

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
 OF THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS PLAN COMMISSION
 HELD AT VILLAGE HALL ON:

July 26, 2017

Project Title: Ivy Hotel
Address: 519 W. Algonquin Rd
Petitioner: James Cazares
 233 E Ontario
 Chicago, IL 60611

Requested Action:

- Land Use Variation to allow a 126 room hotel within the M-2 District

Variations Required:

- Variation from Section 11.4-4 to reduce the required on-site parking spaces from 275 spaces to 169 spaces.

Attendees: Enrique Castel – Project Architect
 Bruce Green, Plan Commissioner
 Terry Ennes, Plan Commissioner
 Lynn Jensen, Plan Commissioner
 Sam Hubbard, Development Planner

Project Summary:

The subject site is approximately 112,000 square feet (2.6 acres) and includes the existing European Crystal Banquet Hall. The banquet hall required a Land Use Variation which was approved in Ordinance 00-012. The current facility requires 171 parking spaces and there are 175 on site. The proposal is to add a 126 room 12-story hotel at the north end of the building, which would involve the demolition of the four smaller banquet rooms that are currently located in this area (the main banquet hall will not be altered). The hotel will include a coffee shop and spa on the ground floor and a 1,800 square foot bar/lounge on the 12th floor of the building. The number of parking spaces onsite would remain as it currently exists today, with the exception to the removal of three spaces located on the western side of the building.

Meeting Discussion:

Mr. Castel introduced the project and stated that Mr. James Cazares, the property owner, would like to remove a portion of the banquet hall and construct a 12-story hotel. Originally, they had planned a 10-story hotel, but were now proposing a 12-story hotel. He acknowledged that a key issue was that the proposed parking did not meet the Village requirements for parking, and so they were working on getting a variation to reduce the parking requirements.

Mr. Hubbard stated that the subject property was located within the M-2 Zoning District, where hotels were neither a permitted or special use, and therefore a land use variation was required. Additionally, a substantial parking variation was also required, specifically, 275 parking spaces were required and 169 parking spaces were proposed. The hotel was proposed at 12-stories in height and would provide a nice array of amenities, including a coffee shop, spa, and 1,800 square foot bar/lounge on the top floor.

Mr. Hubbard noted that this project appeared before the Plat and Subdivision committee in 2016, and has also appeared twice before the Village Board for an Early Review, once in 2016 and then again in early 2017. At each step in the approval process there have been concerns over parking, and the Staff Development Committee believes that parking is the key issue with this project. Based on a preliminary analysis, the project appears to conform to all setback, height, and bulk restrictions. A parking study was submitted along with the Plan Commission application, but further details and additional evidence is

needed to substantiate the viability of the proposed parking variation. Staff has provided the petitioner with a specific list of items needed within the study. To summarize some of the concerns, there have been events at the banquet facility where parking for the event has filled the parking lot and overflowed onto neighboring properties. With the addition of a 126 room hotel, and no extra parking, staff is concerned about a parking problem. The parking study will need to show substantial evidence that the parking will be viable as proposed, and the parking data has not shown this yet.

Mr. Hubbard said that the project appeared before the Design Commission on July 25th and received a favorable review, however, it was noted that the design was still somewhat preliminary and if further refinements were made to the plans, a re-appearance before the Design Commission may be required. In sum, staff was generally supportive of the proposed use, but needed to see the parking issues resolved if this project was to move forward with a favorable recommendation.

Commissioner Jensen asked why staff was showing that 169 parking spaces would be accommodated on site, but the plans showed that 172 spaces would be on-site.

Mr. Hubbard said that 169 spaces would be the likely outcome as additional handicap accessible stalls were needed to comply with current regulations.

Commissioner Jensen asked if there was a valet parking arrangement with Pace or with another nearby neighbor.

Mr. Castel said that the property owner was working to obtain documentation of an agreement with a neighboring property owner to accommodate for valet parking on the neighboring property.

Mr. Hubbard said that the petitioner had indicated they may be able to provide a formal agreement to park on a neighboring property, and that they currently had a "handshake" agreement to do so but nothing formal. He stated that parking likely overflows onto neighboring properties and has not yet created an issue as these properties are traditionally closed on weekends when the banquet hall is experiencing peak demand. However, unless there is a perpetual agreement with a neighboring property owner, it would not count toward the parking requirements as it could be terminated at any time. A previous version of this project indicated that parking may be accommodated on the Pace site across Algonquin Road, however, he had not seen any formal agreement outlining this.

Commissioner Jensen asked if there was a specific level of parking variation that staff would accept.

Mr. Hubbard replied that there was no magic number that staff was looking for, and that at this point staff was looking for further study of comparable hotels/banquet halls to determine what peak parking demand could be. Based on this information, staff would evaluate the proposed parking to determine if it was acceptable.

Commissioner Jensen asked if the petitioner had thought about reducing the number of rooms to meet the parking requirements.

Mr. Castel said that he did not know and would have to ask the petitioner.

Commissioner Jensen commented that at a certain point, reducing the number of rooms could make the hotel economically unfeasible, and so meeting the parking requirements could be a challenge.

Commissioner Ennes stated that the petitioner was not just asking for a parking variation, but was asking for a huge parking variation. He asked if the petitioner had considered a garage.

Mr. Castel said that he would be talking to the petitioner about that.

Commissioner Ennes said that if the petitioner came back with an agreement with a neighboring property owner to park cars on their property, he would want to see something permanent because he would want to avoid a situation where after several years that agreement could be cancelled and then there would be a significant parking problem. He said that he's

been to the banquet facility on multiple occasions, and when there is a large event, it was his experience that parking was always a problem. He said that he is aware that hotels can be 30% occupied at times, but during peak times they will be 100% occupied, and he would want to see the parking study take into consideration parking during peak times. He acknowledged that some guests at the hotel would be airline employees who would not park cars, however, he suspected that the amount of airline customers would be relatively small. He said that a garage may be a solution to solving a parking deficit.

Commissioner Green reiterated the importance of solving the parking issue and acknowledged that it would be a challenge to provide the required parking on site.

Commissioner Jensen asked about the property to the south of the subject property.

Mr. Hubbard said that this property was Brite-O-Matic, and that the petitioner had approached Brite-O-Matic to see if any arrangements could be made for shared parking or purchase of a portion of the Brite-O-Matic site that was currently vacant, but staff was not aware of any agreement being finalized.

Commissioner Jensen stated that it looked like there were 50 or so spaces in the Brite-O-Matic site that could be used by the petitioner on evenings or weekends.

Mr. Hubbard replied that this very well may be the case, however, if an arrangement with Brite-O-Matic was not perpetual, then there was no guarantee that a future owner of that site would honor that agreement.

Commissioner Ennes said that it did not appear that anyone had a problem with the use of the site as a hotel, and that the combination of a hotel and banquet hall would work well together, it was just the parking that was an issue. Long-term, he believes that the area is attractive given the Star Line Master Plan that was prepared a few years ago.

RECOMMENDATION

The Plat & Subdivision Committee was supportive of the hotel concept and advised that the petitioner should move forward but address the parking issues.

Bruce Green, Chair
PLAT & SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE
Sam Hubbard, Recorder