DESIGN AND PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DAPR) MINUTES  
February 12, 2020


Staff Present:  M. Rivera, C. Ruiz

Presiding Member:  J. Leonard

A quorum being present, J. Leonard called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

1. January 29, 2020, DAPR Committee meeting minutes.

S. Mangum made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by J. Hyink.

The Committee voted, 8-0, to approve the meeting minutes, with 2 abstentions and 1 member absent during the vote.

Old Business

1. 1555 Ridge Avenue

Recommendation to Plan Commission

Thomas Meador, applicant, submits for Special Use for a Planned Development to construct a 5-story, 68 dwelling unit multi-family residence with 57 off-street parking spaces in the R6 General Residential District. The applicant seeks site development allowances for: 1) A 3' setback along the north property line where 15' is required for dwelling units, 2) No landscaping where a 10' transition landscaped strip is required along the north property line, and 3) A 10' X 25' loading space with 1.5' rear yard setback where a 10' X 35' loading space with a 3' rear yard setback is required.

APPLICATION PRESENTED BY: Jay Keller, architect

DISCUSSION:

● J. Keller, briefly described changes made to the plan since the preceding meeting.
  ○ Bump-out added on grove
  ○ One bedroom first floor residence on the west elevation with ground floor patio was added
  ○ ADA parking spaces located closer to lobby
  ○ Loading berth was relocated and reduced in size (requests a 25' loading berth as an allowance)
  ○ Bike racks on Grove were moved in front of landscape screening
  ○ Combined two units at the fifth floor to maintain the developments bedroom composition and parking requirement
  ○ Parking spaces reduced to 57 spaces
  ○ Included a waste management plan
  ○ Plans to utilize solar for on-site water heating
  ○ Change in brick color at the first floor

● J. Keller discussed the projects public benefits
● C. Sterling noted that the plant selection for the mayors monarch pledge doesn’t actually provide any benefit to butterflies. C. Sterling noted that the majority of the plant material is pachysandra, a non-native ground cover which actually inhibits native plant growth
● J. Keller stated that an arborist had selected the plants and ensured they were adequate
● C. Sterling stated that the plants were not appropriate and would need to be reviewed during permitting
● K. Jensen stated that an arborist was not the right person to select the plant material and suggested the applicant look at the monarch pledge website which has a list of appropriate plant material
● C. Sterling stated that he appreciated the attempt to alter the first floor brick color, but it had the opposite effect, actually making the building appear more bulky, the entryways are less apparent, and the first floor, which is the more problematic, stands out more
● J. Leonard stated agreement
● J. Keller stated they would change the color of the brick on the first floor back to match the red brick on subsequent upper floors
● C. Ruiz stated agreement that the design of the structure is problematic and offered the following suggestions to make the design more appropriate for Evanston and appear less mass produced
  ○ Change the first floor brick color back to the original proposal (red)
  ○ Reduce the height of the bulkheads to allow for the brick to continue closer to grade
  ○ Introduce a more subtle lintel and include stone sills
  ○ Ensure full window transparency, particularly on the south elevation on Grove
  ○ Include a more substantial cornice
  ○ Consider design elements which are sympathetic to the surrounding architecture. This is important considering the locations proximity to the Ridge Historic District
● C. Ruiz stated that the south and east facades are also problematic. Particularly the south facade along Grove which is inactive and deadens the street frontage
  ○ The view of the east facade from Grove, particularly in context with the adjacent single-family residential, is not appropriate. C. Ruiz suggest alterations to increase fenestration and proposed continuing the brick to this elevation
● J. Leonard agreed that parking on the first floor along Grove is not ideal and stated the committee had asked this to be addressed during previous meetings
● C. Sterling stated agreement with the proposed changes in design by C. Ruiz.
● K. Jensen asked how many parking spaces would be EV ready
● J. Keller stated that 20% of the spaces would be either EV ready or charging
● L. Biggs stated that 6 spaces were EV ready according to the plans, which was closer to 10%
● L. Biggs asked if there was a significant cost associated with more EV ready spaces, simply adding conduit
● J. Keller stated that the cost could increase dramatically if the service changes and felt 20% was appropriate for this development.
● L. Biggs stated concerns with the loading berth
  ○ Problematic backing a truck off the alley and stated the current location blocks some parking spaces
  ○ The truck turning diagram shows it clipping two of the parking spaces
  ○ Concern with the request for a smaller loading berth and stated a 30’ truck is appropriate to design to.
● J. Leonard expressed frustration with the project as it had been back to this committee many times and the same issues remain unresolved. The design must be better.
J. Leonard stated she did not want to keep this item in committee but noted that staff continues to have significant concerns that cannot be addressed without a willingness from the applicant to explore significant changes to the design and layout.

L. Biggs stated agreement. There have been significant design concerns from the start which continuously fail to be addressed.

J. Leonard addressed members of the public and provided a brief summary of what DAPR is.

Multiple members of the public spoke in opposition to the developers failure to hire local union labor and stated concern with the developers safety record.

J. Leonard stated that this committee was not the proper entity to express these concerns to and suggested they take their concerns to Council when and if the project gets to that point.

S. Mangum asked how many times a year to move-outs occur.

Applicant stated roughly 5 per month.

L. Biggs stated concern that the majority of these would use Grove street because of the ineffective loading berth.

L. Biggs made a motion to move the project forward to Plan Commission without providing a recommendation for approval or denial.

Seconded by K. Jensen.

The Committee voted, 11-0, to move the project to Plan Commission without a staff recommendation.

New Business

1. **1825 Lemar Avenue**

Oniel Johnson, applicant, submits for Major Variation to construct an open front porch and fence in the R2 Single-Family Residential District. The applicant requests a 19’ front yard setback where 22.5’ is required (Zoning Code Section 6-4-1-9 (B) 1.) and a fence located in the front yard where the required front yard is not adjacent to a Type 1 Street (Zoning Code Section 6-4-6-7 (F) 2. (a)).

APPLICATION PRESENTED BY: Oniel Johnson

DISCUSSION:

- Applicant provided a brief description of the proposal including the need to provide a safe location for his children to play.
- G. Gerdes asked if the proposed front-yard fence would diminish access of other units.
- Applicant stated that it would not.
- G. Gerdes stated that the drawing should be updated to reflect this.
- Applicant agreed.
- S. Mangum asked if the building had a homeowners association.
- Applicant stated that it did not.
- S. Mangum asked about the design of the proposed fence.
- Applicant stated the fence would be a 4’ high solid picket fence.
- S. Mangum stated that there aren’t many front yard fences in this neighborhood and most that do exist are very transparent.
- Applicant stated that actually many fences in front yards exist in this area.
• L. Biggs stated concern with a fence in the front-yard and the potential to conflict with norm maintenance operations as well as a diminishment of the pedestrian experience
• Applicant stated that 4' is not high enough to reduce visibility and reiterated the want for a safe place for the son to play. If the fence were more transparent, it would not be safe for their child.
• J. Leonard suggested the push the fence further from the front lot-line as well as plant shrubs or perennials which could soften the transition between the fence and the sidewalk
• S. Mangum agreed this could be a solution noting that two other developments nearby with a similar orientation have shrubs in the front-yard
• C. Sterling asked the applicant to explain the need for the “porch” in the front-yard
• Applicant stated that there was no need for the porch and it was simply something they thought would be nice to have to better utilize the space
• C. Sterling asked if the “porch” was related to safety
• Applicant stated it was not
• C. Sterling stated concern with the “porch” noting one of the standards for variation was proving a hardship and need.
• C. Sterling further noted that the “porch” is more of a deck.
  ○ No front entry
  ○ Not covered
  ○ Does not engage with the street in the same way a porch does
• Members debated the differences between porch, deck, and terrace
• C. Sterling asked the applicant if they would be willing to propose a front-yard at-grade terrace rather than the “porch” noting that it would be compliant and not necessitate a variance
• Applicant stated that they would entertain this idea
• J. Leonard suggested the applicant set up a meeting with C. Sterling to discuss options with potential to return to this committee if needed
• C. Sterling noted the applicant would miss their February Zoning Board meeting if the case was continued at DAPR and asked if this was ok
• Applicant stated they were not in a hurry to start construction

Item held in Committee pending a meeting with staff to discuss alternatives.

2. 2536 Ewing Avenue Preliminary/Final Review
Sam Mack, applicant, submits for building permit for an exterior alteration of a commercial space, Mack’s Bike & Goods, in the B1a Business District and Central Street Overlay District.

APPLICATION PRESENTED BY: Sam and Kelly Mack

DISCUSSION:
• Applicant briefly discussed the proposal including the need for the door to efficiently move customers and bikes in and out of the building
• C. Ruiz asked if a more sensitive solution could be found such as sliding glass doors which more closely resemble storefront windows
• Applicant stated that these were looked at, but were too costly and would eliminate valuable product space on the interior
• G. Gerdes stated he was supportive of the project and discussed other requirements
  ○ Need for an ADA parking space
  ○ Signage as a separate permit
• J. Hyink stated that the ADA spot should be the closest to the main entry
• L. Biggs stated that the business should have its own bike racks and they should be located on private property rather than the parkway
• Applicant agreed to supplying a bike rack and would determine the best location
• K. Jensen discussed the need for a waste management plan
• K. Jenses asked if the applicant would consider the sustainable initiative program
• Applicant stated they would
• K. Jensen stated a need for a security plan since bike shops are often targets of theft
• Applicant stated they have one in place
• I. Eckersberg stated she supported the project noting there used to be a bike shop across the street and it was successful in that location for many years

G. Gerdes made a motion for preliminary and final approval.

Seconded by S. Mangum

The Committee voted, 11-0, to grant preliminary and final approval for alterations as presented at 2536 Ewing Avenue.

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Adjournment

J. Hyink made a motion to adjourn, seconded by L. Biggs. The Committee voted, 11-0, to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

The next DAPR meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. in Room 2404 of the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Cade W. Sterling