

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 18, 2021**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Development Review Board was held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 18, 2021 in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

I. Call to order

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Members Crosby, Davis, McCole, Schubkegel, Yanaki, Chairman Martin
Absent: Member Fishman
Also Present: Acting Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner, Village Attorney Caitlyn Culbertson

II. Minutes of the October 21, 2021 Development Review Board meeting

A MOTION was made by Member McCole and SECONDED by Member Davis to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2021 Development Review Board Meeting.

Ayes: Members Davis, McCole, Yanaki, Chairman Martin
Nays: None
Present: Members Crosby, Schubkegel
Motion Passed.

III. Application #22-008: Application for Planned Development by the River Forest Public Library to relocate an HVAC unit on the north exterior of the Library building that will be enclosed by a masonry wall to utilize interior space for programs.

Administrator Scheiner read the admonition and swore in all attendees wishing to speak at both public hearings.

Emily Compton-Dzak introduced herself as the director of the River Forest Public Library. She explained that the Library is requesting approval to install an 8x13 foot air handler unit, a concrete path and space exterior to the north side of the Library building. The Library would also like to place a 16x25 foot, 9-foot-tall masonry enclosure around it and a 1' wide x 42" deep footer.

She explained that the Library would like to pursue this upgrade because the Library's air handler is currently housed in an interior mechanical room. The Library's ultimate goal is to reclaim the 396 sq. ft. mechanical room and remodel it into a multipurpose room for programs, community meetings, and gathering space. The Library currently only has one

meeting room which limits the Library's ability to offer multiple programs at one time. This also causes Library staff to routinely deny reservation requests because the room is always in use.

Director Compton-Dzak further described Phase One of the project, which involves replacing the air handler and constructing the masonry enclosure, and raising the sunken floor as well as ceiling and drywall, and plumbing. Phase Two is to complete the interior room remodel and install a family restroom. She noted that the conversion of the interior space triggers the requirement for additional parking spaces, but that the parking lots shared with Roosevelt Middle School and the public parks provide particular challenges in creating additional parking spaces. Therefore, she requested that consideration be given to not require this additional parking.

Director Compton-Dzak explained that the land occupied by the Library building is leased from the River Forest Park District and the Library has had several meetings with the Park District Board of Commissioners regarding the project. In a memorandum of understanding, the Park District has agreed to allow the Library to act as the interested agent throughout the zoning approval process and the project itself allowing the Library to submit the application, manage meetings and construction, and ultimately maintain the space. The Park District has agreed to renew the Library's lease regardless of whether the project is approved. The new lease would account for the 260 sq. ft. of additional space needed for the project.

Director Compton-Dzak further described the construction of the enclosure. A metal gate will be added to the left side of the enclosure, to provide for access to the air handler unit. She noted that the decibel level of the unit was estimated to be equivalent to the volume of a household refrigerator. She said that the Library hopes to begin construction in January 2022 and complete the project within a few months.

John Houseal, the Village's planning consultant, provided a summary of his review of the application. He noted that the application is consistent with the Village's comprehensive plan. The nature, intensity, and characterization of the Library's use does not change with this application. Collectively, the Library, Park District, and Roosevelt Middle School function as a sort of civic center for the Village. The land use designation of the subject property is public/semi-public, which does not change with this project. The first objective of the application is to continue the high quality services offered by the community. The second objective is to identify potential issues and resolve them.

Houseal stated that there is no zoning relief required with regard to bulk standards or setbacks, as applied to the project. The nearby homes are a great distance from the air unit. Libraries are required to have one parking spot for every 200 ft. of public library space. Moving the internal air handling unit outside would result in approximately 400 square foot of existing space becoming public space, so the Library would need two additional parking spaces. The noise from the unit is nominal and would not negatively affect nearby residents or Library attendees. Trees will be replaced as required by Village Code, and location of the

trees will be determined at a later time. The addition will also not impact the nearby park. The only relief the Library needs is approval for site development for the two parking spaces.

Chairman Martin asked for clarification of the schedule of the management plan. Director Compton-Dzak clarified that they are hoping to bid in January, then asked the architect Natalie Clemens to explain the schedule. Clemens confirmed the construction timeline. They will do an alternate bid of timing based on the needs of the Park District, Library, and current labor and material shortages. One of the bids is a spring start date ending before school ends, and a fall start date right after school begins until the end of the year. The Library will decide based on what is best given the labor and material shortages. A permit application for the project will be submitted in November.

Chairman Martin asked how they propose to protect the people playing in the park year-round during construction. Director Compton-Dzak and Clemens explained that the Library will have to coordinate very closely with Roosevelt Middle School and the Park District to minimize disruptions. Chairman Martin suggested that trucks may have to transport concrete before 7:30 am to avoid interference with school activities. He stated that construction will likely not complete by April and waiting to complete the project in the fall would only exacerbate the issue. Director Compton-Dzak said these stipulations can be added to the contract and that when this proposal was shared with the Park District and school, no concerns were raised other than the dates of construction.

Chairman Martin closed the public hearing.

Chairman Martin proposed certain conditions on approval of the project:

1. The addition must be built according to the proposed plans
2. The interior space must be used as the proposed public space
3. The addition must be subject to the lease finalization with the Park District
4. The Library must comply with the Village's landscape ordinance with regard to tree replacement
5. The construction should be based on some agreement with the School District to protect the use of the field, as well as spectators and children.

A MOTION was made by Member McCole and SECONDED by Member Fishman to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees that the planned development be approved subject to the conditions noted above.

Ayes: Members Davis, Fishman, McCole, Yanaki, Chairman Martin

Nays: None

Motion Passed.

IV. Application #22-005: Application for a Major Amendment to an Existing Planned Development to convert additional commercial space to an additional residential unit at 400 Ashland Avenue

John Schiess introduced himself as an architect, representing applicant 400 Ashland LLC, the entity that owns the subject property. He explained that some additions were made to their application, which has been awaiting a hearing until some changes could be made to it. Schiess explained that he is asking for a major amendment to an existing planned development with possibly site development allowances for the project. He noted that the building is classified by Cook County for tax purposes as a "2-12" mixed use building in terms of its property taxes. Therefore, this approval would not have an impact on the property taxes already being paid on the property. There is no density or exterior change proposed and the building height would not change. Some exterior windows will be modified. The new unit, which is a studio, will conform to the Village's affordability guidelines. There are five parking spaces on the property, which have been there since the original construction of the building.

Schiess noted that after consulting with Village staff, the proposed plan would require eight parking spaces, so an additional three off-site spaces must be added. Schiess said Byline Bank, a neighbor to the property, was the first and most obvious choice, but the bank was not interested in leasing parking spaces. Schiess also spoke with Fifth Third Bank and other neighboring property owners, but no formal lease has been signed. He noted that the property owner found three overnight spaces in Village-owned parking lots on a month-to-month basis. These spaces are still subject to a waiting list. Schiess stated that the applicant's proposal is that the Board will vote in approval of the project, subject to overnight or 24 hour spaces available in the future when the owner is awarded the spaces from the waiting list.

Administrator Scheiner said the addition of one affordable housing unit would bring the Village closer to its goal of at least 10% affordable housing units in River Forest. She explained that under the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeals Act, the current limit on rent that could be charged to be considered an affordable housing unit would be between \$800 and \$915 per month. With regard to parking, the Village does have 24-hour parking lots available to rent for \$120 per month. One space in the CVS lot on Thatcher and North Ave, the other is on Lake and Park. There are currently no spots available at the Keystone lot, which has a wait list of 15 vehicles ahead of the property owner. There are certain overnight spaces available but they are not available during the day time. The Village has a very limited number of 24-hour spots, but a great number of overnight spots.

John Houseal, the Village's planning consultant, provided a summary of his review of the application. He noted that when the plan was initially submitted, there were no proposals for off-site parking. The building differs from typical mixed-use buildings because it is one story. Surrounding the subject property are properties in the C-3 Zoning District which are multi-family. The adaptive reuse of the building is based on specific recommendations in the Village's Comprehensive Plan. The building does not require any site development allowances. No zoning relief is needed. As the applicant indicated, this proposal mainly concerns parking for the building and the proximity of the parking spaces. Typically, spaces must be 350' or less from the residence. There must be one parking space for every two proposed employees. Houseal opined that the number of parking spaces approved under the existing planned development should be increased from seven to eight to accommodate the additional residential unit. His recommendation is to preserve the existing five on-site

parking spaces and located three off-site and off-street parking spaces, totaling eight parking spaces.

Chairman Martin asked if anyone in the audience would like to address the Development Review Board.

Viktor Jakovljevic, the owner of 400 Ashland, introduced himself as resident of the Village. He explained that this proposal comes from his desire to assist one of his employees who is a single dad. He is willing to rent parking spaces that will automatically renew monthly for his employee.

Schiess noted that it was not until the application was being prepared that the owner realized the prior parking spot leases were not active.

A MOTION was made by Chairman Martin and SECONDED by Member McCole to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees that the proposed amendment to the planned development be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The renovations must be completed subject to the proposed plans
2. The owner must maintain three off-site 24-hour parking spaces available for the property within 300' of the property, and must certify the existence of leases/licenses for these spaces annually with the Village
3. The property must maintain one affordable housing unit, and must certify with the Village annually the existence of this unit
4. The property owner must comply with all regulations under Section 10-23-4 of the Village Code regarding dedication of school lands or payments of fees in lieu thereof, as applied to the subject property

Ayes: Members Davis, Fishman, McCole, Yanaki

Nays: Chairman Martin

Motion Passed.

V. Public Comment

None.

VI. Adjournment

Member McCole made a motion to adjourn, second by Member Davis.

Ayes: Members Davis, Fishman, McCole, Yanaki, Chairman Martin

Nays: None

Motion Passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Scheiner

Lisa Scheiner, Secretary

Frank R. Martin

Frank R. Martin
Chairman, Development Review Board

3/14/2022

Date