



Planning & Community Development Department

Date: 10/13/2016

Early Review – Metropolis Ballroom Expansion, 6 S. Vail St.

Please find attached information regarding a proposed expansion to the Metropolis Ballroom facility. Included is a written request for Early Review, dated October 3, 2016. Also included is a conceptual site plan, floor plan, and building elevations for the proposed expansion.

The Early Review Process, instituted by the Village Board in March 2001, allows developers, under certain circumstances consistent with the stated Guidelines for Early Review, to present projects to the Board in order to gauge the acceptability of development proposals. It should be understood that the results of the Village Board Early Review do not commit the Village to approving or denying a development proposal if and when the proposal moves through the review process. It is simply an opportunity for a developer to obtain a degree of preliminary feedback from the Board.

Project Background/Project Summary:

The subject property is occupied by the two-story former Hagenbring building and two story addition, located in downtown Arlington Heights. The property is part of the Metropolis PUD, which was approved by the Village in 1999 and amended in 2005. The Metropolis Ballroom operates out of the 2nd floor of this building in an approximately 9,000 square foot space which includes an outdoor terrace. The applicant is proposing the addition of 1,671 square feet of floor space and 273 square feet of exterior terrace space, all of which would be on the second floor of the building. The addition would be constructed above the existing loading dock at the south of the site and a portion of it would also cantilever over the approximately 7' wide public walkway in-between the loading dock and Vail Avenue garage to be 6 inches from the exterior of the garage. The extra floor area would allow for an expanded ballroom space. Details regarding the increased capacity along with other details will need to be provided. Detailed preliminary comments have preliminarily been provided to the petitioner. Also proposed is the replacement of the existing fabric canopy at the front entrance along Vail Avenue with a metal roofed canopy supported by concrete footings placed within the Village sidewalk. Finally, wall signage is proposed on the eastern face of the addition and several wall mounted banners are proposed along the second floor the building.

Proposed Ballroom Expansion:

The Metropolis Ballroom has proposed the aforementioned improvements to the facility, which would allow them to increase the size of their existing ballroom and outdoor terrace and market themselves to larger events that require capacity for additional occupants. Staff is generally supportive of the proposed expansion, which would facilitate that continued growth of a local business and continue to add vibrancy within the downtown area. The 2005 PUD amendment set maximum occupancy limits which need to be amended or removed to reflect not only current ballroom operations but also to allow for the expanded capacity.

Requested Actions:

1. Negotiation and approval of an Air Rights Agreement to cantilever over Village property.

2. License Agreement to construct the canopy entrance over the Vail Avenue public sidewalk.
3. PUD Amendment to:
 - a. Amend Ordinance 05-040 to increase the capacity of the Metropolis Ballroom
 - b. Amend the approved site plan to allow for the proposed expansion
 - c. Additional Variations as may be determined
4. Amend the Special Use to expand the ballroom
5. Design Commission Review/Signage Variation

Public Walkway/Cantilevered Encroachment – Air Right Agreement

As outlined above, a portion of the proposed building expansion would be cantilevered over the public walkway, which is in-between the loading area at the south of the subject property and the Vail Avenue garage. This cantilevered section would be built over Village owned property, which would require an Air Rights agreement as well as a maintenance and liability agreement to permit the cantilevered section to encroach above the public walkway. Although this cantilevered section would be stepped back so as to maintain 6'-8" between the edge of the terrace addition and the glass elevator shaft of the garage, as the cantilevered section extends west it would step outwards so as to be only 6" from the exterior of the 2nd floor garage parking deck.

The exterior side of the parking garage is constructed of large spandrels and staff has concerns that maintenance of these spandrels would be hampered if the proposed cantilever extends to within 6" of the exterior of the garage. Walker Restoration (parking structure specialist), with whom the Village contracts for maintenance on the garage, was consulted and has recommended a 4 foot minimum clearance between the exterior of the garage and the proposed cantilever in order to perform future maintenance on the garage structure (see attached). It may be noted that even with a 4 foot separation between the proposed cantilever and the garage, future maintenance of the garage would become more expensive as specialized equipment would be needed to perform any repair work with only 4 foot of clearance.

Additionally, the ground beneath the public alley contains, at a minimum, storm sewer and ComEd utility infrastructure. Further input from ComEd is needed regarding their ability to access and maintain the underground lines in this area given the proposed cantilever above. With regards to the Village storm sewer, the Public Works Department has indicated that the sewer be lined as a protective measure should the proposed cantilever be constructed. Future maintenance of this storm sewer would also become more expensive as specialty equipment would be needed to dig under the cantilever. Lastly, it must be determined if an actual public utility easement has been established within the public alley, which would require the applicant to receive formal approval from all parties with rights to the easement prior to cantilevering the building addition over the easement area.

Feedback from the Board regarding the impact on the Village property, walkway, and Air Rights Agreement is requested.

Public Sidewalk/Canopy Encroachment – License Agreement

The applicant has proposed a remodeled front canopy over the Village sidewalk along Vail Avenue. As this canopy would encroach onto the Village Right-of-Way, a maintenance and liability agreement with the Village would be required prior to allowing this encroachment. The existing canopy is fabric and non-structural. The proposed canopy would include brick columns with footings and foundations, a metal roof, lighting, and signage. The proposed canopy must be constructed so as not to adversely

impact pedestrian access along the sidewalk and vehicular access along Vail Avenue (car doors, plowing operations), and it must not interfere with any utilities within the sidewalk.

Feedback from the Board regarding the canopy encroachment is requested.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the Village Board evaluate the proposal and preliminary information available at this time and provide preliminary feedback regarding the proposed building expansion, specifically as it relates to the cantilevered section over the public walkway and the canopy over the Vail Avenue sidewalk.