

Design Review Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 13, 2020

3930 N. Murray Avenue, Shorewood, WI



1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m.

Members present: Chair Scott Kraehnke, Kevin Greene (arrived during item 3), Brian Koester, Mike Oates and Mike Skauge.

Others present: Frederick Bauer, Stephanie Zeiler, Julie Carpenter, Ryan Birschbach, Katie Monachos, Qian Qian Liu, Chad Griswold, Jessica Guzman and Bart Griepentrog, Planning & Development Director

2. Approval of January 23, 2020 meeting minutes.

Mr. Skauge motioned to approve the minutes as drafted; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 4-0.

3. Consideration by Special Exception of the application and plans on file for the installation of two illuminated wall signs at commercial property 1513 E. Capitol Drive, business occupant Roettgers Co./Mobil Station.

Frederick Bauer introduced the item, and Mr. Griepentrog expanded on it with his interpretation of the code. Mr. Griepentrog noted that the sign code does not clearly differentiate wall signage on a gas station canopy versus a building with respect to quantity. He noted that the Board's discussion would be used for potential future requests or code updates to deal with gas station canopies. He also indicated that the proposed wall sign on the west façade was larger than code would allow. The proposed lettering was only 9 inches tall, however the diameter of the circle was 60 inches. As a result, a Special Exception was required for both quantity and size.

Mr. Oates stated that he felt the proportion of the sign on the west façade was appropriate. He also noted that the canopy and fuel pumps block the view from the street. Chair Kraehnke asked the applicant to describe the side profile of the sign provided on the plans. It was noted that the light would be white at 3500 kelvin. Mr. Skauge agreed that the signs look proportional to the façade. Mr. Koester noted that if the additional signs were also Mobil signs that he would think differently, but had no issues with allowing the extra signage as proposed. Chair Kraehnke agreed that since the signs were not the same he was ok with it. Mr. Oates noted that the proposed signage is being installed on a different structure.

Mr. Koester motioned to approve the plans as submitted, which would allow four total wall signs and the size exception for the west facing building wall sign; seconded by Mr. Oates. Vote 5-0.

4. Consideration by Special Exception for size and type of the application and plans on file for the installation of a standard channel letter sign at commercial property 4161 N. Oakland Avenue, business occupant The Lash Lounge.

Ms. Zeiler and Ms. Carpenter presented an overview of their Special Exception request for a front facing solid faced channel letter sign. They noted that it was a brand standard and limited any concerns of light pollution since it was not as bright as existing neon signs. Mr. Griepentrog presented a brief overview, noting that the sign code was updated in 2007 to specifically prohibit front illuminated channel letters if the letters were not open. He referenced a hand out that has routinely been provided to applicants to explain the interpretation of the prohibition and noted that other applicants have been able to meet the standards.

Mr. Greene questioned if the front was perforated, and the applicants indicated that it was digitally printed. Ms. Zeiler expressed her opinion that it would look better than open letters with multiple bulbs. Mr. Oates noted that it was still a standard channel letter, which is prohibited. Mr. Greene questioned if the screen was enough to make it not standard. Chair Kraehnke noted concerns over setting precedent. Mr. Oates agreed that a slippery slope was being considered. Mr. Skauge noted that Oakland Ave is a commercial corridor, but it is not a strip mall. The applicants indicated that this type of sign has been installed in other high-end zip codes and offers a cleaner look than other standard plex face panels. Chair Kraenke restated his concern over considering approval for a prohibited sign type. Mr. Koester noted that since the sign code was specifically updated in 2007 to prohibit this type of sign, it must have been discussed and was clearly adopted by the Village Board. The applicant indicated that technologies have changed since 2007. However, Chair Kraehnke noted that the Board must work within the regulations of the current sign code.

Mr. Skauge made a motion to deny the request; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 5-0.

5. Consideration of the application and plans on file for a proposed 10-unit townhouse development at commercial property 4121 N. Wilson Drive, property owner Flexigon, LLC.

Chad Griswold from Rinka presented an overview of the proposal to the Board. He noted current B-3 zoning, which would allow up to 70 ft. in height in no more than five stories. He provided site context for the 10-unit three-story townhouse development in relation to other multi-family properties in the vicinity. He noted the presence of the Oak Leaf Trail, unique site configuration of the lot and showed existing photos. He provided that the site is currently developed with approximately 16,750 sq. ft. of impervious area and noted that the proposed development would be less at approximately 15,100 sq. ft. The townhouses would each be supplied with two garage parking spaces, which exceeds the code requirement of 1.75 per unit. Lastly, it was noted that three of the units would have two bedrooms, and the remaining seven would have three bedrooms. A material board was provided for reference and renderings were introduced, including a fly-through animation.

Mr. Oates questioned what type of panel would used on the facade and was informed that Prodema or Trespa was being considered. He also questioned if the turning radius for the garages was tested, and the civil engineer for the project responded that it had been modeled and worked.

Mr. Griepentrog clarified that a full approval was being sought by the applicant, who believed that all required materials had been provided. He noted that there were previous discussion of a two-meeting approval. Mr. Griswold informed the Board that once approved the next step for the project would be take it to market for pre-sale. Chair Kraehnke questioned if this meeting was the first time the public had seen the designs. Mr. Griswold noted media stories had also provided broad coverage. Chair Kraehnke confirmed that the units would be for sale, not for rent.

Mr. Koester questioned if there were any plans to install a fence along the Oak Leaf Trail boundary. It was noted that there currently was a fence in place and that the plans show for it to be removed. Mr. Oates asked for clarification of the material choice on the trash enclosure. Mr. Griswold informed that it would be slatted metal and hidden away from public view. He also noted that it would be covered to allow for a patio extension for one of the units. Mr. Greene questioned the color temperature of the lighting and suggested that nothing colder than the street lights on Wilson Drive be considered. Lighting in the range of 3,000-3,200 kelvins was discussed. Mr. Skauge confirmed that the AC units would be placed on the roof. Mr. Griswold noted that the roof was large enough so that they could be placed in a manner unseen from the public right of way.

Mr. Oates confirmed that the proposed American Legion park would be privately maintained by the development. Mr. Skauge agreed that it made sense for that to be paid for privately. Mr. Oates confirmed that no other signage would be installed on the site.

Chair Kraehnke opened up the discussion to the audience.

Lois Wesener, 1202 E. Kenmore Place, spoke in favor of the development, but noted some surprise on the outdoor garden believing the street was quite busy for that amenity. She also questioned the price-point of the units and was informed that they would be on mid to high-end units.

Andrew Dressel, 4102 N. Wilson Drive questioned if the bus stop in front of the current driveway would be relocated. The civil engineer indicated that it would not. Mr. Dressel also questioned if access to the Oak Leaf Trail would be maintained during construction. Mr. Griswold noted that he would expect that it would be.

Chair Kraehnke questioned when construction would start, and Mr. Griswold explained that at least 50% of the units would need to be pre-sold first, but that they were hopeful for Fall 2020. Chair Kraehnke also questioned how long construction would take, and Mr. Griswold believed it could be completed within a year.

Mr. Koester expressed favor of the design and materials, but noted that the AC units were still a question. He noted that it was just a matter of needing to see it.

Mr. Oates confirmed the design and material of the roof edge coping.

Desty Lorino, 4353 N. Alpine Ave., questioned if ice falling from the tower was a concern. Mr. Griswold noted that he was unaware of any such damage on the current American Legion roof. Mr. Lorino stated that the tower used to include de-icing technologies, but that over the last few years the road has been closed several times due to falling ice. He also noted that he liked the project.

Mr. Oates noted that the development was appropriate for the site and that he liked the proposed design and aesthetic.

Chair. Kraehnke stated that he liked the green space in the front yard as a buffer to provide some privacy. He also liked the pedestrian level materials and noted that the project had an overall great design.

Mr. Oates moved to approve the project, as submitted, with the stipulation that the AC units and any necessary screening come back prior to permitting; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 5-0.

6. Adjournment.

Mr. Koester motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Oates. Vote 5-0.

Recorded by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bart Griepentrog".

Bart Griepentrog, AICP
Planning & Development Director