

**Minutes of the Community Design Commission
Held on February 26, 2014
At Village Hall in Room 101**

Meeting called to order at 7:15 p.m. and roll was called.

Attendees: Chairperson Douglas Chien; Commissioners Steven Avalos, Julie Carpenter, Teresa Heit-Murray, Barbara Kwiatkowsky, Christina Loran, James Rolfes, John Schiess, Michele Wheeler

Absent: Commissioners Lloyd Natof, Greg Sorg, Aaron Stigger, Bernie Woytek

Also present: Michael Bruce, Zoning Administrator; Craig Failor, Village Planner

Public Attendees: None.

Non-Agenda Public Comment: None.

Minutes:

Commissioner Heit-Murray motioned to approve the minutes from January 22, 2014. Commissioner Schiess seconded. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Public Hearing(s); Sitting as the Design Review Commission:

Cal. No. 01-14-DRC: 410 Lake Street, Evelyn C. Gross

The applicant is requesting that a variation be granted from Section 7-7-15 (D) (1) (a) in order to maintain an existing wall sign located along the west elevation of the building, a location where there is no street frontage.

Ms. Evelyn Gross presented her application. She said she has been located at the business for 31 years. She said about 20 years ago she installed a sign on the west side of the building to help clients locate her business due to traffic and trees blocking the Lake Street sign.

Mr. Michael Bruce, Zoning Administrator, reviewed the staff report, which supported the variance because of the obstruction of the Lake Street sign by parkway trees and vehicles. Mr. Bruce said the staff report found the variance would not negatively impact the neighborhood.

Commissioner Loran motioned to approve the variance as submitted. Commissioner Carpenter seconded it. A roll call vote was taken:

Loran – yes

Carpenter – yes

Schiess – yes

Wheeler – yes

Heit-Murray – yes

Kwiatkowsky – yes

Avila – yes

Rolfes – yes

Chien - yes
The motion passed 9-0.

Staff Reports:

Mr. Failor said the Village was still in the process of hiring a new Forestry Supervisor. He said the Village Board is looking at reconsidering the tree separation ordinance. He said previously tree spacing was regulated at 35 feet between parkway trees but that ordinance was adjusted to 50 feet spacing - with some discretion by the Village Forester depending on the type of tree. Mr. Failor said the Village President has asked for that spacing rule to come back to the Board for review.

Commissioner Schiess recommended that the CDC reach out to its Trustee Liaison to ask for a role in the upcoming discussion. Chair Chien agreed and said he would do so.

Mr. Failor said the Madison Street streetscape project and other development projects were on hold at the moment as the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation gets established and prepares to take on leadership of those projects.

Other Business:

Sub-Committee Reports/Assignments - discussion of Forestry Committee

Chair Chien said in past years there was a Forestry Commission that was folded into the CDC. Commissioner Rolfes went to a recent presentation on Forestry Commissions/Tree Boards at the Morton Arboretum. He gave an overview of the presentation. He said most of the goals of Forestry Commissions fall under planting, pruning and preserving. He said other goals include maintaining a tree inventory, managing tree risk and building a relationship with the community. He said there was a grant program for communities in the historic watershed area to help with tree planting. Mr. Failor said he would inquire with the Forestry Department to see if they were aware of the program.

Chair Chien referenced the 2014 work plan regarding a Forestry Committee and asked if they should formally establish a standing subcommittee. He said the timing would be good as the new Forester was coming on in the Village. A short discussion ensued about prior research into establishing a private property tree ordinance and how the commission decided to table any decision on that until further notice. Commissioners came to an agreement that establishing a Forestry Subcommittee with five members should occur and a number of commissioners volunteered to serve on it. Mr. Failor explained that when they meet, they would have to follow noticing requirements. Commissioners decided to hold meetings 30 minutes before the established monthly CDC meeting.

Commissioner Rolfes motioned to create a Forestry Subcommittee. Commissioner Wheeler seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Chien asked commissioners if there were any scheduling issues with the March CDC meeting as it falls during school vacation time. Mr. Failor said he would take a poll via email to see if a quorum should be possible.

Commissioner Wheeler said she liked the idea of having a talk by Morton Arboretum experts on issues facing trees like the Emerald Ash Borer. Commissioner Rolfes said he would follow up on that. Mr. Failor said it could be a talk where other commissions were invited to attend as well.

Mr. Failor explained there were two revisions of the Sign Code and gave commissioners copies of the amended code. He said in the future, there might be some discussions regarding banners that may revise the Code further.

Sub-Committee Reports:

None.

Adjournment

Commissioner Schiess motioned to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Angela Schell,

Recording Secretary