

**Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**Proceedings of the November 26, 2018 Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Monday, November 26, 2018 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Zoning Board of Appeals members present: Chairman Mark Pasquesi and Board members James Moorhead, Michael Sieman, Richard Plonsker, Nancy Novit, Kevin Lewis 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 Pasquesi reviewed the role of the Zoning Board of Appeals and asked members of the Board and staff to introduce themselves.

**2. Consideration of the minutes from the October 23, 2018 meeting.**

The minutes of the October 23, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

**3. Consideration of a request for approval of a variance from the front yard setback to allow construction of a front portico at 1331 Harlan Lane.**

**Owners and Representatives: Peter and Caren Skarzynski**

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Ms. Skarzynski introduced the petition. She stated that she and her family have lived in this house for four years. She explained that a roof over the front porch is proposed, supported by a modest column, to provide protection for visitors and packages. She stated that the project will not to impact light or air to adjacent properties. She described the surround of the existing front door noting that it appears as columns integrated into the wall. She noted that the proposed roof is similar to the existing roof, but extends further into the front yard setback and requires a variance because the existing house is sited just one foot behind the setback. She noted that the setback line follows the curve of Harlan Lane. She noted that other designs were explored but found to be inconsistent with the home's existing architecture.

Ms. Friedrich reviewed the request for approval of a variance from the front yard setback requirement to allow construction of a roof over the existing front porch. She noted that the roof, as proposed, extends 4 feet into the 50 front yard setback and is desired by the petitioner to provide a covered entry at the front door. She noted that the front porch will remain open

in nature and similar in design to the minimal overhang that exists today. She noted the house, when constructed, was sited nearly at the front yard setback line, creating the need for a setback variance, as the owner looks to modify the front entrance. She noted there are findings in fact in the staff report in support of the project and several letters from neighbors, also in support of the project.

Chairman Pasquesi invited questions from the Board. Hearing none, he invited public testimony. Hearing none, he returned the discussion to the Board.

Board member Lewis commented that this is a good solution to meet the needs of the property owners. He stated support for the variance.

Board member Nehring noted that a covered front porch, as proposed, is useful and commended the design.

Chairman Pasquesi noted his agreement with the other Board members' comments.

Board member Lewis made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of a front yard setback variance to allow a roof to be constructed over the existing stoop, to be located no closer than 46 feet to the west (front) property line, consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board. He stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

The motion was seconded by Board member Nehring and was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

**4. Consideration of a request for approval of a variance from the rear yard setback to allow construction of an additional bay on the existing garage at 451 Beverly Place.  
Owner: Yvonne Gruby Revocable Trust (Yvonne and Martin Gruby, trustees)  
Representative: Adam Lyons, architect**

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Mr. Lyons noted the petitioners are out of town. He described the request for a rear yard setback variance to allow a one car garage addition. He stated that the lot is on the southeast corner of Westleigh Road and Beverly Place and noted that the home is well screened from Westleigh Road and is prominent on Beverly Place. He noted that the house is setback from the Beverly Place and complies with the required setback. He noted the logical siting for an additional garage bay, at the south end of the existing house, adjacent to the existing attached garage. He noted that the petitioners looked at alternative locations however, none worked as well as the option presented. He noted, that if Beverly Place was considered the front yard from a Zoning Code perspective, the south property line would have been a side yard, requiring only a 12 foot setback. He stated that immediately to the south of the proposed additional garage bay, on the neighboring property, there is a driveway and garage, adding that the private areas of the neighboring home are located further away. He noted that the addition is designed to match the existing architecture of the house. He noted

that after discussions, the neighbors to the south and the west appeared to be in support of the project.

Ms. Friedrich described the request for approval of a rear yard setback variance to allow an addition of a third bay to the existing two car garage. She noted that the Zoning Code defines the front yard of the property as the portion of the property that has the narrowest street frontage and in this case, the north side of the property, which fronts on Westleigh Road, is the front yard. She noted that the siting of the existing garage at the south end of the house limits the ability to expand the garage in a logical manner, without encroaching into the rear yard setback. She noted that a driveway to a lot-in-depth parcel to the east is located along the south property line creating an alley type character which minimizes the impact of the proposed new garage bay on any neighboring homes or outdoor living areas. She noted that the proposed garage is relatively well screened from neighbors to the south and east, and is "tucked in" to a natural area adjacent to the existing garage. She noted the findings in fact in the staff report in support of the project and a letter from a neighbor, also in support of the project in the Board's packet. She noted that another letter in support of the project was just received from a neighbor and was provided to the Board.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Lyons stated that one arborvitae will be removed, the one closest to the addition, but the line of arborvitae, closer to the property line, will remain.

In response to questions from Board member Lewis, Mr. Lyons described the other alternatives that were explored with the property owners including pulling the garage forward, pushing it backwards and ultimately, the current plan was determined to be the best option. He noted this design is most compatible with the massing, architectural style and layout of the residence and the existing garage. He noted that a tandem garage was also considered but rejected because it is less functional than the current proposal.

In response to questions from Board member Sieman, Mr. Lyons stated that the required interior side yard setback is 12 feet in the R-2 zoning district.

In response to questions from Board member Sieman, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that the interior side of the property at 465 Beverly Place is adjacent to the rear yard of the property in this petition.

Chairman Pasquesi invited public testimony. Hearing none, he returned the discussion to the Board.

Board member Novit stated support for the project noting that the proposed siting is logical.

Board member Nehring noted her support and commented that it is likely that the additional bay will look like it has always been there.

Board member Sieman stated his support for the project.

Board member Lewis stated his support for the project.

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

Board member Lewis made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of a rear yard variance to allow a single story, additional garage bay to be constructed no closer than 17'3" to the rear (south) property line as reflected on the plans presented to the Board. He stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

The motion was seconded by Board member Novit and was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

**5. Consideration of a request for approval of variances from the side yard setbacks to allow construction of a rear addition at 140 E. Westminster.**

**Owners: Kevin and Anne Warnke**

**Representative: Ruggles Architecture**

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Mr. Ruggles described the neighborhood and the existing house, noting the small, narrow lots, alleys and the proximity to the Central Business District. He noted that the property is zoned R-2 but does not conform to the requirements of that district. He described the proposed project noting that it includes a modest rear addition and reconfiguration of the deck and porch to the east side of the property. He noted that the dimensions reflected on the plans do not include the 12" eave overhang which is proposed to match the existing house. He noted that this lot and the construction of the house predates the Zoning Code. He noted that the addition steps in from the wall of the existing residence on the west side and matches the existing encroachment of the house on the east side of the property. He described the owners' commitment to the house and the intent to replace the foundation to stabilize the residence for the long term. He stated that the owners want to continue to invest in the house and neighborhood. He noted that the architectural style of the proposed addition is consistent with the house.

Ms. Friedrich noted this request is for approval of interior side setback variances, from both the east and west property lines to allow a small rear addition, elevated deck and relocation of the exterior basement access stair. She noted that the lot does not meet the minimum lot size and width requirements for the R-2 zoning district. She added that many lots along this block of Westminster are significantly narrower than the current minimum lot width requirement due to subdivision of the area and creation of the lots long before current zoning requirements were in place. She noted that this home was built in 1898 and the owners have cared for this historic home for many years. She stated that the owners have found that the foundation is failing despite repair work that was completed by a previous owner and as it became apparent that to preserve the house for the long term, an extensive foundation replacement project is necessary. She noted that the petitioners realized that because extensive excavation will be required as part of that project, there is an opportunity to make modest improvements to the 1898 home. She noted that the proposed modifications include a minor expansion of the kitchen to improve functionality and comfort which will make the home attractive to future buyers. She noted that the addition steps in from the outer edge of the

existing deck on the west side of the property and steps in from the west wall of the house. She noted that the reconfigured outdoor living space is moved east, away from the west property line, and is more centered on the property. She noted that on the east side, the proposed new covered entry and deck generally maintain the same distance from the property line as the existing house at the closest point. She noted there are findings of fact in support of variances for the modest addition and related improvements in the staff report. She noted that two letters were provided to the Board, one in support of the project and one, from the adjacent neighbor to the west, which raises questions about the appropriateness of granting the requested variances.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Ruggles described the existing and proposed basement access.

In response to questions from Board member Plonsker, Mr. Ruggles agreed to work with City staff on any drainage issues that need to be addressed.

In response to questions from Board member Nehring, Mr. Ruggles noted that the down spouts on the house are not currently tied into the storm sewer adding that if directed to do so by the City Engineer, the downspouts will be connected.

In response to questions from Board member Moorhead, Ms. Friedrich explained that the distance from the property line is measured from the furthest extent of the house, in the case, edge of the gutters. She noted that the gutters encroach an additional 12" further than the dimension between the house and the west property line as shown on the site plan. Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Pasquesi invited public testimony.

Ms. Warnke introduced herself and noted that they purchased the Dickinson home in 1996. She noted the architectural details on the Dickinson House adding that Mr. Dickinson was a carpenter working at Lake Forest College and Ms. Dickinson worked at a house on Mayflower Road. She noted that in work completed to date, the original exterior materials were restored. She noted that they continued to update the systems in the house and have honored the carpenter who lived there with careful restoration. She noted that it has been a pleasure to live in the house. She noted the great investment planned for the house explaining that she and her husband feel that they are only caretakers because the house belongs to the community because it has been around for so long.

Hearing no further requests to speak from the public, Chairman Pasquesi returned the discussion to the Board.

Board member Nehring complimented the proposed plan noting that it will allow the house to be more functional and usable. She stated support for the design and the fact that the addition is stepped in from the existing wall. She stated that the staking shows that the house will not overtake the rear yard.

In response to questions from Board member Lewis, Ms. Friedrich stated that the project does not require Building Review Board consideration because the rear addition that is proposed is small and not highly visible from off of the property.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Ruggles explained that the award received from the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation is simply an award for preservation, not a tax credit.

Chairman Pasquesi observed that if the house was demolished, setback variances would be necessary for any new residence proposed for the lot. He noted complimented the thoughtful design noting that the project meets the goals of the property owner without additional impact on the neighboring property to the west.

Board member Sieman stated support for the petition commenting that the project is well thought out. He noted there have been other variances in the neighborhood. He questioned if this area is zoned correctly and suggested that is a larger issue for consideration in the future. He stated support for the variances as requested and encouraged others in the neighborhood to work with staff and seek variances to accomplish reasonable upgrades to their homes.

At the request of Chairman Pasquesi, Ms. Friedrich distributed a map highlighting other variances granted in the area as background information.

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

Board member Nehring made a motion to recommend approval to the City Council of variances from the side yard setback requirements, east and west sides, to allow a small rear addition to be constructed no closer than 3'3" to the west property line and no closer than 8' to the east property line, consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board. She stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

The motion was seconded by Board member Moorhead and was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

**6. Consideration of a request for approval of variances from the front, corner side and interior side yard setbacks to allow construction of additions at 139 E. Woodland Road.  
Owner: S. Murphy and G. Murphy IV  
Contract Purchasers: Jeff and Stacy Collins  
Representative: Jeff Letzter, project manager**

Chairman Pasquesi introduced the agenda item and asked the Board for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner and swore in all those intending to speak.

Mr. Letzter described the project and explained that Summit Avenue is the front yard and the Woodland Road is the corner side yard for the lot. He noted that the existing house encroaches into the setback on the south, the side yard and noted that the proposed addition has a similar encroachment. He noted that there is only a small buildable area on the lot due to the unusual shape of the parcel. He noted that the goal was to locate as much of the addition as possible in the buildable area. He noted the extended eave overhang and gutter on the addition, to match the existing house, which results in a further encroachment into the interior side yard setback than exists today. He described the proposed additions to

the west and the east. He noted that the west dormer will be enlarged and will not result in a change to the footprint of the house. He noted that in response to early staff comments, the proposed addition was moved north, to create less of an impact to the neighbor. He noted the intent to keep the existing character of the house.

Ms. Friedrich noted that most of the existing residence is located within the corner side yard setback due to the irregular configuration of the lot as originally established. She noted that variances are necessary in order to make virtually any modifications to the home. She noted that many lots along Woodland Road in this area are narrower than the current minimum lot width requirements for the R-1 Zoning District due to the creation of the lots prior to the adoption of current requirements. She noted that the addition proposed at the northeast corner of the house will encroach no further than 31'8" into the 40 foot corner side yard (north) setback. She noted that the proposed enlarged dormer at the northwest corner of the house will not encroach into the setback further than the existing condition. She noted that the second story addition, over the existing single story element, at the southeast corner of the house will be 5'1" from the south property line at the closest point, no closer than the existing condition. She noted that the footprint of the new two story addition will not encroach into the setback however, in order to allow an existing interior stairway to function, the overhang and gutter on the new two-story element will encroach 10" into the 10-foot interior side yard (south) setback, at the closest point.

In response to questions from Board member Lewis, Mr. Letzter described the existing interior staircase and reviewed the applicable Code requirements explaining why the functional changes, which result in the further encroachment in the setback along the south property line, are necessary.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Mr. Letzter confirmed that the dormer proposed on the west elevation, over the existing second floor, will replace the existing dormer with an enlarged dormer.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that the house, with the proposed additions, complies with the square footage limitations.

In response to Board member Lewis, Mr. Letzter noted that the existing windows in the master bath will remain. He noted there are existing sloped ceilings that will be preserved along with the existing roof and windows.

In response to questions from Board member Novit, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that no correspondence was received on this petition.

In response to questions from Chairman Pasquesi, Mr. Letzter confirmed the house, with the proposed additions will be 1710 square feet.

Hearing no further questions from the Board, Chairman Pasquesi invited public testimony. Hearing none, he returned the discussion to the Board.

Board member Nehring complimented the design and the creativity to use the space available on the property.

Board member Plonsker noted that approving a project like this encourages young families to move into town adding that investing in this property unique property is a good decision.

Board member Lewis noted the very limited buildable area and stated his agreement with Board member Plonsker's comments. He complimented the unique solution presented to the Board.

Board member Novit noted that this is an architecturally responsible project and agreed with Board member Plonsker's and Lewis' comments.

Board member Sieman noted the unique lot shape and the efforts to preserve the character of the house and the neighborhood through the modifications as proposed.

Chairman Pasquesi agreed with the Board member's comments and stated support of the project.

Board member Moorhead acknowledged the effort to design additions within the existing setbacks, to the extent possible.

In response to a question from Board member Sieman, Ms. Friedrich confirmed that the Building Review Board will consider the design aspects of the project.

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

Board member Nehring made a motion to recommend approval of variances to the City Council to allow additions and modifications to the existing residence to be constructed no closer than 11'10" to the north property line at the enlarged dormer, no closer than 31'8" into the north property line at the 2 story addition, no closer than 5'1" to the south property line at the second story addition, and no closer than 9'2" to the south property line at the 2 story addition, all consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board. She stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report and noted that the Board's discussion is also incorporated into the findings.

The motion was seconded by Board member Moorhead and was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

#### **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, January 28, 2019.

The Board suggested that future consideration be given to establishing zoning setback overlays in areas where there is a consistent deviation from the current Code requirements among a large number of lots.



Ms. Czerniak noted that this issue will be an appropriate topic for discussion during the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle E. Friedrich  
Planning Technician