Winnetka Design Review Board/Sign Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2024

Members Present:	Katie Moor, Chairperson Fritz Duda Maggie Meiners Heather Niehoff Michael Ritter
Members Absent:	Colin Kennedy Paul Konstant
Village Staff:	David Schoon, Director of Community Development Ann Klaassen, Assistant Director of Community Development

Call to Order & Roll Call:
Chairperson Moor called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Roll call was taken of the Board Members present.

Approval of Minutes:
Chairperson Moor asked if there were any comments or corrections or for a motion to approve the May 16, 2024, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the May 16, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Mr. Ritter and seconded by Mr. Duda. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

New Applications:

a. Case No. 24-09-DR: 275 Fairview Avenue - Greeley Elementary School: A Sign Permit to allow installation of a new freestanding sign at the main entrance of Greeley Elementary School.
Ms. Klaassen stated the applicant was unable to attend and asked for a continuance. She then offered to answer Board Members' questions. Ms. Meiners asked if the sign is flat or contained beveled or edged lettering. Ms. Klaassen confirmed the raised borders and copy would be painted to match brand coloring and referred to page 7. Ms. Meiners asked if there was a material sample of the sign. Ms. Klaassen stated that the applicant can be asked to provide the Board with a sample at the next meeting.

Chairperson Moor then asked for a motion to continue the request to the July meeting date. A motion was made by Ms. Meiners to continue the application to the July 18, 2024, meeting. Mr. Duda seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

b. Case No. 24-10-DR: 525 Maple Street - Village Green Park: A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow replacement of existing brick seating areas around the Village Green Playground.
Ms. Klaassen noted the application is specific to the playground and described the request to replace brick seating areas with concrete and referred to playground photographs as well as the existing location. She stated the replacement would be 1:1 and noted the applicant is present to explain the request further and answer questions the Board may have.

Ms. Niehoff questioned the reasoning for the material change. Greg Fields, Winnetka Park District, responded the reasoning is due to challenging maintenance issues as well as issues with mounting benches to brick pavers. He explained that it has been a safety issue because the benches have been tipped over on multiple occasions. He described the methods used to keep weeds from growing between the brick pavers. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Meiners asked if other surface materials can be used as opposed to non-permeable, urban concrete. Mr. Fields responded they attempted to use other surfaces in other parks such as crushed granite which proved to be problematic. Chairperson Moor asked if benches in other parks are set in concrete. Mr. Fields confirmed that is correct. Ms. Meiners asked Mr. Fields to consider bordering the concrete with a more finished material. Chairperson Moor agreed with Ms. Meiners' suggestion. Mr. Fields also agreed although it is not in this year's fiscal budget.

Chairperson Moor asked for either a motion to approve the request with the recommendation for consideration of a brick paver border or to continue the request. Ms. Meiners moved to continue the matter. Mr. Duda and Mr. Ritter stated the request is fine as presented due to its small size. Ms. Niehoff stated while she understood maintenance and safety concerns and the Village's movement toward the use of brick pavers, she commented while she liked the brick trim suggestion, she would be fine with the concrete material and agreed with Ms. Meiners' suggestion to improve the material used. She concluded she would recommend approval as presented.

Ms. Meiners moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the request as presented with the recommendation to consider the cost of installing a brick border around the concrete pads based on the amount in the Park District's reserve. Ms. Niehoff seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

c. <u>Case No. 24-14-SU: Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore (440 Ridge Avenue)</u>: A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow construction of additions and site improvements to Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request

Chairperson Moor outlined how the presentation would proceed. Ms. Klaassen stated the Board is to consider the Certificate of Appropriateness at this time and make a recommendation to the Village Council. She identified the property's location and plans to consolidate the property with the lot to the west at 760 Cherry Street. Ms. Klaassen then identified the property's zoning classification and existing photos and explained the proposed two-story additions which she identified in illustrations. She stated the applicant's goals are to provide an ADA accessible entrance to the church, new updated youth, reception and office space, noting the proposal required zoning relief which she explained to the Board. Ms. Klaassen stated the variation and special use permit applications are to be considered by the ZBA and Plan Commission, staff is simply noting this for the Board's reference.

Ms. Klaassen then stated the proposed materials of the additions would mimic the existing church and referred to the proposal's renderings and described the materials in detail. She noted a material sample board is available for the Board's review. Ms. Klaassen then referred to the proposed lighting for the project. She also stated a landscape plan and schedule is included in the application materials which she explained to the Board as well as the proposed parking lot materials. Ms. Klaassen also referred to the proposed 6-foot-tall cedar fence to be installed on the west lot line and identified the existing fencing which would remain. She noted a 6-foot-tall solid wood fence would be installed on the south side of the easterly parking lot and a 4-foot-tall ornamental fence painted black on the west and south sides of the proposed south addition. Ms. Klaassen then referred to aerial views provided by the applicant and informed the Board the building line articulation variation has been removed from the application and explained the remaining variations being requested and the proposed lot consolidation, which requires special use permit approval due to the proposed lot size. She identified the ZBA's and Plan Commission's tentative review schedule for the requested variations, subdivision, and special use permit applications. Ms. Klaassen also noted the Landmark Preservation Commission is tentatively scheduled to consider the demolition permit for 760 Cherry Street at a special meeting in July with public notices being sent to property owners within 250 feet of the site at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

Ms. Klaassen referred to the factors the Board is to consider with regard to the Certificate of Appropriateness, noting two written comments were received and provided to the Board via email and a hard copy is provided on the dais this evening. She then asked if there were any questions after providing the Board with their options in terms of review.

Ms. Niehoff asked for further clarification in terms of the Certificate of Appropriateness items the Board is to consider, and Ms. Klaassen outlined the four factors in detail for the Board. No additional questions were raised at this time.

Karl Camillucci of Taft Stettinius & Hollister introduced himself and Marshall Brown, the church Pastor, Kendall Lettinga with the church, and Joe Buehler of Present Future Architects. He stated Mr. Brown would provide background regarding the church and the reasoning for the project. Mr. Camillucci first referred the Board to photos of 760 Cherry Street and 440 Ridge Avenue and zoning classifications of the surrounding neighborhood which represented a mix of architectural home styles, commercial and institutional uses. He informed the Board the Ridge property has been used as a church for more than 80 years with the proposal to allow for the longstanding use to continue and provide better quality services to the congregation.

Mr. Camillucci then provided a brief overview of the proposed improvements. He reiterated the purpose of the improvements is to enhance and improve the functionality, accessibility and experience of the church's facilities and it is not their intention to launch new programming. Mr. Camillucci noted the existing church is not ADA accessible.

Marshall Brown referred to the church's purchase of the existing church in 2012 and described the building's lack of functionality at the time it was built. He then described how the classrooms currently operate, which he described as suboptimal. Mr. Brown then described the different levels of stairs in the building which affected ADA navigation and their attempts in the project to improve the church's ADA accessibility standards.

Mr. Camillucci informed the Board they have considered the project for some time and explained how the project evolved. He then explained the changes made to the proposed additions in terms of size, height and roof pitch as well as the setback increase which were made to address the neighbors' comments. Mr. Camillucci also referred to the proposed south rendering as a result of the changes made which he indicated are consistent in scale with surrounding homes. He referred to the Certificate of Appropriateness standards the Board is to address and noted the neighbors' concerns relating to zoning issues would be addressed by the ZBA.

Joe Buehler stated he would discuss the specific design elements and features and provided the building's construction history. He then referred to the Design Guidelines with regard to the two proposed additions. Mr. Buehler discussed how the setbacks would be similar in character with regard to neighboring homes. He noted modifications were made to the building height and are in compliance with residential standards although it is not required. Mr. Buehler referred to illustrations of the proposed conditions, the east and south elevations and noted the south addition was stepped down abutting the west property. He also identified the west elevation and explained the variety of roof forms. Mr. Buehler then explained the fenestration percentages with which they are in compliance for the first and second floors. He outlined their attention to detail in terms of consideration of the project with the original construction documents for the building and the use of materials which he described in detail.

Mr. Buehler then described the ADA accessibility to the building from the parking lot, along with the proposed elevator installation. He referred to the mechanical equipment and its screening behind the gable roofs. Mr. Buehler also described the proposed lighting fixtures in detail as well as the landscape plan.

Chairperson Moor asked if there were any questions for the applicant. Mr. Duda asked if they had a difficult time matching the proposed brick to the existing building. Mr. Buehler responded they considered the use of several different bricks with the proposed brick being the best match. Mr. Duda referred to the tuckpointing done to the building over time. Mr. Buehler referred to the transition to be made with limestone and the challenge in matching the west hall in terms of the brick. He indicated they can consider feathering in tuckpointing on that wall to blend in the new addition with the existing condition.

Ms. Niehoff referred to the difficulty in terms of it being an exact match and suggested similar mortar be used in detail to the existing condition. Mr. Buehler stated the limestone transition can be revisited if required.

Chairperson Moor then asked for public comment and for the comments to be limited to three minutes.

Ryan Lovell stated he lives on the block with his family and they are not against the church expansion but in its current form, the proposal does not meet the Certificate of Appropriateness conditions in terms of its size and location and it is not compatible with urban design plans as well as the lack of respect to the neighboring property owners. He also stated parking issues would be exacerbated and indicated the assumptions provided to Ericksson Engineering for the parking study were misleading and referred to the lack of street parking and safety issues. Mr. Lovell then referred to the view of the mechanical equipment being forced into the property owner's view. He also commented on the parking lot's size, the amount of impermeable surface as well as power line burial and safety issues and increased traffic with the new additions.

Michael Cotter, 351 Ridge, stated he has had parking issues but he has no problem with the addition, however, greater lengths should have been taken to ensure appropriateness in terms of its visibility.

Jim King, 770 Cherry Street, stated he did not have a problem with the proposed parking lot; it would be better than the house that is currently there. He then referred to the church's compatibility with the neighborhood. Mr. King stated the problem related to the mass being requested which would make the church appear to be more of a commercial use. He also referred to the amount of impermeable coverage and water issues. Mr. King added he was denied a request for a 2-foot variance and questioned how the requested variation amounts are possible.

Chris Crooks, 422 Ridge, agreed with the comments made and identified scope as the biggest factor. He stated a 40% increase would represent a significant neighborhood character change and replacing a home with a parking lot would affect the neighborhood residential feel for three additional neighbors. Mr. Crooks stated his property would be particularly impacted by the proposed addition and although it was beautifully designed, he reiterated scope is the major problem. He added while he is not against ADA compliance, it should not be done at the expense of the neighborhood.

Hasan Haq, 418 Ridge, referred to the standard relating to the effect on the immediate vicinity and agreed with the comments made. He also commented on converting the home to a parking lot and its effect on the neighborhood. Mr. Haq stated he did not support the plan as it existed.

Julia Ryan, 428 Linden, stated she is in support of the church becoming ADA compliant but there is a way to do that without so much mass and impact on the neighborhood.

Kevin Ryan, 421 Linden, referred to the photos previously shown and the fact that the proposal would affect four backyards and referred to the drainage and flooding issues. He stated the proposal would reverse their flood mitigation attempts and agreed with the comments made.

Dan Kinsella, 420 Linden, stated he opposed the proposal and referred to the setback line comments although not within this Board’s jurisdiction. He indicated they may plan to formally contest that request. Mr. Kinsella referred to the manner in which the additions conformed to the existing property as opposed to how they conform to the neighborhood. He stated the proposal is massive and not within the zoning requirements. Mr. Kinsella stated they would support an addition which appeared similar to the home to be removed.

Chuck Murphy, 426 Linden, and his wife Judy stated they hoped to work with the church to find a solution all the residents would support. He stated while they realize the church needed improvements, the applicant has not been responsive to them in terms of their concerns. Mr. Murphy then stated with regard to the parking lot, he did not understand how a request of that type would be appropriate in any residential context. He asked the Board to table the discussion for a month in order to provide everyone with additional clarification with regard to the application’s content and for the neighbors to provide additional comments in order to reach a solution they can all support.

Connie Sanders informed the Board she and her husband Steve submitted a letter and they are in opposition to the building’s size. She also agreed they and others need time to process the information recently provided. Mrs. Sanders referred to the west parking lot’s proximity near the train station and safety and lighting concerns. She stated their property would be the most affected and that she had questions with regard to the fence and landscaping. Mrs. Sanders referred to the illustration of the property owner’s fences as well as the landscaping illustration. She stated there is a lack of landscaping to provide screening for their side of the property. Mrs. Sanders also asked for more time for these issues to be addressed.

Chairperson Moor gave the applicant an opportunity to respond to the questions raised. Mr. Camillucci responded that many of the comments raised should be addressed at the ZBA and Plan Commission meetings. He noted for the record with regard to the comments relating to the south addition size, he clarified the existing GFA for the entire proposed site is 19,476 square feet with the proposed GFA being 21,196 square feet which represented a 5% GFA increase. He added the structure would not be 40,000 square feet. Mr. Camillucci also stated with regard to comparisons for alternatives, he referred to the permissions as to what could be built as of right in connection with height and roof lines on the adjacent lot and referred to the design changes made to address such concerns. He then stated with regard to the Cherry Street parking lot, he referred to the existing lot whose spaces are distributed differently and is comparable to what is being proposed. Mr. Camillucci agreed there are challenges in connection with building on the Cherry Street side and the utility lines, which was one reason the proposed addition would be built to the south.

Mr. Camillucci stated with regard to lighting, they paid particular attention to the selected lighting fixtures and that light spillage would not occur and would be consistent with the neighborhood character. He confirmed the applicant is willing to continue discussions with neighbors to address their concerns. Mr. Camillucci concluded in upgrading its facilities, a balance needed to be struck.

Mr. Buehler stated with regard to the impermeable surface and drainage comments, he noted the parking lot would accommodate the same number of spaces and would consist of permeable pavers as opposed to asphalt with the goal being to improve the existing situation.

Ms. Niehoff commented it is difficult for the Board to comment on the design since there are other boards weighing in on items not within this Board's purview. She referred to the first item in the Certificate of Appropriateness standards relating to compatibility with the neighborhood with item 2 being more of a design issue. Ms. Niehoff stated item no. 3 related to contextual and massing issues and item no. 4 related more to the neighbors' concerns in terms of structuring the Board's comments.

Chairperson Moor agreed the Board wanted to be helpful and is limited in terms of what they can offer based on their purview and what has yet to be discussed. She then referred to the wooden fence and agreed fence continuity would be nice to have with a 6-foot fence around the entire perimeter. Mr. Buehler agreed with Chairperson Moor's suggestion. Chairperson Moor then referred to landscaping for the properties adjacent to the parking lot. Mr. Buehler described the proposed landscaping which would have an average height of 20 feet and they had to consider what would be appropriate for that area.

Chairperson Moor then stated with regard to the first Certificate of Appropriateness standard, the church has been in existence for a long time and the proposal is thoughtfully designed and was modified to keep in the context of what is there. She stated in terms of the proposal being appropriate from a massing standpoint, she referred to the change in the proportion of the addition which she described as a nice plan improvement. Mr. Buehler noted full renderings were presented to the neighbors. Chairperson Moor commented the manner in which the addition is married to the building looked nice.

Ms. Meiners stated that it might help if there was a door on the east elevation so it felt more like a house and it might break up that elevation, too. Ms. Meiners also suggested narrowing the atrium to create more of a residential feel. She stated that parking on Ridge is problematic and maybe more green space could be added for worship space that neighbors could also enjoy. Mr. Buehler referred to the Ridge east facing elevation and stated their initial consideration was to not overpower the existing entry with the goal to add a secondary recessed entry that submitted to the original architecture. He agreed more articulation can happen in that location. Mr. Buehler described the difficulty of having a door installed on the south addition due to the grading. Ms. Niehoff commented for the south building addition, it felt too simple and agreed it should be secondary to the main entry. She noted that maybe more articulation or changes to the windows would help it feel less institutional. Ms. Niehoff then stated with regard to context, she commented it is more successful on the macro level than the micro level. She stated the applicant has not been successful in addressing the neighbors' comments and referred to the blank west wall and suggested it be broken up with more articulation. Ms. Niehoff stated making the building ADA accessible would benefit the community as a whole.

Ms. Niehoff then commented she would prefer more building volume on Ridge as opposed to Cherry Street and suggested the applicant be a better neighbor to those to the west. She also stated she is troubled by the amount of parking lot paving and suggested alternatives in terms of access and landscaping. Ms. Niehoff suggested they consider eliminating the north arm of the parking access from Ridge. She commented the building design is contextually acceptable and questioned whether the windows are true divided light. Mr. Buehler stated the windows are simulated divided light. Ms. Niehoff stated she would like to see a sample of what the window would look like. Ms. Niehoff stated with regard to the materials, she suggested the use of natural limestone rather than cast stone, and commented the proposed bollard lights are not neighborhood friendly and appeared to be more institutional looking. Ms. Niehoff added the mechanical equipment should be better shielded from the neighbors and agreed with the suggestion of providing a sample of the brick material to the Board.

Mr. Ritter commented the building has been beautifully designed and is consistent with the original building's architectural style. He referred to the lack of windows on the south side of the south façade and suggested windows be added but noted that the neighbors may not want windows on the south side. Mr. Buehler responded they were sensitive to the neighbors in that regard. Mr. Ritter commented the applicant has generally done a very good job and he is sensitive to the neighbors' comments made that this Board cannot address.

Mr. Duda indicated it would have been easier for the Board to comment if the other boards had reviewed the request first. He agreed with the comments made specifically referring to the fencing being consistent and landscape screening being provided. Mr. Duda also commented he liked the bump out on Cherry Street which served to break up the wall and that he agreed with the institutional appearance comments. He stated that he wants to be sure the brick on the addition matches the existing brick. Ms. Meiners stated they could compliment the brick with clapboard, which could help scale down the mass.

Chairperson Moor suggested the matter be continued to a future meeting while keeping in mind their list of recommendations. She then summarized the Board's position from a design perspective as follows: (i) better comparison of the new and old brick while providing a brick sample along with window material samples; (ii) another design plan for the east parking lot and access loop together with additional landscaping; (iii) work on the fenestration or materials used on the south addition to make it appear less institutional; (iv) providing a street level view of the rooftop mechanical equipment; (v) use of path lighting as opposed to bollard lighting for the neighbors' benefit; (vi) consider shifting the north building addition eastward to eliminate the straight west wall; (vii) confirm fence material and consider making it one complete fence; and (viii) use of natural limestone versus cast limestone.

Chairperson Moor then asked for a motion to continue the matter to the July 18, 2024, meeting. The Board Members discussed their availability and the applicant confirmed they would consider the Board's recommendations by the next meeting date. A motion was made by Ms. Niehoff as stated on page 34 to continue the matter to the July 18, 2024, meeting to provide the applicant time to address the Board's questions and comments as previously noted. Mr. Duda seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:

AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

Mr. Murphy asked for clarification of the specific figures in terms of the amount of the expansion. Mr. Camillucci confirmed the calculations would be provided.

Public Comments:
No comments were made at this time.

Other Business:
a. July 18, 2024, Meeting – Quorum Check.

The Board Members previously discussed their availability.

Adjournment:
Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Duda and seconded by Mr. Ritter. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Meiners, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None
The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antionette Johnson
Recording Secretary