

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
March 21, 2019**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Development Review Board was held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2019 in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

Present: Members Fishman, O'Brien, Schubkegel, Chairman Martin

Absent: Members Crosby, Dombrowski, Kilbride

Also Present: Assistant Village Administrator Lisa Scheiner, Assistant Village Administrator, Building Official Clifford Radatz

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2018 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING**

A MOTION was made by Member Fishman and SECONDED by Member O'Brien to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2018 Development Review Board Meeting.

Ayes: Members Fishman, O'Brien, and Chairman Martin

Nays: None

Motion Passed.

**III. PRE-FILING MEETING AND CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR APPLICATION REQUIREMENT WAIVERS: Proposed Planned Development – 344 Lathrop Avenue**

Chairman Martin explained the purpose of the pre-filing conference for the property at 344 Lathrop. He noted that there is no application on file so there is no recommendation to make. He said if the applicant requests waivers for certain application requirements the Development Review Board will discuss them and vote on the request.

Secretary Radatz administered the admonition and swore in all parties wishing to speak.

John Schiess, JCS Architects (7706 Central, River Forest) stated he is a consultant appearing on behalf of the property owner (Carmela Properties, LLC), and Dr. Gina Piccioni who owns Carmela Properties, LLC and River Forest Dental Studio, which is located at 344 Lathrop Avenue. Dr. Piccioni introduced herself to the Development Review Board.

Mr. Schiess presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Development Review Board. He said the dental practice takes up a large portion of the property, which used to be home to a toy

designer. Dr. Piccioni bought the property with the intent to operate her dental practice there. Mr. Schiess said the hours of operation are Monday through Saturday with varying start and stop hours. He said there are a total of seven part time employees on staff but they do not all work at the same time and that there is a maximum of four employees at any time with the exception of shift change.

Mr. Schiess said the site is a little over 8,000 square feet and the building is 5,583 square feet. He displayed the floor plan for the building and noted that, of the four on-site parking spaces, which includes one ADA space, two would be used for the proposed apartment. Mr. Schiess explained that they are proposing to modify the floor plan of the building for the purpose of converting five offices and one large conference room inside the building to a 1,797 square foot two-bedroom apartment. He said the footprint of the building will not change, and he displayed and discussed the modified floor plan with the apartment that includes a two-car indoor parking garage. He said that, at this point, the apartment will be used exclusively by Dr. Piccioni as a place to stay after practice hours and would not be used as her primary residence. Mr. Schiess said the building is located at the southwest corner of Lathrop Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue. He described the surrounding properties and displayed photos of the building elevations. He displayed and reviewed the existing site plan and floor plan. He noted the location of the adjacent buildings relative to the property lines.

Mr. Schiess said they will attempt to show that this proposal is a less intense use of the building than what was there before with no entitlement action, meaning that in its current configuration with no permitting required all five office spaces could be used.

Mr. Schiess said the reclassification of the property from commercial to mixed-use would significantly reduce the property tax bill because the property would be assessed at 10% of its assessed value instead of at 25%. He said there is an economic component that is driving this request. Mr. Schiess recalled the planned development application at 400 Ashland Avenue that was approved and stated that the tax bill for that property was approximately \$50,000 before it was reclassified as a mixed-use property. He said Dr. Piccioni has a tax bill of \$51,088 and that an almost identical building where he has an office with similar building square footage and lot size down the street, has a tax bill of \$19,948. He said the smaller tax bill leads to a lower operating cost that makes it easier to find tenants, and that 344 Lathrop is at a disadvantage because of its tax bill. Mr. Schiess said that they are asking for the Development Review Board's help in leveling the playing field between the properties.

Mr. Schiess reviewed their request for a waiver of application requirements. He stated they are requesting a waiver of the drainage plan because they are not changing the footprint of the building and only adding two bathrooms. He said they are requesting a waiver of the requirement for a professional economic analysis because the impact of the development is negligible. Mr. Schiess said they are requesting a waiver of the requirement for a traffic study because the traffic impact is less intense than what was there previously and the parking demands for the apartment are typically outside the hours of the demand for the dental practice. He said they are also requesting a waiver of the landscape plan requirement since there are no changes to the entrances and landscaping that is there now.