

## STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT RE-REVIEW

### PROJECT INFORMATION:

**Project Name:** Guidepost Montessori  
**Project Address:** 1000 W. Northwest Highway  
**Prepared By:** Steve Hautzinger

**Date Prepared:** February 3, 2022  
**Date Revised:** February 16, 2022

### PETITION INFORMATION:

**DC Number:** 21-079  
**Petitioner Name:** Diane Menza  
**Petitioner Address:** LFI Real Estate  
9440 Enterprise Dr.  
Mokena, IL 60448  
**Meeting Date:** February 8, 2022  
**Re-Review Meeting Date:** February 22, 2022

### Requested Action(s):

Approval of the proposed architectural design for exterior modifications and an addition to an existing vacant commercial building for a new day care/private school.

### Design Commission Responsibility for Projects Being Reviewed by Plan Commission:

The subject design is being forwarded to the Design Commission for review pursuant to Chapter 6 of the Municipal Code.

This project requires Plan Commission review and Village Board approval for a Special Use and Land Use Variation to allow a day care/private school. Because this project requires Plan Commission review, the role of the Design Commission is limited. The Design Commission's responsibility is as outlined in Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code, Section 14.2-1, which states:

*"For developments where a public hearing is necessary before the Plan Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals, the design review process should, if feasible, be completed by the time of the public hearing. Development proposals requiring rezoning, PUD or other Plan Commission approvals, shall be reviewed by the Design Commission **for building and signage only.**"*

### Summary:

The subject property is approximately 46,706 square feet (1.07 acres) and was most recently occupied by Windy City RC, a remote control car business, but has sat vacant for the last several years. The existing building is approximately 12,232 square feet and is located in the southeast corner of the property. The petitioner is proposing to renovate the existing building for a new daycare/private school.

### February 8, 2022 Design Commission Meeting:

This project was reviewed by the Design Commission on February 8, 2022. A summary of the primary changes to the building exterior that were proposed at that time are as follows:

- New black color asphalt shingles on the existing mansard roof.
- New charcoal color single ply roofing on the existing bow truss roof.
- New "Essential Gray" paint on all existing exterior concrete block walls.
- Replace the existing storefront windows with new clear anodized storefronts including new exterior doors.
- Replace the existing glass block windows on the east elevation with new larger clear anodized storefronts.
- New clear anodized storefront entry vestibule addition
- New 1,156 sf painted concrete block building addition along the west wall

Staff reported that the proposed exterior improvements were minimal, and additional design development was encouraged to enhance the design. The Design Commission agreed that additional design development was required, and the project was CONTINUED for re-review. A summary of the primary issues and feedback from the Design Commission are as follows:

- The proposed design felt like a warehouse instead of a fun place for children.

- The building looks very dark and uninviting. The overall color scheme requires more study.
- The main entrance needs further design development to be more prominent.
- The thin columns supporting the mansard roof need enhancement.
- Consider a lighter more residential roofing color for the mansard shingles, such as "Weathered Wood".
- Consider painting the existing dark brick, which could completely refresh the appearance of the building.

**Project Update:**

In response to the Design Commission's comments on February 8, the petitioner has made the following changes to the design:

- The mansard roof shingle color has been changed from Charcoal to Weathered Wood.
- The existing dark brown brick on the front of the building will be painted in a dark gray color.
- Fiber cement column covers have been added to the mansard roof support columns.
- The EIFS wall above the entry vestibule was slightly enlarged to create a small overhang above the doors.

**Staff Comments:**

Overall, the response to the Design Commission's comments is minimal, and further design development is still required. The new color scheme is an improvement, but it is still dull and uninviting. The dark gray paint color on the existing dark brown brick does very little to brighten up the building. The entry canopy design is weak and understated.

Staff researched other Guidepost Montessori facilities and found numerous examples of bright and welcoming designs. Taking inspiration from some of those designs, Staff recommends the following:

- Select a new lighter and brighter paint color, such as a light creamy tan color, to be used on all of the existing and new CMU and brick exterior walls.
- Change the color of the fabric awnings from Charcoal to light blue, to match Guidepost Montessori's brand.
- Add light blue fabric awnings above all of the windows on the east side of the building.
- Consider painting the entry canopy soffit and mansard roof soffits light blue to match the awnings.
- Extend the entrance canopy further towards the parking lot to create a more substantial covered entrance feature with support columns to match the front of the building.
- Use a contrasting color, such as medium gray, for the EIFS entrance canopy, column covers, trim, coping, gutters and downspouts.
- Lower the wall sign on the front elevation, and add decorative gooseneck lighting, as seen at many other Guidepost Montessori buildings.

Please refer to the "Staff Recommendations" exhibit in the packet for inspiration photos of other Guidepost Montessori facilities and illustrations of the recommended design revisions.

**Rooftop Mechanical Unit Screening:**

Multiple new rooftop mechanical units will be located on the west side of the existing roof. The units will be screened from view by the existing barrel roof on the east, the existing parapet walls on the south, and the parapet walls on the new addition.

**Signage:**

At this time, only conceptual signage has been provided, with one wall sign facing Northwest Highway and one canopy sign facing the parking area above the main entrance. All signs should be designed to comply with Chapter 30 Sign Code.

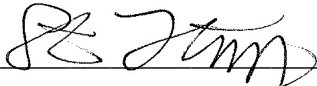
**Trash Dumpster Screening:**

A new small trash storage area is proposed to be built with vinyl fencing to match the new playground fencing around the north end of the site.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Design Commission **evaluate** the proposed architectural design for Guidepost Montessori located at 1000 W. Northwest Highway. This recommendation is based on the revised plan received 2/15/22, Design Commission recommendations, compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and Village codes regulations and policies, the issuance of all required permits, and the following:

1. Further design development is recommended to enhance the design.
2. A recommendation to select a new lighter and brighter paint color, such as a light creamy tan color, to be used on all of the existing and new CMU and brick exterior walls.
3. A recommendation to change the color of the fabric awnings from Charcoal to light blue, to match Guidepost Montessori's brand.
4. A recommendation to add light blue fabric awnings above all of the windows on the east side of the building.
5. A recommendation to consider painting the entry canopy soffit and mansard roof soffits light blue to match the awnings.
6. A recommendation to extend the entrance canopy further towards the parking lot to create a more substantial covered entrance feature with support columns to match the front of the building.
7. A recommendation to use a contrasting color, such as medium gray, for the EIFS entrance canopy, column covers, trim, coping, gutters and downspouts.
8. A recommendation to lower the wall sign on the front elevation, and add decorative gooseneck lighting, as seen at many other Guidepost Montessori buildings.
9. This review deals with architectural design only and should not be construed to be an approval of, or to have any other impact on, any other zoning and/or land use issues or decisions that stem from zoning, sign code or building 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 architect/owner/builder's responsibility to comply with the Design Commission approval and ensure that building permit plans and sign permit plans comply with all zoning code, building code and sign code requirements.



February 16, 2022

Steve Hautzinger AIA, Design Planner  
Department of Planning & Community Development

Cc: Charles Witherington Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Bill Enright, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development, Sam Hubbard, Development Planner, Petitioner, DC File 21-079