



1200 Wilmette Avenue
 Wilmette, Illinois 60091-0040

MEETING MINUTES

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2015

7:30 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Members Present: Chairman Dan Sullivan
 Mike Boyer
 John Kolleng
 Lynn Norman
 Reinhard Schneider
 Bob Surman

Members Absent: Patrick Duffy

Staff Present: Lisa Roberts, Assistant Director of Community Development

I. Call to Order

Chairman Sullivan called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

II. 2015-Z-01 2126 Wilmette Avenue

See the complete case minutes attached to this document.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Roberts
Assistant Director of Community Development

3.0 TESTIMONY, COMMENTS, AND ARGUMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT

3.1 Persons appearing for the applicant

3.11 Mr. Nick Lopez, applicant
101Mobility Chicago

3.12 Mr. Chip Smith, church member
Wilmette Church of Christ

3.13 Mr. Bill Embry, church member
Wilmette Church of Christ

3.2 Summary of presentations

3.21 Ms. Roberts said that this is a request for a 15.0’ front yard ramp setback variation and a 471.13 square foot (13.36%) front yard impervious surface coverage variation to permit the installation of a ramp on the legal non-conforming structure. The Village Board will hear this case on January 27, 2015.

3.22 Mr. Lopez said he was hired to install a new handicapped ramp at the church. The ramp is intended to serve both those in wheelchairs and those walking.

3.23 Mr. Surman asked what material the ramp system is constructed of.

The applicant said it is modular aluminum. The surface is not perforated. It is open on the side.

3.24 Mr. Schneider asked if they considered installing the ramp at the east side entrance.

The applicant said this was considered but that they wanted everyone to be able to use the front entrance.

3.25 Mr. Surman said the ADA code requires that the disabled have the same experience as others, so the side entrance would be discouraged from that perspective.

3.26 Mr. Surman asked if they considered running the ramp along the front of the building, to keep it from projecting into the front yard.

The applicant said they did not consider this. They would need to remove all the bushes that are currently in that location. Those using the ramp need to land on a paved surface. As proposed, the ramp ends at the same elevation as the existing concrete walk. The driveway is blacktop. If they were to relocate the ramp as suggested, there would be delays with the cars as people would stop there to unload.

- 3.27 Mr. Smith said he is an elder in the church. His residence is in Lincolnshire. As designed, the ramp directs people to the left doors of the entry. Those walking use the right side doors. The bushes along the building provide symmetry to the front. They might be able to bushes around the 5' x 5' pieces to match up with the existing sign, which is about 5' away.

The applicant said the ramp has a total rise of 14".

- 3.28 Ms. Norman asked which way the sign is oriented.

The applicant said it is oriented north-south. There are existing bushes around the sign that might screen some of the ramp from the street. The sign lines up with the middle of the entry, between the two sets of double doors.

- 3.29 Ms. Norman asked if the ramp configuration couldn't be modified so that it does not extend so far into the front yard. Instead of two 6-foot lengths, couldn't they put the 5' x 5' landing after the first 6' piece and then make the turn?

The applicant said they would need to pour a 5' x 5' concrete pad where the ramp ends, to have an appropriate landing and to connect to the existing walkway.

- 3.30 Mr. Surman said that might be less aesthetically pleasing because the railing will be seen all the way across the front.

The applicant said their solution might be the best if they are going to landscape around the railing.

- 3.31 Mr. Schneider said that the incline is about 1" per foot.

- 3.32 Mr. Surman said ADA requires 1' out for every 1" of rise. They are exceeding that. Their ramp run total is 17' so it is a gentle slope and exceeds ADA requirements.

- 3.33 Ms. Norman referenced the concrete pad and the 5' x 5' turn at the bottom. There is a 5' ramp going back into the sidewalk. Couldn't they have an opening in the ramp that they could turn onto the sidewalk?

The applicant said that is a good question, but they would need to ensure that people who are in different types of wheelchairs or power chairs to be able to make that turn clearance. They would need a 5' x 5' area for them to do that.

- 3.34 Mr. Surman said that the 5' x 5' area has to be flat and not sloped.

- 3.35 Ms. Norman asked why the last part of the ramp could not be level with the part where they would turn at the bottom of the ramp.

The applicant asked if she was talking about having the ramp run along the existing walkway.

- 3.36 Ms. Norman said it would be like the diagram but instead of putting in another 5' x 5' turn, the ramp continues flat and there is at least a 5' space with no railing so one could turn the wheelchairs.
- 3.37 Mr. Surman said it is a metal frame system and they would have to excavate to have the last portion level with the sidewalk. That is why they were going to put concrete there. They are trying to avoid excavating and installing a concrete slab.

The applicant showed the ramp brochure. The way that the ramps are designed is that the metal ramps would have a flange along the side of the ramp. Those are designed to ensure that no one will fall off the ramp. They would not be able to access the ramp from the side. The ramp has to be entered straight on.

- 3.38 Ms. Norman said that there would be a 5' x 5' at the end of the first 6' section, the ramp would come down the side and then there would be a 5' opening or concrete space at the bottom so one could turn into the sidewalk again instead of coming out so far.
- 3.39 Mr. Schneider asked if it would help if Ms. Norman drew it on 1.4.
- 3.40 Ms. Norman said she is trying to minimize the amount of impervious surface.
- 3.41 Mr. Boyer asked if Ms. Norman wanted to eliminate ramp panels or would there still be the impervious surface.

Ms. Norman was not sure.

- 3.42 Mr. Kolleng said if the ramp started in a specific location, they would need a pad, which would create more impervious surface.
- 3.43 Ms. Norman said she wants to eliminate the 5' x 5' turnaround by making the ramp go level for a while with the concrete so they would turn from the ramp into the concrete.

The applicant said that they would need a minimum of 5' to come off of the 5' x 5' platform. They would not be able to put the turn style platform next to the concrete walkway. He understands what Ms. Norman is suggesting, that they run it alongside the walkway and have the 5' x 5' meet at the existing walkway. They would have to have a ramp connected to the platform and the minimum length that they would have to connect would be a 5' section.

- 3.44 Mr. Surman said that the applicant's suggestion would work if they were to put it over an existing sidewalk because the ramp would come down and land on the

existing sidewalk. With the change suggested, it would come down and end at the grass and they would have to put in concrete or something flat to land at.

3.45 Chairman Sullivan said that the applicant designed the layout. The Board is trying to minimize the variance. Is this the best option to minimize the variance? He feels like the Board is trying to create a new design, which is the applicant's responsibility. Is the proposed option the best option and why is it the best option?

3.46 Mr. Bill Embry said he lives in Glenview and is a member of the church. They looked at extending the ramp along the edge of the sidewalk down to the parking area. But cars come along there and that will not work because cars are driving in and out. That is not what they wanted because they would leave the parking lot and immediately start up the ramp. With the 5' level spot that ADA requires, they need another 5' spot.

3.47 Chairman Sullivan said if they went to the driveway, they would eliminate the second 5' x 5', but they would probably need more ramp to the driveway since their impervious surface would be the same.

3.48 Mr. Boyer clarified that the ramp would be aluminum extruded solid surface. There are no slats or spaces on the floor of the ramp.

The applicant said that for interconnectedness and for water drainage, there are seams for water to drain through. It is not a gutter system.

3.49 Mr. Boyer said that there is some ability for water to drain through.

3.50 Mr. Surman said that it drains off and under.

3.51 Mr. Boyer said that there is no concrete running under the ramp system. There is grass under the system.

The applicant said they wanted the concrete walkway to serve as a unified walkway for everyone and they thought that this was the best design option. They did look at other options, but this one works best.

3.52 Mr. Kolleng asked if the church heard from any neighbors about the proposal.

The applicant said that they did not hear from any neighbors about the proposal.

3.53 There was no one in the audience to speak on this case and the Village received no communication on this case.

5.0 VIEWS EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

- 5.1 Mr. Boyer said that this is a reasonable solution to the issue that they are having with their property. The property does pose a practical difficulty as to how it was designed regarding the entrances and where the parking lot is located. It is a good solution for safety issues versus the other design options. He is not concerned about impervious surface. This case gets caught within that impervious surface definition. It is not truly impervious surface and there is grass underneath that can absorb water. There is some drainage system. It is blocked somewhat by the sign and existing vegetation. All standards of review are met and he will support this.
- 5.2 Mr. Schneider agrees with the above. They might have been able to create another plan, but this is a reasonable solution. They will plant some vegetation and/or bushes to shield the raised platforms. There is hardship because there are few feasible solutions to an existing problem. The side entrance cannot be used and they have to use the front entrance. Variations are thus required. He will support the application.
- 5.3 Mr. Surman can also support the request.
- 5.4 Mr. Kolleng will also support the application and agrees with the comments made. It would be nice to put in shrubbery for shielding.
- 5.5 Ms. Norman can also support the request and thanked Mr. Surman for pointing out that the ADA requires that others are able to experience the same thing.
- 5.6 Chairman Sullivan can also support the request. This is the best solution and will be well hidden from view. This option minimizes the requested variations.

6.0 DECISION

- 6.1 Mr. Boyer moved to recommend granting a request for a 15.0' front yard ramp setback variation and a 471.13 square foot (13.36%) front yard impervious surface coverage variation to permit the installation of a ramp on the legal non-conforming structure at 2126 Wilmette Avenue in accordance with the plans submitted.
- 6.11 Mr. Schneider seconded the motion and the vote was all ayes and no nays (Mr. Duffy was not present).
- Motion carried.
- 6.2 Ms. Norman moved to authorize the Chairman to prepare the report and recommendation for the Zoning Board of Appeals for case number 2015-Z-01.
- 6.21 Mr. Kolleng seconded the motion and the vote was all ayes and no nays.

Motion carried.

7.0 FINDINGS OF FACT UPON WHICH DECISION WAS BASED

The Zoning Board of Appeals finds that the request meets the variation standards of Section 5.4.F of the Zoning Ordinance. The particular conditions of the site, the existing front yard setback to the building and the location of the parking lot, impose upon the owner a practical difficulty. The plight of the owner was not created by the owner. The hardship is peculiar to the property in question. The difficulty prevents the owner from complying with accessibility requirements and providing safe, appropriate access for the disabled. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air. The variations if granted will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The applicant indicated that they could provide additional landscaping around the ramp adjacent to the existing sign and landscaping, which will help mitigate the appearance of the ramp.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Zoning Board of Appeals recommends granting a request for a 15.0' front yard ramp setback variation and a 471.13 square foot (13.36%) front yard impervious surface coverage variation to permit the installation of a ramp on the legal non-conforming structure at 2126 Wilmette Avenue in accordance with the plans submitted.