

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW
VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 18, 2021**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on May 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom and in the Village Hall Board Room (40 E. Center Avenue) the following individuals were present.

Present: Neil Dahlmann
Sheree Dittmer
Matthew Kerouac
Julie Wehmeyer
Bob Hunter, Chair

Absent: Tim Callahan

Also Present: Drew Irvin, Village Administrator (VA)
Jeff Hansen, Village Engineer (VE)
Mike Croak, Building Codes Supervisor (BCS)

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

Chair Hunter asked if anyone would like to address the ABR on any matter not on the agenda. There were no requests to address the ABR.

3. Consideration of a Sign Permit Application and Sign Code Exemption for 105 Albrecht Drive

Chair Hunter introduced the agenda item then Eric Fisher of Cushman Wakefield to address the ABR.

Mr. Fisher said revised rendering of the banner has been submitted for consideration, as requested by the ABR, then he commented on the revisions involving context, height and width. A discussion regarding the size followed.

In response to questions and an alternative from Member Dahlmann, Mr. Fisher said he doesn't have a hardship. The goal is for the proposed lettering (5 feet x 18 inches) to be visible to people entering the Target shopping center as this would help with their marketing strategic of attracting either an industrial or retail user for the building. Mr. Fisher said the existing entrance sign located in front of the building would have to be removed or replaced to add another sign on the existing northern berm. Member Dahlmann said he would be in favor of two complaint signs as opposed to one large non-compliant sign.

In response to a comment from Member Kerouac, BCS Croak said the applicant would be allowed a larger permanent sign, as of right, because the size of the sign is based on the percentage width of the building.

In response to a question from Member Kerouac, Mr. Fisher said the proposed sign is similar to the existing building sign and the intent is to replicate the existing sign to market the building to retail and industrial users. Member Kerouac said the proposed sign would be portraying wrong information to potential retail users regarding the size of signage at that location.

In response to a question from BCS Croak, Mr. Fisher said the front of the building facing Albrecht Drive is approximately 370 feet. BCS Croak commented on sign code requirements regarding wall sign and said if one tenant occupies the building the proposed sign would comply with the code.

In response to a concern from Member Dahlmann, Mr. Fisher said not many industrial buildings face the Target parking lot and he would like to advertise that the industrial park building could also be used for retail use. Member Dahlmann said it would set a precedent, if the ABR allows the large temporary sign and variances (height and square footage), and he thinks similar request will be submitted.

Member Wehmeyer said pursuant to the sign code 32 square feet is allowed for temporary real estate signs; and although she understands what the applicant is trying to accomplish, she is not comfortable with the proposed size of the banner.

Member Dittmer agreed with the suggestion of mounting an additional sign on the northern berm.

Chair Hunter said he thinks the proposed banner is excessive and the message displayed does not mention the building could be used for retail use.

Following an extensive discussion, Member Dahlmann moved to recommend the Village Board approve an exemption for two signs on the condition that the size and height complies with the sign code requirements. Member Dittmer seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Kerouac, Dittmer, Wehmeyer, Dahlmann and Chair Hunter
Nays:
Absent: Callahan

4. Discussion Regarding Possible CBD Streetscape Improvements

BCS Croak introduced the agenda item and VE Hansen to begin the presentation.

VE Hansen said the latest version of the Teska Associates, Scranton Avenue Streetscape Concept, shows the maximum use of features associated with festoon lighting, paver bricks, seat walls, etc. This evening Staff is seeking feedback on how to more selectively choose where, and if, to use certain features and proposed adjustments (festoon lighting, brick pavers, decorative scoring patterns, seat walls and planter pots) to keep the cost within the tentative budget amount of \$500,000. VE Hansen showed the Teska preferred concept budget analysis and commented on how alternatives such as concrete instead of scoring or reducing certain elements such as festoon lighting poles and planter pots would reduce the total cost of the project and he noted the road improvement program cost is non-negotiable.

Chair Hunter opened the floor to comments from the commissioners.

In response to a comment from Member Kerouac, BCS Croak said the festoon lighting could also be located on the village green, train station and near the library. Member Kerouac said he likes the idea of using festoon lighting in other public area as well as on the southeast corner but he thinks it will focus mainly on Inovasi outdoor patrons as opposed to public gatherings at that corner.

In response to a question from Member Wehmeyer, VE Hansen said Staff is suggesting concrete in the right-of-way, no additional brick pavers with the exception of the existing brick pavers in Scranton Alley. Member

Wehmeyer said she is fearful that the old and new concrete will not look good and it would defeat the purpose of the improvements.

Member Wehmeyer continued by stating she understands the idea of placing the festoon lighting in one area but at a major cost. If the festoon lighting was completely eliminated there could be additional funds for other improvements such as benches, brick pavers, etc. that could enhance the overall feel downtown.

Chair Hunter expressed his concern regarding consistent sidewalks, festoon lighting and suggested that brick pavers be used to outline the shapes on the southeast corner, extend the existing pavers outward the width of Scranton Alley on both side of the street as well as the middle section crosswalk strips, boundaries around the edge of the geometry corners, and “V” shaped festoon lighting going down the street. Chair Hunter said he does not think piecemeal improvements will work nor will festoon lighting on the village green.

Member Dittmer expressed her concern regarding use of the proposed middle section crosswalk and said the festoon lighting should be simpler and attached to the building.

Member Dahlmann said the sidewalk replacement should be continuous. If the festoon lighting was eliminated the money could be used to repair curbs and sidewalks, and if desired, add festoon lighting in the future.

In response to a question from Member Dittmer, VE Hansen commented as to where new electrical conduit and power lines would be installed downtown, if needed.

Chair Hunter agreed that there is not much public gathering on the southeast corner and that the festoon lighting could appear to be specifically for Inovasi outdoor patrons. He recommended that festoon lighting be attached to the building.

Member Kerouac said he thinks three-dimensional festoon lighting could create a special moment as you walk downtown as opposed to just lighting the sidewalk.

VA Irvin expressed his recollection of feedback provided by the commissioners at the April 6 ABR meeting. He said the proposed improvements should consider global objectives, improve pedestrian experience, improve the feel and ambiance of the community because eventually the north side of the street will be populated. He said he understands it is difficult to build a plan around the existing downtown tenants especially since the former PNC Bank building on the north side of Scranton Avenue is on the market. VA Irvin said he think patchwork concrete is unavoidable because we are living in a dynamic environment and concrete repairs are constantly needed as a result of gas or watermain breaks. VA Irvin continued by responding to the ABR’s comments regarding brick pavers and festoon lighting.

In response to comments from VA Irvin, VE Hansen said the allotted budget for seat walls is approximately \$50,000 and \$15,000 for benches and some of the remaining improvements will be bid as alternates. VE Hansen reviewed the proposed vegetations and commented on other alternatives (grass, mulch beds, etc.) that could be planted in the landscape areas. He explained why he thinks it would be difficult for the Village public work crews to maintain the proposed landscaping, and noted that amount of vegetation would probably require an annual maintenance contract (\$10,000 dollars). VA Irvin said the Village allows tenants to use Village public right of ways to create interesting spaces for people to gather and build community. He said Staff is seeking feedback regarding the proposed improvements and timing is critical. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Member Wehmeyer, VA Irvin said he had spoken to one downtown second floor resident that does not anticipate any problems with the festoon lighting. VE Hansen said it is possible to put the festoon lighting on timers or reduce the lighting illuminance to minimize any problems with the tenants.

Chair Hunter said the Scranton Avenue Streetscape conceptual base plan is a good outline and rather than making random improvement suggestions, he recommends prioritizing any additional items regardless of the cost.

BCS Croak read a comment from Mickey Collins posted in the Q&A which states: “The origin of this project was a desire to add parking spaces in the CBD and this design concept eliminates five spaces because of the mid-block crossing.” She also asked if the mid-block crossing was more valuable than the five parking spaces.

Ms. Collins said she is curious because she thought all this started as a great opportunity to add parking to the CBD but the conceptual plan actually eliminates parking. She is unsure about the mid-block crossing because this is not a long block nor is there a lot of traffic in this area. Ms. Collins asked if parking spaces were more value in the CBD because the proposed mid-block crossing eliminates parking. She expressed her opinion that parking is more important in the CBD. A discussion regarding parking followed.

Member Kerouac said he thinks pedestrians are just as important as parking spaces and the proposed improvements could enhance the north side of Scranton Avenue.

Member Wehmeyer said fewer improvements on the north side of the Scranton Avenue allows pedestrians to take advantage of a clearer sidewalks as opposed to the congested sidewalk on the south side.

Member Dahlmann agreed that basic improvements should be considered and additional improvements prioritized. In response to a question from Member Dahlmann, VA Irvin commented on how the origin/evolution of the conceptual plan. He said the Village Board approved the current budget which included funds for curb and asphalt work. There was general support to use the remaining fund from the road improvement project to do additional amenities to support the business canvas and continue investing in the CBD to build community.

In response to comments from Chair Hunter, VE Hansen said federal grants are available but shared projects must meet federal standards which would delay this project. He said the ABR could recommend prioritizing replacing all the sidewalk but it would be difficult to maintain consistency. A discussion followed.

Member Kerouac said he thinks a level of excitement will be missed if the focus is solely on the base plan (sidewalks) and that people will appreciate any improvements to Blocks One and Two, as opposed to a consistent sidewalk, because patchwork sidewalks are inevitable. Member Kerouac said he favors the original conceptual vision of brining something new to the CBD. A discussion followed.

In response to a comment from VA Irvin, VE Hansen said he would like to bid the project in June to begin in the fall so as not to lost potential contractors. VE Hansen inquired of feedback regarding expanding the sidewalk in front of the Other Door and Clockworks and repair the drainage. He said Staff intends to add new sidewalk west of the area, replace cracked existing sidewalks or replace all the sidewalk. There were no objections from the commissioners.

In response to a question from Ms. Collins regarding parking in the CBD, BCS Croak said it has been said, there is no shortage of parking in the CBD only a shortage of convenient parking. A discussion followed.

In response to a question from Chair Hunter, VE Hansen said a new sidewalk on the southeast corner would be approximately 750 square feet and 1,000 square feet for the addition on Center Avenue. A discussion regarding sidewalk construction/repairs followed.

Member Kerouac said he does not think decorative sidewalks fits in with the architecture in the CBD and he suggested a simple sidewalk for downtown. A discussion regarding pattern and concrete size followed.

VA Irvin summarized the ABR's consensus regarding the proposed concept:

- Bump Outs as presented;
- Narrow the mid-block crossing to mirror the dimension of Scranton Alley;
- Make the angle symmetrical match its eastern partner;
- No brick pavers;
- Masonry seat walls as opposed to benches;
- Low maintenance plantings; and
- Consider festoon lighting as the last improvement but minimize it to reduce the quantities and overall cost.

VA Irvin said the ABR seems to value pedestrians over an auto-centric world. The potential value of additional parking was not as desirable as expanding and improving the pedestrian experience. VA Irvin commented on the next steps of the project as well as future Advisory Board hybrid and in-person meeting procedures.

5. **Adjournment**

As there were no further business to consider, a motion was duly made and passed to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Croak, CBO, CBCO
Building Codes Supervisor