

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING AD HOC COMMITTEE
MEETING**

May 31, 2017

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Village of Lake Bluff Residential Building Ad Hoc Committee (RBC) met on May 31, 2017 in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue) at 6:30 p.m. and the following members were present:

Present: Brad Andersen
 Jennifer Beeler
 Leslie Bishop
 Deb Fischer
 Matthew Kerouac
 Cheri Richardson
 George Russell
 Scott Streightiff
 Jim Moss, Chair

Also Present: Drew Irvin, Village Administrator (VA)

2. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

Chair Moss stated the RBC allocates 15 minutes for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the RBC on any matter not listed on the agenda.

There were no requests to address the RBC.

3. Consideration of the May 18, 2017 RBC Meeting Minutes

Member Andersen moved to approve the May 18, 2017 RBC Meeting Minutes as amended. Trustee Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

4. Discussion Regarding Committee Work Plan

Chair Moss said the committee should determine how to select specific task or areas that needs to be addressed and avoid trying to solve the issues during the selection process. He questioned if there were items on the non-exhaustive list of “perceived problems” that the RBC may agree with but do not have the ability to address or are there other items not on the list that should be added. Chair Moss commented on why he thought Item #3 (Quality of design of certain new single-family homes are not consistent with traditional, custom homes constructed within the Village) would be a challenge to discuss.

Member Kerouac said this issue is a struggle because the outcome should not be too restrictive to discourage potential developers but it should maintain a certain level of integrity. He said there is nothing wrong with an informal review process because the RBC should not be responsible for defining this as it is difficult to place restrictions on subjective matters.

Member Beeler asked if the wording could be modified to reflect the review of specific materials that could be used. Member Kerouac provided information on the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) upcoming discussion regarding proposed materials standards for new single-family homes, with focus on the exterior of the home. A discussion followed.

Member Beeler asked if a non-conforming proposal which impact neighboring property value had ever been reviewed. VA Irvin said the similar/dissimilar ordinance can be and has been used to govern these types of proposals.

Member Andersen said this may be a slippery slope, especially in a community like Lake Bluff, which consist of an eclectic mix of houses. He asked how the daylight plane and bulk regulations contribute to housing design. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Member Fischer, Member Russell said the height regulations contribute to the flatter rooflines in Lake Bluff on certain size lots.

Member Bishop said a different bulk ordinance for smaller lot sizes might be explored because this is one way to protect the feel of the Village and prevent bigger houses from being built on smaller lots.

Chair Moss asked if there any additional items that should be added to the list for consideration. VA Irvin said there was a comment regarding how the landscaping and/or tree ordinance fit in with the environment and asked if this should be part of the conversation.

Member Bishop asked if there could be a regulation that requires someone working on a subdivision, such as the Stonebridge Development, to start within a certain amount of time or appear before an Advisory Board to request an extension. Members Kerouac and Richardson said that would be a challenge for the developer because of the changing economy and associated risks.

Member Beeler said she noticed a distinct character of homes throughout the Village. She asked if it would be worthwhile to look at a specific ordinance that would deal with the specific character of each subdivision of Lake Bluff because the lot sizes varies and age of the home.

Member Kerouac said maybe importance should not be for the area because it is daunting to a neighborhood to see a ranch home demolished and a two story home built in its place.

Member Beeler said as our housing stock get older there will be more tear downs and she does not want procedures to be more restrictive.

Chair Moss said most of the West Terrace homes were built in the late 1970s and, at first, the newer homes seem out of place but now added a level of diversity which the residents welcomed.

Member Andersen said what we are trying to preserve needs to be defined and we need to continue to embrace change as it makes the community a better place.

Member Fischer said the Village's Strategic Plan should be used as an overlay to try and make better decisions.

Member Andersen said the R-5 zoning district should be discussed because this is the only area designated for diverse housing products. The Village does not have a diverse housing stock and this stifles the demographics in the community. There was a survey conducted which indicated that people desired to retire in Lake Bluff; however, there is no affordable/diverse housing offered.

Member Fischer said she would like to see an asterisk next to the 25 ft. lots to possibly maintain the streetscape.

Chair Moss said it appears that the group desires to preserve the smaller lots and asked if a different set of rules for the smaller lots should be considered. VA Irvin summarized the RBC suggests in relations to the non-exhaustive list of perceived problems which is to keep Items #1, #2, #3, #7, #9, #10 and combine Items #4 and #5.

Member Andersen asked when a 7,500 sq. ft. lot became the minimum for the creation of a new lot in town. Member Russell said this applies to the R-4 District and further research is needed to determine when the specific lot size was adopted.

Member Fischer commented on Item #6 (subdivision and zoning regulations promote large, single-family homes on large lots) and asked if there was much land that would be impacted or is everything now considered to be a parcel. VA Irvin said there is not a large list of sites that could be subdivided and the Code defaults to single-family detached in terms of ease of subdivision and activity.

In response to a comment from Member Bishop, Member Andersen commented on the lack of diversity housing stock, and used Ravine Forest Drive (R-2 District) lot as an example. He said the large parcel could be divided into two lots and the land would be worth more money. The end product combined would be worth more money, more marketable, and create a different housing stock. A discussion followed regarding zoning for multi-family homes and mixed-use in the L-1 District.

Chair Moss asked Staff to provide comparison documents from the Cities of Lake Forest and Glencoe and Villages of Libertyville, Winnetka and Wilmette. Member Andersen asked for documents from a community similar in size with district zoning transitional areas similar to Lake Bluff showing how transitional challenges were addressed.

Member Richardson commented on the transition from single-family to downtown and why a 16 unit building is needed to make it financially viable for a developer. VA Irvin said Block One was authorized residential and noted the Village has not received many requests for multi-family developments. The land cost contributes to the difficulty and a total volume space is needed to make the project viable and profitable. Currently, the Village does not have an ordinance addressing higher density developments but Lake Forest does and has allowed for higher density developments in certain areas.

In response to a comment from Member Kerouac regarding the one year demolition delay process, VA Irvin reviewed the demolition success stories associated with the Village.

Member Richardson asked if zoning and preservation procedures, amongst others, overlay in the existing ordinances. VA Irvin said he believes the variance standards are purposely rigid and the

PCZBA have inquired about alternative tools to assist with the approval process to facilitate modifications to vintage homes.

Member Richardson said the balance between what property owners are allowed to do with their property and what the Village wants to make more restrictive needs to be identified.

Member Kerouac said instead of punishing people that desire to tear-down a home, there should be an incentive offered such as more bulk, waive permit fees, or create regulations for people that desire to renovate/restore a home.

Member Bishop said allowing a variance to construct a larger home on a small lot is not solving the problem with maintaining the Village character. A discussion about preservation and what should be preserved followed.

In response to a comment from Chair Moss, VA Irvin said Staff will organize a tour for the RBC throughout various areas of the Village.

Member Kerouac said the streetscape is impacted more by homes that are subdivided as opposed to a different style of home built on the property.

In response to a comment from Member Fischer, VA Irvin said design review is not a requirement for new single-family residential units, the only exception is if, the submittal is for a planned residential development. A discussion regarding subdivision requirements followed.

Member Russell said he believes the Village has been doing a good job to date and he hopes the RBC does not make any unnecessary changes just because it has been established.

Member Bishop inquired of a landscape ordinance. VA Irvin said the Village does not have a landscape ordinance for new single-family homes but a tree ordinance which governs the procedures for tree replacement.

Member Kerouac asked if Block Three in the CBD should be considered. VA Irvin said that was up to the group. He also said the Colonel Sexton subdivision contributed to the development of the RBC Committee as it raised questions regarding various subdivision and zoning regulations.

Member Fischer said maybe future issues should be discussed because there is not much that needs to be fixed. She asked what could be done to encourage diversity consistent with the Village's Strategic Plan because regulations are normally considered after incident occurs. Chair Moss said what the Village wants to preserve should be more clearly defined.

In response to a question from Member Fischer, VA Irvin said most projects are completed within the existing regulations with the exception of additions to older homes.

Member Andersen asked why the Village charges various fees for tear-downs because this contributes to the cost for redeveloping the property. VA Irvin said the cost for building permits is common because it generate revenue to pay for road repairs. A discussion followed.

Member Andersen said new developments are seen as an improvement to the community but there is a sense that the owner is being penalized for trying to make improvements.

Member Bishop commented on the need to maintain affordable housing in the community as this could possibly attract younger buyers. A discussion followed.

Member Russell commented on detached garage bonuses and recommended Item #2A be removed from the non-exhaustive list of perceived problems. The housing stock would be nicer if the garages are in the rear of the home.

Following its discussion, it was the consensus of the RBC to:

- re-order/prioritize the non-exhaustive list of perceived problems’;
- direct Staff to provide information from various communities to compare zoning related matters;
- add a column for possible solutions to the non-exhaustive list of perceived problems;
- combine Items #4 and #5; and
- take the daylight plane restrictions off the list.

5. Village Staff Report

VA Irvin had no report.

VA Irvin said he asked Member Russell to review the heritage lot issues and provide some working language.

Member Kerouac volunteered to review zoning variations for R-4 District. Member Richardson said she will ask the HPC what should be preserved.

6. Chair’s Report

Chair Moss inquired of available for future meetings and the third Thursday of the month is being considered.

7. Committee Member’s Report

There was no report

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to consider and upon a motion duly made by Member Fischer and seconded by Member Bishop, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Drew Irvin
Village Administrator