WINNETKA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 11, 2024

Zoning Board Members Present:	Matt Bradley, Chairman Mark Haller Lynn Hanley Kathryn Leister Kate Casale MacNally
Zoning Board Members Absent:	Mike Nielsen Todd Vender
Village Staff:	David Schoon, Director of Community Development Ann Klaassen, Assistant Director of Community Development

Call to Order & Roll Call:
Chairman Bradley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call was taken of the Board Members present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes.
Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to approve the May 13, 2024, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the May 13, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Casale MacNally and seconded by Ms. Hanley. A vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Bradley, Haller, Hanley, Leister, Casale MacNally
NAYS: None

Community Development Report:
Mr. Schoon stated there is no Community Development Report.

New Cases:

a. Case No. 24-13-SU: 1155 Oak Street - Winnetka Public School Nursery: An application seeking approval of an amendment to an existing ordinance granting a Special Use Permit and Variations that allowed construction of an addition to Carleton Washburne School on the Subject Property, and zoning variations. The requested amendment would allow improvements to the existing Winnetka Public School Nursery playground located at 1155 Oak Street. The variations would permit the proposed improvements to (i) exceed the maximum permitted roofed lot coverage; (ii) provide less than the minimum required front yard setback from Oak Street; and (iii) exceed the maximum permitted height for sheds. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request.

Ms. Klaassen explained the background in connection with the requested ordinance amendment and identified the property's location, site photos along with the play equipment to be replaced with new equipment. She also identified wrought iron fencing which would remain. Ms. Klaassen then identified the existing play equipment and the concrete pad and mulch play surface which would be replaced as well as two existing sheds and a pergola that would be reduced in size and repaired. She also identified the location of the proposed four-foot fence. Ms. Klaassen then identified the 20-inch diameter tree to be removed noting the Village Forester agreed with its removal due to its condition and restricted root zone and that a 3-inch diameter large growing shade tree is required to be planted in replacement of the silver maple.

Ms. Klaassen explained the requested zoning relief and the site's existing nonconformities together with the variation percentages being requested. She stated the existing sheds received zoning approval in 2000 to be constructed at a height greater than the permitted height of 7 feet. Ms. Klaassen stated the DRB unanimously recommended approval of the design of the improvements and the Plan Commission reviewed the special use permit and also recommended approval. She noted no public comment was received and that a draft motion for the Board's consideration is included in the packet on page 15. Ms. Klaassen then asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Casale MacNally asked if there were any other bodies that needed to review the proposal other than the Board, the DRB and the Plan Commission. Ms. Klaassen responded there are not. Ms. Casale MacNally then asked if the Board recommended approval, how soon would the item be presented to the Village Council. Ms. Klaassen expected the request to be presented to the Village Council next Tuesday, June 18.

Mr. Haller referred to the play equipment illustration and asked if any work is being done north of the sand. The applicant responded there would be a nest swing installed and a prefabricated playhouse as well as a boulder to be moved to the north section between the paths and the fence. Mr. Haller commented he preferred the proposed wood play equipment over the other play equipment installed in playgrounds recently.

Chairman Bradley then swore in those speaking to this matter. Kate Higley, Board President and Phil Cox, Operations Director with GRG Playscapes, introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Cox offered to answer the Board's questions. Mr. Haller asked what was the rationale for removing the tree. Mr. Cox stated following discussions with the Village Forester, it was determined that the silver maple has exceeded the growth space with the root system extending through the surface. Ms. Higley indicated the roots may have presented a trip hazard but cannot speak to it for sure. Chairman Bradley stated at the Plan Commission meeting, it was explained that the stump would remain. Mr. Haller explained the reasons why the tree is beneficial for the playground. Chairman Bradley asked where the new tree would be placed, and Mr. Cox identified its possible location to the north of the playground with the potential to grow over time. In response to a statement by another board member, Ms. Hanley stated 1":1" tree replacement is not always required by the Village. Ms. Casale MacNally referred to the Village Forester's comments which stated that a 3-inch caliper tree is the largest caliper tree that is commonly available in the area. Mr. Schoon explained the Village Forester's reasoning in terms of tree replacement. Mr. Haller commented otherwise, the play area looked great.

Ms. Casale MacNally stated if the request is approved by the Village Council, she questioned the timing of the project. Mr. Cox informed the Board they expect a completion date of August 16, 2024. He explained that they are working with Bulley & Andrews, who is working at the Skokie School, in terms of equipment, staging materials, deliveries, etc. with a possible earlier start date if the Village Council approved the request in June.

Ms. Hanley referred to the log tunnel and questioned the reasoning for its location. Mr. Cox stated it would be replacing an existing piece of equipment in that location and serve to pull children into other areas on the site to play in decentralized play areas. Ms. Hanley asked if the hedges and landscaping outside of the fencing would remain in terms of privacy. Mr. Cox responded no vegetation on the outside of the fence would be disturbed. Ms. Hanley then asked Ms. Klaassen why the stage did not impact the front yard setback and referred to page 38. Mr. Klaassen and other Board Members confirmed the stage is being replaced with a new piece of equipment setback farther from the front yard line, thus requiring a front yard setback variation not as significant as for the stage being removed. Chairman Bradley asked if there were any other questions.

Chairman Bradley referred to the sheds and questioned their existing use and height. Ms. Higley responded they are used for storage and supplies and could not speak to their increased height above 7 feet. Mr. Cox indicated it may have been the types of sheds offered in the design process. Chairman Bradley asked if the site would be ADA compliant. Mr. Cox stated ADA accessibility was discussed at prior meetings and he could not speak to the priorities over the initial concepts. He noted mulch is considered an ADA accessible play surface. Mr. Cox also noted there will be water play features at a similar height to the existing, which is lower. Ms. Higley noted the playhouse was open on one side and opens to the sidewalk so it would not have a step up in terms of access. Chairman Bradley asked if the playground is used during the summer. Ms. Higley confirmed camp is offered during the summer, but this year due to the project they only offered a 2-week camp, which ends this week. No additional questions were raised at this time. Chairman Bradley then called the matter in for discussion.

Ms. Hanley stated she had no problem with the special use request since it is an existing use or the front yard setback variation which would be a reduction from what is there. She also stated she had no problem with the shed height or RLC. Ms. Casale MacNally agreed with Ms. Hanley's comments and commended the applicant on the amelioration of the front yard setback and shed height issues. She also stated the RLC is a de minimus nonconformity and would be in favor of the request. Ms. Leister commented that it is a good plan and agreed with the comments made. She also commented she liked the design features which would be good for the children. Mr. Haller agreed with the comments made. Chairman Bradley also agreed the special use standards have been met as well as the RLC standard but could not, as an individual board member, recommend approval for the higher shed height since no justification was made for the increased height.

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to recommend approval of the request as indicated on page nos. 15 and 16. A motion to recommend approval was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Ms. Casale MacNally. A vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Bradley, Haller, Hanley, Leister, Casale MacNally
NAYS: None

<u>New Business</u>:

a. <u>July 8, 2024 Meeting - Quorum Check.</u>

The Board Members discussed their availability and alternative meeting dates.

<u>Public Comment:</u>

No comments were made at this time.

<u>Adjournment</u>:

Chairman Bradley asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Hanley and seconded by Ms. Casale MacNally. A vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Bradley, Haller, Hanley, Leister, Casale MacNally
NAYS: None
The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antionette Johnson
Recording Secretary