

**The City of Lake Forest
Building Review Board
Proceedings of April 2, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Building Review Board was held on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., at the Municipal Services Building, 800 Field Drive, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Building Review Board members present: Chairman John Looby and Board members, Sally Downey, Eric Lohmueller, Joanne Bluhm, and Justin Stamer

Building Review Board members absent: Scott Renken and Sarah Lamphere

Staff present: Luis Prado, Assistant Planner and Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

1. Introduction of Board members and staff, overview of meeting procedures – Chairman Looby

Chairman Looby reviewed the role of the Building Review Board, and the meeting procedures followed by the Board. He asked the members of the Board and staff to introduce themselves.

2. Consideration of the minutes from the February 5, 2025 Building Review Board meeting.

The minutes of the February 5, 2025 meeting were approved as presented.

3. Consideration of a request for a recommendation in support of a height variance for a rear second story addition and alterations at 172 Atteridge Road.

Property Owners: Richard and Kathleen Hanson

Representative: Michael Rafferty, Architect

Chairman Looby asked the Board members for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Hanson stated that he and his wife have lived in Lake Forest for 24 years and recently moved from a larger home in the west part of town, to the house on Atteridge to downsize and to be closer to the Central Business District. He stated that the proposed addition will improve the functionality of the house and add a primary bedroom and bathroom on the second floor while maintaining the character of the 105 year old home. He stated that a height variance is requested to allow a small portion of the roof of the addition to be consistent with the height of the original home. He stated that no changes are proposed to the front elevation of the home. He stated that the neighbor to the east is supportive of the project.

Mr. Rafferty reviewed the footprint of the original house noting the one story 2019

addition. He stated that to avoid blocking the second story windows, the 2019 addition was designed with a low roof pitch with a flat roof section. He stated that the 2019 addition does not align in character or form with the rest of the house. He stated that the second floor addition is proposed on top of the 2019 single story addition and is designed to match the pitch of the roof on the original portion of the house. He reviewed the roof plan of the existing house and the proposed addition and pointed out the small area of the new roof that exceeds the current height limitation in order to match the height of the original roof. He noted that as is common in older homes, the finished grade around the house is more than three feet below the first floor. He presented the existing elevations and the proposed elevations. He stated that the exterior materials on the addition will match those on the existing house.

Mr. Prado confirmed that a height variance of three inches is requested to allow a small portion of the roof of the addition to exceed the current allowable height and match the height of the roof of the original home. He reviewed that the proposed addition adds a second floor above the addition to the home that was constructed in 2019. He noted that as the proposed addition moves to the rear, the massing steps down and back from the original house. He noted that as presented, there are some inconsistencies in the windows and suggested that further study and refinement of that aspect of the addition could benefit the overall project. He stated that two letters were received and were provided to the Board.

Chairman Looby invited questions and comments from the Board.

Board member Stamer stated support for the height variance. He suggested consideration of using double hung windows for the two small windows to match the other windows in the home. He noted that reconfiguring the bathroom layout could allow the addition of two high transom windows which would break up the mass of solid wall in that area. He noted the benefit of moving the plumbing supply line into the house.

Board member Bluhm stated support for the height variance. She agreed that the windows could benefit from further study and refinement.

Board member Lohmueller stated that in his opinion, the windows as presented are acceptable but acknowledged that some refinement could benefit the overall design. He commented that the wall at the edge of the chimney is awkward. He suggested off setting the wall to achieve a more intentional look.

Board member Downey agreed with Board member Lohmueller that the windows as proposed are acceptable but acknowledged that further study and refinement could be worthwhile. She noted that the addition extends over the earlier addition.

Chairman Looby commended the petitioners for renovating, rather than demolishing an older home. He encouraged the petitioners to consider the suggestions offered

by the Board.

In response to questions and comments from the Board, Mr. Rafferty responded that if windows are added in the bathroom, they will likely need to be small and square like the windows on the side elevation. He stated that the small windows on the side elevation are intended to allow for a bed to be placed on the wall below the windows. He stated that the high windows are desired for natural light. He stated that if windows are added on the rear elevation, they will likely need to be high and narrow, adding yet another window style to the home. He agreed to give some consideration to the Board comments about the windows. He stated that the goal is to match the height of the original house for design reasons. He stated that no third floor space is intended.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Looby invited public comment. Hearing none, he invited final comments from the Board. Hearing none, he invited a motion.

Board member Stamer made a motion to recommend approval of a rear, second story addition, a height variance for the addition, and approval of related alterations based on the findings detailed in the staff report and incorporating the comments of the Board as additional findings. He stated that the motion is subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Prior to the submittal of plans for permit:
 - a. Conduct further study and refinement to better align the windows in the addition with the windows on the original home.
 - b. Consider off setting the wall near the chimney to achieve a more intentional appearance.

The refinements shall be subject to staff approval.

2. All modifications to the plans, including those detailed above and any others made in response to Board direction or as the result of final design development, shall be clearly called out on the plans submitted for permit. Staff is directed to review any changes, in consultation with the Chairman as appropriate, to determine whether the modifications are in conformance with the Board's direction and recommendation prior to the issuance of any permits.

3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit:

Tree Removal and Landscaping

- a. A plan shall be submitted identifying the location of tree protection fencing to be installed prior to the start of construction and describing any pre and post construction treatments planned to increase the chances of long term survival of the trees intended for preservation which are located

close to construction activity. If determined to be necessary by the City's Certified Arborist, specific measures may be required.

Exterior Lighting

- b. Details of exterior lighting shall be provided with the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights.

Construction Parking, Staging, and Tree Protection

- c. A plan for construction parking and materials' staging shall be submitted for review and will be subject to approval by the City's Certified Arborist, City Engineer, and Director of Community Development. The public street and all private driveways must remain unobstructed, passable, and clean at all times. Due to the narrowness of the street, off site contractor parking may be required at the discretion of the City.
4. Submit an as-built survey during construction, once the framing is in place, to confirm that the addition does not exceed a height of 30 feet and 3 inches from the lowest adjacent pre-construction grade to the highest point of the roof.

The motion was seconded by Board member Lohmueller and was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

3. Consideration of a request for a recommendation in support of a new single-family residence, attached garage and associated hardscape and landscape plan on a vacant lot at 375 Deerpath Square.

Property Owners: Daniel and Adriana Axeunte
Representative: John Nelson, Architect

Chairman Looby asked the Board members for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Nelson described the vacant property noting that the zoning setback is 40 feet on all sides of the lot creating a long and narrow buildable area. He stated that the house is designed to minimize the variances needed. He stated that since the materials were provided for the Board packet, the siting of the house changed. He stated that the intent is to shift the house and driveway to the south. He stated that the site and engineering plans have not yet been updated. He reviewed photos of surrounding homes. He stated that the exterior materials and colors reflected in the rendering are not accurate. He reviewed the elevations noting the dormers on the front of the house and the cantilevered element on the rear of the house which are intended to break up the appearance of mass. He agreed that the expanse of solid wall on the north elevation can be broken up. He stated that the covered front porch extends out five feet beyond the front plane of the house. He presented a

section of the residence. He stated that the intent is to present simplicity in massing. He acknowledged that the Board will need a revised site plan and a landscape plan.

Mr. Prado stated that the property is unique in that it is bordered on four sides by public streets, which results in a 40 foot setback on every side of the lot. He confirmed that the Zoning Board of Appeals is scheduled to consider a request for variances to allow limited elements of the house to encroach slightly into the setbacks. He noted that the adjacent road, Deerpath Square, is designated for limited parking during church services in the inset area located at the north end of the site, near Deerpath. He acknowledged that the petitioner intends to shift and reorient the house and driveway to avoid conflict with the inset area. He stated that the site was staked but refinement may be needed to align with the yet to be modified site and engineering plans. He noted that the staff report suggests refinement of the front facing dormers to soften the roof pitch and the appearance of starkness. He noted the large expanses of unbroken wall on the side elevations. He stated that in the rendering, the front entrance to the home appears commercial in character and suggested refinement to create an entry that has more of a residential character and scale. He stated that consistent with past Board approvals, natural materials should be used for trim since a synthetic product is proposed for the siding. He stated that a landscape plan is needed to identify trees and vegetation proposed to remain and to identify all proposed removals. He noted that currently, the site is well screened by vegetation along the north and east property lines, adding that preserving those areas will be important to maintain the existing screening from the adjacent roadways.

Chairman Looby invited questions and comments from the Board.

Board member Bluhm stated that the revised siting of the house will need to be accurately shown on updated plans. She agreed that a landscape plan is needed. She stated that in her opinion, given traffic levels on Deerpath, limited windows on the north elevation make sense. She asked that the location of the patio be reflected on the updated plans. She asked that samples of the proposed exterior materials and color palette be provided to the Board. She stated that if there is an opportunity to avoid three garage doors facing the street, that should be explored. She noted the low lying area at the south end of the property and stated that the grading plan will need to address that area.

Board member Stamer questioned whether moving the house to the south, where the grade is lower, will result in the house as proposed exceeding the allowable height.

Board member Downey encouraged the petitioner to look at other houses in the area and make refinements to allow the home to fit into the character of the neighborhood. She stated that the dormers appear awkward and stark and require softening and refinement. She stated support for the zoning variances requested.

Board member Lohmueller also stated support for zoning variances. He stated that more information is needed on the proposed siding. He questioned whether the

panels are smooth or textured. He acknowledged that the battens will give some relief to the expansive flat LP surface. He stated that the panels above the garage appear overly wide. He agreed that the dormers need refinement. He stated that the garage mass overall needs to be reduced and the roof brought down. He suggested considering stucco and trim to achieve an appearance more in keeping with the neighborhood. He asked for further details on the front door and agreed that it needs to be softened. He stated that the front porch is a nice touch and suggested pulling it in from the sides of the home.

Chairman Looby asked for confirmation of the width of the panels proposed for the siding noting that they should be residential in scale. He agreed that the wall above the garage appears barren.

Board member Downey stated that the garage should not compete with the house.

Chairman Looby invited a response to the Board's questions and comments from the petitioner.

In response to questions and comments from the Board, Mr. Rafferty confirmed that the house will be shifted about 60 feet to the south and noted that he just became aware of this proposed change. He stated that the siding panels are proposed at 24" but could be reduced to 16". He stated that the pitch on the dormer roofs is intentionally pronounced to create character but acknowledged that it could be softened.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Looby invited public comment. Hearing none, he invited final comments from the Board. Hearing none, he invited a motion.

Board member Lohmueller made a motion to continue the petition to allow the petitioner to consider the Board's comments and refine and provide further detail on the site plan, exterior materials, roof pitch on the dormers, the massing and height of the garage, the window configuration and size, the width of the board and batten, the front entrance, and the standing seam roof on the porch roof. He stated that a revised site plan and detailed landscape plan should be submitted for Board consideration along with the specific information requested.

The motion was seconded by Board member Stamer and approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

7. Opportunity for the public to address the Building Review Board on non-agenda items.

No additional public testimony was presented to the Board.

7. Additional information from staff.

No additional information was provided by staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine J. Czerniak
Director of Community Development