Winnetka Design Review Board/Sign Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2025

Members Present:	Katie Moor, Chairperson Fritz Duda Colin Kennedy Heather Niehoff Michael Ritter
Members Absent:	Paul Konstant
Village Staff:	Scott Mangum, Director of Community Development Ann Klaassen, Assistant Director of Community Development Davorka Kirincic, Building and Code Enforcement Manager

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.

Public Comments:
No comments were made at this time.

Approval of Minutes:
Chairperson Moor asked if there were any comments, corrections, or a motion to approve the March 20, 2025, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the March 20, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Mr. Duda and seconded by Mr. Ritter. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to take the agenda out of order and move the Grace Presbyterian Church matter to the end of the agenda. A motion to take the agenda out of order was made by Mr. Ritter and seconded by Mr. Duda. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

Continued Applications:
a. Case No. 25-03-SU: Hubbard Woods Train Station (1065 Gage Street): Certificate of Appropriateness to allow renovation of the existing train depot and train platform and construction of a new pedestrian bridge, new accessible ramps, new stairs and elevators to the train platform, and new warming shelters. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request. This item was continued from the March 20, 2025, Design Review Board meeting.
Ms. Klaassen identified the property's location and photos of the existing depot as well as the east elevation of the station. She described the project proposal in detail and referred to existing illustrations of the external elements that are proposed to be replaced. Ms. Klaassen then stated a priority objective is to make the train station ADA compliant including internal improvements. She described in detail, landscape screening and the slight relocation of the Green Bay Trail to the east to accommodate the east

elevator tower and warming shelters. Ms. Klaassen stated the proposal included matching the exterior of the existing train station, including the slate roof. She noted that façade of the east side of the pedestrian bridge and ramp would also match the brick and limestone elements of the existing station. Ms. Klaassen also stated that proposed exterior lights on the pedestrian bridge are intended to match the lights on the Elm Street pedestrian bridge.

Ms. Klaassen stated due to the project's ongoing review by the Union Pacific Railroad (UP), Metra and its design team have provided three options for the pedestrian bridge railing which she identified for the Board. She stated it is the applicant's plan to propose option no. 2 and request a variance from the UP. Ms. Klaassen referred to the proposed signage which is not subject to the Village's sign code or sign regulations but are subject to the Village's Design Guidelines which she described for the Board. She also identified the proposed landscaping plan which was reviewed by the Village Forester and summarized their conclusion. She also informed the Board of the proposal's review schedule for the ZBA and Plan Commission.

Ms. Klaassen identified the four factors the Board is to consider for reviewing the Certificate of Appropriateness as well as the applicable Design Guidelines excerpts included on page 84. She noted one written comment was received from the public and provided to the Board, and stated following the applicant's presentation, public comment and applicant's response, the Board may continue the matter to a date certain or recommend approval or denial with draft language of a motion included on page nos. 20 and 21. She then asked if there were any questions. No questions were raised at this time.

Patricia Davidson, Ty Lin International, referred to the PowerPoint presentation and stated she would summarize the project elements. She described the existing station conditions, the historic windbreaks to be repaired and reinstalled, the pedestrian stairs and station interior to be renovated as well as the Green Bay Trail relocation. Ms. Davidson informed the Board the project scope included the station depot renovation, restoration of the windbreaks, repaving pedestrian improvements along Tower Court, pedestrian bridge replacement, addition of two elevator towers and east and west ramps for ADA accessibility. She stated the project also would include replacement of the existing platforms and installation of two new warming shelters, as well a slight realignment of the Green Bay Trail.

Ms. Davidson stated the steps used to access the station would be regraded to eliminate them and identified several other elements in the proposal. She referred to several additional proposal renderings identifying several proposed elements as well as additional clearances required for the elevators. She then described the railing materials which would require a variance from the UP as well as detailed images for the ramps and two elevator towers. Ms. Davidson also described the windbreak restoration process, the two new shelters and the proposed materials. She referred to the Green Bay Trail and described the proposed landscaping screening. Ms. Davidson noted they have a material board for the Board to review including the requirement to use a slate roof. She then asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Niehoff referred to the proposal's consistency with the Elm Street station and SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) requirements and commented on how the proposed materials fit in with the Board's desire for quality materials. She asked for clarification with regard to the stairs leading into the station and asked if it would be a graded ramp with a railing. Ms. Davidson responded a railed ramp would not be used in front of the building. Ms. Niehoff questioned the elevator tower articulation and suggested a brick reveal or intrusions be included to match what was used at the Elm Street station. She also provided a suggestion with regard to the roof overhang. Ms. Davidson referred to the approved iteration for the elevator tower design and if it was modified, it would require SHPO approval. She also clarified the downspout location. Ms. Niehoff then asked about the color of the railings. Ms. Davidson responded that the railings would be black. Ms. Niehoff stated she would prefer the color of the railings at the Elm Street Station over black. She then questioned the platform lighting. Ms. Davidson clarified the proposed lighting for the Board.

Mr. Duda agreed with Ms. Niehoff's comments specifically the brick detailing on the elevator tower. Mr. Kennedy asked if there would be any issue from UP with regard to the variation required for option no. 2. Ms. Davidson responded she did not know. Chairperson Moor agreed she would prefer a 42 inch fence to match that at Elm Street. The Board agreed to include it as a recommendation for approval. Ms. Moor then commented that the sign facing Hubbard Place seems very large since it just faces residences. Roya Basirirad, with Metra, informed the Board there is a signage team which created a proposal based on sign standards and indicated they can suggest the size be minimized as much as possible.

Chairperson Moor referred to the elevator tower articulation and suggested adding more divided light to the windows. Ms. Niehoff agreed with Chairperson Moor's suggestion. Ms. Davidson confirmed SHPO drove the elevator tower appearance, she noted that the original design matched the station more. Ms. Basirirad stated that SHPO wants the towers to be different than the station. Ms. Niehoff stated they don't necessarily have to match but they need more detail to give them quality. The Board Members discussed their preferences and also reviewed the material board.

Ms. Davidson stated to address the comment from the public regarding the speakers, they can lower the speakers but they will need to add more. She noted that the speakers would be located on the light poles. Chairperson Moor asked how many more would have to added. Ms. Davidson responded probably two times more.

Chairperson Moor asked if there were any public comments. No comments were made at this time. She then called the matter in for discussion.

Chairperson Moor identified the Board's options and asked for the application to be continued to the May 15, 2025, meeting in order to allow for the Board's questions to be addressed. The Board Members discussed their availability.

Ms. Niehoff moved to continue the matter to the May 15, 2025, meeting and asked for the applicant to consider the following items: (i) for the elevator towers to include additional detail and for the roof overhang to be more in line with the level of detailing at the Elm Street station, (ii) for the window design, in addition to the brick, be considered together in terms of the roofline, windows and brick elements, (iii) consider matching the Elm Street railing color; (iv) consider reducing the size of the east side's signage with the size to reflect the residential nature of that side; and (v) address neighborhood concern relating to speaker volume. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

New Applications:
a. **Case No. 25-07-DR: 515 Hibbard Road - Carleton Washburne School: Certificate of Appropriateness to allow exterior building alterations to replace existing louvers on the school building.** Ms. Kirincic identified the property's location and zoning classification and described the proposed north and south side façade improvements in detail. She referred to an illustration of the existing conditions as

well as the proposed elevations. Ms. Kirincic referred to the Certificate of Appropriateness standards the Board is to consider and asked if there were any questions. No questions were raised at this time.

Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the request as presented. A motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness was made by Mr. Duda and seconded by Mr. Ritter. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

b. **<u>Case No. 25-08-DR: 510 Winnetka Avenue - Oberweis Ice Cream and Dairy Store</u>: Sign Permit and Certificate of Appropriateness to allow refurbishment of existing awning frames, installation of new signage, and exterior building alterations, including changes to the existing doors/windows and exterior lighting.**

Ms. Kirincic informed the Board that one written comment was received from the public before the agenda packet was sent out on Friday, March 14, 2025. She noted that four additional written comments were received between that date and the DRB meeting, which were provided to the Board this evening. Ms. Kirincic then identified the property's location and zoning classification and noted that the use is allowed by right in the district. She identified illustrations of the existing storefront and explained that the project included recovering existing awning structures and installing new awning valance and wall signs, as well as a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior building alterations, which she described. Ms. Kirincic identified the proposed awning fabric cover as red and the location of the wall sign above the main entrance, and described the proposed logo, lettering, valance, awning height, and sconce lights. She noted the proposed awning valance sign met the sign code standards and referred to the applicable Design Guidelines.

Ms. Kirincic then described the proposed pin-mounted wall sign, logo, lettering, and background panel, which met all wall sign standards. She identified the proposed location, which complied with the street exposure size limitation. She then described the proposed exterior alterations in detail.

Ms. Kirincic then described the proposed exterior changes on the storefront and identified the Certificate of Appropriateness standards the Board should consider. She reminded everyone that the Board is only making a design recommendation to the Village Council for the awnings, signage, and exterior Building Changes and has no authority over the building tenant.

Chair Moor asked if there were any questions. Mr. Ritter asked if the three west and two south existing awnings would remain brown/maroon. Ms. Kirincic confirmed that this was correct.

Debbie Winchester, the design architect, provided material samples to the Board for their review. She referred to the concerns relating to LED lighting and confirmed it would match that of incandescent lighting, and the sign lumen levels would be at 800 lumens in order to be sensitive to the neighborhood.

Ms. Niehoff asked for additional information about the wall sign's back panel. Ms. Winchester explained that the panel would be metal and painted to look like limestone, and flat-cut letters would then be pin-mounted to it. Mr. Duda asked if it is possible for the entire building to have the same color awnings. Ms. Winchester responded that they cannot assume the residents in the building want red awnings.

Adam Kraber, Oberweis President and CEO, stated they would prefer to have red awnings in front of their storefront, but would consider having all red awnings on the entire building. The Board raised no additional questions at this time.

Chairperson Moor asked for public comment and stated while the Board realized the residents have concerns, she referred to the Board's purview which is limited. She noted that the Village is not party to the condominium unit owners' declarations and that the appropriate venue to advocate whether the changes can be made would be in court.

Kim Nathanson, 518 Winnetka Avenue, the Condominium Board President, stated the building is 93% residential with Hoffmann Real Estate owning the remainder. She stated all of the modifications being requested by the applicant are covered by their bylaws, and the applicant has not communicated with them. Ms. Nathanson stated the Certificate of Appropriateness should be denied due to the lack of meeting the standards, and she specifically referred to the light fixtures affecting the occupants along with proposed red awnings. She described the proposed sign as an attractive nuisance.

Tim Jacobs, 518 Winnetka Avenue, a condo unit owner, stated that the changes will affect residents in the building because their property value will be reduced, the lights will create light pollution, and there will be noise pollution. He also stated that this is a safety concern due to the location being on a busy corner.

Sarah Anzevino, 518 Winnetka Avenue, a condo unit owner, stated that the request would diminish the building's look and character. She also agreed with the previous comments.

Jeannie Shepherd, 518 Winnetka Avenue, a condo unit owner, asked how the application was allowed to proceed. Ms. Kirincic explained the permit application process. Mr. Jacobs referred to the previous Board's discussion relating to the train station and the request for the lighting went against the Village's design aesthetic.

Michael Lachowicz, owner of Aboyer and Fondita Miquel restaurants, referred to a previously submitted RFP to create a Village entrance to the corridor as a welcoming Village function. He stated the applicant is flexible in terms of what they are trying to achieve, and the Village needs more businesses. Mr. Lachowicz stated while he understood the unit owners' position, he referred to the support his business has received from the Village. He stated there needs to be a middle ground.

Mr. Jacobs described the overhanging lights as highly inappropriate. The Board Members and Ms. Winchester discussed the minimal effect of gooseneck lighting. Mr. Kraber stated they would be happy to turn the lighting off after business hours.

Shirley Olin, 518 Winnetka Avenue, a condo unit owner, stated that the building's design element drew the owners to it and identified the previous commercial tenants. She then stated that they were only recently made aware that Oberweis would become a tenant. Ms. Olin described the proposal as a paramount decision and questioned how they would go about addressing the issues with the applicant.

Jenn Epstein, Hoffmann Commercial Real Estate property manager, stated they have worked with the Village on projects over the last 8 years as well as on exceptions and provided their history to the Board. She described the difficulties in working with the condo unit owners on this project. Ms. Epstein informed the Board that someone has been in contact with Hoffmann, but they do not have that person's information. She stated they want to co-exist happily and do not want to be contentious. Ms. Epstein stated the applicant wants to open by the summer and there are other bodies to which the request must be presented.

Mr. Kraber informed the Board that there are other stores in their portfolio with residences above and described themselves as good neighbors. He also stated that they have never received complaints from those locations, and the awning and signage proposal would be consistent with the lighting being positioned to not affect the neighbors. Mr. Kraber added that red is their brand color. He also explained that the solid red was a pivot from their red and white awnings on their other stores.

Mr. Jacobs asked the applicant if they would consider not putting up awnings and changing the light fixtures to only signage. Ms. Epstein described the existing dilapidated awning condition and stated the proposal would improve the building and help the community. Mr. Kraber stated there are 40 stores in their portfolio and their brand is consistent.

Chairperson Moor reminded everyone the Board is only making a design recommendation to the Village Council. Mr. Ritter added the Board has no authority over the building tenant.

Chairperson Moor asked the Board Members for their comments. Ms. Niehoff stated she understood the applicant's brand color preference and precedent. She questioned whether there are guidelines which would prohibit red gooseneck lighting and suggested the use of black or eliminating them. Mr. Kraber provided their hours of operation. Mr. Duda commented that it would be nice to have awning consistency on the whole building and that he had no problem with red. Mr. Kennedy agreed with the comments made and also suggested different lighting options. The Board Members and the applicant discussed lighting color options.

Chairperson Moor then asked for a motion to continue the matter or to recommend approval of the request with conditions. A motion was made by Ms. Niehoff to approve the request with the following conditions: (i) all awnings on the building must be a uniform color awning within the Oberweis red color scheme, (ii) use of black gooseneck light fixtures for the Oberweis signage lighting. Mr. Duda seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed, 4 to 1:
AYES: Duda, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: Kennedy

c. <u>**Case No. 24-14-SU: Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore (440 Ridge and 760 Cherry Street):**</u> **Certificate of Appropriateness for an amended design of proposed additions and site improvements to Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore. The Village Council has final jurisdiction on this request.**
Ms. Klaassen provided a summary of the application beginning with its presentation at previous meetings and identified the request's primary changes. She informed the Board that the traffic and parking analysis was reviewed by the Village Engineer and it was determined that there would be no material impact on traffic and parking in the immediate neighborhood since the plan included no increase in church activity. Ms. Klaassen then referred to illustrations of the previous plan and amended plan being proposed. She noted the applicant submitted revised engineering plans to reflect the amended plan which were reviewed by the Village Engineer and noted there would be no need for stormwater detention onsite due to the reduction in impermeable lot coverage. Ms. Klaassen also stated the project would have to be designed to ensure surface stormwater did not drain to neighboring properties.

Ms. Klaassen then referred to the west elevation rendering and noted the overall aesthetic of the proposed addition remained the same in terms of building materials, light fixtures and fencing. She also referred to updated aerial images. Ms. Klaassen then referred to the zoning relief required for the improvements and identified two variations which were eliminated. She provided a summary of the Historic Preservation Commission's, Plan Commission's and ZBA's consideration of the request and identified the concerns noted and the support given. Ms. Klaassen also referred to the factors the Board is to consider in connection with the Certificate of Appropriateness and the public correspondence received.

Ms. Klaassen stated following the applicant's presentation, public comment and Board discussion, the Board may either continue the matter to a specific date or recommend approval or denial the request with draft language for a motion included on page nos. 101 and 102. She then asked if there were any questions. No questions were raised at this time.

Marshall Brown, Winnetka Presbyterian Church Senior Pastor, introduced his team to the Board and provided a summary of the updated changes which addressed ADA accessibility and improved functionality. He commented on the difficulty in terms of the building's functionality due to the amount of stairs. Mr. Brown also identified the lack of dedicated classroom and programming space along with security issues. He described the revised plan as a good plan and a compromise. He also described their engagement with the neighbors, which produced good ideas. Mr. Brown then summarized the project timeline from inception to today and the reasoning behind the plan which would allow them to serve the most vulnerable and the community in its entirety for the next 100 years.

Joe Buehler, Present Future Architects, summarized the design objectives which remained the same in terms of materials, roof forms, etc. He then referred to illustrations and described the proposed building materials in detail. Mr. Buehler identified the plan revisions as a result of the Plan Commission review including modifications to the south addition, traffic patterns, the Cherry Street property, the request for the improvements to feel more residential in character, additional screening and landscaping, explore further expansion to the north, increased setbacks from neighboring residents and the amount of greenspace to decrease the amount of impermeable surface. He then referred to illustrations of the prior and current proposal schemes.

Mr. Buehler identified the blue dashed line which represented a compromise in that the two-story addition would not cross 30% of the neighbor's backyard with that request being exceeded while identifying the increased setbacks. He also summarized the amount the proposed addition was reduced in terms of square footage over various iterations and explained how the interior spaces were reconfigured. Mr. Buehler then identified the various proposed elevations for the site, landscaping and fencing improvements.

Chairperson Moor asked if there were any questions. Mr. Kennedy asked if the new wood fence would match the existing fence. Mr. Buehler responded that the neighbor wants to keep their fence, which was recently installed. He noted that the neighbors fence is rounded, and the proposed fence would not be. Ms. Niehoff thanked the applicant for working through the process with the different entities which addressed a lot of the concerns raised. She commented the request met the criteria the Board is looking for.

Chairperson Moor then asked if there were any comments from the public.

Martin O'Connor, a Cherry Street resident across from the church for the last 40 years, commented on how the congregation improved the space and have been sensitive to the neighborhood with the applicant doing a professional job. He was very complementary to the landscaping the church has and how it is professionally maintained.

Tom Shannon informed the Board they realized at the time the church was purchased that it would require a lot of work in terms of improvements. He commented the architect has done a fabulous job on the proposal and commended everyone working toward getting the project done.

Jill Shannon, 759 Burr, provided a history of her grandmother's ownership of her home on Cherry Street and the improvements made by the church since it was purchased by the applicant. She commented the proposed plan would enhance the building's beauty. No additional comments were made at this time.

Chairperson Moor then asked for a motion to recommend approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness as indicated on page no. 101. Ms. Niehoff moved to recommend approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed revisions as indicated on page 101. Mr. Duda seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None

Other Business.

a. May 15, 2025, Meeting – Quorum Check.

The Board Members discussed their availability.

Adjournment:

Chairperson Moor asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Kennedy and seconded by Mr. Duda. A vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed, 5 to 0:
AYES: Duda, Kennedy, Moor, Niehoff, Ritter
NAYS: None
The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antionette Johnson
Recording Secretary