

**Minutes of the Community Design Commission/ Forestry Sub-Committee Meeting
Held on February 22, 2017 at 6:45p.m./ 7:15 p.m.
At Village Hall in Room 101**

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

Attendees: Chair Douglas Chien; Commissioners Mitchell Murdock and C. Scott Smith

Absent: None

Also present: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Rob Sproule, Forestry Superintendent

Discussion regarding forestry issues/Forestry Supervisor Report

Mr. Sproule updated commissioners on the Forestry Division. He said cycle pruning was underway and was focused on the north east portion of the village. In-house crews were doing removals and resident request work as necessary; 100-120 trees were estimated to be removals. Tree planting was gearing up with about 330 trees to be planted. Mr. Sproule will provide a tree planting diversity list at the next meeting. He said he would contact the Park District about any Arbor Day celebration collaboration with the sub-committee. Chair Chien asked about planned developments and following up on their landscaping maintenance. Mr. Failor said staff would pull a list for future discussion.

Community Design Commission Meeting called to order at 7:17 p.m. and roll was called. A quorum was present.

Attendees: Chair Douglas Chien; Commissioners Juan Betancur, Richard Katz, Teresa Heit-Murray, Mitchell Murdock, C. Scott Smith, Aaron Stigger and Cindy Wong

Absent: Commissioners Susan Ebner, Adam Kallish, Lloyd Natof, and Nick Sinadinis

Also present: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator
Loretta Daly, Business Services Manager

Non-Agenda Public Comment:

None.

Forestry Sub-Committee Overview:

Commissioners updated the commission on the sub-committee.

Minutes:

Chair Chien asked for corrections. Commissioner Stigger moved to approve the minutes from January 25, 2017 and February 8, 2017 as submitted. Commissioner Wong seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously.

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

3 Erie Court: West Suburban Medical Center is requesting that a variation be granted from Section 7.7.15 (D) (1) (b) of the Sign Code of the Village of Oak Park, which section requires that wall signs for buildings located on corner lots shall only be placed along the front lot line or the corner lot line. The proposal shows an "EMERGENCY" sign located on the North Elevation of the Emergency Center building, an area where there is no street frontage.

Mr. Bruce reviewed the application. He said the Project Review Team was in support of the variance request as the north elevation was the main pedestrian entrance to the emergency room.

Mr. James Crewman, from Quantum Sign Corporation, was present on behalf of West Suburban Medical Center. Mr. Crewman said the hospital wanted to add the sign because patients were entering the main hospital entrance believing it was the emergency room. He said the hospital believed the new sign could save patrons important time. He said the sign would be low-light and should not impact the nearest house, which was about 100 feet away.

Chair Chien asked if neighbors had been consulted. Mr. Crewman said he didn't know but said the sign would be a low LED. Commissioner Katz asked if there was an emergency entrance off of Humphrey Avenue. Mr. Crewman said that entrance was used primarily by ambulances. Commissioner Heit-Murray said she lives near a hospital and doesn't get a lot of light from the signage. She said she believed it was important for people to find the emergency entrance. Commissioner Wong said this was needed as she had been at this hospital and went into the wrong entrance.

Commissioner Katz moved to approve the variance as submitted. Commissioner Stigger seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Katz – yes
Stigger – yes
Heit-Murray – yes
Smith – yes
Betancur – yes
Murdock – yes
Wong – yes
Chien – yes

The motion passed 8-0.

Other Business:

Resolution Approval

6729 North Avenue: US Bank

Commissioner Katz moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Stigger seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Katz – yes
Stigger – yes
Heit-Murray – yes
Smith – yes
Betancur – yes
Murdock – yes
Wong – yes
Chien – yes

The motion passed 8-0.

Wayfinding Signage Update

Mr. Failor said the commission would need to make a recommendation to the Village Board on the designs submitted by Sasaki of the sign family and the gateway signs. He said the commission could recommend those together or separately.

Ms. Daly updated the commissioners on the process and reviewed the designs submitted by Sasaki. She said if the recommendation goes forward to the Village Board then staff would request the next phase of the project, which would be implementation planning; following that would be a multi-year installation process as it would be less of a burden from a financial perspective.

Chair Chien asked for discussion.

Commissioner Katz said he felt the consultants did a great job; for the gateway signs, he suggested customizing each per the different areas they would be placed and recommended a pedestal due to concerns about salt. Commissioner Stigger agreed and said at the last meeting the consultants indicated they would be on a slight curb to protect from damage. Commissioner Katz suggested a pedestal that had a design element to it and also suggested an art deco font in the downtown area.

Chair Chien asked for an estimate on how many gateway signs would be placed. Ms. Daly said five for now.

Commissioner Stigger said he really liked the parking signs and other signs but was not a fan of the gateway sign. He said he liked the dimensions but suggested the color would be better as green; he didn't like the outline of the font, the stroke on the side and the bleeding off of the letters. Commissioner Betancur questioned the orientation of the letters, going down to up; he felt it was overdesigned as well.

Chair Chien suggested splitting the discussion into two topics- the general wayfinding signage and the gateway signs.

Commissioners discussed the pedestal concept for the gateway sign. Commissioner Katz suggested limestone with an art deco design to it as it would tie into downtown's architecture. He said the font and pedestal could be altered depending on the location of the sign. Commissioner Stigger suggested a dark grey pedestal.

Commissioner Heit-Murray said the gateway sign has a dimension to it of frailty or slenderness and it doesn't feel strong or powerful. She said Oak Park was a powerful community filled with diversity. Chair Chien said an oak tree was a very solid, massive tree. Commissioner Heit-Murray agreed and said it should show strong; the impression doesn't portray what was necessary in this moment in time. Commissioner Smith suggested it looked vulnerable. Commissioner Heit-Murray agreed.

Commissioners asked about the back of the sign, which was bronze and unlettered. Commissioners were not pleased with that concept.

Chair Chien said he was concerned if a teenager hit the sign or tried to climb the sign, would the sign recover. Chair Chien asked for two motions on the designs.

Commissioner Smith moved to approve the gateway sign design as presented. Commissioner Katz seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion failed unanimously.

Commissioner directed consultants to consider the following concerns regarding the gateway sign in the redesign:

- Concerns about people climbing it
- Font
- Pedestal
- Weight of the sign: vulnerable and fragile versus powerful
- Stroke around the lettering
- Alignment of the lettering to the sign

- Orientation of the lettering
- Back of the sign being plain
- Blade of grass too literal
- Color
- Lighting options

Chair Chien moved to the wayfinding sign family designs. Ms. Daly directed commissioners to the small signs added to existing light poles as this was a new addition since the last meeting. She said it would be an alternative in areas that don't have a lot of room. Commissioner Heit-Murray said it felt heavy and rectilinear against a cylindrical pole and doesn't seem to follow the rest of the designs. Commissioner Betancur suggested a banner redesign. Commissioners discussed a redesign that incorporates two sides with color in between. Commissioner Heit-Murray suggested more of a panel style rather than a rectangle. Some commissioners suggested not including these signs. Chair Chien said this sign felt grafted on and if it was implemented it would not fit with the overall family.

Commissioner Stigger moved to recommend the design of the wayfinding sign family with the exception of the interpretative light pole signs. Commissioner Katz seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.

Staff Report

Mr. Failor said the zoning code rewrite would go to the Village Board in March. The zoning code would include the design guidelines that were reviewed by the commission. A planned development application for 1000 Lake Street was coming to the Plan Commission, likely in April. A meeting tomorrow was scheduled in Chicago regarding a potential partnership on a business plan /streetscape plan for North Avenue. Staff was preparing to present more information to the Village Board on the Lake Street streetscape project. Staff was meeting with businesses right now regarding the streetscape schedule. Responses have come in on the Harrison Street/South Town business district plan request for proposal; staff was reviewing the responses. Mr. Failor reviewed the Madison Street road diet. A short discussion ensued about a traffic study along Madison Street.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Stigger moved to adjourn. The meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.

Angela Schell,
Recording Secretary