

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
JOINT PLAN COMMISSION & ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
SPECIAL MEETING**

NOVEMBER 20, 2019

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Peters called to order the regular meeting of the Joint Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA) of the Village of Lake Bluff on Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at 7:04 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue).

The following members were present:

Members: David Burns
Jill Danly
Elliot Miller
James Murray
Susan Rider (arrived at 9:09 p.m.)
George Russell (via phone)
Gary Peters, Chair

Also Present: Ben Schuster, Village Attorney (VAT)
R. Drew Irvin, Village Administrator (VA)
Mike Croak, Building Codes Supervisor (BCS)
Jeff Hansen, Village Engineer (VE)
Glen Cole, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)

AVA Cole reported that a notice was received from Member George Russell in accordance with the Village's Electronic Attendance at Meetings Policy. Member Russell will be deemed authorized to attend the meeting electronically unless a motion objecting to his electronic attendance is made. There were no objections and Member Russell was deemed present.

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

Chair Peters stated the PCZBA allocates 15 minutes during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the PCZBA on any matter not listed on the agenda. Each person addressing the PCZBA is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three minutes.

There were no requests to address the PCZBA.

3. Consideration of the September 18, 2019 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes

Member Burns moved to adopt the September 18, 2019 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes as presented. Member Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

4. Consideration of the October 30, 2019 PCZBA Special Meeting Minutes (Missing Middle)

Staff's memorandum advised that these draft minutes will be presented at the next regular meeting.

5. Chair Peters Administers, the Oath to Those Participating in the Public Hearings

6. A Public Hearing Regarding Amendments to the Zoning Regulations (Sign Code)

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from staff.

AVA Cole said that over the summer the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) engaged in drafting revisions to the Village’s sign code with the assistance of Ms. Arista Strungys of Camiros, a local planning consultant. The revisions concern facilities in the L-1 and L-2 Zoning Districts and would allow:

- Each tenant to have one or more signs in some situations, instead of limiting signs to a maximum number of one sign per lot;
- Property owners to submit and receive approval for a Master Sign Plan, which would eliminate the need to return to the ABR for a new approval for every tenant sign change; and
- Larger wall-mounted address signs based on the linear frontage of each tenant.

AVA Cole said the ABR held a public meeting to review a complete draft of its proposed revisions including notice to affected building owners. At the conclusion of the meeting, the ABR unanimously approved the adoption of these amendments. While the ABR is charged with administration and review of the relevant sections of the Zoning Regulations, it is still the PCZBA’s responsibility to conduct a public hearing and formally recommend a course of action to the Village Board of Trustees regarding the amendments.

Following a request from Chair Peters, Ms. Strungys provided an overview of the process which resulted in sign code revisions for the L-1 and L-2 Districts. She provided information regarding the revisions for the master sign plan and noted permissions will remain the same for ground signs, flags/flag poles, and on-site informational signs. She said there were two proposed new sign types (menu board associated with a drive-thru and window sign provision) as well as revisions for awnings and wall signs.

Chair Peters thanked Ms. Strungys and the ABR, and opened the floor for public comments. There were no comments and Chair Peters closed the public hearing.

Member Murray made a motion to recommend the Village Board approve the ordinance as presented. Member Danly seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (6) Burns, Danly, Miller, Murray, Russell, and Chair Peters
Nays: (0)
Absent: (1) Rider

7. A Public Hearing Regarding 999 Sherwood Drive (Special Use – Animal Hospital)

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from staff.

AVA Cole said the Village received a zoning relief application from the Animal Hospital of West Lake Forest to allow an animal hospital to operate at 999 Sherwood Drive in the L-1 Light Industry District. The property commonly known as the Smedbo property consists of two principal structures, the north structure numbered 999, is the subject of the application and has a floor area of 6,152 square feet. The south structure, numbered 1001, is 13,217 square feet in floor area. AVA Cole said the site was under consideration for a new medical office development in late 2018 but the proposed development was not constructed due to market conditions. If approved, this would be the second Animal Hospital allowed in the L-1 Light Industry District.

Chair Peters invited the Applicants to the podium.

Doctors David McKenna and Brian DiFuccia, co-owners of the Animal Hospital of West Lake Forest, introduced themselves to the PCZBA. Dr. McKenna said they are seeking to lease the building to operate an animal hospital and noted the proposed space will accommodate their expanding business.

Chair Peters said for the record, the PCZBA will adopt and incorporate by reference the standards for variations and SUP provided by the applicant. There were no objections from the PCZBA.

Chair Peters opened the floor to questions from the commissioners.

In response to questions from Member Miller, Dr. McKenna said the plan is to close the Lake Forest facility and operate in Lake Bluff. There are veterinary hospitals that offer high volume after hour emergency services but they do not intend to offer that type of service. Dr. DiFuccia said currently there are only preliminary drawings available because there will be some minor tweaks. The plan is to occupy the space by July 2020. He said that the hours of operations will be similar to the existing facility in Lake Forest, Monday through Friday (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) and Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.). He said there will be no boarding services offered and there should be no traffic concerns.

In response to a question from Member Murray, Dr. DiFuccia said their goal is to function as an animal hospital and there will be no boarding or kennel services offered.

Member Danly shared her observations regarding parking.

Member Burns had no questions and said this will be a great low impact business with sufficient parking.

Member Murray said this is emblematic of the type of uses discussed for the L-1 District and there should be fewer restrictions for new businesses in this area.

Member Russell asked for clarification regarding the parking. The application indicates there could be approximately 20 employees and 8 customers at the building which currently has 33 on-site parking spaces and he inquired of the number of parking spaces allowed for this particular tenant. Dr. McKenna said the pending lease authorizes 15 parking spaces but their plan, if approved, is to expand the parking to the north to create an additional 10 parking spaces. Dr. McKenna provided the PCZBA with a plan for the proposed parking expansion.

Dr. DiFuccia said the pending lease does not allow them access to the south side parking area. The plan is to expand the north paved parking to allow for a double-load lot on that side of the building.

Chair Peters said the proposed parking expansion would be allowed as a matter of right. A discussion regarding parking followed.

AVA Cole said the proposed parking would be subject to ABR review but the PCZBA is not being asked to consider a parking variation this evening.

Member Russell said it is important for the property owner to understand, that it appears the proposed business could utilize 50% of the onsite parking and the multi-tenant building may require additional parking. However, if the SUP is approved, the Village is not obligated to allow additional parking which may require a variation.

In response to a comment from Chair Peters, Dr. DiFuccia said the recommended conditions of approval regarding trash enclosure and no outdoor animal activities will not be a problem.

Chair Peters opened the floor for public comments, there were no comments and he closed the public hearing.

Member Miller made a motion to recommend the Village Board approve the special use permit as requested with the conditions recommended by Staff. Member Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (6) Miller, Burns, Russell, Danly, Murray, and Chair Peters
Nays: (0)
Absent: (1) Rider

8. A Public Hearing Regarding 600 East Prospect Avenue (Residential Variations)

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from staff.

AVA Cole commented on the information provided in the original and supplemental packets and noted that, at the dais, there were provided response letters from the Applicant to the neighbors and revised plans which included two trees located on the northwest end of the property.

Member Danly disclosed that she lives across the street from the subject property but this will not bias her judgement regarding this agenda item.

AVA Cole said the Applicant is seeking a side yard and daylight plane variation necessary to complete a partial demolition, renovation, and expansion of the residence. The irregular shaped lot currently has a setback of 3.5 ft. compared to the normal setback of 5 ft. and the Applicant is proposing to keep the line along the northern part of the west side near 503 Maple Avenue. He stated that Staff has reviewed the stormwater drainage and tree preservation concerns and believe the concerns will be addressed adequately through the building permit process. AVA Cole stated that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviewed the proposed work, was supportive of a variation, and unanimously voted to conclude its review.

Chair Peters invited the Applicant to the podium.

Following an introduction from Edward Deegan, the project’s architect, the property owner (Catherine Denckla) explained why she chose to relocate to Lake Bluff and why she is seeking a partial renovation of the existing structure. Ms. Denckla said she has spoken with the surrounding neighbors and the majority are in favor of the request.

Presentation from Ed Deegan, Architect for the Project

Mr. Deegan shared feedback from the HPC review and provided background information on the existing structure. The proposed is located blocks from Lake Michigan and positioned on the corner of Maple and Prospect Avenues. The aerial view of the property shows that the main body of the existing structure rests on the corner closest to Maple and Prospect Avenue and the property north/south is positioned between the block. Mr. Deegan showed photos of the existing elevations and said the goal is to maintain the roofline, enhance the existing masculine appearance, install an elevator, and manage the current height. The plan is to renovate the existing structure as opposed to demolishing the home and rebuilding

lower to grade. Mr. Deegan showed photographs of the existing structures and an illustration of a figure ground which included the detached garage to the east and the “void zone” between the neighboring property to the east and the subject property. He showed a layout of the existing home and detached garage and said the articulated figure ground will not radically alter the streetscape. Mr. Deegan showed a layout of the existing site plan then reviewed the lot configuration and explained how the “pinch point” and building envelope creates a hardship for the property owner. Also, the Applicant desires to have an attached garage and the only way to make it a conforming element is to demolish the existing detached garage. A discussion followed.

Mr. Deegan continued the presentation, he said the building envelope is unusual and the transition between the north/south and east/west, the “pinch point” in the existing structure will be saved and the remaining areas will be removed. Mr. Deegan reviewed the proposed site plan regarding setbacks, tree preservation, etc. He reviewed the site plan and noted the proposed renovations would lessen the existing non-conforming daylight plane conditions. He said it is difficult to manage daylight plane because of where the house is positioned on the property, without requesting some relief, otherwise the second floor would be useable. Mr. Deegan showed a view of the north non-conforming elevation and said the plan is to lessen the non-conformity by removing the gable and introducing the shed.

In response to a question from Member Murray, Mr. Deegan showed where the proposed chimney would be located and noted the top shed dormer would have a metal roof.

Mr. Deegan reviewed the proposed first and second floor demolition plan and commented on the proposed renovations which included the front facade. He said the plan is remove the detached garage and retain the exterior shell of the existing house. He reviewed the existing and proposed elevations from various views. Mr. Deegan showed renderings of the proposed home from various views and said the plan is to retain all the existing materials. In conclusion, he showed the conforming FAR calculations and noted there would be no request for a square footage variance.

In response to a question from Member Miller, AVA Cole said the proposed location for the air conditioner units would not require a variance. A discussion followed.

Chair Peters opened the floor for questions from the commissioners.

Member Russell expressed his concern regarding the shed dormer along the north property line adjacent to 503 Maple Avenue. He expressed his disagreement with the application statement, that the plans for the proposed home will lessen the existing daylight plane nonconformity. Member Russell said he thinks there will be more bulk in the daylight plane as a result of the shed dormer along the top floor and north property line, whereas before the main intrusion was the gable end of the roof. He questioned if the second floor could not be designed with a “knee wall” along the north wall.

In response to a question from Member Murray, Mr. Deegan said they did not, but they are willing to metrically quantify the imposition into the existing daylight plane.

Member Russell asked if the Applicant had considered a “knee wall” instead of the shed dormer. Mr. Deegan said their rationale was that removal of the gable would lessen the impact/volume immediately along the side of the neighbor’s house. An extensive discussion regarding bulk followed.

Member Russell said he hopes that a special emphasis will be placed on measurements to ensure the referenced mature trees are protected. Mr. Deegan said a landscape and tree protection plan will be submitted to the Village for review.

Chair Peters said the petitioner is seeking two variations: (i) side yard setback, and (ii) daylight plane height restriction. He thinks it is significant that the Applicant is within the FAR requirements. He is not necessarily a proponent of allowing variances to go beyond FAR, but here you are staying within the FAR, so from his perspective it is less objectionable of a request.

Chair Peters opened the floor for public comments.

Elizabeth Jensen (resident) read her letter and provided a copy for the record. She showed her lot configuration and said the variance will impact her property. She expressed her concerns regarding drainage, tree protection, south lot line setback variance, placement of the new garage, screen porch and air conditioning units. She said in the neighbor spirit, for which Lake Bluff is known, she had met with the Petitioner regarding a compromise regarding the setback of the garage and placement of the air conditioning units because she feels these changes will have a major impact on the property. Unfortunately, the Petitioner was not willing to consider the compromise so she is asking the PCZBA to make a decision that will be fair to everyone.

Robert Nelson (resident) read his letter and provided a copy for the record. He said his property is located east of the subject property and shared his concerns regarding the impact on drainage and ground water runoff, impact of the proposed garage and screened porch on the view looking west, reduction of sunlight due to the proposed addition, and impact on the trees. He shared his letter and concerns with the Petitioner and he hopes the PCZBA will consider his concerns.

In response to questions from Chair Peters, Mr. Deegan said they are currently working with a civil engineer and the appropriate documents will be submitted to the Village for consideration as part of the permit process. He said due to time constraints there were no discussions regarding shifting the garage and screen porch to the south side of the home. He reviewed the east elevation and noted how the proposed renovation would lower the mass over the proposed screen rooms.

In response to a question from Chair Peters, AVA Cole said he is unsure if the Village has ever performed a light study such as that requested by the commenters.

Member Danly said the current non-conforming structure has so many hardships that the daylight plane should not be an issue. A discussion followed.

Member Murray said he thinks southern light is precious in that part of town, and he think that the extended roofline, although it is within the existing intrusion into the daylight plane, will significantly extend that intrusion to the east and he thinks it will be good practice to review a light study to see how this will impact neighboring properties.

Chair Peters said he is not opposed to that type of request if it will help the process but he thinks the proposed design will mostly impact the neighbors to the north.

Following an extensive discussion, Member Burns moved to recommend the Village Board approve the side yard setback and daylight plane variations with the understanding that the Village will enforce its

drainage ordinance and tree preservation requirements. Member Danly seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	(4)	Burns, Danly, Russell, and Chair Peters
Nays:	(1)	Miller
Abstain:	(1)	Murray
Absent:	(1)	Rider

9. A Public Hearing Regarding 79 Scranton Avenue (Special Use – Restaurant)

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and requested an update from staff.

AVA Cole stated the request is to operate an eating place without drive-in or drive-through facilities within the tenant spaced at 79 Scranton Avenue. The use would be shared with the existing bicycle shop within the tenant space. The “Bonk” dining concept relates to the feeling of fatigue after cycling, the plan would be to serve soups, salads, and other fast casual cuisine. He said the Applicant proposed to occupy the existing bicycle shop with no exterior changes and in the interior, their proposing to create a new food preparation area; dine-in area for 22 customers; and two ADA accessible bathrooms. The plan is for some bicycle shop merchandise to remain on the first floor and that storage and repair would move into the basement. AVA Cole said the food would be prepared off-site at the operator’s existing commissary (Inovasi Restaurant) and brought to the Restaurant for final preparation and sale. There are similar existing restaurants in the CBD such as Inovasi & Otherdoor and Prairie Espresso.

AVA Cole said this particular property has received a variation reducing the minimum parking requirements applicable to this building from 67 stalls to 18 stalls. The Zoning Code requires the same number of stalls be provided for restaurants as for other retail trades based on square footage. He referenced the Village’s downtown parking study. The study’s ratio applicable to retail uses are 2.38 stalls per 1,000 square feet; the ratio applicable to a restaurant is 6 stalls per 1,000 square feet. Given the 550 square foot space of this restaurant, an estimated 2 additional stalls would be generated. AVA Cole said Staff recommends, as a condition of approval, that employees be required to park at the train station as well as adhere to the provisions in the draft ordinance.

Chair Peters invited the Applicant to the podium and administered the oath.

Ron Oesterlein, landlord and co-owner of Rev Cycles, briefly explained the request and noted the addition of the proposed restaurant could extend the life span of the bicycle shop.

John Des Rosier, owner of Inovasi & Otherdoor, said he does not believe this will be a huge impactful business but could possibly help the bicycle shop. The plan is to offer the community another affordable food service option with price points of \$9 to \$10. The restaurant will be open 7 days a week, between late afternoon and evening hours, the food will be prepared off-site and the food will be delivered to patrons after the order is placed.

Chair Peters said for the record the PCZBA will adopt and incorporate by reference the standards for variations and SUP provided by the applicant. There were no objections from the PCZBA.

Chair Peters opened the floor for comments from the commissioners.

In response to a question from Member Russell, Mr. des Rosier stated the health department approved an arrangement which would allow the food to be prepared in the Inovasi kitchen and delivered to the restaurant.

In response to a question from Member Murray, Mr. des Rosier said the restaurant will close at 8:30 p.m. in the winter and 9:00 p.m. in the summer and the bicycle shop's hours of operation will not change. He is not certain if they will seek a liquor license, but if so, it would be for wine and beer.

In response to a question from Member Burns, Mr. des Rosier said the food will be prepared for on-site consumption and carry out, then elaborated on the delivery/carry out process.

In response to a question from Member Miller, Mr. des Rosier said the restaurant will be open on Sundays (4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.), if the business is successful, they may consider extending the hours. An extensive discussion regarding amending hours of operation followed.

VAT Schuster stated it is within the PCZBA purview to impose restrictions on the hours of operation, or structure the hours of operation as they deem appropriate. In terms of how that would be modified it could be a condition in the ordinance and the Applicant would have to come back and go through the amendment process or if you wanted to provide that they could modify the hours of operation through another procedure.

Chair Peters asked if the lunch hours would interfere with the bicycle business. Mr. Oesterlein said there would be no interference during the winter months but the summer months could impose a challenge. A discussion followed.

Chair Peters opened the floor to comments from the public.

Chair Peters administered the oath to Derek Hilldale of Bluffington's Café.

Mr. Hilldale said he does not object to another restaurant in the Central Business District but he is concerned with parking in the CBD. He read his letter and provided a copy for the PCZBA. Mr. Hilldale said CBD parking restrictions are not being enforced and the success of both businesses depends on adequate parking. Also, he believes that the proposed restaurant will desire to be open during lunch hours and possibly remain open later because 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. is a dead zone.

Member Miller commented that parking enforcement is a Village problem and it should have no impact on the request.

As there were no further comments, Chair Peters closed the public hearing.

Member Miller made a motion to recommend the Village Board approve the special use permit subject to the Staff recommended conditions regarding limited intensity of use, employee parking at train station and hours of operation. Member Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes:	(5)	Danly, Murray, Burns, Miller, and Chair Peters
Nays:	(1)	Russell
Absent:	(1)	Rider

Following a question from Member Murray regarding overdeveloping restaurant and food services in Lake Bluff. An extensive discussion regarding policy issues, parking supply, and demand in the CBD and Village's enforcement of parking regulations followed.

10. A Workshop for 109-119 East Scranton Avenue

AVA Cole provided a brief overview of the proposed use and site history and noted the address was corrected and architectural renderings were provided in the supplemental packet.

Chair Peters invited the Applicant to the podium.

Scott Streightiff Presentation

Scott Streightiff spoke on behalf of the property owner, Lawrence Property, LLC. He said the primary intent is to seek approval for the adaptive reuse of an existing vacated bank drive-through on the south end of the property. The plan is to repurpose the structure as an "English" themed pub and garden. Mr. Streightiff read the letter of intent which was provided in the packet. He shared information as to why Mr. Lawrence would be suitable to operate this type of business, then he showed photographs of the existing conditions from various views.

Mr. Streightiff said the parking plan approved in 2004, allows 12 parking spaces for the property. He showed an aerial view of the parking lot and noted currently there are only 10 functional parking spaces. He reviewed the proposed parking lot noting the revisions will have a net effect of 4 on-site additional spaces, and 3 additional on-site parking spaces along Oak Avenue, for a total of 17 parking spaces. Mr. Streightiff said the current drive-through access will be closed off and repurposed as a pedestrian walkway. The proposed modification will increase parking by 7 spaces. In conclusion, Mr. Streightiff showed an animated walk around of the proposed business and noted the existing drive-through roof would be repurposed, exterior material will be Chicago common brick, heavy lumber will be used for the interior space and as an expression on the exterior, the existing easement for the drive-through area will remain open and a proposed garden area.

In response to a comment from AVA Cole, Mr. Streightiff said there will be little advertisement for the restaurant; therefore, the gas lantern, when illuminated, will signify the establishment is open and closed when not lit. The gas lantern and a brass emblem would be the only exterior signage used to identify the space.

In response to a question from Chair Peters, Mr. Streightiff showed where the restaurant/pub area would be located in the structure.

Chair Peters inquired of the hours of operation, from the audience, Mr. Gary Lawrence shared information regarding how many tables will be used and the hours of operation.

In response to a question from Member Burns, Mr. Lawrence said he thinks there will be sufficient parking and commented on alternative access routes to the pub.

In response to a question from Member Miller, Mr. Lawrence explained how the current parking spaces are allotted for Lawrence Interiors noting one space is dedicated to the apartment tenant, two spaces for Bluffington's (first come first serve), and the remaining spaces could be open parking.

In response to questions from Chair Peters, Mr. Lawrence said next fall would be an ideal time frame but it depends on various factors (Village process, investors, etc.). Also, the plan would be to obtain a liquor license. Chair Peters said from his perspective the concept is very intriguing.

In response to a question from Member Russell, Mr. Lawrence said Friday hours of operation will be concurrent with the Lake Bluff Brewery hours (late afternoon until midnight).

Member Russell asked if there were any operating changes to the existing Lawrence Interior business. Mr. Lawrence commented on the intended concept regarding the dumpster area located behind Bluffington's. There have been no problems with oversize vehicles maneuvering Oak Avenue because they only receive deliveries once a month.

Chair Peters asked the commissioners if they had any significant concerns.

Member Burns said he likes the concept and the Village should support these type of developments and he would like to know what actions could be taken to better enforce the Village ordinance regarding parking in the CBD.

Member Russell asked that the proposal be shared with the Lake Bluff public safety departments mainly because ingress/egress to the alley. Mr. Lawrence said the rear walkway will remain because of the existing utility easement in that area.

Member Murray said the proposed readapted use for the space is fantastic but he is concerned about parking, traffic, access to the space, landscaping and the proposed parking lot.

Following an extensive discussion, Chair Peters thanked the presenter for their presentation.

11. A Workshop for Block Three of the Central Business District

Chair Peters introduced the agenda item and said this is a workshop, not a public hearing, to have civil dialogue and address as many issues as possible regarding the proposal, then he commented on how the workshop would proceed.

Presentation from Brad Andersen

Brad Andersen introduced himself and Peter Witmer to the PCZBA. He thanked the PCZBA and said the plan is to present the conceptual plans for the Block 3 development, receive feedback/comments and suggestions from the PCZBA and general public. Mr. Andersen commented on how current and previous concerns have been addressed as of today. Mr. Andersen explained how he got involved in the project, provided a summary of the site and its history, then reviewed slides with information regarding Lake Bluff's demographic population and planning analysis based on the Village's planning documents (1994 comprehensive Plan Survey, 1997 Comprehensive Plan, CBD Vision Study, and 2023 Lake Bluff Strategic Plan). Mr. Andersen reviewed a slide illustrating Lake Forest's approach to single story living and noted that Lake Bluff currently only has one single-story condominium unit, without stairs, in close proximity to the CBD. He reviewed slides illustrating the property value case studies for single family home sales adjacent to condominiums (McKinley Partners condominiums, McKinley and Westminster Roads, Illinois/Oakwood condominiums, Kelmscott Park development, North Avenue neighborhood, Lake Bluff and proposed condominium for 120 Scranton Avenue, Lake Bluff). Mr. Andersen defined the real estate terminology "progression/egression" as it relates to market value. He concluded his

presentation showing photographs of the existing site conditions for the subject project and expressed his opinion that the development will enhance the property values.

Presentation from Peter Witmer of Witmer and Associates

Mr. Witmer introduced himself and provided background information regarding his firm and developments. He showed an aerial view of the subject project and expressed his concern regarding how the property is zoned (commercial and residential). Mr. Witmer showed photographs of the CBD and said the plan is to maintain sufficient space between the streetscape and first floor of the proposed development. He reviewed the proposed schematic site plan which included two units, 10 units per building, landscaping between the buildings, entranceway and underground garage off of Oak Avenue, corner units with lights on both sides, and a pedestrian public easement along the streetscape. He said the proposed setbacks for the development would be 7 ft. for the front area, 10 ft. along the sides and 20 ft. for the rear and proposed on-street parking.

Mr. Witmer showed the schematic site plan for the ground floor, second floor, and penthouse which will have four units with setbacks at each corner. He showed the schematic plan for the proposed underground parking garage and noted there will be significant storage, an enclosed garbage area included in the space. He said that most units will have 2 parking spaces but the larger units will have 3 parking spaces. Mr. Witmer reviewed the ground floor schematic layout for the proposed 2,175 sq. ft. units, with individual door entranceways, screened front porches, and landscaping. He reviewed the second floor schematic layout for the proposed 2,175 sq. ft. units with an outdoor terrace area. He reviewed the ground schematic for the proposed 3,375 sq. ft. penthouse units with an artificial roof landscape area. He reviewed the elevation study from various views (East Scranton Avenue, Southwest corner; Scranton Avenue/Oak Avenue, Northwest corner at Oak Avenue and a slide illustrating the space between the subject and neighboring property). He said if a two story development is mandated, they would not proceed because it is not economically feasible. In conclusion, he commented as to why this proposal is more Lake Bluff friendly than previous proposals.

Member Murray inquired of the pricing for the units. Mr. Andersen said because the building has not been designed the pricing is in flux but could be priced at approximately \$700,000.

Public Comment

Chair Peters opened the floor and allocated (3) three minutes for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the PCZBA on this matter.

Lee Nysted, a 40 year resident, said his house is located behind the proposed development then read his opening remarks dated November 16th and 20th of 2019 and provided a copy of both letters for the record.

Jean Niemi, resident, said she lives directly behind the proposed development then read her letter dated November 20, 2019 and provided a copy for the record. She also expressed her concern regarding parking in the CBD and suggested the property be used as a parking lot.

Katherine Briand, a longtime Village resident, said this development is not appropriate for Lake Bluff and expressed her concerns regarding density, infrastructure (storm and sanitary sewers, etc.), demand for real estate, traffic, highest and best use, and tree protection.

Karen Eckert, a longtime Village resident, read her letter in support of the proposed development dated November 21, 2019 and provided a copy for the record.

Kevin Considine, resident, said his property, located over the back fence, would be significantly affected by the proposed development. He thinks a multi-family development in downtown for this particular property would be a great opportunity; however, this proposed development would not address the “missing middle housing” concerns. Mr. Considine thanked the property owners and said he hopes a solution can be reached but certain aspects for this particular proposal such as height, scale and mass are not appropriate for Block 3 in his view.

Edward Holstein, a longtime Village resident, said Lake Bluff is in dire need of “empty nester” housing and the proposed development, or something similar, would benefit residents seeking to downsize and remain in Lake Bluff.

J.B. Weiler, Lot #3 property owner and Village resident, commented as to why he placed another proposed project on hold and considered pursuing this proposal. He said he is confident the team will work with the surrounding neighbors to address their concerns regarding the proposal.

Lee Nysted returned to the podium and said the McKinley development in Lake Forest has vacant spaces which are still on the market and expressed his concern regarding the impact on Lake Bluff infrastructure.

Following a request from Chair Peters, Mr. Andersen said it is difficult to reply to “We do not want this building” and addressed specific concerns regarding size, light aspect, and shading. He said there was a shadow study performed and if desired can be provided. Mr. Andersen said he was told that one of the neighbors was not in favor of the development as presented because of the 20 ft. setback, but that neighbor may be more favorably inclined if there was further compromise on the setback.

Mr. Witmer thanked everyone for the feedback and said all the input will be reviewed to determine how to get the proposed development to an appropriate size. He explained what he meant by “not economically feasible”, by stating the space volume is the issue not the land cost component and there will be consideration as to how to reduce the overall building footprint.

Member Danly said that this development could be a bookmark to the Block One development at the other end of the Central Business District, which is over two stories. She asked if the presenters would consider submitting a massing model which could help better understand the development.

Member Murray said he believes that this proposed development will not work and he thinks that some of the community concern is that a three story development for this area is not in keeping from the transition of Block One to the single family residential zones to the east. He asked what alternative models could be pursued that would provide the property owners with compensation for the land without contradicting the actions of the Village Board. Member Murray said he is skeptical of the argument presented because the presenters have explained why the properties might sell, but not why the development will fit on Block 3 or benefit the community as a whole.

Mr. Andersen asked how the long range plan for alternative housing fits in with this potential location. An extensive discussion followed.

In response to a comment from Mr. Andersen, AVA Cole said the additional comments that were received have been provided in the supplemental packet and one was placed at the dais.

In response to questions from Chair Peters regarding height and setbacks, Mr. Witmer said the two story portion of the building would be approximately 30 ft., the third story approximately 8 ft. for a total of 38 ft. However, there will be an elevator located inside the building that would require a 12 ft. clearance from the tallest floor to get the required headroom for the elevator above the floor, so the third floor could be higher. Mr. Witmer said the north side proposed setback from the corners would be approximately 32 ft. and it was suggested that the third floor section be pulled back into the center of the development and shared their thoughts on why the third floor should be developed as proposed. There could be opportunities to move the massing of the third floor toward the center to lessen the impact.

Both Mr. Andersen and Mr. Witmer expressed their concerns regarding future developments if the proposed development is not approved. A discussion followed.

In response to questions from Member Rider, Mr. Witmer said the intent is to step back the third story which will allow outdoor space facing the south side of the building. He said they will abide by all the Village requirements regarding stormwater and new developments. Also, if the project moves forward, the plan is to bury the existing utility lines to improve the property line and plant additional vegetation. An extensive discussion regarding stormwater remediation followed.

In response a question from Member Rider regarding tree protection, Mr. Witmer said they would examine a way to save some of the mature trees on the east side of the property, but it will be difficult to keep the trees, which may be removed if a single family home was developed on the property.

Member Rider expressed her understanding that there are some three story homes in east Lake Bluff and she asked if the proposed building height would exceed 30 ft. Mr. Andersen said the Lake Bluff Library is 36 ft. and one home across the street from the property is 36 ft. He said there are several homes at this proposed height and that it does not make sense to him to establish an arbitrary height limit. Mr. Andersen said from his perspective this should be scaled as a bookend to define the easterly edge of downtown. He said it is not unprecedented to have taller structures in east Lake Bluff and showed photographs of such structures such as the former Lake Bluff Children's Home and Hotel Irvin.

In response to a question from Member Rider, Mr. Witmer commented on the vacancy rate in relation to their Lake Forest developments noting there are no vacancies in two of the developments, and the first and second floor of the third development is sold out. He said he is not concerned about the demand but he wants to work to best fit the development into the downtown concept. A discussion followed.

Member Russell commented on previous discussions regarding the subject site. He said it was absolutely clear that the overwhelming majority of the residents in the area were opposed to a three story structure; therefore, the Village regulations were revised and new planning principles were developed. Member Russell said he is firmly opposed to any proposed development for Block Three that is higher than two stories or 30 ft. maximum, and to the idea of shrinking in the two sides and having the two middle lot owners on North Avenue suffer with a wall that could be 40 ft. in height over their back property line.

Member Burns said the Village Board has ruled on this and thanked the presenters for their interest in Lake Bluff. He said this proposal is similar to asked for review of an issue that has been definitively

determined by the Village Board. This is a proposed three story development and unless the Village Board changes their course, a decision has been made. He expressed his concern regarding the potential vacant lot if the existing policies remain unchanged. An extensive discussion followed.

Following a comment from Mr. Andersen, Member Murray said he would prefer to see a more wholesome debate of the factors around the impact on a broader community.

12. Staff Report

AVA Cole said the Village adopted the ordinances amending the Lake Bluff Zoning Regulations for (L-1 District Uses, Physical Fitness Facilities, Use of SIC Codes) and to further prohibit Cannabis Business Establishments in the Village. Also, the Village Board adopted a Complete Streets Policy resolution and noted that one component of the policy is that the PCZBA is directed to consider the policy when conducting its development reviews.

The PCZBA continued its discussion regarding the proposed Block 3 development. Following a comment from the PCZBA, Katherine Briand returned to the podium and said that a two story proposal had previously been considered for that location.

It was the consensus of the PCZBA to seek direction/clarity from the Village Board regarding regulations for developments on Block Three.

In response to a question from Member Miller, VA Irvin said the PCZBA is an advisory board to the Village Board and it seems the commission may be constrained by the existing single metric of the PMD tool which addresses height standards. VA Irvin said he thinks the Village Board would like to hear feedback from the PCZBA, especially if there are certain parameters by which this might be palatable.

Member Murray said there is a lack of consensus on this matter, but the PCZBA cannot consider this right now because of the Village regulations. A discussion followed.

In response to questions from Member Rider, VAT Schuster explained the various mechanisms that this or another development of Block 3 could use under the zoning code. An extensive discussion followed.

13. Commissioner's Report

AVA Cole reported on potential zoning applications for the December regular meeting.

14. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the PCZBA, Member Miller moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Burns seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Cole
Assistant to the Village Administrator