



VILLAGE OF WILMETTE

1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

MEETING MINUTES

APPEARANCE REVIEW COMMISSION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019

7:30 P.M.

VILLAGE BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present: Carrie Woleben-Meade, Chair
Nada Andric
Richard Brill
Devan Castellano
Jeffery Saad
Charles Smith

Members Absent: Mason Miller

Guests: Jeff Conner, 130 E. Randolph, Chicago, IL
Colleen Miller, 130 E. Randolph, Chicago, IL
Angelo Roncone, 5270 Lincoln Avenue, Skokie, IL
Anne Ardino, 350 N. LaSalle Drive, Chicago, IL
Ben Andrews, 350 N. LaSalle Drive, Chicago, IL

Staff Present: Lucas Sivertsen, Business Development Coordinator

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Woleben-Meade called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES; APPEARANCE REVIEW COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 7, 2019.

Mr. Smith moved to approve the January 7, 2019 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brill. Voting yes: Chair Woleben-Meade and Commissioners Andric, Brill, Castellano, Saad, and Smith. Voting no: none. **The motion carried.**

III. CONTINUANCES

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Sivertsen to make sure the applicant for 2018-AR-31 knew they would like to review sites where their proposed materials have been used in the past.

Mr. Brill moved to continue Case 2018-AR-31, 505 Skokie Boulevard to the March 4, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Andric. Voting yes: Chair Woleben-Meade and Commissioners Andric, Brill, Castellano, Saad, and Smith. Voting no: none.

The motion carried.

IV. CASES

**2019-AR-04
3232 Lake Avenue**

**Advocate North Shore Pediatric Partners
Appearance Review Certificate**

Mr. Sivertsen called Case 2019-AR-04, 3232 Lake Avenue, Advocate North Shore Pediatric Partners, requesting an Appearance Review Certificate to remodel the storefront, reconfigure crosswalks, install landscaping and install a generator.

Mr. Conner presented the plans as submitted to the Commission. He said they are going through the existing parking lot island to create a new crosswalk. The existing crosswalks are not ideally located. The proposed crosswalk will provide a safe route. A new generator will be behind and below and existing screen wall. A few handicapped parking spaces have been added to accommodate the new medical use. The idea behind the entrance is to provide an inviting experience for the patients. The crosswalk is designed to be playful. The landscaping in the island is designed to be low so that it does not block any sight lines. The proposed colored concrete is not painted. The color is part of the mix so it will not wear out. Bollards are proposed for safety. They are proposing a zero curb line along the east side of the drive-aisle. The curb is only 5 inches so it will not be that noticeable of a grade change. They feel the existing entrance is rather cavernous and large. They are proposing to remove the existing piers and infill the recessed space with a new pleated glass wall that is playful. The proposed canopy provides shelter. The beam enclosure will be a white finished metal similar to the glazed brick on the building. The entrance was moved to the side to better accommodate interior space planning and circulation. The storefront glass of the entrance will be clear and the new glass wall will have a blue tint.

Mr. Smith asked about the slope of the canopy.

Mr. Conner showed a section drawing of the canopy showing that it would be pitched to go back toward the building where water could then drain into a gutter.

Ms. Woleben-Meade asked if there were separate air conditioning units proposed.

Mr. Conner said they are replacing the existing units. There will be two at the rear that will be larger. They are looking at the height of them to see if they will extend past the height of the existing screen. If they go beyond the screen, they have every intent on extending the screen if needed.

Ms. Woleben-Meade asked if there was any signage proposed.

Mr. Conner said they did not yet have sign plans for the tenant. They were intending on placing the sign to the wall north of the storefront.

Mr. Sivertsen explained that because there is a local sign ordinance for Edens Plaza, the sign proposal would not come before the commission unless they were requesting a variation.

Mr. Smith asked if exterior lighting was proposed.

Mr. Conner said the only lighting would be some downlights underneath the canopy.

Ms. Andric said if you looked at the overall shopping center, you would realize there is a consistent design. The proposed remodeling is introducing a completely different vocabulary. There is a certain aesthetic to Edens Plaza whether we like it or not. Edens Plaza has a certain dignity and consistency in design setting itself apart from other strip malls. She asked for an explanation of why they were choosing to introduce something so different. She understands the tenant wants to set themselves apart, however, there are also other tenants who would want the same. She wondered if there were some by-laws that would protect the look of the center.

Mr. Sivertsen said the center is not landmarked as a protected building. There may be by-laws that the landlord has in place, but that information is not made available to the Village. While the zoning district name "Planned Commercial Development" implies the property it is a planned unit development, it is not.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said while there are no specific aesthetic protections there is still a need to maintain continuity.

Mr. Smith said he agrees with Ms. Woleben-Meade. He added the different renderings all show the glass differently. The renderings take liberty in design. He didn't think the elevations were accurate.

Mr. Conner said it was difficult to accurately show the proposed color. They went through several rounds of prints today in order to come up with the boards presented tonight. They are not intentionally trying to deceive anyone.

Ms. Andric said Mr. Conner mentioned their attempt at being playful with the exterior, but the nature of the business is not one that is attracting people as they drive by. She wanted to know why they were trying to establish a new precedent in the center.

Mr. Conner said a lot of the work they do as a firm starts out with a functional need and then you go from there. Trying to stay within context, they feel that the angled bands are replicated in the zig zagging pattern in the glass wall. He feels the existing entrance to the storefront does not have great scale.

Ms. Andric asked if there was another way to get around that issue while maintaining the texture of the whole development.

Mr. Conner said this is supposed to be a special facility, which is why they want to distinguish it from the rest of the center.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said she thinks the two-story glass wall is interesting in letting more light in, but maybe they can keep more elements of the existing design. Maybe the existing top band continues all the way across, or maybe the face of the awing matched the color of faux limestone banding.

Mr. Conner said they looked to keep more of the existing elements like continuing the limestone banding at the top of the first floor canopy, but the height of the band would split the wall in almost half, which did not make for a good proportion.

Ms. Andric asked if there was a way to work within the existing columns they were proposing to remove.

Mr. Conner said it was an aesthetic that they didn't like. The existing columns block more light.

Mr. Roncone said they pushed their design team to really focus on the perspective of their patient. They didn't want the location to be an ominous place to visit.

Mr. Patera said the current entrance is kind of a foreboding space. He looked at the current building and didn't think there was a rhythm or pattern that was being broken up by the glass wall. The bookends of the entrance are remaining. The height of the canopy makes the space feel more to scale.

Ms. Castellano asked if they were proposing to replace all of the glazing.

Mr. Conner said the glazing on the second floor will stay and most of the front façade will stay. Where the new entrance will be located the storefront windows will be replaced. It will match the existing storefront which is black/dark bronze framing.

Mr. Saad suggested placing bollards on the other side of the crosswalk as well if their concern is for runaway strollers.

Mr. Conner they could however because of the width of the walk at that point, a bollard may get in the way.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said she understands the logic and inspiration of the lily pad design in the crosswalk, but it doesn't relate to anything else in the shopping center. It could be a distraction for other tenants.

Mr. Roncone said he thinks it actually adds safety to the center.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said the crosswalk definitely helps the safety; however, it is the lily pad pattern that concerns her. She is tempted to suggest the crosswalk be all one color. The lily pad design brings the branding of the pediatric center all the way into the common parking lot, which may not be a good thing.

Mr. Patera said they were trying to add some fun. No kid will be able to walk straight through the walk. By putting a traditional grid pattern in the walk, you would lose that.

Mr. Smith wondered if the rumble strips were large enough to provide adequate notice of the crosswalk.

Mr. Conner said he agreed, especially if cars are going through there more slowly. A larger rumble strip might be needed.

Mr. Smith said Ms. Andric makes a good point. They could potentially be making a precedent for the rest of the shopping center by allowing such a large deviation from the existing aesthetic. His biggest point of concern is the blue glass. He thinks there are other ways to create that spark and fun. Sometimes it is done with color, but in other cases, things can be done on the inside. To introduce the blue glass into the shopping center, he personally doesn't like the color against the existing brick color and secondly he thinks with all the striping it starts to look circus like. He would like to know more about the framing and how that relates to the glass wall. Can you create something on the inside that is lit, that creates your spark instead of relying on the exterior window tint and frame?

Mr. Conner said they could definitely change it to clear glass. The blue glass proposed allows a lot of light through it and has low reflectivity. Clear glass is fine though. The frame would be completely behind the glass using a butt joint.

Mr. Smith said he does not think he can vote for something with the blue glass. It is just too foreign to the center.

Mr. Brill said the rest of the shopping center has one-story piers. It is unique that this tenant space has piers going two stories. He thought it always looked strange. It would be better if they could stay with a one story pier.

Mr. Conner said there are not many other tenants with two stories.

Mr. Sivertsen said the only other tenant with two stories is the former Carson's Department store.

Mr. Saad said they are introducing a break in the vernacular of the whole center. The canopy bothers him more than anything else. The canopy is directing people towards the center; however, the entry is off to the side.

Mr. Conner said the asymmetry of the awning along with the curved walk was intended to direct people towards the side entry. They also have landscaping in the middle to help block the path to the center.

Mr. Saad said a future tenant who wants the entry in the middle will need to do a total retrofit.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said what she likes about the canopy is that it helps bring down the scale of the storefront. What stands out to her is that it is a different material.

Mr. Smith said it would help if it matched the color of the white horizontals.

Mr. Conner said it was the intent to match the white horizontals.

Mr. Sivertsen said the white banding on the canopy had a cast concrete like finish and the white banding at the base of the wall was a glazed brick.

Mr. Conner said the blue glass is maybe a push and if the commission feels it distinguishes them too much from the rest of the center than clear glass is fine.

Ms. Castellano said a material board would be helpful so they can see the actual colors next to each other rather than relying on inaccurate renderings. She agrees that the clear glass is needed. There are many things going on in the interior and the clear glass may draw people in even more. She wondered if they were proposing to transplant any of the trees proposed to be removed.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said the two flanking the entrance and the one in the island are not worth transplanting. It would however be nice to get a tree in the island. With the island in general there are a lot of things going on that do not relate well to the rest of the center. She would like to see it simplified by possibly reducing the number of radiuses that becomes a field of ornamental grasses with a shade tree coming out of it.

Mr. Patera said the bands are almost five feet wide, so he feels it is a good sized island. The idea with the banding is to draw you in. They selected four different types of plants all which stay low to protect sight lines. He doesn't see there being a lot of perennials in the island. He doesn't want it to seem overwhelming. It's not plain jane like the rest of the center.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said she understands the intent, but they are located in a shopping center and there are other tenants and there is a standard landscape pattern in the rest of the center. She thinks this particular design is landing in the center without blending into the rest of the center.

Ms. Andric said she feels that all of the branding can be accomplished on the interior. It is a lovely idea to have children feel welcomed, but there are other tenants in the center that need to be considered. Not every tenant can have their own separate façade. She is supportive of all of their proposed safety improvements, but they can accomplish those improvements and still relate to the center. She is pleading with the applicant to consider her comments. There is no need to create an architectural statement in the middle of something that already exists with a unified design.

Mr. Smith said he had a technical question. How will the joints around the lily pads be designed?

Mr. Patera said there will be separate pours of concrete. There will be a caulk joint with a fiber strip down below.

Mr. Smith said from a technical perspective the caulk is going to fail and will need regular maintenance. He asked if this has been done in other areas with the same conditions.

Mr. Patera said the joints will need to be maintained and they will need to be very careful when they are pouring to make sure the two surfaces are flush.

Mr. Brill said the design is basically a wall of glass two-stories tall in the middle of a good-sized shopping center. All of the tenants have a consistent architecture and then there is all of a sudden this two-story glass wall in the middle.

Mr. Patera said what he is hearing that the commission is looking for consistency, yet the designers are looking for something with a little bit of distinction without going too far one way or another. They do not want it to look so plain Jane that is indistinguishable from any other tenant. To address Ms. Woleben-Meade's comments he said he could introduce some of the same plant materials used elsewhere in the center. Any by replacing the blue glass with a clear glass they might have something that blends in better with the rest of the center.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said they need to find a balance between the existing center and adding their individual personality. The proposed project shouldn't look out of place.

Mr. Smith said the inside will have a lot of individual personality and whimsy. For him it is the glass color that will help find that balance.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said she thinks they can remove the boulders to help find a balance in the landscape island.

Mr. Sivertsen said after hearing their presentation he realized they are proposing to remove a shade tree in the existing parking island. Per code they are required to have a shade tree so he asked if they could amend the plan to add a shade tree in the island.

Mr. Patera said he could find a place for a tree.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said in going through their standards of review, they will need to make sure the a/c units are screened, so they will need to come back with those details. Because there are so many odds and ends that need to be addressed she asked the applicant if they wanted to be continued. She didn't think they would get a favorable vote until some of these questions are addressed.

Mr. Patera asked if there was an administrative review process they could go through if the commission could agree in concept.

Ms. Woleben-Meade said there were too many issues that need the commissioner's review. She doesn't want the applicant to be disheartened. It is a lovely submittal, but there are too many outstanding questions.

Mr. Smith said it is the most comprehensive submittal he has seen since being on the commission. The reason why it is under such valuable critique is that it is so visible. He said Ms. Andric is correct, that the commission could be setting a precedent for other tenants in the shopping center by approving such a large shift in design.

Mr. Roncone said he is fine with that. They will take the commission's comments back and revise.

Ms. Woleben-Meade asked if the applicant had any questions for the commission.

Mr. Smith moved to continued Case 2019-AR-04 to the March 4, 2019 meeting. He requested that the minutes from the meeting be forwarded to the applicant. The motion was seconded by Ms. Castellano. Voting yes: Chair Woleben-Meade and Commissioners Andric, Brill, Castellano, Saad, and Smith. Voting no: none. **The motion carried.**

Mr. Sivertsen said he could send the applicant draft minutes since they won't be formally approved until March 4.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no additional public comments.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:45 p.m., Mr. Brill moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith. Voting yes: Chair Woleben-Meade and Commissioners Andric, Brill, Castellano, Saad, and Smith. Voting no: none. **The motion carried.**