

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: 132 W. Northwest Highway
Project Address: 132 W. Northwest Highway
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

Date Prepared: December 19, 2017

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 17-155
Petitioner Name: Keith Ginnodo
Petitioner Address: Kingsley Ginnodo Architects
33 N. Hickory Avenue
Arlington Heights, IL 60004
Meeting Date: January 9, 2018

Requested Action(s):

1. Approval of the proposed architectural design for an addition to an existing commercial building in the (B-5) Downtown Zoning District.

ANALYSIS

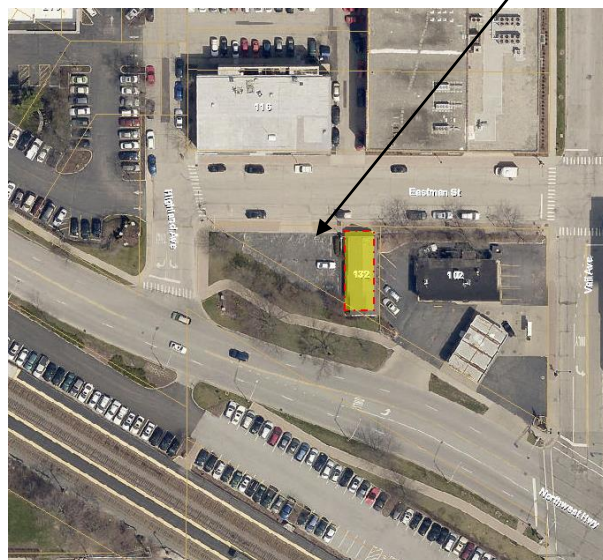
Summary:

The subject design is being forwarded to the Design Commission for review pursuant to Chapter 6 of the Municipal Code, specifically Section 6-501 (e)(1), which states that the Design Commission "shall review all Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Permit and Sign Permit applications for new construction and those improvements which affect the architectural design of the building, site improvements or signage to determine whether it meets with the standards, requirements and purposes of the Design Guidelines and Chapter 30, Sign Regulations."

The petitioner is seeking approval of the architectural design for a second floor addition and a single-story attached one-car garage addition to an existing single-story commercial building in the Downtown (B-5) Zoning District. The property is a triangular site on the north side of the railroad tracks, directly west of the Mobil gas station. The existing vacant building was previously used as an office, and it is proposed to be converted to a retail store. The second floor addition will be a single-family dwelling unit to create a live/work mixed-use building. The scope of the project includes modifications to the existing parking lot as well as new landscaping.

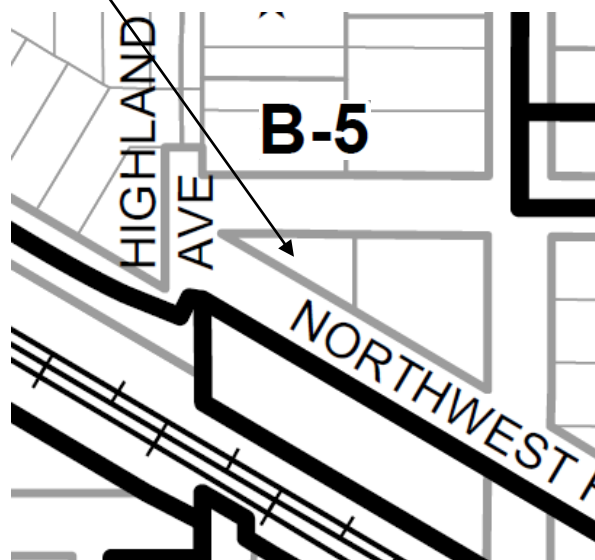
This project requires Plan Commission review and Village Board approval as a Planned Unit Development, as well as approval of setback variations.

Site:



Aerial of Property

Subject Property



Zoning Map of Property

Surrounding Land Uses:

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use	Comprehensive Plan
North	B-5, Downtown District	Office Building	Mixed Use
South	P-L, Public Land District	Metra Commuter Parking Lot	Government or Institutional
East	B-5, Downtown District	Mobil Gas Station	Mixed Use
West	B-5, Downtown District	Village Bank & Trust	Mixed Use

Architectural Design:

Style and Materials. The proposed design is a complete makeover of the existing single-story pitched roof building to create a new modern style building. The second floor addition is proposed to be clad with a dark gray, horizontal fiber-cement lap siding.

The Design Guidelines for the Central Business District state, *“the architecture of the upper façade gives the building a feeling of permanence; defines its architectural style; and relates it in a coordinated manner to neighboring buildings.”*

The Design Commission should evaluate the proposed modern style with the context of the surrounding buildings, and also evaluate the use of horizontal lap siding as the primary wall material. Consider whether a masonry façade would be more appropriate for a feeling of permanence and a better relationship to neighboring buildings.

East Elevation. The east elevation is the back of the building, but it will be highly visible from Northwest Highway and Vail Avenue. As proposed, the upper façade of the east wall is a blank wall of siding. The wall is approximately two feet from the east property line, and preliminary building code review concludes that window openings are not allowed where exterior walls are less than five feet from the property line.

The Design Guidelines state, *“Side and rear elevations which are visible from the street should be designed to present an attractive organized appearance.”*

It is recommended that the design of the east wall be enhanced for a more attractive appearance. Options for incorporating some windows should be explored such as stepping back sections of the wall or using fire rated glazing. In addition, consider adding vine cables (as shown on the west elevation) for architectural interest and to promote the growth of vines onto the upper façade.

Storefront. The proposed retail storefront faces Northwest Highway on the south and west walls of the building. As proposed, the retail storefront has an understated appearance and it does not stand out as a commercial space.

The Design Guidelines state, *“The design of the storefront can play a key role in creating visual interest and activity at street level by providing an inviting entrance and an attractive display of merchandise... The largest possible amount of window display area should be provided to attract customers...”*

It is recommended that the two existing punched opening windows on the west wall be changed to a full storefront in order to maximize the window display area for the retail space. Additionally, it is recommended that the southern balcony bay be omitted to provide an unobstructed view of the storefront. As an alternate, the size of the balcony could be reduced and cantilevered for a lighter appearance above the storefront.

Signs. There is no clear sign frieze provided for retail signage.

The Design Guidelines state, *“Signs fit best on the sign frieze which separates the storefront display windows from the upper façade... Signs on new buildings or renovations should be part of the architectural concept, and shall be harmonious with the building design.”*

It is recommended that a sign frieze be incorporated into the design to accommodate wall signage and to further enhance the appearance of the retail storefront. Separate sign permit applications are required for all signage.

North Elevation. The north elevation is predominantly a blank solid wall facing the public sidewalk. It is recommended that additional windows be added to break up the blank wall and add interest along the sidewalk.

Rooftop Mechanical Unit Screening:

Rooftop mechanical units are required to be fully screened from public view. The proposed design includes three rooftop air conditioning units that are proposed to be screened with horizontal sided walls to match the building.

Landscaping:

The petitioner is proposing new landscaping throughout the site including a new row of shrubs along the south edge of the property to screen the view of the parking lot. Overall, the landscape design is nicely done, but the following recommendations should be considered to enhance the design.

- Provide specialty paving within the plaza area along the west and south building walls.
- Provide a detail of the proposed decorative fence for review.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is supportive of renovating and improving this property, but approval cannot be recommended until certain key design elements are addressed.

It is recommended that the Design Commission **require revisions and re-review** the proposed design for 132 W. Northwest Highway. This recommendation is based on the plans dated and received 12/11/17, 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. Evaluate the proposed modern architectural style with the context of the surrounding buildings.
2. Consider whether a masonry façade would be more appropriate for a feeling of permanence and a better relationship to neighboring buildings.
3. Enhance the design of the east wall for a more attractive appearance. It is recommended that windows and vine cables be added (as shown on the west elevation).
4. Change the two existing punched opening windows on the west wall to a full storefront.
5. Either omit the southern balcony bay to provide an unobstructed view of the retail storefront, or reduce the balcony size and cantilever it above the storefront.
6. Incorporate a sign frieze above the retail storefronts.
7. Add windows to the north wall to break up the blank wall along the sidewalk.
8. Consider specialty paving within the plaza area along the west and south building walls.
9. Provide a detail of the proposed decorative fence for review.
10. 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 architect/homeowner/builder's responsibility to comply with the Design Commission approval and ensure that building permit plans comply with all zoning code, building permit and signage requirements.
11. All signage must meet code, Chapter 30.

December 20, 2017

Steve Hautzinger AIA, Design Planner

Cc: Charles Witherington Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 17-155