

MINUTES
REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
July 8, 2021

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Tim Loftus, who described the Commission's advisory function as it makes recommendations to the Village Board, and explained that the Village will be filling vacant spots on it. He introduced meeting participants Trustee liaison Steve Thompson, Planning Manager Kelly Purvis and Recording Secretary Barbara Dutton.

Roll was called. Present: Chairperson Loftus and Plan Commissioners Laura Brown, Angela Fanella, Mohammed Saeed and Jamie Vondruska. Commissioner David Rodemann arrived subsequently and Commissioners Lloyd Berry and Robert Mulherin were absent.

Public Comment Non-Agenda Items

There was no public comment pertaining to non-agenda items.

Approval of Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Fanella moved to approve the draft minutes of the May 27, 2021 Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motion passed by voice vote.

Motion to Open the Public Hearing for 520 Forest Avenue to consider the placement of two HVAC units in the required front yard.

A motion to open the Public Hearing for 520 Forest Avenue to consider the placement of two HVAC units in the required front yard was made by Commissioner Fanella and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motion passed by voice vote.

Staff Introduction

Village Planning Manager Purvis, Glen Ellyn, 535 Duane Street, was sworn in. She described the subject property located at 520 Forest Ave, for which the Petitioner, property owner Standard Forest LLC, is requesting approval of a zoning variation to allow the installation of two HVAC units in the required front yard. Located at Forest and Anthony and to the north of the Central Business District, the subject property, stated Purvis, is zoned R4 and improved with a multi-family apartment. Single-family homes are to the north and east, an apartment building to the west and east, and an office building to the south. The petitioner, she stated is requesting approval of the following variation from Zoning Code Section 10-5-5 to allow two HVAC units to be placed in the required front yard, which is defined by Code as facing Anthony (though the front entry faces Forest). According to the Petitioner, Ms. Purvis explained, the Forest Apartments on the subject property provide affordable housing to seniors.

The common and amenity spaces currently do not have working air conditioning, stated Planning Manager Purvis, who added that the petitioner sought to be compliant and place the HVAC units either on the west or south sides of the building or on the roof, but found that installing the HVAC units on the west or south sides of the building infeasible due to the location of the condenser line, and rooftop

mounting prohibitively expensive. Hence, the petitioner is proposing to install the units in the front yard where they will encroach approximately 4 feet into the required front yard, creating a setback from the front property line of approximately 25 feet, where a 30 foot front yard setback is required. Arborvitae is to screen the HVAC units from view, Purvis stated, listing Staff-suggested conditions, should the Commission recommend approval of the Petitioner's request.

In response to a query by Chairperson Loftus to clarify setback requirements, Ms. Purvis stated that the issue is that HVAC units are not a permitted encroachment in the front yard. Commissioner Vondruska asked the tonnage of the units. Chairperson Loftus replied that they are two and four ton, respectively. Commissioner Rodemann asked if the units could be put in the side yard, to which Planning Manager Purvis said she didn't believe so, as the corner side also requires a 30' setback, which would present an encroachment. Commissioner Vondruska wondered if being a corner lot presented a more of a set-back challenge, to which Planning Manager Purvis replied affirmatively. Commissioner Saeed asked if the noise level would disturb pedestrians and other; Planning Manager Purvis did not know. Chairperson Loftus asked what the allowable sound at the property line is according to Code. Planning Manager Purvis stated the pertinent section is not referenced often, but that the requested placement represents a greater setback from what would be the parkway than Code dictates for residential-lot. Commissioner Vondruska surmised that, based on the tonnage, the proposed units would be similar in noise level to a residential unit. Commissioner Rodemann suggested that the placement doesn't present an aesthetic issue, since the placement is not on the side of the building's front entrance. Kelly thought the sound would actually be less than if the units were placed on the south side, as permitted.

Petitioner's Presentation

Petitioner Michael Johnson, 401 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL, was sworn in. Referencing the application, Chairperson Loftus asked him if the two rooms in question were currently air-conditioned. The Petitioner said they are not, and that the owner is looking to increase resident comfort. Chairperson Loftus asked how many units are in the building; Mr. Johnson stated there are 80, all one-bedroom. Chairperson Loftus asked if the exterior electrical disconnects are covered or have locks on them. The Petitioner replied, "Absolutely," adding that the senior multiple-family property is subject to tight HUD inspection standards that specify tamper-proof, secured disconnects. Chairperson Loftus asked how the units would be mounted, to which Mr. Johnson responded that they would be pad-mounted unit. Commissioner Rodemann asked the Petitioner to describe how the discharge line sets and electrical would appear. Mr. Johnson stated that all the condensing lines will be insulated and have a finished look, the electrical lines will be in flex-conduit, and the condensate discharge lines from the mini-split unit will be covered by mulch. Curious as to the location of the penetration through the wall, relative to the mini-split, Chairperson Loftus asked if the lines would run inside or on the outside. The Petitioner stated it would be the exterior from about head height and that the 6-ft.-high arborvitae will be able to cover the penetration. Commissioner Rodemann suggested a cover would look better than insulation, and could serve while the arborvitae grows. Planning Manager Purvis asked on behalf of Trustee Thompson if there are any first-floor units that will be next to the HVAC units. Mr. Johnson said the location chosen is in the center of the community room, so is separated by more than 50 feet from the first window of any adjoining unit. Commissioner Brown asked if any additional improvements are

planned that might affect the exterior. Mr. Johnson replied that only normal maintenance is planned for the foreseeable future – nothing that would significantly cause an aesthetic difference to the exterior.

Public Comment

None.

Commissioner Fanella moved to close the Public Hearing; seconded by Commissioner Brown, the motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Rodemann, who expressed support for the Petitioner trying to improve the property and serve the residents, suggested making the term “finished” part of the language to specify a suitable treatment to cover lines and achieve a finished look. In agreement, Commissioner Vondruska stated satisfaction. After Chairperson Loftus entertained whether the findings of fact support approving the variation request, Commissioner Fanella moved for the following:

After conducting a public hearing and deliberating on the requests of the petitioner, Standard Forest, LLC for approval of a Zoning Variation to allow the installation of two HVAC units in the front yard of the property at 520 Forest Avenue in the R4 Residential District, the Plan Commission hereby recommends approval based on the findings of fact, as discussed or amended at the Plan Commission public hearing on July 8, 2021, which are hereby incorporated into the Motion by reference as though fully set forth herein, and a copy of which will be attached to the minutes of this meeting and kept on file as part of the permanent records of the Village. The Plan Commission makes this recommendation of approval with the following conditions:

1. That the project be constructed in substantial conformance with the plans and testimony presented at the Plan Commission public hearing and before the Village Board of Trustees;
2. That the landscape screening around the HVAC units be installed and continuously maintained by the owner of the property.
3. That exposed piping of the project be finished in conformance with the character of the building.

Seconded by Commissioner Vondruska, the motion passed by roll call vote: Commissioners Fanella, Vondruska, Brown, Saeed and Rodemann and Chairperson Loftus all voted “yes.”

Trustee’s Report

Trustee Thompson invited questions, and reported that the Board approved the purchase of the Budgetel property on Roosevelt Road, for which development proposals will be sought. He listed upcoming Village events, Jazz up Glen Ellyn and Taste of Glen Ellyn, and observed that the Apex development keeps adding floors. He related that an effort to find new members for all the commissions is underway, and that recommendations for new Plan Commission members have been made. Commissioner Fanella complimented the approach to outdoor dining made. Trustee Thompson expects

more with sidewalk widening, and explained particulars of the decking and street arrangement at “A Toda Madre,” relating that a 100-year-old water main was replaced as part of the streetscape work.

Chairman’s Report

Chairperson Loftus announced that the evening’s meeting was the last one for Mr. Rodemann, who is leaving the Commission, and who the Chairperson described as an “asset.” Chairperson Loftus said that per Village President Senek, the Commission will have a “full crew” by its next meeting.

Staff Report

Planning Manager Purvis thanked Commissioner Rodemann for his service. She reported that three vacancies are to be filled on the Commission, a new planner is on board, and an associate planner is being sought, and listed other open positions. She said she didn’t anticipate another July meeting, but that there could be business before the Commission in August.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Chairperson Loftus adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m. following a voice vote on a motion to adjourn by Commissioner Vondruska, seconded by Commissioner Fanella.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Dutton-Thomas
Recording Secretary