



MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF VILLAGE OF FRANKFORT
PLAN COMMISSION / ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
MARCH 8, 2018 – VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
432 W. NEBRASKA STREET

Call to Order Chair Don Schwarz called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Margaret Farina, Alicia Hanlon, Jessica Petrow, Maura Rigoni, Lisa Hogan and Don Schwarz

Commissioners Absent: Gene Savaria

Staff Present: Village Administrator Robert A. Piscia, Building Department Supervisor Adam Nielsen, Assistant Director of Development Services Zach Brown, and Administrative Assistant Marina Zambrano

Elected Officials Present: Mayor Jim Holland, Trustee Mike Stevens, Trustee Bob Kennedy, Trustee Cynthia Heath, Trustee Dick Trevarthan, and Village Clerk Adam Borrelli

Chairman Don Schwarz swore in those wishing to testify.

A. Approval of the Minutes from February 22, 2018.

Motion (#1): Approve the minutes from February 22, 2018.

Motion by: Hogan
Approved: (5 to 0)

Seconded by: Hanlon

B. Public Hearing Request: Camp Variance (Continued from February 22, 2018)
Table Indefinitely

Public Hearing Request: Variance of first floor building materials to permit the construction of a single-family home located at 22302 Ledgestone Way in the Stonebridge Valley Subdivision.

Staff noted that the applicant revised his plans to comply with ordinance requirements.

Motion (#2): Recommend to table the request indefinitely

Motion by: Rigoni
Approved: (5 to 0)

Seconded by: Farina

C. Final Plat Approval: Aiello Re-subdivision

Public Hearing Request: Final Plat approval to consolidate two existing lots into one 94,348 sq. ft. lot located at 312 and 320 S. 95th Avenue, in the Kean Avenue Estates Subdivision.

Building Department Supervisor Adam Nielsen presented the staff report and provided an overview of the request. The applicant, Joe Aiello, was present and further described the request.

- Plan Commission members questioned timeline for construction of the new property. The applicant added there is a plan for construction that will take place as soon as they are able to receive the final plat approval for the lot consolidation;
- Commissioners noted that the new lot was consistent with ordinance requirements;
- Commissioner Rigoni questioned if the subject property was near where the Village's Comprehensive plan showed a future connection between White Street and 95th Avenue which staff confirmed;

Motion (#3): Recommend the Village Board approve the Final Plat of Resubdivision for 312 and 320 S 95th Avenue in the Kean Avenue Estates Subdivision in accordance with the reviewed plans.

Motion by: Hogan
Approved: (5 to 0)

Seconded by: Rigoni

D. Public Hearing Request: Alexi Development Variances (Ref. # 102)

Public Hearing Request: Variances of the front yard setback requirement from 30 feet to 20.5 feet, rear yard setback from 30 feet to 28.2 feet, corner yard setback from 30 feet to 21 feet, lot coverage from 20% to 20.1%, and first floor building materials to permit the construction of a single-family home, located at 122 Walnut Street.

Building Department Supervisor Adam Nielsen presented the staff report and provided an overview of the request. The applicant, Tony Vari, was present and further described the request noting that he and his clients had gone through several iterations of architectural design in attempt to address the concerns expressed in previous meetings and that he had reduced the square footage \pm 100 square feet in an attempt to meet lot coverage however a more accurate calculation of lot area conducted by his engineer resulted in the home still exceeding lot coverage by 18 square feet.

Mark Adams of the Old Town Homeowners Association questioned the setbacks of the surrounding homes noting that he believed his home's setback was larger than described. Staff noted that the setbacks in the staff report are based upon aerial photography which has some margin for error and confirmed that the front property line is generally parallel to the back of the sidewalk. Mr. Adams noted the largest issue with the home is the orientation of the entrance facing Oregon Street as the majority of the homes on corner lots in the old town area face the north / south

oriented tree named streets. Mr. Adams stated that the home as proposed is unfair to downtown residents as it would ruin the streetscapes of both Oregon and Maple and expressed his belief that in large part pedestrians do not walk down Oregon Street.

Pamela Biesen questioned whether the address will have to be changed if not facing Walnut. Staff noted that the Frankfort Post office confirmed the address would not change.

Teresa Kara expressed concern with the size of the home and questioned if anyone had studied the impact that new homes are creating in the downtown. Ms. Kara polled the audience to see how many in attendance owned a home in the downtown area and asked how many were aware of the proposed changes. Ms. Kara suggested the Village explore ways to keep people better informed.

Emily Biegel questioned what decides if variances are approved noting that it appears variances are always given to the builders. Ms. Biegel questioned how the Commission determines if a home is going to fit with the surrounding neighborhood and suggested that the residents are kept in the dark on proposed developments in the downtown area by design. Ms. Biegel suggested the Village impose fines for tearing down a home that could then be used to help small businesses. Ms. Biegel questioned what the downtown residents get in return for the approval of variances and noted that the Southwest Suburban Activists were asked to attend the Plan Commission meeting because so many people were deeply upset.

Commissioner Petrow explained the standards of variance the Commission uses in review of proposed variances.

Audience members suggested that if the Village keeps allowing old homes to be torn down they should remove the historic district signage. Jason Kimsey expressed his belief that the home could be remodeled and not torn down.

Mark Baker noted that variances are common in the old town area because most homes and properties are non-conforming. Mr. Baker noted that what downtown residents get from this specific proposal is the removal of an abandoned home and dead trees and a new home that will improve the tax base.

Peggy Donnellan, suggested for the Plan Commission packets to be posted on the Village's website. Ms. Donnellan suggested the Village's elected officials let go of their vision for the downtown and develop a vision that is more in keeping with the desires of the downtown residents.

Rosemary Bloomer questioned why larger homes are being built and not one-story homes stating that the two story homes take away light and air from the smaller homes nearby.

Stephanie Kush suggested the meeting be postponed until the Village can study how variance approval impacts the value of existing homes. Ms. Kush noted that the Commissioners do not have a vested interest in the downtown because they do not live there. Ms. Kush questioned if Commissioners had received a copy of the survey

that was conducted by the Old Town Homeowners Association and suggested that the survey results be taken into consideration.

Nichole Schaeffer noted that the home should face Walnut Street and suggested the Village adopt architectural criteria for the downtown. Ms. Schaeffer expressed her belief that new homes could be constructed in the downtown while preserving the historic look and feel.

Paul Dicosola expressed his concern over the perceived lack of consistency in variance review criteria.

Danette Muscarella inquired whether the home could be moved to avoid the corner side yard setback variance. Staff expressed their opinion that if the garage were detached from the home and pushed closer to the alley, the first floor of the home converted to all masonry, 18 square feet of the home removed, and the home shifted $\pm 10'$ to the north and west that the proposed home could be constructed without any variance approval. Ms. Muscarella questioned if an engineer had been through the home to determine if it was salvageable and discussed the results of the survey that the Old Town Homeowners Association conducted.

Dawn Shields suggested the Village impose a moratorium on new construction in the downtown until the concerns of the residents were addressed and suggested new homes utilize the same footprint of the home they are replacing.

Bob Allan owner of the property immediately to the north noted that he is the only person directly impacted by the proposed home and that the setback variances being requested are even less than the existing home maintains. Mr. Allan noted that he was strongly opposed to shifting the home further north to meet the corner side yard setback requirements as doing so would push the home too close to his home.

- Commissioner Farina suggested the applicant work with the Old Town Homeowners Association to enhance the Walnut Street façade and questioned if in doing so the association would be more amenable to the orientation of the front entrance;
- Mr. Galvin expressed a willingness to work with the association however voiced concern that it would be difficult to satisfy everyone's requests and opinions on the design;
- Mark Adams noted that the Old Town Homeowners Association was not interested in discussing the design of the Walnut Street façade if relocating the entrance from Oregon to Walnut was not proposed;
- Member Farina expressed concern with the proposed lot coverage noting that the subject property is large in comparison to others in the downtown area;
- Commissioner Hogan thanked the resident who lived immediately north of the subject property for expressing his opinion noting that Commissioners often ask if the immediate neighbors are present as they value their input;
- Member Hogan questioned the makeup of the Old Town Homeowners Association and if all residents in the old town area were involved;

- Staff noted that the Mayor and Board have directed staff to involve the Old Town Homeowners Association in reviewing plans in the old town area regardless of their membership rates;
- Commissioner Hanlon noted that many of the issues raised by the audience were policy related and that policy is set by the Mayor and Village Board;
- Member Hanlon noted that she would prefer the home meet the lot coverage requirements but that modifying the plans to comply with setback and materials requirements would be a mistake and result in a home that is out of character with the surrounding area;
- Commissioner Rigoni noted that the Village does not regulate the orientation of a home's front door;
- Member Rigoni thanked the applicant for reducing the size of the home and stated that the proposed 18 square feet of additional lot coverage was negligible;
- Commissioner Rigoni noted that landscaping will help soften the appearance of the eastern façade of the home. Mr. Galvin agreed that he would preserve the shrubs along the northern property line and that he intended to install landscaping along the foundation of the home;
- Staff explained the HR zoning district noting that if the property were zoned HR the proposed home could be built without any variances for setback or lot coverage;
- Commissioner Petrow noted that the downtown area belongs to all the people of Frankfort and that the attendance in the audience speaks volumes;
- Member Petrow noted that the zoning ordinance specifically addresses the orientation of garages however does not speak to front entrance orientation. Ms. Petrow noted that the Comprehensive Plan states that new homes should respect the existing street network and that the Comprehensive Plan should be used as a guide where the zoning ordinance is silent on a particular issue;
- Commissioner Petrow discussed the findings of fact and noted that the majority of the lots in the old town area are non-conforming and as such the plight of the owner is not unique and expressed her belief that the proposed plans would alter the essential character of the surrounding area;
- Commissioners thanked all those in attendance noting that their participation and commentary is valuable in the decision making process.

Motion (#4): Table the public hearing to April 26th to allow time for Commissioners to attend the upcoming CMAP training, allow the 1890's Theme Committee to pursue grants for historic preservation training, and for staff to provide additional information regarding the impact of recent variance approvals.

Motion by: Petrow

Seconded by: Farina

Staff requested clarification on the additional information being sought by the Commission. Commissioners suggested staff provide the reports and meeting minutes from all variance approvals relating to new construction in the downtown area.

Motion (#8): Recommend the Village Board approve a variance of the lot coverage requirement from 20% to 20.1% to permit the construction of the proposed home located at 122 Walnut Street in accordance with the approved plans and public testimony.

Motion by: Rigoni

Seconded by: Hogan

Not Approved: (3 to 2)

Aye (2): (Hogan, Rigoni)

Nay (3): (Farina, Petrow, Hanlon)

Motion (#9): Recommend the Village Board a first floor building materials variance to permit the use of Hardi composite siding for the construction of the proposed home at 122 Walnut Street in accordance with the reviewed plans and public testimony.

Motion by: Rigoni

Seconded by: Hanlon

Approved: (4 to 1)

Aye (4): (Rigoni, Hanlon, Farina, Hogan)

Nay (1): (Petrow)

Following the vote members noted that the upcoming Plan Commission training and possible historic preservation training was extremely important and that staff and the Village should continue to pursue such training opportunities.

E. Workshop: AGS, Inc. Variances

Future Public Hearing Request: Rezoning from I1 to I2, variance of required landscape of front yard from 25 ft. to 20ft., and variance to permit a loading area in the front yard to permit construction of a new 49,500 sq. ft. building within the East Point Industrial Park. Other Request: Final plat approval.

Assistant Director Brown presented the staff report and provided an overview of the request. The applicant, John C. Trainor, was present and further described the project.

- Commissioners discussed the proposed rezoning noting that the requested I2 zoning is consistent with the property immediately to the west;
- Members discussed proposed consolidation noting similar requests were approved for the other properties within the East Point Park;
- Commissioners noted that the 20' public utility and drainage easements between the lots that will need to be abrogated and storm sewers within those easements relocated;
- Plan commission members discussed the proposed reduction of the landscaped front yard from 25' to 20' noting that it is consistent with other recent requests in industrial areas and historic application of the requirement however requested the applicant provide enhanced landscaping within the reduced space;
- Commissioners discussed the proposed loading dock within the required front yard setback noting that the larger concern was how the retaining wall and guard rail would obstruct north/south traffic flow within the parking lot;

- Commissioners questioned if the applicant could relocate the dock to comply. Mr. Trainor noted that relocation would conflict with their “lean” manufacturing process and inhibit future expansion plans and as such is impossible;
- The applicant agreed to investigate modification of the plans to limit the impact of the retaining wall and guard rail on traffic flow;
- The applicant confirmed that he expects to have 30 employees at this location;

F. Workshop: Crystal Brook Phase II- Preliminary Plat Discussion

Future Request: Revised preliminary plat approval for Crystal Brook Phase II, being part of the subdivision known as Crystal Brook of Frankfort and generally located at the northwest corner of Harlem Avenue and Steger Road.

Building Department Supervisor Adam Nielsen presented the staff report and provided an overview of the request. The Engineer was present and further described the request

- Plan Commission members discussed the revised Harlem Avenue bridge design and questioned the reason for the change;
- The applicant confirmed that the revision was necessary to reduce costs and that they had previously requested removal of the bridge entirely and explored a secondary access to Steger Road;
- Staff noted that purpose of the workshop was to give the applicant feedback on the bridge design and revised phasing prior to them initiating the approval process for the bridge changes with the Army Corps, IDNR, and FEMA. Staff noted that finalized plans will be presented at a future meeting;
- Commissioners questioned if the previously approved arboretum along Harlem would be constructed. Staff noted that the applicants had not requested nor staff approved the removal of this amenity;
- Members questioned what land was donated to the Park District within the development. Staff confirmed that the detention ponds and the area under the high tension power lines was dedicated to the park;
- Commissioners noted that any changes to the bridge and drainage would need to be approved by the Village’s engineer;

G. Public Comments

None

H. Village Update

Trustee Mike Stevens provided an update on recent Village Board discussions.

I. Other Business

None

J. Attendance Update

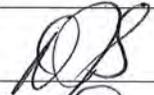
Members confirmed their availability for the next Plan Commission Meeting to be held on March 22, 2018 Except Lisa Hogan. Commissioners requested staff provide a copy of the outline for the upcoming CMAP training.

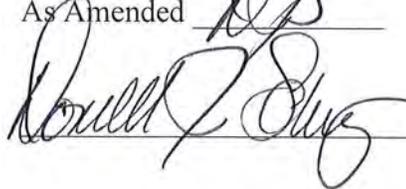
Motion (#10): Adjournment (11:10 PM)

Motion by: Rigoni Seconded by: Farina
Unanimously approved by voice vote.

Approved March 22, 2018

As Presented _____

As Amended  _____

 _____ /s/Donnell Schwarz, Chairman

 _____ /s/ Secretary