

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
WORTHINGTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
WORTHINGTON MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION

June 27, 2013

The regular meeting of the Worthington Architectural Review Board and the Worthington Municipal Planning Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with the following members present: Richard Hunter, Chair; James Sauer, Vice Chair; Kathy Holcombe, Secretary; Mikel Coulter; Amy Lloyd; and Jo Rodgers. Also present were: Scott Myers, Worthington City Council Representative for the Municipal Planning Commission; Lynda Bitar, Planning Coordinator and Clerk of the Municipal Planning Commission; and Melissa Cohan, Paralegal.

A. Call to Order – 7:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of minutes of the meeting of June 13, 2013

Mr. Coulter moved to approve the minutes, and Mrs. Rodgers seconded the motion. All members said, “aye”.

4. Affirmation/swearing in of witnesses

B. Architectural Review Board

1. Unfinished

- a. Existing Cell Tower Equipment Modifications – **300 W. Dublin-Granville Rd.** (Tom Paine of SBA Network Services Verizon) **AR 26-13**

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar received an e-mail from the applicant requesting the application be withdrawn.

2. New

- a. Signage – **600 High St.** (Sign-A-Rama of Gahanna/Worthington United Methodist Church) **AR 43-13**

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the facts from the application. Samples of the materials were distributed to Board members for viewing. Mr. Hunter asked if the applicant was present. Mr. John Persons, of Sign-A-Rama Gahanna, stated his address is 158 N. Hamilton Rd., Gahanna, Ohio.

Mr. Hunter asked Mr. Persons to give the Board a few more details about the materials for the signs. Mr. Persons said one inch thick PVC plastic will be used for the three small hanging signs (projection signs) and the thin composite which is hard plastic with aluminum faces will be used for the two wall signs that will be facing north. The two ground mounted post and panel signs will be two inch thick aluminum. Mr. Hunter asked if they would have a bronze background and Mr. Persons said yes, with white vinyl lettering. Mr. Persons said he felt the size of the directional signs were reasonable since the large building sits on about four acres of land.

Mr. Sauer asked Mr. Persons to explain the rationale for the street sign along Hartford St. Mr. Persons said the street sign is to mark the entrance for people coming from the east because the building sits far back from the street. Mr. Sauer said the church has a very large presence on High Street, and a visitor coming to the church would normally arrive through the High Street entrance. Visitors coming from the Hartford Street area will likely already know where the church is. Mr. Myers said he knows where the church is but the church's back driveway is easy to miss. Mr. Sauer said he felt it was not necessary to have a sign on a residential street, but he was okay with the other signs that were presented at the meeting. Mrs. Holcombe said she agreed with Mr. Sauer. She said possibly something smaller and more permanent would be okay, but the street sign presented at the meeting looked like a temporary sign and it was too large. Mrs. Holcombe also agreed that a new visitor coming to the church would likely arrive through the High Street entrance.

Mr. Gary George approached the microphone and stated he is the chairman for the trustees of the church. Mr. George said he agreed with the Board's comments about the neighborhood street sign. Mr. Hunter said the sign has a twelve square foot face on each side and might look better if the size was reduced, and possibly less lettering which could result in more positive votes from the Board. Mr. Hunter asked Mr. George if a two foot by two foot sign would be okay with less wording on it. Mr. George said he was not sure how to answer Mr. Hunter's question because he will have to go back to his board to get an opinion on the matter. Mr. George said he would like to defer to the sign expert and asked for Mr. Persons opinion. Mr. Persons said that since the sign sits so far back from the road he would prefer that the sign remain twelve square feet. Mr. George asked the Board members what would be the largest sign approved for that particular location. Mr. George said the church wants to be neighbor friendly.

Mr. Sauer said a smaller sign would be better than a larger sign, and no sign would be best of all. Mrs. Holcombe said she agreed with Mr. Sauer. She said she understands why the church would like the sign in that location, but visitors will likely arrive via the High Street entrance. Mr. Sauer said that banks sometimes mark their driveway with a two foot by two foot directional sign and that might be a possible solution.

Mr. Coulter said he understands the need for the sign, and is not necessarily against it, but feels the proposed sign looks like a "For Sale" sign. He feels a smaller more decorative sign would be

more appropriate, possibly something with a stone base to match the stone wall. A more decorative sign would be in better character with the neighborhood.

Mr. George asked the Board if they would decide on an agreeable size that he could discuss with his trustees. He asked if he should have some of the signs approved tonight and come back later with the plan for the street sign. Mrs. Bitar said the signs cannot be installed until a variance is granted and that will not happen until August. Mr. George said that he would like the Board to table his application.

Mr. Hunter asked the audience if there was anyone present that wanted to speak for or against this application even though it was going to be tabled and no one came forward. Mr. Sauer moved to table the application and Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. All Board members said, "Aye".

b. Garage – 676 Oxford St. (Shawn McNeil/Keaton) AR 44-13

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar discussed the facts from the application. Mr. Hunter asked if the applicant was present. Mr. Shawn McNeil from Garage Gurus approached the microphone and stated his address is 370 Charleston Ave., Columbus, Ohio. Mr. McNeil said his client just wants to build a garage that fits nice with the neighborhood and her house. The Board members said they liked the style of the garage. Mrs. Holcombe said she liked the idea of the house being white to match the garage. Mr. Hunter asked if there was anyone present that wanted to speak either for or against this application and no one came forward.

Findings of fact:

1. A 30' x 20' freestanding garage is proposed for this property. The proposed location is 4'7" from the north side of the property, and approximately 65' behind the house. The lot is 252' deep. The proposed garage would be oriented with the entry doors facing south. A concrete area with a turnaround is proposed to extend from the garage south to about 3' from the property line. A variance for placement closer than 8' to the north side property line is required.
2. The proposed garage roof would have a gable running east/west and black asphalt shingles to match the roof on the house. HardiePlank lap siding is proposed with a profile similar to the vinyl siding on the house. The homeowner hopes to replace the siding on the house with HardiePlank at some point. Windows are proposed on the north, south and east sides of the garage, and a man door is proposed on the west with a small shed roof above. A decorative lamp is also proposed. The garage would be painted white and the man door "Nimbus Gray".

Conclusions:

1. The proposed garage is appropriate for this property and the District.

2. A variance for extending into the required side yard must be in place before a building permit can be issued.

Mr. Coulter moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY SHAWN MCNEIL FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO CONSTRUCT A GARAGE AT 676 OXFORD ST. AS PER CASE NO. AR 44-13, DRAWINGS NO. AR 44-13, DATED JUNE 12, 2013, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. Mrs. Bitar called the roll. Mr. Hunter, aye; Mr. Sauer, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Coulter, aye; Mrs. Lloyd, aye and Mrs. Rodgers, aye. Mr. Hunter said the motion has been approved.

- c. Paver Patio with Built-in Grill & Seating – **140 W. New England Ave.** (Sean Kocheran/ Cooke) **AR 48/13**

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the facts from the application. Mr. Hunter asked if the applicant was present. Mr. Hunter asked the applicant if she had been sworn in yet and she said no. Mrs. Bitar swore in the applicant, and then the applicant came to the microphone and stated her name is Ms. Lynn Walter. Ms. Walter stated she is representing RAS Construction. Ms. Walter said the seating wall will be 18” high.

Mr. Hunter asked if there was anyone present that wanted to speak either for or against this application and no one came forward.

Findings of fact:

1. The applicant is proposing installation of a 352 square foot brick paver patio at the rear of the house, adjacent to a recently renovated room. A paver walk (incorrectly labeled as concrete on the drawing) is proposed between the patio and driveway.
2. The patio would include a built-in grill and low walls for seating. Cut stone veneer is proposed for the walls. A simulated wrought iron gate would run between the house and an existing retaining wall for a stair that goes to the basement.
3. New plants will be added to existing for landscape treatment on the north side of the patio and house.

Conclusion:

1. The proposed changes are appropriate.

Mr. Coulter moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY SEAN KOCHERAN FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL A PATIO AT 140 W. NEW ENGLAND AVE. AS PER CASE NO. AR 48-13, DRAWINGS NO. AR 48-13, DATED JUNE 14, 2013, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

Mr. Sauer seconded the motion. Mrs. Bitar called the roll. Mr. Hunter, aye; Mr. Sauer, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Coulter, aye; Mrs. Lloyd, aye and Mrs. Rodgers, aye. Mr. Hunter said the motion has been approved.

C. Municipal Planning Commission

1. Subdivision

a. Preliminary Plat – 130 W. Clearview Ave. (Jeffrey Sheban) SUB 01-13

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the facts from the application. Mr. Hunter asked if the applicant was present. Mr. Jeffrey Sheban and Mrs. Anne Cain Sheban approached the microphone and stated they live at 130 W. Clearview Ave., Worthington, Ohio.

Mr. Hunter said he felt he could not vote for this application because the land would then be below the current standards for the community. He said the applicants have a very nice home on the property, and the green space attached to their home has great value.

Mrs. Sheban said they have enjoyed their home in Worthington for several years. She said there are several homes on her street that still have fifty foot lots, and there are several on the bordering street as well. She wanted to know if they could return to their original lot sizes of when they purchased the property in 1999, and if allowed, would the lot on Evening Street be a buildable lot in the future.

Mr. Sauer said he is open to the possibility because there are many other fifty foot lots in the neighborhood. Mr. Myers said if the lot is split it will be affected by different zoning laws than those in place when the lot was created. Mrs. Bitar said before the lots were combined, they were governed by the standards for existing lots of record. She said the lot would have to be subdivided with variances to meet the original standards. Mr. Sauer said he would not want to consider a variance that would reduce the side or rear yard setbacks more than what they would have been had the lot never been split.

Mr. Hunter pointed out there are Building Code issues for the existing house north of the applicant's house. He also said there are approximately eleven other homes that have either combined or changed to create lots wider than fifty feet. Mr. Coulter said within the same block,

there are many which still have existing fifty foot lots. Mr. Coulter said he agrees with Mr. Sauer, and is not opposed to the idea, but he would like to see what the plans look like.

Mr. Myers asked what the setbacks were at the time of the split. Mrs. Bitar said the way the Code is written a person must meet the prevailing setback for the front. The side would have to be at least six feet from the property line.

Mrs. Holcombe said she thought the applicant may have a problem getting a variance, and if the applicants sell their home, the new owner may not be able to build on the new parcel. Mrs. Holcombe said she is not opposed to letting the property go back to the original lot lines, but feels that the home is more valuable with the larger yard. Mrs. Bitar said the setbacks would be platted, and variances granted with the subdivision.

Mr. Myers asked the applicants if they were willing to spend the money on an engineer and an architect to draw up the plans, and take the risk to have those plans approved by two different political bodies, both of whom are subjected to different degrees of public comment. No answer was given. Mr. Myers said he was speaking as a Council member, and did not feel the applicants were going to get the assurance they were hoping for this evening. Mr. Sheban said that short of an assurance, it would be helpful to know whether the Board thinks a buildable lot could be created under the current circumstances. Mr. Myers said until he can see what is left of the lot, and get an idea of how much buildable space there is, the idea is hard to conceptualize.

Mr. Sheban said he would like to be able to sell the lot with the idea that the new owners could do whatever they wanted. Mr. Myers said the lot may be a buildable lot, but it might not be a marketable lot, and Mr. Sheban may want to discuss that with a realtor.

Mr. Hunter asked if there was anyone in the audience that wanted to speak about this application even though the Board was not moving to a vote. Two people raised their hands and said they would like to speak.

The first speaker was Mrs. Roberta Powell. Mrs. Powell said she lives around the corner from the applicants and that she could visualize a home being built on the lot and wanted to speak on their behalf.

The second speaker was Ms. Peggy Barnum. Ms. Barnum stated her address is 120 W. Clearview Ave., Worthington, Ohio. She said she is their next door neighbor to the east. Ms. Barnum feels the character of the community would be compromised if the lot was split, and they had to listen to the noise from construction vehicles. She is opposed to the loss of trees and green space.

Ms. Barnum said it will be difficult to watch her home lose value. She tried to purchase a half lot west of her property to build a garage, but the former owner, nor the Shebans wanted to sell the half lot to her. Ms. Barnum asked the Commission to weigh the impact on the residents before a final recommendation is made. She said she has enjoyed being neighbors with the Shebans and wishes them well, but wants to go on record as opposing the lot split and new build just to protect the economic and aesthetic interest of the property next door. Ms. Barnum said

she thought several neighbors were on vacation this week and was not sure if they were aware of what was going on.

Mr. Sheban said he would like to table his application. Mrs. Holcombe moved to table the application and Mr. Sauer seconded the motion. All members said, "Aye".

D. Other

There was no other business to discuss.

E. Adjournment

Mr. Coulter moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. All members said, "Aye".