

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF  
JOINT PLAN COMMISSION AND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AND  
ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING  
FEBRUARY 9, 2016**

**APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The Village of Lake Bluff Joint Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA) and Architectural Board of Review (ABR) met at a Special Workshop Meeting in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue) on Tuesday, February 9, 2016. The Meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. and it was determined the following PCZBA and ABR Members were present:

PCZBA Members: Sam Badger  
Leslie Bishop  
Mary Collins  
Michael Goldsberry  
Elliot Miller  
Gary Peters  
Steven Kraus, Chair

ABR Members: Neil Dahlmann  
Matt Kerouac  
Carol Russ  
John Sorenson  
Robert Hunter, Chair

Absent: Edward Deegan, ABR Member  
Stephen Rappin, ABR Member

Also Present: Drew Irvin, Village Administrator  
Michael Croak, Building Codes Supervisor  
Brandon Stanick, Assistant to the Village Administrator

PCZBA Chair Kraus reviewed protocol for this evening's meeting and noted there will be no action taken this evening.

**2. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment Time)**

PCZBA Chair Kraus stated the PCZBA and ABR allocate fifteen minutes during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the Boards on any matter not listed on the agenda.

Mrs. Ruth Schnell (resident) commented on a desire for smaller housing so seniors can stay in the Village, and she asked the Boards to keep that in mind during their consideration.

ABR Chair Hunter stated the public will be allowed fifteen minutes to respond and asked concerns already expressed not be repeated during the meeting. ABR Chair Hunter commented on incorrect information circulating through the community and clarified the Village has not received any petitions for redevelopment along E. North Avenue.

In response to a question from Mr. Jim Stevenson (resident), ABR Chair Hunter stated the schematic drawings first included in the Downtown Design Guidelines were provided for discussion purposes by the Village's Consultant, Teska Associates and have since been removed.

Ms. Robin McAfee (resident) expressed her interest in the redevelopment of CBD Blocks Two and Three as it could drastically change the character of Lake Bluff. Ms. McAfee stated her response to the downtown survey was she liked charm, quaintness and the neighborhood feel, and expressed her opinion that increasing the building height along Scranton Avenue is not charming.

Mr. Thomas McAfee (resident) expressed his opinion the proposal is completely out of context with the community. The Block One development is a completely independent entity as there is no residential housing adjacent to the property. He commented on senior housing and the need to ensure the Village remains a livable community. Mr. McAfee stated the process appears to be moving rapidly and suggested this be a thoughtful process because of its significance.

Ms. Holli Volkert (resident) expressed her concern regarding the proposed Block Three redevelopment project. She suggested the loft units be moved to face Scranton Avenue to give the downtown a more urban feel and transition into single-family homes using the row of houses along Oak Avenue. She asked the design of the single-family homes on the corner of Evanston and Scranton Avenues be reviewed. The draft guidelines state single-family homes should have some kind of detachment between them and the proposed plan does not provide for detached structures along Evanston Avenue. She recommended any proposed design blend well with the historic structures in the downtown.

Mr. David Mark (resident) expressed his concern for the traffic pattern whereby occupants would enter the development through a single driveway located on Oak Avenue, which is a one-way street. He also expressed concern for the residents along North Avenue because traffic coming on-site would have to travel North Avenue making it a secondary downtown street. He asked the traffic pattern be reviewed to determine the impact on the neighborhood and if it could be reconfigured to lessen the impact on Oak Avenue.

Ms. Maureen Chamberlain (resident) asked that a traffic and parking study be conducted.

Ms. Marina Carney Puryear (resident) referenced an article from *National Geographic* regarding the benefits of trees and stated the proposal for Block Three is not only bad for the residents but also property values.

Ms. Nancy White (resident) asked if any of the resident feedback from the downtown preference survey was considered when designing the proposal. She stated Lake Bluff is a special town and developers should listen to its residents.

Mr. Chris Ackerson (resident) expressed his belief the proposal does not reflect Lake Bluff's character as it appears on Google Earth and inquired of the value-added for residents. The development will only allow residential in the CBD as opposed to mixed-use, which would benefit the entire community.

Mr. Stevenson stated Lake Bluff is a quirky and unique town. He expressed his belief residents would like to preserve the existing density. He expressed his concern for increased traffic in the neighborhood and noted Lake Bluff is a family community and asked the Boards to keep that in mind when considering any redevelopment project.

3. **A Joint Workshop with the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals and the Architectural Board of Review for the Proposed Redevelopment of the Former PNC Bank Property Located at 120 E. Scranton Avenue (Central Business District Block Three)**

PCZBA Chair Kraus introduced the agenda item and asked the development team to begin their presentation.

Mr. Robert Harte, principal with Uppercross Development Group, LLC, introduced Mr. Lawrence Frej (principal with Uppercross Development) and Mark Diedrich (principal with Kuo Diedrich Architects). Mr. Harte noted that Smith Capital Management, Inc. owns the property.

PCZBA Member Badger inquired of the relationship between the developer and the owner. Mr. Harte stated Uppercross Development is the contract purchaser for the property.

Ms. Mary Ellen Patton (resident) asked if the owner had given any insight on the design of the project. Mr. Harte stated the owner did not provide any specifics and noted the development is a plan generated by Uppercross Development.

In response to a comment from the audience, Mr. Harte stated the proposed plan is based on the planning principles for the Downtown Design Guidelines, as well as what is feasible for the market.

Mr. Diedrich showed slides of the site plan concept and noted, based on the subarea visioning project, the goal of the development is to serve as a transition from downtown to the single-family residential neighborhoods to the east. He described the proposal, stating there is a three-story flats building with two units per floor, with units starting at 1,800 sq. ft, two bedroom units and parking below the building. Mr. Diedrich stated the attached townhomes on Scranton Avenue are setback with 3 foot high stoops from the sidewalk to the entrance. He stated along Evanston Avenue the plan is for attached single-family homes with pitched roof buildings approximately 2.5 stories above the stoop. Mr. Diedrich stated the townhomes are typically four bedroom homes with one being an office and size ranges from 2,600 to 3,200 sq. ft.

Mr. Diedrich reviewed the proposal in relation to the Planning Principles and noted seven of the principles relate to Block Three. He explained the proposed access and parking for the development and noted there is a total of 31 onsite parking spaces located behind the buildings. There is approximately 45 ft. of setback from the curb and the intent is to preserve as much of the green space and streetscape and create a landscape interior courtyard in the rear of the development. Mr. Diedrich stated Planning Principles #1, #2 and #8 were not addressed because they are specific to Block Two. Lastly, Mr. Diedrich showed an aerial view and streetscape view of the entire development.

PCZBA Chair Kraus opened the floor for questions from Members of the PCZBA and ABR.

PCZBA Member Badger inquired of the structure located above the walkthrough along E. Scranton Avenue. Mr. Diedrich stated it is a single level connector that attaches the proposed Scranton Townhomes to the attached single-family house at the corner of Evanston Avenue. This will most likely serve as the master bedroom.

PCZBA Member Badger inquired of the traffic access to the development. Mr. Diedrich stated traffic would access the site from Oak Avenue.

PCZBA Member Collins expressed her opinion the project is out of scale and out of context with downtown. She expressed her belief Lake Bluff is a two story town, and if there are third floor rooms, the third story is under a sloping roof. The design transition seems abrupt and the three different elements do not make sense. She stated there is a real desire in this town to have something that residents can downsize to in order to stay in Lake Bluff.

ABR Member Russ expressed her belief the developer has made an effort to follow the draft design guidelines and she does like the three different types of products on the block. She expressed her agreement with the comment regarding moving the flats to Scranton Avenue. ABR Member Russ encouraged the developer to soften the third story. She expressed her agreement with PCZBA Member Collins regarding the third story roofing. ABR Member Russ expressed her opinion the rear of the proposed development is more aesthetically pleasing than the north side of Block One. She stated the design should be discussed further after we address the density.

Mr. Diedrich stated the landscape features have not been fully refined and explained the proposed three story concept, noting various unit types will be setback to allow variation down Scranton Avenue. In the rear the garages are subterranean to maintain a three story appearance from the street.

PCZBA Member Bishop expressed her belief the developer maybe at a disadvantage because the design guidelines have not been finalized. She shared her preference for complete underground parking and asked if this could be accomplished with this type of building. PCZBA Member Bishop asked if the use of the buildings could be redefined and noted Scranton Avenue would be a better location for the flats building.

ABR Chair Hunter expressed his agreement with ABR Member Russ regarding the three different housing types. He stated a decision regarding the maximum height should be made tonight so the developer has clear direction to move forward. He commented the fences in front of the townhome units may not be needed.

In response to a question from the audience, Village Administrator Drew Irvin explained the preliminary and final development review processes for a project such as this.

PCZBA Member Goldsberry inquired how the project fits the “transitional” preference outlined in the guiding principles. Mr. Diedrich stated the three story flats building would be constructed on the western portion of the property farthest away from the single-family residential properties. Mr. Diedrich stated the transition around to Evanston Avenue, where the setback from the curb increases, is more consistent with a typical single-family residential.

PCZBA Member Goldsberry expressed his opinion the proposal is not transitional for Lake Bluff and does not fit its character. PCZBA Member Goldsberry expressed his belief the design does not capture the Lake Bluff brand and stated the branding guidelines should be given to perspective developers. He expressed his concern regarding increased traffic and noted he would not support the proposal at this time.

ABR Member Kerouac expressed his opinion the proposal looks like a big block all the way around the property and encouraged the developer to provide relief between the buildings. He stated Lake Bluff is a walkable community and inquired if there is a way to scale down the buildings. He expressed his concern with vehicular access to the site.

PCZBA Member Miller stated density is important and a transition from three story buildings to two story maybe appropriate. He stated commercial space should be considered as part of the transition rather than more residential units. PCZBA Member Miller expressed concern with the single-family homes not having backyards.

PCZBA Member Bishop expressed her concern for traffic, and because of the size of the proposed structures, does not believe there are sufficient outdoor play areas to accommodate families living in the townhomes.

PCZBA Chair Kraus stated the large townhomes will attract a different clientele than he had anticipated when considering the best use for this property. He stated he likes the development but is not sure if it fits on this particular site or reflects the needs of Lake Bluff. PCZBA Chair Kraus asked the development team to consider the target market and price points to determine what fits best at this location.

ABR Member Dahlmann expressed his concern the proposal is not consistent with the character of the community and the proposal is too dense with 16 units on .75 acres. Although he likes the stoops on the walkup units, this feature could create a problem for seniors looking to stay in Lake Bluff. He expressed his preference for 12 units and noted two and three bedroom units are appropriate if seniors are the targeted market.

PCZBA Member Badger expressed concern for the height of the buildings along Evanston Avenue and stated he would like more trees and a better transition to the single-family neighborhood.

PCZBA Member Collins stated she does not believe that change is the issue and she is comfortable with change if it stays with the character of the town. She commented on the importance of scale and density because they are not the only influences on the community's character.

PCZBA Chair Kraus opened the floor for comments from the audience.

In response to a question from a resident, Mr. Diedrich stated the HVAC units for the flats have not been addressed in this conceptual drawing.

A member of the audience expressed support for first floor retail and living space on top.

Mr. Norman Bleier (resident) commented on the transitional aspects of the design and noted it's similar to Chicago industrial design and would look fine in Ravenswood but not Lake Bluff.

Mr. Marc Munder (resident) expressed his opinion the design is more architecturally pleasing than some areas in the community. He stated the project should wait to make sure it's compatible with the redevelopment of Block Two.

Ms. Susan McMurray (resident and business owner) expressed her preference for more retail along Scranton Avenue. She stated the parking in Lake Bluff is already horrendous and commented on the efforts by the Village to secure additional parking. She expressed her concern with the density of the development.

Ms. Anne Atzeff (resident) inquired of the architect's impression of the community and the process he

used to learn about Lake Bluff. Mr. Diedrich stated he grew up in the Midwest and attended graduate school at University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois. He stated he used Goggle Earth to walk Lake Bluff at first and then physically toured Lake Bluff a few times with real estate agents looking at various properties to see the architectural style and understand the feel of the community. Mr. Diedrich stated his impression of Lake Bluff is that it is a quaint little bedroom community and the proximity to Lake Michigan is a great feature.

Ms. Atzeff stated residents take pride in Lake Bluff and its historical buildings. She expressed her opinion the scale of the design does not reflect the cottage feel of Lake Bluff.

Mr. Charles Ludmer (resident) expressed his concern for the architecture, layout and density of the project.

Mr. Mark Stolzenburg (resident) expressed his belief density is a major issue for families in Lake Bluff. The development does not fit the Lake Bluff brand and could increase traffic. He stated a development has to be economically beneficial for the town and work for the developer at the same time; however, the economics of the development could cause a negative impact on neighboring property values.

Mr. Terrance Moran (resident) inquired how long it would take to finish the project. He expressed concern with the construction traffic and the impact that rental units would have on the neighborhood. Mr. Diedrich commented on the type of materials that would be used for the development and expressed his uncertainty regarding the construction timeframe. In addition, he stated all the units would be for sale.

Ms. Holli Volkert (resident) expressed her preference for adding walkable space between the units. She stated the Village needs to define senior housing needs and expressed her opinion the Village should seek to attract residents that can contribute to the economic growth of the town. Ms. Volkert suggested cul-de-sacs on the middle or end of Oak Avenue to prevent traffic from entering North Avenue. She stated she likes the feel of the bigger units which could be divided into smaller units on the inside to serve different demographics. Mr. Volkert stated she likes that the property is owner occupied and not rental. She asked where guests would be allowed to park because parking is an issue. Lastly, Ms. Volkert encouraged residents to provide the development team with comments that would help improve the project.

Mr. Paul Lemieux (resident) expressed his belief the proposal will not be able to accommodate senior housing for those that are disabled. He stated he likes the flats building because there is a scarcity of single floor housing and this could provide more diverse housing stock. He expressed his support for not having retail on this block because of its transitional nature.

Ms. Kate Moriani (resident) expressed her concern with parking.

Mr. Jerry Ryder (resident) expressed his opinion the development on Block Three would set the precedent for the development of Block Two.

Ms. Mary Ellen Patton (resident) asked if the proposed parking area would have heated roadways. She also expressed her concern for the amount of impervious surface on the lot and asked if drainage issues have been addressed. Mr. Diedrich stated we have striven to ensure the development would not increase the impervious surface on the property. He commented on the snow removal noting their intent to use a

snow melting system or hire a firm to haul the snow from the site. Mr. Diedrich stated the stormwater system has not been designed, but will be completed prior to any formal submission.

Ms. Susan Barnum (resident) expressed her concern on how the development would impact the character of the Village and asked the developer to work with the Village to retain the character of the community.

Mr. William Boggess (resident) expressed his concerns on how future developments would not only increase density but could negatively impact property values.

Mr. Daniel Daehler (resident) stated density will be an issue if the development is three stories. He asked how we can move forward with the Block Three development without knowing what Block Two will look like.

Following a brief recess at 9:14 p.m., it was the consensus of the Boards to table Agenda Item #4 for discussion at a future workshop meeting.

4. **Adjournment of the Meeting**

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brandon J. Stanick  
Assistant to the Village Administrator



Michael Croak  
Building Codes Supervisor