

DRAFT

MINUTES OF
THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
DESIGN COMMISSION
VIRTUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

Chair Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: John Fitzgerald, Chair
Kirsten Kingsley
Scott Seyer

Members Absent: Ted Eckhardt
Jonathan Kubow

Also Present: Gerald Becker, FastSigns for *The Goddard School*
Erin Witt for *The Goddard School*
Steve Hautzinger, Staff Liaison

Chair Fitzgerald read the following statement as requested by the Village: I find that the public health concerns related to the coronavirus pandemic render in-person attendance at the regular meeting location not feasible.

Chair Fitzgerald stated that with only 3 commissioners in attendance tonight, a positive vote was needed from all three commissioners for a project to be approved. He also asked the petitioners and anyone speaking from the public, to state their name before speaking. **Mr. Hautzinger** added instructions for muting when not speaking and how to raise hand when someone wants to speak.

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 25, 2020

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SEYER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2020. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 1. SIGN VARIATION REVIEW**DC#20-053 – The Goddard School – 1316 N. Arlington Heights Rd.**

Gerald Becker, representing *FastSigns*, and Erin Witt, Site Development Manager for *The Goddard School*, were present on behalf of the project.

Mr. Hautzinger presented Staff comments. The Goddard School is currently completing an extensive renovation of an existing building to create a new day care facility. This project received approval as a Land Use Variation to allow a day care facility in an O-T Office Transitional Zoning District, where typically only office uses are allowed. Since O-T Zoning Districts are intended to be light commercial uses adjacent to Residential Zoning Districts, signage is limited. Chapter 30 sign code only allows one freestanding monument sign per development, and walls signs are prohibited.

The petitioner is requesting the following variation:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-202, to allow three wall signs totaling 47.4 sf, where wall signs are not allowed in the O-T Zoning District.

The main wall Sign #1 indicates the name of the business and is proposed to be located on the front (east) elevation facing Arlington Heights Road. A second small round logo, Sign #2, is proposed on the front elevation, and the third wall Sign#3, is proposed to be located above the main building entrance, which is located at the southwest corner of the building. In addition to the wall signs, one code-compliant ground sign has been approved facing Arlington Heights Road.

The petitioner submitted a letter addressing the sign variation criteria, stating that the primary need for the wall signs is to identify the business, and to identify the location of the main entrance that is towards the rear of the building. The petitioner states that the signs will not be illuminated, so there will be no impact on the adjacent residences. The design of the signs is based on corporate guidelines, and they feel there will be no competitive advantage over the neighboring Kinder Care day care, which has a similar wall sign and ground sign.

With regards to Staff comments, Staff agrees that some wall signage is necessary to identify the business. If this business was located in a commercial zoning district, they would be allowed one wall sign facing Arlington Heights Road, but the two additional wall signs would not be allowed. However, Staff does not object to the proposed additional wall sign located above the main entrance, which will help with wayfinding on the site. In regards to the third small logo wall sign on the front of the building, it is located above a classroom exit door, so Staff does not understand the need for, or purpose of this sign, and recommends it be omitted. Overall, the signs are nicely designed, and Staff agrees that since the proposed wall signs are not illuminated, there will be no negative impact on the adjacent residences.

Staff recommends that the Design Commission recommend **denial** to the Village Board for the following sign variation for *The Goddard School* at 1316 N. Arlington Heights Road:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-202, to allow three wall signs totaling 47.4 sf, where wall signs are not allowed in the O-T Zoning District.

Staff recommends that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board for the following sign variation for *The Goddard School* at 1316 N. Arlington Heights Road:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-202, to allow **two** wall signs (signs #1 & 3) totaling 45.1 sf, where wall signs are not allowed in the O-T Zoning District.

Mr. Becker said that the 3 wall signs being proposed are all part of the branding and identification of The Goddard School. The signs are all the same HDU material and are proportional to the specs that The Goddard School has created in terms of identifying the building and the logo. Ms. Witt said that their branding is trademarked to include both the logo and the name of the school in the same horizontal line, and since this is a prototype building, they want to have their branding as close to the road as possible. Since it is not feasible to have both the logo and school name where Sign #2 is being located, just the logo is being proposed there to give extra branding to the school.

Chair Fitzgerald asked if there was any public comment on the project at this time, and **Mr. Hautzinger** said there was none.

The commissioners summarized their comments. **Commissioner Kingsley** said that the signs being proposed are pleasant and necessary, especially Signs #1 and #3, and she had no issue with the variations being requested for those signs. She also appreciated that Sign #1 is the larger of these two signs, which **Mr. Becker** confirmed. **Commissioner Kingsley** had concerns with Sign #2, the small logo wall sign, because it did not indicate an entrance, and she was inclined to not support a variation for it. She added that the code compliant monument sign being proposed looks nice.

Commissioner Seyer agreed with Commissioner Kingsley's comments about Signs #1 and #3, which include the name of the school. He felt these two signs are appropriate and necessary, and he liked the way they fit on the two facades and that they will not be illuminated. He was in support of the variations for these 2 signs; however, he had concerns about Sign #2, the round logo wall sign. He did not understand the purpose of this sign and asked for clarification. He wanted to work with the petitioner on their signage, while recognizing issues with precedence for having more than 1 or 2 sign variations on a particular project.

Chair Fitzgerald agreed with the comments made by the other commissioners. He liked Sign #1 at the north end on the front (east) elevation, Sign #3 over the main entrance on the south elevation, and the monument ground sign being proposed. He was not in favor of Sign #2, which is the logo wall sign, because it looked stuck on the building, it was not needed, and it did not indicate a specific entrance.

Commissioner Seyer said that it appears as though all 3 commissioners are fairly unanimous in their lack of support for Sign #2, the logo wall sign being proposed at the south end of the east elevation. He asked the petitioner how important it was to have this sign. **Ms. Witt** pointed out the blue playground area located somewhat in front of the wall sign at the north end of the east elevation, and said that they were looking at the logo wall sign as an unobstructed view of signage on the front elevation, in case the playground structure was obstructing the other wall signage. She completely understood the commissioners' comments about the logo wall sign, which they would love to have if possible.

Chair Fitzgerald said that because of how nice the monument sign is, he wanted to keep with his original support of the variations for Signs #1 and #3 only. **Commissioner Kingsley** asked to see the site plan, and said that while she understood the petitioner's comments about the close proximity of the wall sign at the front entry and the adjacent playground structure, she felt that 2 wall signs would be adequate for the building, especially with the monument sign. She was comfortable in supporting variations for Signs #1 and #3 only.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SEYER, TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, DENIAL OF THE FOLLOWING SIGN VARIATION REQUEST FOR *THE GODDARD SCHOOL* LOCATED AT 1316 N. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS ROAD:

1. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-202, TO ALLOW THREE WALL SIGNS TOTALING 47.4 SF, WHERE WALL SIGNS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE O-T DISTRICT.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SEYER, TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING SIGN VARIATION REQUEST FOR *THE GODDARD SCHOOL* LOCATED AT 1316 N. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS ROAD:

1. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-202, TO ALLOW TWO WALL SIGNS, (SIGNS #1 & 3), TOTALING 45.1 SF, WHERE WALL SIGNS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE O-T DISTRICT.

THIS RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON THE PLANS RECEIVED 8/11/20, FEDERAL, STATE, AND VILLAGE CODES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES, THE ISSUANCE OF ALL REQUIRED PERMITS, AND THE FOLLOWING:

1. THIS REVIEW DEALS WITH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED TO BE AN APPROVAL OF, OR TO HAVE ANY OTHER IMPACT ON, NOR REPRESENT ANY TACIT APPROVAL OR SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED LAND USE OR ANY OTHER ZONING AND/OR LAND USE ISSUES OR DECISIONS THAT STEM FROM ZONING, BUILDING, SIGNAGE OR ANY OTHER REVIEWS. IN ADDITION TO THE NORMAL TECHNICAL REVIEW, PERMIT DRAWINGS WILL BE REVIEWED FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE DESIGN COMMISSION AND ANY OTHER COMMISSION OR BOARD APPROVAL CONDITIONS. IT IS THE PETITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INCORPORATE ALL REQUIREMENTS LISTED ON THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS INTO THE PERMIT DRAWINGS, AND TO ENSURE THAT BUILDING PERMIT PLANS AND SIGN PERMIT PLANS COMPLY WITH ALL ZONING CODE, BUILDING CODE AND SIGN CODE REQUIREMENTS.

SEYER, AYE; KINGSLEY, AYE; FITZGERALD, AYE.
ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hautzinger explained to the petitioner that the Design Commission is a recommending body to the Village Board for all sign variations, and he will coordinate with the petitioner to schedule the review with the Village Board.

ITEM 2. GENERAL MEETING

Mr. Hautzinger gave an update on this year's Alan F. Bombick Award. The recipients of the award have been selected and notified, and he is currently working on getting the plaques ordered; however, presentation of the award has not yet been determined. There is hope to host the meeting in person, so we are waiting for November to see when in-person meetings might possibly resume.

Commissioner Kingsley wanted to talk about the inspection process of homes under construction in the Village. She recently became aware of a home under construction that was not following the design drawings that were approved by this commission which involved the setback of dormers. Issues like this should be caught during inspection, but since the inspection is done late in the building process, she wondered what will happen when issues like this are found when the building is so far along in construction. She was unsure how often this actually happens, but she felt this topic should be discussed because she took issue with working hard on this commission if it is difficult to enforce.

Chair Fitzgerald agreed that this is an important issue, and he recalled years ago when a project had to come back to the Design Commission for approval of changes that were made in the field.

Mr. Hautzinger gave background on the specific project Commissioner Kingsley was talking about, and explained that this issue was reported to the Building Department for enforcement. Revised construction plans were then submitted to reflect the field change, and after reviewing it with Commissioners Kingsley, Staff approved the change. However, he acknowledged Kirsten's concerns about avoiding this same issue from happening again in the future.

Mr. Hautzinger felt that this was somewhat of an isolated situation. He explained the process that after Design Commission or Staff administrative design approval, Staff then reviews the building permit plans for compliance with the approved design plans as well as confirming that all required design revisions are incorporated into the permit plans. Plans are then required to be followed in the field, and inspectors review the construction for compliance.

Chair Fitzgerald stated that the approved look of each project should occur unless it is decided to leave it open ended for Staff to decide before a permit is issued. In this particular case, he was glad to hear that it had to come back to Staff for approval, and he had faith in Staff's approval that the change that was made was still acceptable and does not look ridiculous. He hoped that if it looked really bad, then they would either be required to change it or brought back to the Design Commission for approval.

Commissioner Kingsley reiterated her concern that because the inspections happen so late in the building process, it can become impractical to make corrections to the construction. She acknowledged that the timing of the inspections is not going to change, but she wanted there to be some teeth in the process to enforce the Design Commission's requirements.

Mr. Hautzinger reiterated that he felt this was somewhat of an isolated situation, and it is not a problem that comes up often at all. Sometimes things can happen, but in his perception, this has not been a recurring problem. He reiterated that Staff works very thoroughly on each project to enforce the Design Commission's requirements. He does not personally inspect each project during construction, but for those projects that are observed, his observations are that the approved plans are being followed in the finished construction.

Commissioner Kingsley asked Staff to let the Design Commission know if this happens again, but she just wanted to bring this up because it highlights the potential that it can happen. She thanked everyone for discussing this matter.

Mr. Hautzinger encouraged the Design Commissioners to report these matters to Staff if they ever observe them. He reiterated that unapproved changes in the field can be brought back to the Design Commission for review, and he assured the Design Commissioners that their hard work and attention to detail is not getting lost in the process.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SEYER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:10 PM.

KINGSLEY, AYE; SEYER, AYE; FITZGERALD, AYE.
ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

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