

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 23, 2015**

Notice being duly given for the regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Vernon Hills, Vernon Hills, Illinois, the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Putterman at the Village of Vernon Hills, 290 Evergreen Drive, Vernon Hills, Illinois.

Members present: Chairman Putterman, Mr. Van Der Meulen, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Cashen

Members absent: Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Newberg, Mr. Stier

Also attending as representative for the Village:
Mr. Michael Atkinson, Building Commissioner

Chairman Putterman stated that a quorum was present to conduct the evening's business. He explained to the petitioner that since not all Board members were in attendance, they could ask for a continuance. He explained that the Committee is a recommending body to the Village Board. He further explained the three criteria needed to be met if the variance is approved.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES:

Approval of prior minutes of February 6, 2014

Motion by: Mr. Van Der Meulen

Seconded by: Mr. Baumann

Ayes: 4 – Van Der Meulen, Baumann, Cashen, Putterman

Nays: 0

Absent: 3 – Kennedy, Newberg, Stier

CASE #2015-01

Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins, 700 N. Milwaukee: Petitioner requests a variation from the Vernon Hills Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 19, Signs, Section 19-3(c)(6) to allow the cumulative total of the wall signs on the south elevation to be 58.06 square feet in lieu of the maximum permitted size of 51 square feet; to allow the cumulative total of the wall signs on the east elevation to be 58.06 square feet in lieu of the maximum permitted size of 25.5 square feet; and to allow two walls signs on the south and east elevation in lieu of the maximum permitted number of one sign per elevation. The purpose is for the installation of new wall signs in connection with a façade renovation.

Sworn in to give testimony:

Mr. Steve Kolber, 828 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois

Mr. Kolber explained according to the franchise agreement, this location for Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins needs to remodeled every so many years and bring it up to standards.

On the corner elevation, they are trying to equalize the elements on both sides and really nail down the presence of this store. The materials are being driven by comments made from staff. Normally where you see the radiant of color is usually a Hardy board material. It was recommended that we go with an EIFS material for this.

Mr. Van Der Meulen questioned the depth of the columns being proposed.

Mr. Kolber indicated they are approximately 18" off the building; don't project that far, it's to get a little relief from the masonry that is currently there.

Chairman Putterman explained the difference between Hardy board and EIFS.

Mr. Kolber indicated it was recommended to use EIFS and the Franchisee is perfectly happy to modify to that request. The existing sign code restricts Dunkin Donuts from creating their nationally recognized appearance and dilutes store recognition. If you look at this store now, one side has Dunkin Donuts and one side has Baskin Robbins. It's hard to tell that there are actually two stores in one location. This nails down the corner nicely and gives more recognition as to what's really happening in that specific store.

The existing signage looks and feels outdated with the neighboring retail centers. It needs to be updated and it's not just what the Franchisee wants, the National brand is also asking for this. They are looking to make it a cleaner look for the entire center because this corner is the pinnacle and it just doesn't look well.

They feel this will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood as they are upping their game of what's currently displayed along with what other tenants are doing. It's a nicer end cap and is not a detriment to any of the neighbors.

Chairman Putterman explained this can be broken down into two different cases; one being the square footage and the other being the number of signs or it can be kept as one. He questioned if the current signs ever needed a variance.

Mr. Atkinson indicated to his knowledge, no variance was needed and they were in compliance. The existing signs have been there for so long, nothing was found on them.

Discussion then entailed that other stores in this mall that had sign variances were Petsmart, Dick's, the main pylons and tenant panels on the pylons.

Chairman Putterman explained how several years ago, the Village did not allow any logos at all on signs; it was purely words with no lights or colors to distract drivers. Over the years it became more agreeable to change as the world has changed. They've since changed ordinances to allow some of these things to take place. They've still been against logos because of a cluttered look; however he does not feel this request causes clutter.

Mr. Van Der Meulen brought up that this mall currently has 34 all brick columns, none of which have any signage on them other than safety parking (fire lane) and those are the only signs allowed on any of the columns. His concern is they are asking for a façade change that allows signage on columns, creating the appearance of two white columns being added to the strip mall. He feels this changes the essential character of the mall; having all brick columns and now adding two white columns. At an 18" depth, going from ground level to the roofline level, it's going to appear like two white columns are being added to the mall.

They need to look at what future ramifications are going to be. If this comes into play, they may have other tenants wanting that "bookend" look as well. If you don't have uniformity and color in that style or character, this property can start to look like a circus.

Chairman Putterman indicated the façade columns are sort of part of the sign variance and the Village Board will then have to look at this from an appearance level and approval.

Mr. Van Der Meulen indicated there's a sign hanging at the top of the column and its background is part of the column. That gives the appearance that the entire column is part of the sign. The issue then becomes, if these columns are acceptable with the signage on them, and leaving the appearance in part, in parcel to the sign, or have two additional signs but not to be located on the columns. You would need to stop the column at a certain point and not go beyond the window line down and just have it as a sign that extends out from the building. You can do it from above the awning, but keeping in line with other signage in that mall, something that's extending from the roofline. Extending the façade from the roofline keeps in essence with the character. There are at least six facades that have peaked points that extend above the roofline. One option is to not have the column go from roof to ground level, but go from the awning line up to the roof line with the white background.

Confirmation of sign calculations was determined for each side, going from the parapet to below the Baskin Robbins lettering and not including the rest of the column.

Mr. Kolber illustrating on a display indicated if they maintain a certain line, he believes the Franchisee and Brand will have no problem with this.

Chairman Putterman indicated then that there are no changes in the sign, but in the façade.

After further discussion, a motion by Mr Baumann, seconded by Mr. Van Der Meulen, the following resolution was made:

RESOLVED: Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Vernon Hills, Illinois, hereby recommends approval for a variation from the Village Code of Ordinances, Chapter 19, Signs, Section 19-3(c)(6) to allow the cumulative total of the wall signs on the south elevation to be 58.06 square feet in lieu of the maximum permitted size of 51 square feet; to allow the cumulative total of the wall signs on the east elevation to be 58.06 square feet in lieu of the maximum permitted size of 25.5 square feet; and to allow two wall signs on the south and east elevations in lieu of the maximum permitted number of one sign per elevation as long as the column remains brick up to the bottom of the awning line.

Upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

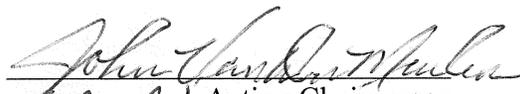
Ayes: 4 – Van Der Meulen, Baumann, Cashen, Putterman
Nays: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 3 – Kennedy, Newberg, Stier

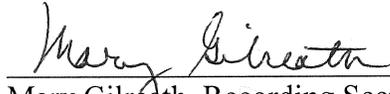
Motion carried unanimously

Mr. Atkinson indicated this will appear before the Committee of the Whole on May 5. The sign layouts plus drawings reflecting what this Commission recommended are needed by the end of the day on April 29.

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was duly made by Mr. Van Der Meulen, seconded by Mr. Baumann, and unanimously carried, the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals adjourned at approximately 7:36 p.m.

Approval Date: 8-4-2016


John Van Der Meulen, Acting Chairperson


Mary Gilreath, Recording Secretary

Distribution:
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File

Videotape of the meeting retained on file pursuant to Village policy