attached garage were built prior to the current zoning regulations for lots-in-depth. She explained that construction of a dormer is proposed on the south side of the existing attached garage. She stated that the dormer

faces a well landscaped area which will help to screen views of the dormer from the neighboring property to the south. She noted the dormer will not encroach any further into the setback than the existing garage. She stated that findings of fact in support of the variance are detailed in the staff report. She added that a letter in support of the project, from a neighboring property owner, was received and is included in the Board's packet.

Chairman Pasquesi invited questions from the Board.

In response to questions from Board member Moorhead, Mr. Witmer noted that the air conditioner unit will be located in a location that complies with the setback requirements.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Witmer said that a stairway, constructed to meet applicable Code requirements will provide access to the space above the garage.

Chairman Pasquesi, hearing no further questions from the Board, invited public testimony. Hearing none, he returned the discussion to the Board

Board member Lewis stated support for the variance as requested.

Board member Nehring commented that the project presents a good solution for providing more space for the family.

Chairman Pasquesi noted his agreement with the other Board members' comments and invited a motion.

Board member Nehring made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of a variance from the lot-in-depth setback requirement to allow the siting of the dormer addition no closer than 36'7" to the south property line consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board. She stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

The motion was seconded by Board member Plonsker and was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

4. Consideration of a request for approval of a variance from the front yard setback to allow construction of a screened porch at 485 Everett Road.

Owner: Thomas Moutvic

Representative: Frank Klepitsch, architect

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Mr. Klepitsch introduced the petition. He noted that the main mass of the house is located slightly off of the center of the lot, toward the west property line. He noted that an attached garage is located on the east side of the house and pointed out that on the south side, the house is built up to the setback line providing very little room for expansion. He noted that the existing house, with the proposed screen porch, will still comply with the allowable square

footage. He noted that the proposed screen porch extends into the front yard setback, to the west of the house, and is located 15'4" from the west property line. He described the floor plan of the house noting that the proposed location of the screen porch is the natural place for exiting the house to take advantage of an outdoor area. He noted that the one-story screen porch will break up the elevation and the mass of the existing west elevation of the existing house. He noted that the house appears to relate more to Everett Road, similar to the house to the west. He noted that the west side of the house, where the screen porch is proposed, reads more as a side yard facing the side yard of the house to the west. He stated that the proposed screen porch will provide an outdoor space with some privacy from the surrounding homes and streets. He noted that the property owners have discussed the project with several neighbors and the neighbors appear to support the project. He described the landscape plan noting that the plantings will soften the elevation with larger shade trees and three smaller ornamental trees.

Ms. Friedrich noted this petition is for a front yard setback variance on a corner lot. She noted that the front yard is defined in the Zoning Code as the side of the lot with the shortest street frontage which in this case is along Prairie Avenue. She noted that this property is part of the Lake Forest Heights Subdivision, platted in 1924 and the home was built in 1950. She noted that special setbacks were established for this subdivision. She described that the existing house sits nearly at the front yard setback line, and the screened porch is proposed to extend out from the house, no closer to the front property line than 15'4". She stated that on this property, a screen porch at any location will require a variance. She noted that two conditions of approval are recommended in the staff report, one requiring the screen porch to remain open in nature, screened, rather than walled, to reduce the appearance of mass and a requirement for a final landscape plan as part of the permitting process. She noted that a preliminary landscape plan is included in the Board's packet and was reviewed by the City's arborist and found to be satisfactory. She noted that findings of fact in support of the variance are detailed in the staff report. She added that letters in support of the project from neighboring property owners are included in the Board's packet.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that a permit would be necessary to add windows to the screen porch after it is constructed.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Czerniak explained that the condition is recommended recognizing that a screen porch presents the appearance of less mass within the required setback and is calculated differently than a solid structure under the Building Scale provisions of the Code.

In response to questions from Chairman Pasquesi, Mr. Klepitsch confirmed that the addition is planned to remain as a screen porch. He noted however that the petitioner would like to install a plexiglass type material, to allow the space to be used during three seasons.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Klepitsch confirmed that the screens are fixed. He stated that the only door is on the south elevation exiting on to the small patio area.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Czerniak suggested that the Board could recommend a condition requiring the screen porch to remain open in nature, allowing for

some flexibility to add plexiglass type protection to expand use of the room later into the season.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Pasquesi invited public testimony. Hearing none, he returned the discussion to the Board.

Board member Novit complimented the project and stated her reluctance to limit options for the space in the future.

Board member Lewis stated that if the variance is granted, the porch should not be expanded in the future. He stated that a second floor addition should not be permitted in the future. He agreed that the existing house is awkwardly placed on the property. He noted that the project, as proposed, is a good addition to the property and appears to meet the applicable criteria. He stated however that limits should be established to prevent future expansion.

Board member Nehring noted that there is not a rear yard on the property and commented that the proposed location appears to be a natural place for a screen porch.

In response to questions from Board member Plonsker, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that if a second story was ever proposed, a new request for a variance would need to be considered by the Board.

Chairman Pasquesi complimented the petitioners on the project and for involving the neighbors in early discussions about the project. Hearing no further comments from the Board, he invited a motion.

Board member Novit made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of a variance to allow construction of a screen porch addition no closer than 15'4" to the west property line, consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board and subject to the following conditions. She stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

1. The porch shall remain open in nature, rather than walled, to reduce the appearance of mass and maintain transparency within the setback area.
2. A final landscape plan, subject to approval by the City Arborist, should provide for landscaping to buffer views of the screen porch from the streetscapes and from neighboring homes.

The motion was seconded by Board member Nehring and was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

- 5. Consideration of a request for approval of modifications to the existing site plan as an amendment to the existing Special Use Permit to allow 1) the addition of a dance studio, 2) widening of the existing entrance driveway off of Green Bay Road, and 3) minor realignment of the existing entrance to the parking lot at 1230-1260 N. Green Bay Road.**
Owner: The City of Lake Forest
Petitioner: The Ragdale Foundation

**Representatives: Jeff Meeuwsen, Executive Director, The Ragdale Foundation
Heather LaHood and David Woodhouse, Woodhouse Tinucci Architects**

This petition was postponed at the request of the petitioner.

6. Public testimony on non-agenda items.

No public testimony was presented to the Board on non-agenda items.

7. Additional information from staff.

Ms. Friedrich noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 25, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle E. Friedrich
Planning Technician