

The City of Lake Forest
Building Review Board
Proceedings of February 3, 2021 Meeting

A meeting of the Lake Forest Building Review Board was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting was conducted remotely in compliance with Governor's Executive Order 2020-07, issued on March 16, 2020 that suspended certain Open Meetings Act provisions relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Building Review Board members present remotely: Chairman Jim Diamond and Board members, Joanne Bluhm, Sally Downey, John Looby and Richard Walther.
(Two vacant positions.)

Building Review Board members absent: None

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

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

Chairman Diamond 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 December 2, 2020 meeting of the Building Review Board.

Consideration of the minutes of the December 2, 2020 meeting was postponed.

3. Continued consideration of a request for approval of a new residence on a vacant lot, a conceptual landscape plan, and overall site plan. The property is addressed as 1365 Estate Lane East.

Property Owner: Marlin Ventures

(Paul Lopata, 33%, Steven Brown 33%, Ed Yawitz 33%)

Contract Purchasers: Jamie and Peter Childs

Project Representative: Jeff Letzter, Project Manager

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

Mr. Letzter stated that the petition was initially presented to the Board in December and at that time, the Board directed the petitioner to revise some aspects of the site plan and design of the home. He explained that in response to the Board's direction, the plans now incorporate shutters to be more consistent with the selected architectural style, the previously proposed double windows were replaced with single windows with muntins in

both the top and bottom sashes, the front portico was refined, and the circular louvered vents were removed. He stated that the driveway was shifted out of the 10 foot drainage easement on the west side of the property and explained that to accommodate the shift in the driveway location, the house was shifted east. He stated that the width of the driveway was reduced from 16 feet to 14 feet which reduced the amount of impervious surface on the site. He stated that the project now complies with the allowable square footage. He stated the landscape plan was modified to include additional trees.

Ms. Baehr stated that at the December meeting, the Board continued the petition with direction to the petitioner to conduct further study of some aspects of the design of the house, the overall site plan and the landscape plan. She noted that the staff report details the changes made to the plans since the December meeting. She stated that it appears that the petitioner was responsive to the Board's direction and noted that the revised plans are more consistent with the City's Residential Design Guidelines and the applicable review standards. She noted that the landscape plan was updated to include additional plantings however, the required replacement inches is not yet satisfied. She stated that as the landscape plan is developed further, additional trees will need to be incorporated to satisfy the required replacement inches on the site to the extent possible. She noted that if the replacement inches cannot all be accommodated on the site, a payment in lieu of on site plantings will be required to support plantings in the general area.

Board member Looby expressed support for the changes made to the plans. He encouraged the petitioner to add shutters to all the windows for consistency.

In response to questions from Board member Walther, Mr. Letzter stated that the brick on the chimney will be four inches thick. He confirmed that the gutters and downspouts are black to match the trim on the house. He stated that a paver brick walkway is proposed in the front yard.

Board member Downey commended the petitioner for the changes made to the plans. She stated that the revisions greatly improve and enhance the design of the home.

Board member Bluhm agreed with Board member Downey. She observed that the black gutters and downspouts appear prominent on the home and encouraged the petitioner to reconsider the color for those elements.

In response to questions from Chairman Diamond, Mr. Letzter stated that a charcoal colored, decorative, metal flue cover is proposed on the chimney. He stated that the shutters are wood and will be painted black.

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

Kevin Morris, 1467 S. Estate Lane, stated that he attended the December meeting and was very impressed with and appreciative of the Board's service. He stated that during the previous meeting he raised concerns about the drainage as the three properties at the corner of Estate Lane East and Oak Knoll Drive are developed. He added that there are ongoing drainage issues in the Estate Lane neighborhood. He noted that he appreciates

the time City staff spent with him to discuss his concerns. He asked to review the findings from the City Engineer on the proposed development. He added that the proposed homes are a fantastic addition to the neighborhood.

Hearing no further public testimony, Chairman Diamond asked staff to respond to public testimony.

Ms. Czerniak stated that engineering staff has had conversations with Mr. Morris in the past and is aware of drainage issues on his property and in the neighborhood. She stated that further engineering staff follow up is planned.

Chairman Diamond invited final comments from the Board.

Board member Looby complimented the style of the shutters.

Board member Walther strongly encouraged the petitioner to reconsider the color of the gutters and downspouts.

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

Board member Walther made a motion to recommend approval of the new residence, conceptual landscape plan, and the overall site plan subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Consideration shall be given to changing the color of the gutters and downspouts to match the trim color.
2. Any modifications to the plans including those made in response to Board direction and those made as the result of final design development, 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.
3. The final grading and drainage plan shall demonstrate the project is consistent with the applicable Code requirements and the recently approved subdivision plans and will be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer. Grading or filling on the site should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary to meet good engineering practices and properly direct drainage.
4. The final landscape shall include, but not be limited to, all required replacement tree inches to account for trees removed to the extent possible using good forestry practices, plantings along the west property line to screen the garage doors and garage apron, and trees in the front yard to soften the appearance of the house from the streetscape over time.

5. Tree Protection Plan – Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect trees identified for preservation and to protect trees on neighboring properties during construction, must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
6. Details of exterior lighting shall be submitted with the plans submitted for permit. All fixtures shall direct light downward and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. In particular, the lights on the west facing garage shall utilize fixtures that direct light downward to eliminate impacts on the neighboring property.
7. 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 motion was seconded by Board member Looby and approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**4. Consideration of a request for approval of building signage for two new restaurants, Everett Farms and The Station, located at 840 S. Waukegan Road.
Property Owner: GCP Forest Square
Restaurant Owner: John des Rosiers
Project Representative: David Monahan, All American Signs**

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

Mr. des Rosiers stated that two signs are proposed, one facing east toward Waukegan Road, and the other on the west side of the building, facing the train tracks. He stated that the two restaurants will occupy adjacent spaces at the south end of the commercial building. He acknowledged that the proposed signs are larger than permitted by the Code to increase visibility from the street. He explained that the sign on the east side of the building will align with the width of the window below. He stated that each sign contains only the name of each restaurant. He noted that originally, larger signs were proposed however, in working with City staff, the size of the signs was reduced to more closely conform to the City regulations. He stated that the sign raceways will match the color of the stone on the building.

Ms. Baehr stated that this petition is a request for two wall mounted illuminated signs. She explained that the petition is being presented to the Board because the petitioner is requesting variances for the size of the signs and because lighting is proposed on the signs. She explained that the approved signage plan for Forest Square limits storefront signs to the lesser of 25 square feet or 5 percent of the storefront area. She stated that the 25 square foot maximum applies in this case. She stated that the approved signage plan also limits the overall dimensions of signs to 15 feet in length and 3 feet in height. She explained that the "Everett Farms" restaurant sign proposed on the east side of the building totals 40 square feet and is 18.5 feet in length, exceeding both the maximum square footage and length permitted in Forest Square. She stated that the sign on the west side of the building for "The Station" restaurant complies with the length and height requirements, however the

square footage totals 28 square feet exceeding the maximum of 25 square feet. She acknowledged that the petitioner reduced the size of the signs from the plans originally submitted after discussions with staff. She noted the importance of assuring that the signs are visible given the history of restaurants in this space. She stated that in this case, variances to some extent seem appropriate. She stated however that as currently proposed, the signs appear somewhat large in comparison to the scale of the building façade. She stated that both signs could benefit from some reduction to better relate to the building.

Board member Looby stated that he understands the difficulty of this location due to limited visibility and noted that there has been considerable turnover of tenants in the space. He stated that in his opinion, it makes sense that the sign facing Waukegan Road is larger than the size approved for the overall building. He noted that there is also a tree in the front of the building that makes it difficult to see the signage from Waukegan Road. He stated support for the sign as proposed noting that it is important that the business is visible to be successful.

In response to questions from Board member Looby, Ms. Baehr confirmed that the existing sign on the building from the previous tenant complies with the allowable square footage.

Board member Walther stated that he has more of a concern about the size of the sign on the west side of the building. He stated that the existing sign on the west side of the building is substantially smaller than the sign proposed by the petitioner. He added that the smaller sign appears to fit the scale of the building better than the proposed sign. He stated that in his opinion, the length of the sign on the east side of the building fits the façade well. He explained that the petitioner could reduce the height of the sign on the east side by just 5 inches and the square footage would then be reduced from 40 square feet to 30 square feet which would help to lessen the overage. He stated that the fact that the tenant occupies two spaces does not itself justify a larger sign adding that as an example, if a tenant occupied four spaces, it would not be appropriate to then allow the tenant to have 100 square feet of signage on the building. He stated that there has to be a limit on the size of the signs regardless of whether a tenant has one or multiple spaces. He says that the intent of the original signage approvals appears to achieve a uniform appearance across the building.

Board member Downey stated that she agrees with comments made by Board member Looby. She added that the sign proposed on the east side of the building appears to anchor the south end of the building well. She noted that some of the signs on the building, although smaller in size, seem to stand out more than the proposed signage due to the font type and colors. She questioned the proposed color of the signage.

Board member Bluhm agreed with comments made by Board member Looby and Downey. She added that the larger mass on the south end of the building appears to be able to support a larger sign. She stated that the sign on the west side should be large enough to be visible from the train tracks but agreed that it appears that the size of the sign could be reduced slightly. She pointed out that because of the angle of the building, the sign on the west side will only be visible to people on trains traveling south. She

questioned if the petitioner considered adding a sign on the south façade of the building.

Chairman Diamond agreed with Board member Walther's comments.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. des Rosiers stated that sign on the east elevation will be centered on the window below. He stated that he is willing to reduce the size of the sign on the west side slightly to bring the sign more into scale with the west side entrance. He explained that by reducing the height of the sign on the east elevation as mentioned by Board member Walther, the length of the sign would also then have to be reduced, making the overall size of the sign much smaller and more difficult to see from the street. He noted that the signs will be dark blue.

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

Stephen Douglass, representing the owner of the building, stated that they are very excited about the proposed signage and they are very much in favor of the proposal as presented. He added that they were in favor of the slightly larger version of the signs that was initially presented to staff. He explained that the previous tenant's sign was very difficult to see from the street adding that previous restaurants in the space also had limited visibility. He stated that with respect to the sign on the west side of the building, it faces the train tracks, but also faces Telegraph Road, so the larger size seems appropriate in order to be visible to drivers on Telegraph Road or people in the train station parking lot. He added that the signs are not visible from any residential area.

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

In response to questions from Board member Downey, Ms. Czerniak explained that it is expected that the restaurants are open later than other types of businesses in Forest Square. She added that businesses are required to turn off their signs after business hours.

Board member Walther observed that the sign proposed on the east side of the building appears to sit slightly lower than other signs on the building. He explained that other signs appear to be set higher on the building façade given the height of the arches along the front of the building.

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

Board member Looby made a motion to recommend approval of building signage for two new restaurants subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. The size of the sign on the west facing elevation shall be reduced slightly.
2. All signage shall only be illuminated during business hours.
3. Warm lighting as opposed to cooler, more stark lighting shall be used.

4. After installation, the lighting intensity shall be evaluated by staff to verify consistency with lighting levels in the area. The intensity of the lighting shall be reduced if determined to be necessary by staff.
5. Modifications to the plan as noted above, and any other changes made in response to direction from the Board or as a result of final design development shall be clearly called out on the plans. Changes will be reviewed by staff, in consultation with the Chairman as appropriate, to confirm that the plans are in conformance with the approvals granted and the conditions prior to the issuance of a permit.

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

5. Consideration of a request for approval of new plans and exterior materials to replace plans approved previously as part of the residential development at Amberley Woods Courtyard Homes located between Saunders Road and Conway Farms Drive, south of Route 60.

Property Owner: McNaughton Development (Paul R. McNaughton, 100%)

**Project Representatives: John Barry, McNaughton Development
Brian Fergon, architect**

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

Mr. Barry introduced the project and the design team. He explained that McNaughton Development is a family owned business with 40 years of experience building custom homes. He stated that the company's luxury homes have always been architecturally exciting and distinctive adding that the company is very proud of their products. He explained that today, the company's business model is acquiring and developing well located infill properties, properties that are concept driven such as empty nester, maintenance free developments. He stated that the product proposed at Amberley Woods a development they recently acquired. He stated that their developments are successful and incorporate the latest trends in materials.

Mr. Fergon explained that a "coastal" architectural style is proposed and has been successful with clients in other communities. He stated that the style is more transitional and contemporary than traditional Nantucket or coastal homes. He stated that the proposed homes have a combination of board and batten, shake and lap siding, with brick or stone accents. He stated that the materials and color palette blends together in a harmonious way. He added that one of the main elements of the homes is the use of double hung windows with minimal divisions that allows greater views from the windows and presents a cottage like appearance.

Mr. Barry stated that four different models are proposed, two ranch styles and two first floor master bedroom designs, each offered in two different elevation designs. He reviewed the floor plans for each model. He stated that one of the four models will have a side load garage. He explained that the homes have simple roof forms, open porches, masonry chimneys, and bracket details. He explained that the goal is to

provide a sense of consistency and appropriate proportions and scale, but not be repetitious. He stated that individual home buyers will select the exterior colors. He stated that in the event that the same models are built next to each other, there will be differences in the colors of the siding, the roof, the front door and the garage doors. He added that there will also be differences in the exterior materials, brick and stone. He noted that in no event will there be more than three of the same model types next to each other. He reviewed the typical landscape plan for a home.

Ms. Baehr explained that the petitioner is requesting approval of new plans and exterior materials for the Courtyard Homes in the Amberley Woods development, located on the south side of Amberley Court. She stated that there is background information on the overall development and the prior approvals for the Amberley Woods Courtyard Homes in the Board's packet. She explained that the current petition is brought forward by a new developer, McNaughton, the recent purchaser of the remaining vacant 19 single family home lots in the development. She added that the designs and exterior materials as now presented are proposed to replace the plans for the courtyard homes that were previously approved by the Board. She stated that the current proposal includes a total of four different plans, each with two different façade treatments. She explained that the Board's role in reviewing the proposed plans is to consider the plan, as is done with any new residence presented to the Board, in the context of the architectural styles, design quality, architectural detailing, and exterior materials of the surrounding homes. She added that the approvals granted to date for the courtyard homes provide for a high quality architectural design, relatively simple massing and roof forms, details consistent with the selected architectural style, and high quality exterior materials. She stated that leading up to the Board's review of the new plans, staff offered input and direction to the petitioner on the proposed architectural style and other elements of the design, such as massing, the fenestration pattern, and exterior materials in an effort to assist the developer in bringing forward plans that more closely relate to the context of the Amberley Woods development and follow the quality and character established in the development and by the existing courtyard homes. She stated that the plans currently presented do not fully reflect the character and quality of the Amberley Woods development. She added that the staff report includes a number of recommendations that speak to the proposed architectural style and other design elements as well as to the landscape plans. She stated that staff is recommending that the Board offer input and direction and continue the petition to allow the opportunity for further refinement of the designs in an effort to more closely follow the established character of the development and the City's Residential Design Guidelines.

Board member Walther stated that it appears that the proposed plans do not yet appear to be a good fit with the existing development in Amberley Woods or the community overall. He stated that when visiting the site he noticed that the exteriors of the existing courtyard homes have many natural materials including copper gutters, wood shingle roofs, natural stone, and pavers. He added that he does not see the same level of commitment to natural materials in the proposed plans. He noted that the exteriors as currently proposed are comprised almost entirely of non-natural materials. He stated that the plans appear to show windows with muntins on the

interior only. He explained that given the location of the homes so close to the street, interior and exterior muntins are important to provide depth and shadow. He asked that further work be done to present homes that respect and align with the character and quality of the established homes in the area.

Board member Downey stated that there appears to be a disconnect between the proposed coastal architectural style and the styles of the existing courtyard homes. She agreed with the recommendations in the staff report. She stated that the staff report is very thorough and details why the current plans are not appropriate for the development. She stated that she was disappointed to find that the proposed building designs are the same as models featured on the developer's website for tract subdivisions constructed in other communities. She encouraged the developer to study the existing development in the area and work to create a product that fits in with this particular neighborhood. She added that the proposed designs do not measure up to the same quality of the existing homes in the area.

Board member Bluhm expressed concern about the number of homes presented with street facing garages but acknowledged the challenge given the small lots. She stated that this area has been slow to develop adding that the right combination of floor plans, price, and a beautiful exterior that will fit the area is needed for this development to be successful. She stated agreement with the recommendations presented in the staff report. She added that anti-monotony guidelines should be provided to avoid the development appearing repetitious.

Board member Looby agreed with comments of Board member Downey. He stated that this type of home, with first floor master bedrooms, is a product that is needed in Lake Forest, but noted that as presented, the plans are far off in terms of the overall design, quality and exterior materials. He stated that the recommendations offered in the staff report are right on target. He encouraged the petitioner to carefully consider the comments, study the area and work to more closely align the plans with the community traditions.

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

Wayne Urbanek, 2025 Amberley Court, stated that he is one of the five homeowners in the Amberley Woods Courtyard Homes development adding that his home was built by the previous developer. He thanked the Board and staff for all of the work to date on this petition. He stated that as a homeowner in Amberley Woods, he welcomes the development of the remaining 19 lots but he would like to see the character and quality of the home designs be more in alignment with the five existing homes in the development. He stated that there is a Homeowners Association and he encouraged the petitioner to work with the Association and discuss the plans before returning to the Board.

Hearing no further requests to speak from the public, Chairman Diamond invited final comments from the petitioner.

Mr. McNaughton stated that he and his team are very excited about building out the development. He noted that his firm has considerable experience in building luxury homes on infill sites. He stated appreciation for the Board's feedback. He explained that there are reasons why the current designs are proposed. He noted however that they will take the feedback offered by the Board into account and will reconsider the plans. He stated that he will contact the Homeowners Association. He stated his intent is to put forth a great product that they can be proud of and that they can sell quickly at an affordable price for empty nesters. He stated that there is definitely a need for this product.

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

Board member Walther encouraged the petitioner to work on incorporating more design options with a side load garage and to take the comments in the spirit in which they were offered, to help move this project forward.

Board member Bluhm stated that she is glad to hear that Mr. McNaughton is willing to be responsive to the input offered by the Board and agreed that the product is needed in the City.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Diamond invited a motion.

Board member Looby made a motion to continue the petition and directed study and refinement as detailed below.

- Conduct further study of architectural styles found in the community and styles that are compatible with the existing courtyard homes in the development in order to present building designs that are consistent with the City's Design Guidelines and the Board's Standards.
- Design all elements of the building consistent with the chosen architectural style, a mix of elements from various styles shall be avoided.
- Provide a consistent level of detailing and on all elevations.
- Configure windows to be generally consistent in shape, orientation and size.
- Locate windows in a consistent pattern across the elevations.
- Refine the massing and height of the proposed home designs to align more closely with the massing and height of the existing courtyard homes.
- Simplify and reduce the size and height of the roof forms.
- Develop designs that incorporate side load garages, consistent with the City's Design Guidelines.
- Utilize exterior materials that more closely match those on the existing courtyard homes and follow the City's Design Guidelines.
- Consider the incorporation of hardscape materials that are more compatible with the quality and character of the hardscape materials of the existing courtyard homes.
- The landscape plans shall incorporate plantings along the sides of the house and the driveway to the extent possible.

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

OTHER ITEMS

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

There was no additional public testimony presented to the Board.

7. Additional information from staff.

There was no additional information presented to the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr
Assistant Planner