

The City of Lake Forest
Zoning Board of Appeals
Proceedings of the June 28, 2021 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Monday, June 28, 2021 at 6:30 p.m., in Lake Forest, Illinois.

Zoning Board of Appeals members present: Chairman Michael Sieman and Board members Pete Clemens, James Moorhead, Ari Bass, Nancy Novit, Laurie Rose and Lisa Nehring.

Zoning Board of Appeals members absent: None

Staff present: Michelle Friedrich, Planning Technician and Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

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

2. Consideration of the minutes from the May 24, 2021 meeting.

The minutes of the May 24, 2021 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. Consideration of a request for a variance from lot-in-depth setbacks to allow construction of an addition and alterations to the existing residence at 901 Spring Lane.

Property Owners: Natalie and Justin Hagstrom

Representative: Scott Streightiff, architect

Chairman Sieman introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest.

Board member Nehring noted that while visiting the site, she saw family members by did not have any conversations.

Board member Clemens noted he met the owner when he was on site but did not discuss the petition. He stated that he can rule on the petition objectively.

Board member Rose noted she met the owner and talked briefly but did not discuss the substance of the petition. She stated that she can rule on the petition objectively.

Hearing no further declarations from the Board, Chairman Sieman swore in all those intending to speak and invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Streightiff introduced the petition noting that additions and renovations to the existing house are proposed. He noted that no changes are proposed to the pool house or the coach house. He noted that the house encroaches into the lot in depth setback along the north property line and explained that modification of the roof form in that area, to increase the height of the house, is proposed. He reviewed the proposed site plan noting that a variance from the 50 foot lot in depth setback is requested from the south property line. He noted that the larger neighborhood is characterized by a wooded streetscape with manor homes on large lots. He noted that the property is just over 2 acres and bordered by a wooded ravine to the west and beyond that, Lake Forest College. He stated that the current home is in need of updating adding that the petitioners desire to renovate, rather than demolish the main residence. He stated that the Adler designed Coach House will be preserved. He stated that currently, upon entrance to the property, guests view three garage doors. He stated that the owners desire to add a motor court at the front of the home and shift the garage to the south side of the property. He noted that currently, guests often enter the home at the service entrance. He described the existing and proposed elevations and noted the changes and new construction proposed within the north and south setback areas. He noted that the property has a significant landscape buffer of deciduous plantings. He noted that in his opinion, the proposed project meets the variance criteria.

Ms. Friedrich reviewed that the property is a lot in depth and a 50 foot setback applies from all property lines. She noted the existing house was built in 1954, in compliance with the Code in place at that time. She confirmed that the existing house encroaches into the 50' setback along the north property line and is located 24.5 feet from the north property line. She stated that the proposed modifications on that portion of the house, an increase in height, will not encroach into the setback any further than the existing house. She noted that a new garage is proposed on the south side of the house along with a courtyard adjacent to the front door. She explained that the intent is to shift parking to the south side of the property, away from the entry to the site. She noted that the garage addition encroaches in the 50' setback along the south property line and, as proposed, is located 31 feet from the south property line. She noted that the existing property is heavily screened with vegetation and is not very visible from surrounding properties. She noted that a variance from the square footage limitations is also requested and will be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission in July along with the design aspects of the project. She noted that two conditions of approval are recommended in the staff report; a requirement for fully dimensioned plans and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Chairman Sieman invited questions from the Board.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Mr. Streightiff stated that in the alternative plan that was studied, there is more driveway surface. He noted that the plan presented for approval minimizes the visual impact on the neighbor to the south by providing more space for plantings along the south property line. He clarified that there is no second floor area in the proposed garage adding that the roof pitch is used to match the roof pitch on the north side of the house.

In response to questions from Board member Moorhead, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that a 20 foot side yard is required in the R-4 district on a standard lot. She confirmed that the front yard, 50' in the R-4 District, is applied to all sides of a lot in depth.

In response to questions from Board member Moorhead, Ms. Czerniak explained that the increased setback is required for lots in depth because of the adjacency to the private areas of neighboring lots on all sides

In response to questions from the Board member Rose, Mr. Rosborough of Rosborough Partners, landscape consultant for the petitioners, stated that the work proposed will have no impact on the ravine. He noted that the sensitive areas on the site will be protected by silt fence during construction. He noted that the gravel motor court will be surrounded by stone cobbles and the service court will be solid pavers.

In response to questions from Chairman Sieman, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that the request for a variance from the square footage limitations will be heard by Historic Preservation Commission.

Hearing no further questions, Chairman Sieman invited public testimony.

Mary Robertson, 620 Mayflower Road, questioned how tall the proposed garage will be noting that her home is directly south of the proposed garage. She questioned whether her driveway encroaches on to the 901 Spring Lane property as reflected on the map in the packet. She noted that drainage in the area flows to the south and expressed concern about potential drainage impacts on her property as a result of the proposed construction.

Hearing no further testimony, Chairman Sieman invited Mr. Streightiff to address the public testimony presented.

Mr. Streightiff noted that the garage will be 24 feet high to the ridge line. He clarified that no work is proposed on the 620 Mayflower Road property. He noted that the area around the existing house is flat adding that City Engineering staff will review the plans to evaluate the potential for drainage impacts. He noted that in general, the

property drains to the ravine area adding that there is storm sewer on the 901 Spring Lane property.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Streightiff stated that an engineering plan has not been prepared yet. He noted that an updated plat of survey for the property was provided when the petitioners purchased the property.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Ms. Friedrich noted that an engineering plan will be required when plans are submitted for permit. She said that comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting and the Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be forwarded to the City Engineer for consideration as part of the review of the engineering plan.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that no height variances requested. She noted that the vicinity map in the Board's packet appears to indicate that the driveway for the 620 Mayflower Road property clips the corner of the 901 Spring Lane property but noted that the vicinity map is intended to be representative and cannot be relied on for the exact location of property lines and improvements. She stated that based on the property surveys, it appears that the driveway for the 620 Mayflower Road property is fully contained on that property.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Ms. Czerniak suggested that the property line be staked prior to any construction. She added that an auto turn study can be required to confirm that the driveway is functional.

In response to questions from Board member Rose, Ms. Friedrich acknowledged that there may be a discrepancy between the two property surveys but noted that is a matter that will need to be resolved privately.

In response to questions from Board member Moorhead, Ms. Friedrich stated that the Board can recommend a condition requiring the submittal of drainage and grading plans but noted that such a condition is redundant of standard requirements for a project of this magnitude.

In response to questions from Board member Rose, Ms. Czerniak noted that the City can provide a copy of the drainage and grading plans to the neighbor for information and comment prior to the permit issuance.

Board member Rose noted complimented the project and noted that in her opinion, the requested variances satisfy the criteria. She stated support for a condition requiring the submittal of drainage and grading plans that will be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer with consideration given to the concerns expressed by the neighbor.

Board member Nehring agreed with Board member Rose's comments.

Board member Moorhead agreed with the comments of the other Board members. He noted that the proposed modifications on the north side of the home do not expand the footprint or increase the extent of the encroachment into the setback. He stated that the project appears to be reasonable and appears to meet the variance criteria. He agreed that staff should be directed to consider the drainage taking into account the neighbors comments and concerns.

Board member Novit agreed with the comments of the other Board members. She stated some reservation about the proposed height of the garage but acknowledged that the height as proposed complies with the Code and that the Historic Preservation Commission will review the height from a design aspect.

Chairman Sieman noted that the Board exists to consider situations like this where there are existing nonconformities due to construction prior to existing Code regulations. He expressed concern however with the square footage overage but acknowledged that the Historic Preservation Commission will consider that aspect of the petition. He stated that the project is a thoughtful approach to the design. He agreed that the drainage will need to be carefully considered. Hearing no further comments from the Board, he invited a motion.

Board member Nehring made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of lot-in-depth setback variances to allow a modified roof form to be located no closer than 24.5 feet to the north property line and a garage addition to be located no closer than 31 feet to the south property line both as depicted on the site plan presented to the Board. She noted that the recommendation is subject to the following conditions of approval:

1. Fully dimensioned plans shall be submitted along with the application for building permit.
2. Review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission is required prior to the issuance of a building permit.
3. Drainage and grading plans and an auto turn study for the garage apron shall be submitted along with the application for building permit and will be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer.
4. The south property line shall be staked prior to issuance of a building permit and shall remain staked during construction.

The motion was seconded by Board member Clemens and approved by a vote of 7-0.

- 4. Consideration of a request for variances from the front and side yard setbacks to allow construction of a front porch and a second story addition to the residence at 624 Highview Terrace. A lot coverage variance is also requested.**

Property Owners: Jerry O'Brien and Laura Nekola
Representative: Chris Russo, project manager

This item was postponed at the request of the petition.

5. Public testimony on non-agenda items.

No public testimony was presented to the Board on non-agenda items.

6. Additional information from staff.

Ms. Friedrich noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 26, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle E. Friedrich
Planning Technician