

**Minutes of the Community Design Commission/ Forestry Sub-Committee Meeting
Held on April 26, 2017 at 6:45p.m.
At Village Hall in Room 101**

Forestry Sub-Committee Meeting called to order at 6:45 p.m.

A quorum was not present.

Community Design Commission Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. and roll was called. A quorum was present.

Attendees: Chair Douglas Chien; Commissioners Susan Ebner, Adam Kallish, Richard Katz, Jonathan Kirk, Nick Sinadinos, and Cindy Wong

Absent: Commissioners Juan Betancur, Teresa Heit-Murray, Mitchell Murdock, Lloyd Natof, C. Scott Smith, and Aaron Stigger

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

Chair Chien introduced and welcomed new commissioner, Jonathan Kirk.

Non-Agenda Public Comment:

None.

Chair Chien reviewed the Forestry Superintendent's report. He said this Friday is Arbor Day and the Village would be partnering with the Park District on some activities. Fruit trees would be given out at the Oak Park Conservatory. The Forestry subcommittee placed tree tags in Austin Gardens as part of the activities.

Minutes:

Commissioner Sinadinos moved to approve the minutes from February 22, 2017. Commissioner Ebner seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote as submitted.

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

Roll was called, a quorum was present.

Cal. No. 04-17-DRC: Shanita Straw (6602 Roosevelt Road) Applicant, is requesting that a variation be granted from Section 7-7-9 (H) (1) and Section 7-7-15 (C) (1) of the Sign Code of the Village of Oak Park, which sections requires that permanent window signs must limit the number of items of information to no more than six (6) items and that permanent window signage shall occupy no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the surface of each window area, respectively, to allow eleven (11) items of information in the window area and to allow more than twenty-five (25%) of the window area to be covered. **This application was withdrawn by the applicant.**

Cal. No. 05-17-DRC: Sugar Beet Co-op (812 Madison Street), Applicant, is requesting a variation from Section 7-7-15 (B) (1) (c) of the Sign Code of the Village of Oak Park, which section requires that projecting signs located in a Corridor Commercial Sign Overlay District and fronting on Madison Street shall not exceed 24 square feet in area, in order to erect an approximately 28.3 square foot projecting sign.

Mr. Bruce reviewed the application and said the Project Review Team felt the sign was too large and should be reduced to comply with the sign code.

Mr. Peter Nolan and Mr. Chris Roland, of the Sugar Beet Co-Op were present to discuss their variance request. Mr. Nolan gave a presentation on the Sugar Beet Co-Op. He said they do not have an exterior sign and believe an exterior sign will help their operations. He said they used grocery store consultants to help them design the sign and believe a sign that extends out of the building would be the best choice. He said they would be asking for a sign that was six feet in diameter, which was about 15% larger than what the code allows. Mr. Greg Marsey, also from Sugar Beet Co-Op, said the Corridor Commercial District sign overlay allows for a larger sign except for lots that face Madison and Garfield streets. He said the main reason for the variance request was the speed of cars driving along Madison, as having a larger sign would make it easier for drivers to read it.

Chair Chien asked staff for the reasoning behind the different sign allowances for lots that front Madison Street. Mr. Bruce said when the sign code was prepared the thought was positioning Madison Street as a more pedestrian-friendly corridor in comparison to high vehicular areas like North Avenue, for example. Commissioner Sinadinos asked if the additional six inches was a specific calculation or having the sign be 6 feet was an easy number. Mr. Marsey said six feet sounded like the right size based on what they wanted to do. Mr. Roland said it was also a good size in proportion to the building. Commissioner Sinadinos clarified the opaqueness of the sign. Mr. Marsey confirmed the green color would be opaque. Commissioner Sinadinos noted the light pole could obstruct some of the sign. Mr. Roland said they were hampered by the location of their main entrance and didn't want to have it further down the building. Mr. Marsey said their landlords were very specific about where they could place a sign and how it would be mounted. He also noted the plans were a little off and the sign would be closer to the building than shown.

Commissioner Kirk asked about reducing the sign to code; the font and wording would still be very legible and only the 'all are welcome' portion would need to be removed. Mr. Roland said attracting non-members was very important and they would need to keep those words on the sign. Commissioner Ebner said the same sign text could be kept but it would be reduced. She noted the sign would still be very large. Commissioner Ebner asked if six feet was a standard size for signs. Mr. Marsey said he didn't believe so as the sign would be custom made. Commissioner Kallish said it would be an 8% reduction and as it was just a gut instinct by the applicants to get as big a sign as possible, there was no other logic to allow for the variance. Mr. Marsey argued that Madison Street's reduced size was an arbitrary decision that didn't have much logic to it as Madison was a very busy street. Commissioner Wong asked if there were plans to put signage for the parking lot. Mr. Roland said there was a small parking sign on the fence but no other signs were planned.

Chair Chien reviewed the conditions on granting variances: plans are consistent with design criteria of code; sign would be suitable and compatible with neighborhood; features would not be detrimental to the growth of the village; and the sign would not cause substantial depreciation of property values. He reminded commissioners that the motion would need to be made to approve the variance although commissioners could vote for or against the motion.

Commissioner Katz moved to approve the variance requested. Commissioner Sinadinos seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Katz – no
Sinadinos – yes
Kirk – yes
Ebner – no
Kallish – no
Wong – yes
Chien – no

The motion failed 4-3.

Other Business

Resolution Approval: 3 Erie Court

Commissioner Ebner moved to approve the resolution for 3 Erie Court. Commissioner Wong seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Reports

Mr. Failor said there would be a presentation to the Village Board on the new zoning ordinance on May 22, 2017. A planning consultant has been chosen for the Harrison Street Business District plan update and their contract would be going to the Village Board for approval. A short discussion ensued about potential development projects along Harrison Street. A meeting on May 3 at the library will discuss the Lake Street streetscape project. The Wayfinding project will likely go before the Village Board sometime in June; the next CDC meeting will likely have some gateway designs for commissioners to review.

Commissioner Sinadinis suggested establishing gateway sign locations before reviewing signs. He asked about the new signs in the Park District. Mr. Failor said as the signs followed the sign code, they were not under the CDC's purview for review.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Angela Schell,
Recording Secretary