

Village of Lombard

*Village Hall
255 East Wilson Ave.
Lombard, IL 60148
villageoflombard.org*



Minutes

Monday, November 20, 2023

7:00 PM

Village Hall - Board Room

Plan Commission

Leigh Giuliano, Chairperson

Commissioners:

Ruth Sweetser, Bill Johnston, Kevin Walker,

Tony Invergo, Alissa Verson and

Robert Spreenberg

Staff Liaison: Anna Papke

Call to Order

Chairperson Giuliano called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Giuliano led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Members

Present 5 - Ruth Sweetser, Leigh Giuliano, Bill Johnston, Robert Spreenberg, and Alissa Verson

Absent 2 - Kevin Walker, and Tony Invergo

Also present: William Heniff, AICP Director of Community Development, Anna Papke, AICP Planning & Zoning Manager Community Development.

Chairperson Giuliano called the order of the agenda.

Ms. Papke read the Rules and Procedures as written by the Plan Commission.

Public Hearings

[230372](#)

PC 23-22 Text Amendments to Village Code - Landscape Requirements

The petitioner, the Village of Lombard, is requesting text amendments to Village Code Chapter 155, Article XI, Landscape Requirements, and any other relevant sections for clarity and consistency. Proposed amendments include the following:

1. Amend Section 155.706 of the Village Code, Parking lot landscaping, to reference tree species in conformance with Section 99.04 of Village Code.
2. Amend Section 155.707 of the Village Code, Transitional yard landscaping, to reference tree species in conformance with Section 99.04 of Village Code; and to amend and clarify the requirements for transitional landscape yard improvements.
3. Amend Section 155.709 of the Village Code, Perimeter lot landscaping, to reference tree species in conformance with Section 99.04 of Village Code; and to clarify requirements for properties adjacent to detention ponds, wetlands, floodplains or

similar.

4. Amend Section 155.712 of the Village Code, Changes to approved landscape plans, to clarify that approved landscape plans must be maintained by current and future property owners for the life of the development. (DISTRICT ALL)

Sworn in to present the petition was Anna Papke, Planning and Zoning Manager, and William Heniff, Director of Community Development.

Chairperson Giuliano read the Plan Commission procedures and asked if anyone other than the petitioner intended to cross examine and, hearing none, she proceeded with the petition.

Ms. Papke presented the petition and staff report. The IDRC report for PC 23-22 was entered into the public record in its entirety. Staff is proposing a series of text amendments to the Landscape Requirements in the Zoning Ordinance. These proposed amendments are intended to clarify existing provisions and address consistency with other sections of the Village Code. No substantive changes are proposed.

Ms. Papke summarized the proposed amendments as follows:

- *Amending the parking lot landscaping requirements so the requirements for tree plantings are consistent with tree planting requirements in the public right of way.*
- *Amending the transitional yard landscaping requirements to allow for flexibility of the placement of fencing within the transitional yard, and for consistency with tree planting requirements in the public right of way.*
- *Amending perimeter lot landscaping requirements to clarify that when county, state, or federal requirements for landscaping around a detention area or wetland conflict with Village landscaping requirements, the regulations of the county, state, or federal agency shall apply.*
- *Clarifying that plantings associated with an approved landscape plan must be maintained for the life of the development, and that this obligation will pass to future property owners in the event of property transfers.*

Chairperson Giuliano asked if there were any questions or comments on the petition and staff report. Hearing none, she opened the meeting for comments among the Commissioners.

On a motion by Commissioner Verson, and a second by Commissioner Johnston, the Plan Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that the Village Board approve the petition associated with PC 23-23.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Ruth Sweetser, Leigh Giuliano, Bill Johnston, Robert Spreenberg, and Alissa Verson

Absent: 2 - Kevin Walker, and Tony Invergo

[230373](#)

PC 23-23 Text Amendments to Village Code - Exterior Lighting

The Plan Commission submits its recommendation to approve the text amendments to Village Code Section 155.417(G)(14), and any other relevant sections for clarity and consistency, as it pertains to exterior lighting in the B4A Roosevelt Road Corridor District. (DISTRICT ALL)

Ms. Papke presented the petition and staff report. The IDRC report for PC 23-23 was entered into the public record in its entirety. Ms. Papke said staff is proposing a text amendment to the requirements for exterior lighting in the B4A Roosevelt Road Corridor District. Currently, the Code requires exterior lighting in B4A to be directed downward. This and other existing lighting standards are intended to promote compatibility between the Roosevelt Road corridor and nearby residential development.

Review of existing development along the corridor finds that the prohibition on uplighting has not been uniformly enforced. There are multiple examples of lighting directed upward to highlight signage, landscaping and building features. To staff's knowledge, this lighting has not negatively impacted neighboring properties. Therefore, staff proposes to amend the Code to remove the prohibition on uplighting to provide for clarity and consistency. At the suggestion of the Public Works Department, the amended language will include a provision to limit overspill into the sky. All other regulations intended to reduce the impact of lighting on adjacent properties will remain in place, including parking lot lighting standards and transitional landscape yard standards.

Chairperson Giuliano asked if there were any questions or comments on the petition and staff report. Hearing none, she opened the meeting for comments among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Spreenberg said the provision to allow for "only incidental overspill to the sky" was not specific and might be difficult to enforce.

Ms. Papke said the intent from Public Works was to make sure there were no spotlights pointed upward and that other lighting provisions in the Code would prevent overspill as well. Mr. Heniff noted that parking lot lighting standards that limit lighting levels at property lines would also prevent lighting from spilling into the sky.

On a motion by Commissioner Sweetser, and a second by Commissioner Johnston, the Plan Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that the Village Board approve the petition associated with PC 23-23.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Ruth Sweetser, Leigh Giuliano, Bill Johnston, Robert Spreenberg, and Alissa Verson

Absent: 2 - Kevin Walker, and Tony Invergo

[230374](#)

PC 23-24 Text Amendments to Village Code - Wall Signage

The petitioner, the Village of Lombard, is requesting text amendments to Village Code Sections 153.506 and 153.507, and any other relevant sections for clarity and consistency. The proposed text amendments clarify the total amount of wall signage permitted on properties with more than one street frontage in the B5 Central Business District and the B5A Downtown Perimeter District. (DISTRICT ALL)

Ms. Papke presented the petition and staff report. The IDRC report for PC 23-23 was entered into the public record in its entirety. Ms. Papke said staff is proposing a text amendment to the wall sign requirements for the Downtown (B5) and the Downtown Perimeter (B5A) Districts. Currently the Sign Ordinance allows businesses in these districts to have wall signage equal to one square foot per linear front footage of the property. Total signage is capped at 50 square feet per property regardless of the number of street exposures.

The proposed text amendment will allow for a cap of 50 square feet of signage per façade of street front exposure. This will allow buildings with multiple street exposures to have proportionately more signage than buildings with a single street exposure. This approach is consistent with the signage allotments in the other B Districts.

Chairperson Giuliano asked if there were any questions or comments on the petition and staff report. Hearing none, she opened the meeting for comments among the Commissioners.

On a motion by Commissioner Spreenberg, and a second by Commissioner Johnston, the Plan Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that the Village Board

approve the petition associated with PC 23-24.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Ruth Sweetser, Leigh Giuliano, Bill Johnston, Robert Spreenberg, and Alissa Verson

Absent: 2 - Kevin Walker, and Tony Invergo

Business Meeting

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Spreenberg, that the minutes of the October 16, 2023 meeting be approved.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Ruth Sweetser, Leigh Giuliano, Bill Johnston, Robert Spreenberg, and Alissa Verson

Absent: 2 - Kevin Walker, and Tony Invergo

Public Participation

There was no Public Participation

DuPage County Hearings

There was no DuPage County Hearings

Chairperson's Report

The Chairperson deferred to the Director of Community Development

Planner's Report

There was no Planner's Report

Unfinished Business

1. Plan Commission Meeting Start Time

The Plan Commission discussed the possibility of moving the start time of the meeting and decided not to change the meeting time. The Plan Commission will continue to meet at 7:00 p.m.

2. Plan Commission Vice Chairperson

The Plan Commission and staff discussed the Vice Chairperson position. The Plan Commissioners tabled the matter for further discussion at the December 18, 2023, meeting.

New Business

There was no New Business

Subdivision Reports

There was no Subdivision Reports

Site Plan Approvals

There is no Site Plan Approvals

Workshops

Storage Centers in Office District - 665 W. North Avenue:

Mr. Heniff presented the workshop. The Plan Commission packet included an overview of the workshop. Mr. Heniff said the workshop was being conducted to receive feedback from the Plan Commission on the possibility of allowing storage centers in the Office District. This workshop was in response to an inquiry from a developer interested in converting an office building to a storage center.

Mr. Heniff showed the definition of storage centers from the Village Code. Storage centers contain individual storage units with access provided through a central internal entrance. There may be retail sales of storage items and/or rental/storage of vehicles as ancillary uses. Storage centers are intended for storage of personal items, not for warehousing or commercial storage. Storage centers are distinguished from mini-warehouses. Mr. Heniff mentioned several existing storage centers in the Village.

Storage centers are currently permitted uses in the I District and conditional uses in the B4 and B4A Districts.

Staff received an inquiry from a developer interested in converting an existing office building into a storage center. Mr. Heniff noted that the market for traditional office space has experienced a shift as companies transition to remote or hybrid work models. Staff has noted an increase in inquiries regarding uses other than office buildings in the Office District. The present inquiry is part of a larger trend that will likely drive a larger future discussion of potential uses in the Office

District.

Mr. Heniff said most office property in the Village is located in the Butterfield Road corridor, 22nd Street corridor, Woodlake of Lombard office park, and Heron Point at North Avenue and Route 53. The subject of the workshop is 665 W. North Avenue, an office building in the Heron Point Planned Development. Mr. Heniff noted the Heron Point PD also includes the Fairfield Inn hotel. The office building was constructed in 2001 and has recently experienced excessive vacancies.

Mr. Heniff said LSC Development is considering acquiring 665 W. North Avenue and converting it into a storage center. There are currently some tenants in the building, who may remain in the building while the remainder is converted to storage. There would be no changes to the footprint or height of the building. The petitioner is conducting structural analysis to determine if the building can meet building code requirements for storage centers. LSCD has experience converting office buildings to storage centers in other nearby municipalities.

Storage centers are not permitted in the underlying O District at 665 W. North Avenue, so zoning entitlements would be needed to facilitate the proposed conversion. Mr. Heniff outlined three possible options: a map amendment (rezoning) to a district that allows storage centers; a use exception within the Heron Point Planned Development; or text amendments to add storage centers as a permitted or conditional use in the O District.

Mr. Heniff said the challenge with rezoning is that it would allow all the uses within the new zoning district on the subject property. For instance, if the property were rezoned to Industrial, many manufacturing and warehousing uses would be permitted by right. This may not be compatible with nearby properties at Heron Point. Use exceptions can only comprise 40% of a planned development. 665 W. North Avenue likely comprises more than 40% of the Heron Point PD, so this would not be an option. Staff would recommend a text amendment to the Office District to allow storage centers as conditional uses. This would apply to any property in the O District. By making it a conditional use, the Plan Commission and Village Board would be able to consider storage centers in the O District on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding compatibility of storage centers with other uses in the O

District, Mr. Heniff said that storage centers are quiet uses. The Village had not received significant code enforcement complaints on storage centers. One property had some drainage complaints, but this was not related to the use of the property as a storage center. Information provided by the petitioner and included in the Plan Commission packet also noted that storage centers generate less traffic and lower parking demands than office buildings and are generally a daytime operation.

Mr. Heniff said the definition of storage centers includes the possibility of vehicle storage. If the use is added to the O District as a conditional use, there would be an opportunity to review vehicle storage on a case-by-case basis.

Staff is seeking feedback from the Plan Commission on the general concept of converting office buildings into storage centers as well as the possibility of adding storage centers to the O District as conditional uses. Staff would also welcome feedback on the concept of the 665 W. North Avenue conversion if the Plan Commission has any comments specific to that site.

Commissioner Johnston noted that such conversions would need to consider floor weights and elevator capacity. He said he was concerned about the potential for the storage of RVs and trucks, and how that would look. He noted that the parking lots would need to be structurally sound for these types of vehicles. Another concern was what would happen if the building were converted to a storage center and then the storage center concept was unsuccessful; could the building be returned to an office use? Commissioner Johnston said he sees the fit of a storage center in a commercial corridor such as Roosevelt Road. He is not too concerned about the use in the Office District so long as it is done right.

Commissioner Spreenberg said the idea of storage in the O District is fine, particularly if it is added as a conditional use. He saw some possibility for a mixture of office and storage uses in the same building. He had similar concerns regarding load requirements for the building and the look of a parking lot if there is vehicle storage. He asked what would happen if a storage center wanted to build additional buildings. Mr. Heniff said all these items would be reviewed as part of a conditional use process.

Commissioner Verson asked if there were trends in office building conversion to uses beside storage centers. Mr. Heniff said there had

been inquiries about schools and religious institutions in the O District. Schools are conditional uses, and religious institutions are permitted in the O District. There may be other uses that would be appropriate and could be considered in a larger future discussion about the O District.

Commissioner Verson asked if storage would be more advantageous from a property tax standpoint. Mr. Heniff said it would be taxed as a commercial property.

Commissioner Johnston asked for clarification of the boundaries of the subject property. Mr. Heniff described the property as shown on an aerial map.

Commissioner Johnston said 665 W. North Avenue is a nice looking building and would be an attractive storage facility. He asked if the developer could potentially fill in the stormwater pond and build another building. Mr. Heniff said the pond is a critical wetland, which cannot be developed. The storage center conversion concept would occur within the confines of the existing building and parking lot.

Commissioner Sweetser asked how the Village would handle the ongoing need to reassess land uses in the O District. Mr. Heniff said that this was part of a larger ongoing discussion about adaptive reuse of office buildings. The Village would continue to do this as market conditions change.

Commissioner Johnston asked if the potential vehicle storage area at the storage center would be visible from the Fairfield Inn. Mr. Heniff said location of vehicle storage areas would be looked at as part of the conditional use process.

Commissioner Verson said a storage facility makes sense at this particular property. Mr. Heniff said that by making it a conditional use there would be the opportunity to review each potential storage center to make sure it is compatible with the neighborhood.

Chair Giuliano said it is key to make it a conditional use, so that potential storage centers in the O District can be reviewed. There may be some office buildings where storage centers do not make sense. She said the concept of a mixed use building with office and a storage facility, as mentioned by Commissioner Spreenberg, is interesting. She asked if Village staff had come across this concept or if the LSCD team had an example. Mr. Heniff said he would ask the LSCD team.

Commissioner Spreenberg said that with vehicle storage, there could be concerns about fuel leakages. He suggested this be considered with any future proposals.

Mr. Heniff thanked the Plan Commissioners for their feedback.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnston, seconded by Commissioner Spreenberg, to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The motion passed by an unanimous vote.