

**Winnetka Design Review Board/Sign Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2023**

Members Present:

Katie Moor, Chairperson
Fritz Duda
Paul Konstant
Maggie Meiners
Heather Niehoff
Michael Ritter

Members Absent:

None

Village Staff:

David Schoon, Director of Community Development
Ann Klaassen, Assistant Director of Community
Development
Davorka Kirincic, Building and Code Enforcement
Manager

Call to Order & Roll Call:

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Kirincic took roll call of the Board Members present.

Public Comments:

No comments were made at this time.

Approval of Minutes:

a. August 17, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Chairperson Moor asked if there were any comments or corrections or for a motion to approve the August 17, 2023, meeting minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the August 17, 2023, meeting minutes. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

NAYS: None

Continued Applications:

a. Case No. 23-17-DR: 80 Green Bay Road – John Plunkett Interiors: Sign Permit to allow installation of wall and glass door signs and a Sign Code Variation to allow a non-street exposure wall sign to exceed 20 square feet in area. This item was continued from the August 17, 2023 Board meeting.

Ms. Kirincic stated the request is for four signs which would contain the logo and business name. She noted the door signs met the standards but since they would be applied externally, they required Board approval. Ms. Kirincic stated the wall signs met the standards and identified one sign which exceeded 20 square feet which required a sign code variation. She then stated the door and wall signs on the east elevation comply with the maximum street exposure requirement.

Chairperson Moor asked for the applicant's presentation. John Plunkett introduced himself, his wife Valerie and the sign designer, Jake Slager of Landmark Signs. Mr. Slager stated the request is for a sign variation on the east facing elevation which is needed is due to its location on the curve and which would provide street exposure for the non-street side of the building. Mr. Plunkett described the sign as

1 fairly removed from the Green Bay Road facing side and came from their Plaza De Lago location which
2 would provide visibility for northbound traffic. He then asked if there were any questions.

3
4 Ms. Meiners referred to the sign on the front of the building and the white paint. She commented white
5 is not as cohesive as the other sign's branding and since it is hidden by the tree, she suggested a sign
6 similar to the sign on the east side making it more cohesive. Mr. Plunkett described the proposed sign as
7 being more in line with their new branding and identified its specifics. He also stated the window trims
8 would be dark bronze with new dark bronze windows to be installed on the south wall. Ms. Meiners
9 asked if they would consider making the south sign cohesive with the proposed tower sign. Mr. Plunkett
10 responded while they are over budget, it could be done. Mr. Slager stated while the sign is older, he
11 explained how could be altered onsite.

12
13 Chairperson Moor agreed the white color seemed foreign. Mr. Plunkett provided color samples and a
14 rendering to the Board for their review. Mr. Plunkett described the current and proposed colors for the
15 siding, roof, sign post, etc. as well as the lettering and logo colors. He suggested alternative coloring to
16 silver for the leaf coloring to address the Board's concerns.

17
18 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to approve the application with the condition for the south facing
19 sign, the leaf motif, would be changed to brushed silver. A motion was made as stated by Chairperson
20 Moor. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

21 AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

22 NAYS: None

23
24 **New Applications:**

25 **a. Case No. 23-18-DR: 547 Chestnut Street - Chestnut Street Flowers: Sign Permit to allow**
26 **existing window signs to remain, a Sign Code Variation to allow existing window signs that exceed**
27 **10% of their respective window area to remain, and an Awning Permit to allow replacement of the**
28 **awning cover and sign.**

29 Ms. Kirincic stated the application including recovering the existing awning frame with new fabric for
30 two businesses as well as approval to have the existing window sign remain which exceeded 10% of the
31 window area requiring a sign code variation. She stated the existing window and proposed signage
32 complied with the maximum permitted sign area. Ms. Kirincic then described the awning signage
33 wording and provided a fabric sample to the Board for their review.

34
35 Chairperson Moor asked for the applicant's presentation. Michelle McKenna introduced herself to the
36 Board. Chairperson Moor asked if there were any questions. Ms. Niehoff asked if the awning height
37 would remain the same. Ms. McKenna responded the height would remain the same and only the color
38 would change. She then described the wording and awning color and noted the awning would contain
39 the actual business name. The Board Members commented the proposal is fine.

40
41 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to approve the application as submitted. Mr. Ritter moved to
42 approve the request as presented. Mr. Duda seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion
43 unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

44 AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

45 NAYS: None

46

1 **b. Case No. 23-19-DR: 550 Lincoln Avenue - Bashy Bash: Sign Permit to allow replacement of the**
2 **existing wall and window signs and to install additional signage on the existing awning valance with**
3 **the new business name.**

4 Ms. Kirincic stated the proposed window sign met the sign requirements except that it would be applied
5 to the glass's exterior and has more than two colors. She stated the awning and wall sign met the
6 standards and the name would change to the new business name, noting all three signs comply with
7 street exposure requirements.

8
9 Chairperson Moor asked for the applicant's presentation. Lilia Barba introduced herself to the Board.
10 Chairperson Moor asked if the new sign would be identical to the existing sign. Ms. Barba responded the
11 sign would be see through with the scalloped edge containing color. She described the lettering, its size
12 and coloring. Ms. Niehoff referred to the new signage above the stone and questioned its font. Ms.
13 Barba identified the font and described it contextually for the Board in comparison to the other
14 businesses and also referred to visibility issues. Chairperson Moor asked if there were any other
15 questions. No additional questions were raised at this time.

16
17 Chairperson Moor then asked for a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Duda moved to
18 approve the request as presented. Mr. Konstant seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion
19 unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

20 AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

21 NAYS: None

22
23 **c. Case No. 23-20-DR: 42 Green Bay Road - Winnetka Dental Associates: Sign Permit to allow the**
24 **existing storefront window and door signs to remain and to allow existing window signs that exceed**
25 **10% of their respective windows to remain.**

26 Ms. Kirincic stated the request is to allow the existing window and door signs to remain noting the
27 window sign exceeded the 10% maximum requirement required a sign variation. She also stated the
28 existing window sign extended over the window margin also requiring a variation. Ms. Kirincic stated the
29 existing signs complied with the maximum permitted sign area and street exposure.

30
31 Chairperson Moor asked for the applicant's presentation. Josh Oleari of Winnetka Dental Associates
32 introduced himself to the Board and stated the business has been in the current location for over 40
33 years and described the business owners' history. He stated the sign has been there 20 years and he
34 would like for the sign to remain.

35
36 Chairperson Moor explained the reasoning for the application and asked if there were any questions.
37 Mr. Duda commented on the sign's size which appeared large and which has been there for 20 years as
38 well as sign variation requests the Board typically saw. Ms. Meiners agreed and stated it is fine since the
39 applicant is not looking to change the sign. Chairperson Moor asked if there were any other questions.
40 No additional questions were raised at this time.

41
42 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Konstant moved to
43 approve the request as presented. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion
44 unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

45 AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

46 NAYS: None

47

1 **d. Case No. 23-21-DR: 725 Elm Street - Forsyth Jeweler: Sign Permit to allow installation of a**
2 **window sign on the storefront.**

3 Ms. Kirincic stated the proposed sign is for a new business which met the sign code standards but would
4 be applied to the exterior of the glass.

5
6 Chairperson Moor asked for the applicant's presentation. Ashley Walden introduced herself as the
7 owner of the Forsyth Jeweler. Chairperson Moor asked if the sign would have a white backing. Ms.
8 Walden responded it would not and described the font as shaded. She confirmed the lettering would be
9 black and white die cut. Ms. Kirincic informed the Board that there is a temporary sign at the storefront
10 window until the new die-cut exterior sign is applied. Chairperson Moor asked if there were any other
11 questions. No additional questions were raised at this time.

12
13 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Konstant moved to
14 approve the request as presented. Mr. Ritter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion
15 unanimously passed, 6 to 0:

16 AYES: Duda, Konstant, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter

17 NAYS: None

18
19 **e. Case No. 23-13-TX: 808 Oak Street - New Multifamily Residential Building: An application**
20 **submitted by 808 Oak Street, LLC, seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the**
21 **construction of a new four-story multifamily building. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this**
22 **request.**

23 Mr. Konstant and Ms. Niehoff recused themselves from the discussion due to their involvement with the
24 project. Ms. Klaassen identified the location of the vacant lot, its size with ingress/egress easements,
25 parking spaces, and residential condominium units. She identified parking access and the parking garage
26 entry located 30 feet back from the lot line to minimize the visual impact of the garage door and provide
27 adequate space for vehicles to wait for the garage door to open. Ms. Klaassen noted a front yard
28 setback variation is required to allow the building to be setback more than 3 feet with the intent to
29 create a pedestrian street wall. She also identified the ground floor plan which includes a residential
30 lobby, elevator, two staircases, and a trash enclosure at the rear of the building and the access points.

31
32 Ms. Klaassen described each unit and its square footage, the green roof facing Oak Street and a green
33 roof for the interior courtyard facing the west elevation. She also referred to proposed renderings of the
34 building, the location of the air conditioning units on the roof as well as the upper floors of the building
35 being setback approximately 13 feet from the front lot line. Ms. Klaassen noted the building height
36 would be 44 feet 3½ inches which is compliant with building height requirements. She identified the
37 west proposed courtyard elevation and the rendering of both the front and rear elevations, and noted
38 updated renderings were provided by the applicant and described the exterior wall finishes and colors.
39 She further described the building's elements containing railings, louvers and balcony elements. Ms.
40 Klaassen stated the terrace ceilings would be prefinished aluminum with a wood appearance and
41 described the screen wall located on the front property line.

42
43 Ms. Klaassen then stated the windows and garage doors would be prefinished aluminum with a full
44 vision front entry door. She also referred to the interior courtyard north/south rendering and the rear
45 elevation. Ms. Klaassen stated the applicant provided a landscaping plan which she described for the
46 Board noting the building's rear is setback more than 20 feet to allow for the required landscaped area.

1 Ms. Klaassen identified samples of the board formed concrete and decorative aluminum screen and
2 white color as well as the proposed windows and prefinished aluminum curtain wall as well as the
3 proposed light fixtures. She noted the applicant is requesting a text amendment to allow ground floor
4 residential uses less than 50 feet from the street line in the C-2 district adding the Village Council was
5 receptive to the text amendment request and that the Village Council has designated the Zoning Board
6 of Appeals and Plan Commission to be the public bodies to hold public hearings on the text amendment,
7 special use, and variation. Ms. Klaassen stated those meetings have not yet been scheduled.
8

9 Ms. Klaassen informed the Board additional public comment was received and provided to the Board via
10 email as well as on the dais this evening. She stated the Board can either ask the applicant for additional
11 information or make a motion to recommend approval or denial as indicated on page nos. 78 and 79 of
12 the agenda packet. She then asked if there were any questions. The Commission Members described
13 the request as well designed. No questions were raised at this time.
14

15 Chairperson Moor stated the applicant's presentation was not necessary since the Board had no
16 additional questions. She then asked for public comment and referred to letters submitted to the Board.
17

18 John Shepherd, President of the 812 Oak Condominium Association, referred to the garage wall location
19 and asked for additional clarification. Sonia Arminio, Konstant Architecture, informed the Board the
20 garage wall would meet the 812 Oak wall with a small area for clearance. She also noted floor nos. 2-4
21 could have a courtyard which would not be visible from the street. Mr. Shepherd referred to an initial
22 plan neighbors had seen for an underground garage and stated that the Maple trees in their courtyard
23 which may be damaged by lack of light. Chairperson Moor questioned the garage wall height. Ms.
24 Arminio estimated the wall height to be lower than the 14 foot height limitation on the second floor and
25 would be taller than their wall by approximately 4 feet. She explained the reasoning as circulation for
26 not having an underground garage. Mr. Shepherd then referred to the lack of rails on roof elevations
27 and the air conditioning units not being 10 feet back from the building edge. Ms. Arminio responded at
28 the rear portion, the units would be located above the master closet and described the roof access. She
29 indicated they would be open to moving them forward.
30

31 Tom Lybrook, Konstant Architecture, agreed that the AC units were shown close to the building edge
32 and would have to have a guard on the east side. He stated they planned to conform to requirements as
33 the project developed. Mr. Shepherd referred to the 800 Oak building with vents and electrical elements
34 coming out of the west side and the impact of the development on that building. Mr. Lybrook stated
35 with regard to the first floor garage height, he stated their planting terrace is higher than their grade by
36 5.5 feet noting their first floor height is being dictated by zoning. Ms. Arminio referred to the tree
37 concern and stated they planned to protect the trees and spoke with Mariani Landscaping in that
38 regard.
39

40 Lucy Naphin, 812 Oak Street, asked if the new courtyard structure would be 12 feet wide which would
41 be much closer to their building. Chairperson Moor referred to the floor plan for clarification. Ms.
42 Klaassen responded the proposed courtyard is 12 feet from west to east with the north/south length
43 matching that at 812 Oak. Ms. Naphin then asked why the design is not more in keeping with
44 Winnetka's style of Tudor or art deco. She also asked if there is an impact study for their building. Ms.
45 Naphin noted her concern related to the busy street and an additional garage entry on that street would
46 generate additional traffic. She then questioned the new buildings' height. Chairperson Moor confirmed
47 the building height would be less than the maximum 45-foot height and appeared to be similar in height
48 to their building.

1
2 Bill Schermerhorn stated he manages both 800 Oak and 812 Oak, and that his main concern related to
3 making sure the issues relating to 800 Oak get addressed. He noted two window bays for their building
4 would be completely covered. He also stated their visibility would be affected by the new building. Mr.
5 Schermerhorn stated a concrete wall would affect their buildings' vents. He then referred to the
6 building's size on the small lot and questioned why underground parking cannot be done with
7 underground water storage possibly being in that location. He also referred to the prior renderings
8 showing brick, Tudor and pitched roofs which were not shown on the current renderings. Mr.
9 Schermerhorn also referred to AC units generating noise.

10
11 Ms. Meiners referred to the underground parking issue and how it impacted either building. She
12 commented she preferred no underground parking and asked for clarification in terms of parking at
13 street level. Mr. Ritter agreed with Ms. Meiners' comments and stated underground parking would
14 result in four units instead of three and address the neighbors' concerns. He stated first floor parking
15 would be a benefit to the neighbors. Chairperson Moor asked Mr. Schermerhorn to explain the benefit
16 of having underground parking versus first floor parking. Mr. Schermerhorn stated the application
17 required a variation and would have an effect on the courtyard appearance as well as the building's
18 scale.

19
20 Rick Adams, 812 Oak, informed the Board he submitted a letter and stated another underground
21 parking advantage would be that it would be accessed through the rear. He also stated it would increase
22 pedestrian safety. Mr. Adams also described how bricks could be used as opposed to the proposed
23 materials to help facilitate construction on the narrow lot.

24
25 James White of Forest Glen commented the proposed modern building felt out of place and the
26 Winnetka charm and change of culture would be affected. He also stated he is concerned with regard to
27 light and construction referring to his grandmother living in the area.

28
29 Karen Adams, 812 Oak, informed the Board she submitted a letter to the Board. She agreed with the
30 neighbors' concerns and referred to the amount of noise generated by the existing vibrant restaurants
31 in the area. Mrs. Adams stated she is concerned with the proposed driveway and children safety as well
32 as the use of poured concrete rather than brick. She also questioned how trees would survive on a
33 rooftop deck and the building's modern look should be integrated in order to be more conducive to the
34 neighborhood. No additional comments were made at this time.

35
36 Ms. Meiners referred to 800 Oak and stated it is not clear what would be done with the two window
37 bays. Ms. Arminio described the difficulty to the site's constraints to protect both the 812 courtyard and
38 the 800 window bays. She stated if the courtyard is moved closer to 812 Oak, there would be more fire
39 restriction issues and they aimed to make the view as pleasant as possible. Ms. Arminio also stated they
40 are restricted on interior room sizes in terms of ADA requirements, etc. and they attempted to be as
41 respectful to neighboring properties as possible.

42
43 Chairperson Moor questioned the proposed height relative to the neighboring buildings. Mr. Lybrook
44 responded they asked the Village if any plans were available for either building. He confirmed no plans
45 were available to 812 Oak with their renderings developed from photos noting the proposed building
46 would be lower than the maximum building height. Mr. Lybrook stated in connection with vents, that
47 issue would be dealt with between the two owners.
48

1 Chairperson Moor referred to the tree comments and the relationship to 812 Oak and referred to page
2 89. She asked how far the trees stick out. Ms. Arminio responded they do not have the exact location of
3 the drip line and confirmed they would be mindful of it. She added they would engage with an arborist.
4

5 Ms. Meiners questioned the east wall and Ms. Arminio responded it would be precast concrete. Ms.
6 Meiners asked if vines could be used on that elevation. Ms. Arminio explained how the first floor is built
7 out to the property line with a green roof above.
8

9 Ms. Naphin stated her view would be directly impacted by the proposed building and asked why that
10 wall would be glazed. Ms. Arminio explained how glazing added depth and would help soften the view.
11 Mr. Schermerhorn questioned why the proposed building is being allowed to be built on such a small
12 site.
13

14 Chairperson Moor noted setbacks do not fall within the Board's purview and asked the Board Members
15 for their comments. Ms. Arminio provided a sample material board to the Board for its review along
16 with an explanation of the reasoning for its use.
17

18 Chairperson Moor asked if there were any other questions. Mr. Duda described the property as very
19 difficult to develop and questioned the difficulty with regard to navigation. He commented the proposal
20 is a wonderful solution and stated the Board has to weigh the applicant's and surrounding property
21 owners' rights. Mr. Duda then stated he is only concerned with the AC unit visibility to the south and
22 how it contextually compared with the properties on either side and referred to the vertical aluminum
23 slats at the street level. He suggested they not be extended to the ground and for there to be a more a
24 pedestrian friendly front.
25

26 Ms. Meiners agreed with Mr. Duda's comments and stated given the nature of 800 Oak, the proposal
27 considered its environment with the vertical slats. She commented after reviewing the project, she
28 described it as well done and agreed with Mr. Duda's comments regarding the vertical slats on the
29 building's lower portion. She agreed the project was difficult and the applicant was very thoughtful in
30 connection with the proposal. Ms. Arminio explained with regard to the slats, given the project is in the
31 C-2 commercial district, it is meant to be a contiguous wall which would still allow for a planting bed to
32 soften the view. Mr. Duda suggested the use of a raised planting bed. Ms. Arminio stated it was meant
33 to represent a continuous building line and provide articulation. She compared the appearance to that
34 of 800 Oak. Ms. Meiners stated pedestrian consideration should be preferred over that of the building
35 residents and suggested it not appear shut out. Ms. Arminio confirmed it is not meant to be a security
36 feature and for it to appear as residential as opposed to commercial.
37

38 Chairperson Moor suggested the Board reconsider the request without the vertical slats that appeared
39 less institutional. Ms. Meiners recommended taking into consideration the Board's and the public's
40 comments and represent another iteration incorporating the comments made. She described the
41 proposal as a great solution. Ms. Arminio agreed. Mr. Schoon stated the Board can move to request a
42 revised design to address the first floor issue or continue the matter to the Board's next meeting with
43 specific comments for the applicant to address.
44

45 Chairperson Moor asked the applicant if they would agree to continue the application to a future date
46 for the Board's consideration. Ms. Arminio agreed. Mr. Ritter agreed it is a wonderful solution for a
47 difficult property and if the Board did not approve the request, they may end up with a less favorable

1 project. He agreed it would be helpful for the Board to see a rendering without the vertical slats down
2 on the first floor.

3
4 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion. Ms. Meiners moved to continue the application to the October
5 19, 2023, meeting. Mr. Duda and Mr. Ritter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion
6 unanimously passed, 4 to 0:

7 AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Ritter

8 NAYS: None

9 RECUSED: Konstant, Niehoff

10
11 **Other Business.**

12 a. **October 19, 2023, Meeting – Quorum Check.**

13 The Board Members discussed their availability and concluded there would not be a quorum. Mr.
14 Schoon stated staff would discuss alternative meeting dates with everyone.

15
16 **Adjournment.**

17 Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Meiners and
18 seconded by Mr. Duda. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 4 to 0:

19 AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Ritter

20 NAYS: None

21 The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

22
23 Respectfully submitted,

24
25 Antionette Johnson

26 Recording Secretary