

Appearance Commission Meeting Minutes
Date: October 11, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Naumiak to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2023 meeting and seconded by commissioner Maschek. All members voted aye.

Commissioner Demario was absent.

Case 2023-032A – 7525 Lowell Ave- New Detached Garage

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

The garage was constructed in violation of approved plans and must go before Zoning Board of Appeals for a variation.

Commissioner Maschek asked if the pitch of the garage roof matches that of the house roof.

Chairman Lynk liked the fire pit feature.

Commissioner Maschek added that inclusionary zoning changes could allow for taller garage structures in the future.

Recommendation and Voting

A motion was made to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to approve as Presented. The vote was unanimous.

Motion: Maschek Second: Naumiak

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

Case 2023-036A – 8951 Lincolnwood Dr - 1st & 2nd Floor Residential Addition

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

The architect presented the case and verified that all materials will match existing.

Chairman Lynk said that the aesthetic appeared similar.

Commissioner Maschek liked the mid century look and said that there are not many midcentury style homes left. He preferred that the mullions in the windows be removed.

Recommendation and Voting

A motion was made to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to approve as presented. The vote is unanimous.

Motion: Klein

Second: Pathak

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

Case 2023-038A – 9015 Keeler Ave- New Detached Residence

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

The petitioner clarified that brick color will most closely resemble the one show in the material sheet.

Chairman Lynk asked if the ebonite satin smooth material is brick. The petitioner affirmed.

Chairman Lynk said that the bulky column at the front is ok if it matches the width of the side of the garage. He asked if the structure will be bricking all around.

The petitioner said yes except for the wood material used for the bump out component.

Commissioner Naumiak said that the proposal looked good.

Recommendation and Voting

A motion was made to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to approve as presented. The vote is unanimous.

Motion: Maschek Second: Naumiak

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

Case 2023-035A – 4605 Golf Rd- Non-Residential Façade

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

A representative for the architect said that the proposed is a contemporary design that will change the current plain stucco design. He added that the clock will have lit hands and will be facing Golf Rd.

The material will consist of anodized aluminum and corrugated black panels that will compliment with back lighting.

Chairman Lynk questioned if the site was currently under construction.

The representative said that it is in the footings stage.

Chairman Lynk said he was not fond of the clock.

The representative said that the clock is a feature on all of their buildings.

The clock materials are anodized aluminum and limestone.

The Chairman asked if the clock would be roughly 100 yards from Golf Rd.

The petitioner replied, yes.

Recommendation and Voting

A motion was made to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to Approve as Presented.

The vote is unanimous.

Motion: Naumiak Second: Pathak

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

Case 2023-037A – 5110 Brown St- 2nd floor Residential Addition

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

Given the large quantity of Staff comments, Chairman Lynk told the petitioners to work with Staff and return once a proposal with fewer Staff objections is reached.

Recommendation and Voting

Case continued. No Vote.

Case 2023-039A- 4043 Main St- Commercial Façade

Discussion and Interested Parties

Chairman Lynk read Staff comments into the record.

The proposed design features a new 4' tall wall that is much shorter than what had been previously proposed to Staff.

Chairman Lynk asked for the material behind the wall.

The applicant said that it will be stucco with crown molding on the top.

Commissioner Maschek asked if there will be an outdoor café for the grill.

The applicant responded there would be outdoor seating in the summer months and weather permitting and added that the proposal will look nice compared to the existing.

Recommendation and Voting

A motion was made to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to Approve as Presented. The vote is unanimous.

Motion: Shah Second: Pathak

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

Old Business: Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness for Residential Properties

Case 2022-067A- 4600 Main St- New Residential Development

Discussion and Interested Parties

Fitzgerald Architects presented the case.

The proposal was amended from the initial 5-story building to townhomes. A palette of brick, stucco, and stone are used to be compatible with the neighborhood.

He added that window size and locations have been modified in this proposal based on concerns from neighbors. 3rd floor bedroom windows have been removed. Living room and dining room windows on end elevations on 2nd floor are preserved for natural light.

The building elevations are a composite of brick, stucco, fiber cement siding, stone, metal canopies.

Each building is 6 units. Each unit has distinct features, but they mirror one another as well.

An alternating checker-board pattern is created with the use of different materials.

Trees # 12 and 13 are feared not to survive construction and will be removed and replaced.

Chairman Lynk is unsure about the amount of white cement board.

The architect responded that an all red and yellow brick façade was rejected by Staff.

Chairman Lynk added that the Commission does not want aluminum siding.

Commissioner Maschek said the fiber cement stands out. He said that traditional or contemporary in design are options but that it should not be both. He added that conformity with surrounding structures should not be done at the expense of quality.

Chairman Lynk asked for the original submittal that was changed after Staff input.

Commissioner Maschek mentioned that the flat single canopies above the door can be doubled making it flat to mimic the stoop.

Chairman Lynk said that the cement board makes it look 'cheap'.

Commissioner Maschek asked Staff to project the design that features gables and bump outs. The Commissioner compares the two designs. He stated that more brick should be added and that he does not like the dog house-like roofs.

Commissioner Maschek likes the contemporary look. He suggested a complete material board to better evaluate colors.

Commissioner Naumiak asked what color the windows would be.

The petitioner replied, white.

Chairman Lynk said that he likes the bricks shown on the sample board.

Commissioner Naumiak asked what color the canopies would be.

The architect showed the dark steel grey sample.

Commissioner Naumiak said that the doors should be in that color as well.

Commissioner Klein stated that she wants to see preservation of existing trees as well as adding larger trees to soften the project.

The petitioner presented a video of the proposed project.

The petitioner added that the clubhouse was being removed for open grass based on feedback.

Commissioner Maschek referenced the neighbors' concerns with the 5' fence height.

The petitioner replied, stating that it would be a 6' tall fence solid vertical board to board with no gaps.

Public Comment

Speaker 1:

References and summarized letter submitted and signed by 66 community members with concerns about the development.

Chairman Lynk reiterated that only appearance related comments would be heard.

Speaker stated that massing and density are an appearance related concern. Also stated that the proposal reduces green space. They also noted that the petitioner has not applied for the planned development designation. They stated that neighboring buildings are shorter than the proposed development.

She also stated that the proposed development façade is out of character with the neighborhood. Speaker noted that for sake of maintenance and sound insulation, the proposed fence should be a brick one.

Speaker 2

Speaker 2 commented that green space in Skokie is now more valuable than ever. He referenced a past comment by Chairman Lynk that something would be built on the land of proposed development and asked the Chairman how he knew this.

Chairman Lynk said he concluded this based on the sale of the property that something new was going to be developed on site. Chairman Lynk also noted that the comment was not Appearance related.

Speaker 3

Agreed with Commissioners about adding more brick, doors having combined the overhang, not liking dog-house style overhang.

Speaker 4

Showed a slideshow about comparable community facades. Discussed homes in the area and stated that all are brick façade. He also stated that he does not feel that fiber cement board fits with the neighborhood.

Chairman Lynk asked if he was bothered by the white fiber cement board. The speaker said, yes. Chairman Lynk asked the speaker if he would like to see one continuous brick color. The speaker replied, no.

Slideshow showed facades of new construction around Skokie. The speaker said that all are classic and not trendy or contemporary.

Speaker 5

The speaker also presented a slideshow. The speaker said that the proposed building is taller than surrounding properties.

The speaker referenced an appeal with the Plan Commission and said that 12 buildings cannot be on one lot.

The speaker showed other townhome developments around Skokie. He stated that most of the others are near businesses, schools, highways and not next to R1 zoned properties like the proposed one is.

Speaker 6

The speaker asked about who will maintain trees and landscaping on site. Staff stated that there would be a landscape agreement with a separate ordinance should the development be approved. Staff also added that landscape bond money is held to ensure compliance with approved landscape plan.

Speaker 7

The speaker stated that density is related to the appearance and that the development would be one of the largest in the area and is not in keeping with the neighborhood.

The speaker said that the project will not benefit the neighborhood and will drastically affect the quality of life, and that she did not like the appearance of the building.

The petitioner's party returned to the podium.

The architect said there is no objection to going to all brick façade and removing white cement panels. Relief is being asked on this between the 2 story windows.

They stated they have no objection to combing canopies into a single canopy.

Commissioner Naumiak asked if the door could be a glass door.

The architect responded that there will be a glass panel in the door.

Chairman Lynk asked about the fence material.

Commissioner Maschek asked if the posts would be wood or steel.

The architect responded, wood.

Commissioner Maschek said that metal posts would be nice. He also asked if the fence would go the entire length.

The petitioner said that part of the fence is on the neighboring property.

Chairman Lynk said if the neighbors agree, the fence should be consistent.

Chairman Lynk said that the fence should be an upscale and quality one.

Commissioner Maschek asked about materials and suggested that a brick with an interesting look can be utilized rather than with fiber cement. He also asked about whether there could be additional windows on the side elevations. He also suggested exploring adding a soffit above the 3rd floor window so it appears less flat.

Commissioner Maschek pondered whether additional green area could be added where 24' bricked drive aisle is without impacting parking.

Chairman Lynk stated that this is part of Plan Commission and should be disregarded.

Commissioner Maschek added that there should be a landscape maintenance plan.

Chairman Lynk requested that the project be re-presented to include all brick elevation, brick element to replace white board area, varying color of lighter color cement board or improved rendering, continuous canopies, soffit or feature above upper window, cut sheet of proposed fence and windows on side elevations.

Commissioner Maschek clarified that it need not necessarily be additional windows on the side elevation, but something to dress up the corner.

Commissioner Shah added that lighting on site should be addressed.

A resident asked about the configuration of fencing around the two recreational parks. Chairman Lynk asked what the neighbors prefer. The preference was for the area to be open. Commissioner Maschek said he'd rather see resources diverted to the privacy fence than around the parks.

Recommendation and Voting

Case continued to October 25, 2023. No Vote was taken.