

The City of Lake Forest
Building Review Board
Proceedings of December 5, 2018 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Building Review Board was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 6:30 p.m., at the Municipal Services Building, 800 Field Drive, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Building Review Board members present: Chairman Ted Notz and Board members, Chris Bires, Ross Friedman, Fred Moyer, Bob Reda and Richard Walther

Building Review Board members absent: Jim Diamond

Staff present: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development and Jennifer Baehr, Assistant Planner

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

Chairman Notz 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 of the November 7, 2018 meeting of the Building Review Board.

The minutes of the November 7, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. Consideration of a request for approval of a partial demolition and additions to an existing residence. Modifications to existing detached garage are also proposed. The property is located at 139 Woodland Road.

Owners: Jeff & Stacy Collins

Representative: Jeff Letzter, designer

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

Mr. Letzter introduced the project. He explained that the project was recently before the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board recommended approval of zoning setback variances to accommodate the proposed addition. He stated that the existing house on the property is a stucco building with a front facing gable. He added that the existing house is a modest size home. He noted that the proposed additions will add approximately 500 square feet of living space. He explained that the intent of the design was to maintain the prominent front facing gable of the existing house but add enough space to accommodate a growing family. He stated that an earlier version of the design located the addition on the south side of the existing house, within five feet of the

property line, very close to the neighboring home. He explained that based on staff input, the current proposal locates two-story addition on the east side of the house, a second story dormer addition on the west side, and a small second story addition over the existing one single story element at the southeast corner of the house. He added that all of the proposed additions are lower in height than the existing house. He explained that demolition will be limited to only wall sections on the east side of the existing house to allow for the two-story addition. He noted that the proposed exterior materials for the additions include natural stucco, cedar trim, and asphalt roof shingles. He added that the materials will match the existing house.

Ms. Baehr reiterated that the extent of the demolition is limited to the exterior walls on the east side of the existing house to allow for the new two-story addition. She stated that the design of the additions generally maintain the form and dominant front facing gable of the existing house. She added that the materials and simple detailing found on the existing house are carried through the design of the proposed additions. She explained that the extended dormer proposed on the west elevation presents a larger mass in comparison to the existing dormer. She suggested that consideration be given to adding openings or using larger openings to break up the appearance of mass of the proposed dormer. She added that the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation provided comments that speak to the siting and massing of the proposed additions.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Letzter stated that the existing color palette of the home will be maintained and used for the additions. He added that the existing asphalt shingles will be replaced. He stated that the architectural style of the existing house lends itself to an asymmetrical design. He added that maintaining a shed dormer on the west elevation of the house is important to the owners so an extended dormer is proposed to create the additional second floor space that is needed.

Board member Friedman stated that the design appears incongruent with the existing house. He noted that the existing house has a steeply pitched gable roof and the new design introduces a new roof form.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Letzter confirmed that the landscaping represented in the rendering reflects the proposed landscaping.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Ms. Baehr stated that an earlier version of the design presented a double window on the dormer. She clarified that staff recommended that additional openings be added to the dormer to break up the mass. She stated that in response to staff's recommendation, a triple window, as opposed to a double window, was added.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Letzter explained that the existing dormer is comprised of mostly windows. He stated that windows are not reflected on the north elevation in an effort to minimize the appearance of the addition.

In response to questions from Board member Bires, Ms. Baehr stated that consideration of larger windows or additional windows in the extended dormer is still recommended by staff.

In response to questions from Board member Bires, Mr. Letzter stated that the dormer is the master bedroom closet so windows are limited. He clarified that a chimney is located in the center of the existing house preventing the open floor plan on the first level which is desired by the owners. He stated that removal of the central fireplace and chimney is proposed.

Board member Moyer suggested that it may be worth revisiting the design of the first floor plan in an effort to retain the fireplace and chimney.

In response to questions from Board member Moyer, Mr. Letzter stated that the interior of the existing home does not have significant architectural details or features that would warrant preservation.

Board member Moyer stated that in his opinion, the proposed addition helps to provide a background to the existing house. He noted that it is very seldom that an addition improves the appearance of the existing house. He noted however that some further refinement of the proposed addition will be beneficial.

In response to questions from Board member Reda, Mr. Letzter acknowledged that the roof pitch on the proposed dormer differs from the steeper pitch on the main roofs to keep it a minor element.

In response to questions from Board member Walther, Mr. Letzter said the tree at the northeast corner of the house is a Pear tree and is in good health. He confirmed that the ivy on the house will remain. He said that light fixtures at the front entry will be recessed into the entry alcove.

Board member Walther commented that the tree helps to soften the appearance of mass of the two-story addition. He agreed that more windows should be added to the extended dormer on the east elevation.

He suggested that the pedestrian door on the west elevation of the garage be shifted south noting that at that location, there will be a shorter distance between the garage and side door to the main house. He added that relocating the garage door will allow for additional landscaping around the garage.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Ms. Czerniak explained that the house is located in a National Register Historic District, but not in a Local Historic District so it falls under the purview of the Building Review Board rather than the Historic Preservation Commission. She stated that the interior of the house is not under the purview of the Board however, to the extent that interior elements affect the exterior appearance of the house, such as the proposed removal of the chimney, the Board does have a duty to evaluate such changes. She stated that petitioners are encouraged to document

historic and existing conditions noting that the documentation is kept in the City files and shared with the Lake Forest History Center.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Mr. Letzter confirmed that the angle of the dormer wall is plumb, not flared like the walls of the existing house. He explained that different locations for the master bedroom closet were explored but required modification of other existing openings on the house. He stated that extending the dormer appears to be the most feasible means to achieve the desired closet. He pointed out that the sill height of the extended dormer windows are higher than the window sill heights on other elevations of the house to allow more storage space in the master closet space. He stated that the width of the dormer is approximately 14 feet. He confirmed that the color of the garage siding will be a similar to the color of the stucco on the main house. He added that the main house is entirely stucco with wood trim.

Chairman Notz commented that the width of dormer is not that large and adding wider windows would reduce the available storage space in the closet.

Board member Moyer suggested that if the pedestrian door on the garage is shifted to the south, lattice or vines could be used to add interest to the west elevation of the garage.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Notz invited public comments.

Susan Athenson, 901 Summit Avenue, explained that her family was in a small house in the immediate neighborhood and built an addition to make the house livable. She stated support for the addition and the need for extra space. She encouraged preservation of the existing architectural details and character. She stated that the existing house has seen only minimal alterations since its original construction. She expressed disappointment that today, many people are altering houses to accommodate open floor plans and not respecting the original floor plan. She stated concern about losing the gables and small shed dormers on the existing house. She suggested moving the proposed addition to the south to minimize the appearance of additional mass at the front of the house. She asked that construction parking be restricted on the neighboring residential streets and suggested that parking may be able to be accommodated in the parking lot at West Park.

In response to public testimony, Mr. Letzter stated that the existing conditions of the property prevent an addition on the south of the existing house. He added that the neighboring home to south is only 5 feet from the property line. He added that to respect the neighbor to the south as well as zoning setbacks, the addition is located primarily east of the existing house. He explained that the addition is designed to maintain the original gable on the house. He stated that the house, with the addition, is under the allowable square footage.

In response to public testimony, Ms. Czerniak stated that there may be an opportunity to allow construction parking in the West Park parking lot. She added that the City will work

with the petitioner to develop a construction parking and staging plan that limits impacts on the neighborhood and through traffic. She pointed out that the staff report includes a condition limiting on street parking.

Hearing no further public testimony, Chairman Notz invited final comments from the Board.

Board member Reda suggested the petitioner explore expanding the dormer windows by eight to 12 inches and added that consideration should be given to shifting the pedestrian door on the garage further to south. He added that a staging and parking plan should be developed to prevent parking on Summit Avenue and Woodland Road.

Board member Friedman expressed concern with the overall design of the addition. He explained that the existing house is historic and an asset to the neighborhood. He stated that designing an appropriate addition requires careful attention to massing, rooflines and details. He stated that in his opinion, the current design of the addition is not successful and appears as a stark mass adding that the design does not match the character or elegance of the existing house.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Mr. Letzter stated that the proposed design attempts to maintain the original form of the house by stepping the addition back from the front gable. He explained that there is not enough room on the property to place the addition in a location where it does not significantly impact the existing house. He added that the roof line of the addition is lower than the peak of the original roof. He explained that if the north wall of the addition is shifted south, the length of the addition may need to be expanded to the east resulting in the house extending too close to the existing garage and a larger mass as perceived from the front of the house.

Board member Friedman stated that the design should be refined to soften the appearance of the addition and to respect the character of the existing house.

Board member Moyer suggested that there is sufficient space in the foyer and laundry room to remove a foot and a half which would allow the addition to be setback further from the front gable.

Hearing no further comments from the Board, Chairman Notz invited a motion.

Board member Reda made a motion to continue consideration of the request with direction to the petitioner to consider all of the comments made by the Board and refine the plans to achieve greater compatibility of the addition and alterations with the existing house.

The motion was seconded by Board member Friedman and approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

4. Consideration of a request for approval of a building scale variance to allow construction of a pool house at 1875 Telegraph Road.

Owner: Michael Byun

Representative: Dennis Plauck, builder

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

Mr. Plauck introduced the project. He stated that the request includes a pool and shade structure. He explained that the existing house is over the maximum allowable square footage for the property and the proposed pool shade structure will add to the square footage. He stated that the property is well landscaped and the proposed project will not impact any of the existing landscaping. He added that the shade structure itself is small.

Ms. Baehr stated that the existing house on the property is over the maximum allowable square footage by 507 square feet. She added that with the proposed pool house the total square footage on the property will be 632 square feet over the maximum allowable square footage. She explained that the proposed pool house is largely open and as a result, most of the pool house can be calculated as a design element. She added that only the enclosed area of the pool house is counted toward the square footage for the house. She stated that staff received a letter from the neighbor to the south expressing concerns about drainage. She acknowledged that during the original construction of the house on the property, several years ago, there were some drainage issues. She stated that a grading and drainage plan for the pool and pool house will be required and will be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer before a building permit is issued.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Ms. Baehr confirmed that only the enclosed area of the pool house is being counted toward the total square footage. She added that the remaining area of the pool house is counted as a design element and noted that all of the square footage for allowed for design elements was not used for the house and is available for the open portion of the pool house.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Mr. Plauck stated that the columns will either be round or rectangular with fluting.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Plauck stated that the roof of the house is cedar shingles. He stated that asphalt shingles are proposed for the pool house. He added that if the Board recommends that the materials of the pool house match the house, those changes will be made. He stated that an existing storm drain is located within the foot print of the proposed pool house. He explained that the existing storm drain will be relocated and if appropriate, tied to the storm drain in the driveway.

In response to questions from Board member Bires, Mr. Plauck confirmed that

landscaping is planned around the pool house.

In response to questions from Board member Moyer, Ms. Baehr clarified that just over 100 square feet of the pool house is calculated into the overall square footage.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Czerniak stated that when the house was originally constructed, it was in compliance with the building scale provisions then in place. She added that since that time, changes were made to the building scale provisions.

Chairman Notz commented that in his opinion, since the pool house is separated from the house and will serve a different function, the exterior materials may not need to be the same as the materials on the house. He stated that relative to the size of the house and property, the addition of 100 square feet is minimal.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Notz invited public comments.

Bobbi Groover, 1901 Telegraph Road, stated that she has serious concerns about drainage impacts on her property as a result of the proposed construction. She explained that she dealt with significant drainage issues when the house was constructed at 1875 Telegraph Road. She added that she still experiences issues with drainage on her property and is concerned that the proposed construction will add to the current problems. She stated that the site plan locates the pool house and equipment on the south side of the property, close to her property. She added that on the north side of the property, there is an open field. She suggested locating the pool house and pool equipment on the north side of the property.

In response to public testimony, Mr. Plauck stated that the proposed pool and pool house will not change the drainage on the site. He added that the proposed storm drain will catch any water runoff.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Plauck stated that the natural flow of water is generally across the property, to the northeast.

Ms. Groover noted that water flowed to the north before the house was built on the subject property. She explained that as a result of the construction of the house, the direction of water flow in the area changed.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Mr. Plauck stated that he could talk with the property owners to find out if they are willing to consider relocating the pool house to the north side of the property.

In response to questions from Board member Walther, Mr. Plauck agreed that the mechanical equipment could be moved to the east side of the pool house to minimize noise and visual impacts to the adjacent property.

In response to questions from Board member Friedman, Mr. Plauck stated that the in the proposed location, the pool house is not visible from the street. He added that there are large trees on the site to screen the pool and pool house from views from off the site. He stated that relocating the pool house to the north side of the property will require significant regrading on the site. He explained that the proposed location of the pool house, on the south side of the property, works well with the natural grading of the site.

In response to questions from Ms. Groover, Mr. Plauck stated that the proposed location of the pool house is 38 feet from the south property line.

In response to Chairman Notz, Ms. Czerniak stated that if it is determined that the cabana is best sited on the south side of the property, a condition of approval could be added requiring that the mechanical equipment is located on the east side of the pool house.

Board member Friedman suggested that a screen element, or extension of the south wall of the pool house could be used to further minimize noise and visual impact to the adjacent neighbor.

In response to questions from Chairman Notz, Ms. Czerniak stated that it is difficult to completely baffle sound because conditions can change. She stated however that locating equipment away from the property line and buffering the equipment with a building or fencing will help to mitigate off site noise impacts. She stated that if so directed, staff will work with the petitioners to explore alternative locations for the mechanical equipment to minimize noise impacts to adjacent neighbors.

In response to questions from Ms. Groover, Ms. Czerniak stated that the City can provide a copy of the construction, grading and drainage plans to Ms. Groover before a building permit is issued along with the City Engineer's review comments. She stated that the City Engineer can also be available to meet with Ms. Groover. She explained that the Board's approval does not authorize construction. She stated that the Board's approval authorizes the petitioner and contractor to move forward with development of final construction plans, which are subject to City review.

Board member Friedman suggested to Ms. Groover that she retain a qualified engineer to review the plans for the project before construction begins.

Board member Walther stated that based on the elevations reflected on the plans, it does not appear that the stormwater runoff patterns will be changed as they relate to Ms. Groover's property as a result of the pool and cabana construction.

In response to questions from Ms. Groover, Ms. Czerniak stated that public notices of the project were mailed on November 26th.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Notz asked the Board for final comments. Board member Reda made a motion to recommend approval of a building scale

variance to allow construction of the pool house. He stated that the motion is based on the findings in the staff report and incorporates the Board's discussion and the testimony presented. He noted that the recommendation is subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. The mechanical equipment for the pool shall be relocated to the east side of the pool house or, the pool house and mechanical equipment shall be relocated to the north side of the property.
2. The pool equipment shall be screened and baffled to mitigate noise.
3. If any modifications are made to the plans that were presented to the Board, either in response to Board direction, or as the result of final design development, the modifications shall be clearly called out on the plan and a copy of the plan originally provided to the Board shall be attached for comparison purposes. 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 approval prior to the issuance of any permits.
4. Details of all exterior lighting shall be provided with the plans submitted for permit. All fixtures shall direct light downward and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view by the fixture or by sight obscuring glass.
5. 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. No parking of construction vehicles on Telegraph Road is permitted due to the narrow road width.
6. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, grading and drainage plans and the City Engineer's review comments on those plans shall be provided to the neighboring property owner to the south to allow for review and comment. Any comments offered by the property owner or an independent engineer hired by the property owner shall be considered by the City Engineer to mitigate the potential for off-site negative impacts from drainage.

The motion was seconded by Board member Friedman and was approved by a 6 to 0 vote.

OTHER ITEMS

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

There was no additional public testimony presented to the Board.

6. Additional information from staff.

- **Consideration of the 2019 Building Review Board meeting schedule.**

Board member Reda made a motion to approve the 2019 Building Review Board meeting schedule.

The motion was seconded by Board member Friedman and was approved by a 6 to 0 vote.

No additional information was presented from staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr
Assistant Planner