

**SUMMARY NOTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION  
MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2007  
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD**

On Monday, April 9, 2007, at the Village Hall Second Floor Multi-Purpose Room, 361 Happ Road, the Architectural Commission met at 7:00 P.M. to consider three issues:

Members in Attendance:

Pat Karr, Chairperson  
Juergen Fuss  
Todd Berlinghof  
Steve Page  
Tom Jennings

Members Absent:

Steve Hirsch  
James Hayes

OTHERS PRESENT: Planner Linnea O'Neill and Community Development Director, Anne Kane (see attached sign-in sheet).

Chair Karr opened the meeting with an overview of the issues to be considered at this meeting.

Chair Karr requested approval of the Summary Notes of the March 12, 2007, Architectural Commission meeting.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Berlinghof, Seconded by Commissioner Jennings to approve the Architectural Commission Summary Notes of March 12, 2007.**

The vote was as follows:

**AYES: 5**

Pat Karr  
Juergen Fuss  
Todd Berlinghof  
Steve Page  
Tom Jennings

**NAYS: 0**

**ABSTAIN: 0**

**ABSENT: 2**

Steve Hirsch  
James Hayes

**Motion Carried**

Chairperson Karr indicated that she sent an e-mail to all the parties involved requesting that item number 3, Penny's Noodle Shop, be heard first.

**ISSUE #1: Consideration of a request for Penny's Noodle Shop permanent signage located at 320 Happ Road, submitted by Niwat Burkban.**

Niwat Burkban's daughter, Dalin Burkban, was present with her father and addressed the Commission showing a picture of the sign panels to be changed for their new business. Commissioner Berlinghof asked if their restaurant was the same as the downtown Chicago business. She indicated it is the same and is a family business.

Commissioner Jennings asked if the same sign materials would be used as was previously used for Red Limousine – a hard plastic. She indicated the same materials would be used.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

**A motion was made by Commissioner Berlinghof, Seconded by Commissioner Fuss to approve the two new sign faces for Penny’s Noodle Shop at 320 Happ Road, in conformance with the plans submitted March 15, 2007.**

**The vote was as follows:**

**AYES: 5**

Pat Karr  
Juergen Fuss  
Todd Berlinghof  
Steve Page  
Tom Jennings

**NAYS: 0**

**ABSTAIN: 0**

**ABSENT: 2**

Steve Hirsch  
James Hayes

**Motion Carried**

**ISSUE #2: Continuation of a request for a front yard variation, a height variation and a corner yard variation to allow for an eight foot fence in the east front yard, the south back yard and the west side yard setbacks at 8 Winfield Drive, submitted by Alan Buchman.**

Todd Stephens was present along with Michael Hughes representing the owners at 8 Winfield Drive. Mr. Stephens indicated that the west and south fences being requested for approval are within the Code and will be 6’4”. They are asking for a variance for an eight foot (8’) fence along Hibbard Road. He submitted a picture of a fence which is across the street from this property. Chairperson Karr indicated that property in the picture is in unincorporated Cook County.

Commissioner Berlinghof requested clarification of the fence type and height proposed around the property. Todd Stephens stressed the need for the eight foot (8’) fence along Hibbard Road due to the traffic. A six foot (6’) wrought iron fence is proposed for the west lot line and a six foot (6’) stockade fence is proposed for the south lot line. Commissioner Berlinghof questioned the reduction to four feet (4’). Mr. Stevens stated that four feet (4’) will be at the north end of the east fence and will gradually transition up to eight feet (8’). It was then explained by Ms. O’Neill that raising the six (6) or four (4) foot sections by up to four inches (4”) is required by Code in floodplain areas to allow for drainage under the fence. It was agreed that the cedar fencing with the board on board side would face the property owners to the south and west and Hibbard Road.

Commissioner Berlinghof questioned Ms. O’Neill with respect to the Code regulations to back yards. Ms. O’Neill stated that the first 40’ of this property on the north and east side is the front yard setback. Front yards are allowed four foot (4’) tall fences. The property’s south side is considered the back yard where six feet (6’) fences are allowed, and, the west side is considered the side yard where six foot (6’) fences are also allowed.

Mr. Hammer, representing the neighbor at 46 Hibbard, stated that Illinois law allows for the fact that if an item has been here 20 years or more without being concealed and no objections, then it can be replaced, it does not have to be removed. They would not have to revert back to the Code requiring four feet (4').

Mr. Stephens disagreed with Mr. Hammer and discussion ensued.

Commissioner Berlinghof indicated that this was not a court of law and this issue would have to be discussed with a different authority. He stated that he did not have a problem with a six foot (6') fence along Hibbard, but he does have an issue with the six foot (6') fence in the rear. Mr. Stephens suggested the pool area is a reason for a six foot (6') fence.

Mr. Hammer indicated his client has a problem with the six foot (6') wrought iron fence.

The Commission continued to review the pictures and to get clarification of the locations of the fences. Mr. Stephens indicated that this is the only property on Hibbard with a four foot (4') fence which is two feet (2') below grade, grade being the sidewalk. Mr. Hammer argued that grade is the grade of the property. It was determined that the fence is falling down now.

After reviewing the documents, Commissioner Berlinghof felt that the ordinance was designed to prevent what could happen here. He felt that replacing existing fencing is one thing, but the extra two feet would make a big difference.

Commissioner Fuss questioned whether this issue was brought up before. He was advised it was not, however, the petitioner has been before this Commission for other matters. He asked if landscaping, such as evergreens, have been considered for screening. Mr. Stephens indicated that this is a big lot, below grade and is the lowest lot in the neighborhood. It is two feet (2') below the sidewalk and a gulley runs alongside. Michael Hughes, builder for Dr. Buchman, indicated that the east side of the property has a big rut which runs parallel with the property. The fence would give more privacy from noise, safety issues and for the gulley to run.

Mr. Hammer, attorney for a neighbor, indicated there is not a safety issue. He said the ordinance specifically says you cannot raise the grade in order to get the higher fence. Mr. Stephens indicated this is why they are requesting a variance.

Commissioner Fuss questioned Ms. O'Neill as to the Code requirements. Ms. O'Neill said the Code limits the fence to six feet (6'), but as in this case, if there is flooding problems, the fence must be raised four inches (4") above grade. The owners received a previous variance for the existing six foot (6') east front yard fence which, by Code, is required to be four feet (4'). An argument continued between the attorneys regarding what is the definition of grade. Mr. Stephens stated that it is not defined in the Code and that grade is the level of the sidewalk. Mr. Hammer stated that you cannot raise the grade and the existing level is the grade. Chairperson Karr indicated that they cannot look at all the grades for the properties, the Commission looks at the height of the fence.

A neighbor stated that she moved here in June of 2004 and that the current fence has always been in disrepair. It does not allow for drainage. There is significant flooding around both properties and significant flooding in the southwest and west property line along 8 Winfield Drive. Her concern is that whatever fence is installed between the properties does not inhibit

the flow of the water or change the grade to change the flow of the water. She said they currently have a lake in their driveway. Chairperson Karr indicated that she understands her concerns but stated there is the caveat that the fence has to be four feet (4") above ground level.

Commissioner Page noted that the properties in Northfield adjacent to Hibbard are six feet (6') high. He would prefer to see the fence height in the front yard at six feet (6'). He is a builder as well as an architect and they just finished a project roughly across the street in which they had the same issue. They used large substantial evergreens as a screening and buffer. He suggests a combination of evergreens to soften the six foot fencing.

Mr. Stephens clarified the ordinance, with Ms. O'Neill that fences in flood plains are allowed to be raised up to four inches (4") for drainage. He suggested that 6'4" fence might be used instead of an eight foot (8'). Commissioner Page asked and Mr. Stephens responded that no new grading is planned. Mr. Hughes discussed the topography of the property and the effect of the fence on the varying, sloping property.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

**A motion was made by Commissioner Berlinghof, Seconded by Commissioner Page to deny the eight foot (8') fence variance and allow for the current variance of six feet (6') with a four inch (4") clearance for drainage around the property if required, otherwise a six foot (6') fence, with the transitional four foot (4') fence section at the entryway. If cedar fencing is used, the board on board side of the fence shall be facing the property owners and the finished side to the neighbors and street.**

**The vote was as follows:**

**AYES: 5**

**Chairperson Pat Karr  
Juergen Fuss  
Todd Berlinghof  
Steve Page  
Tom Jennings**

**NAYS: 0**

**ABSTAIN: 0**

**ABSENT: 2**

**Steve Hirsch  
James Hayes**

**Motion Carried**

**ISSUE #3: Consideration of signage and building/site details for Willow Park located at 401 Wagner Road, submitted by Northfield Park District.**

George Alexoff from the Northfield Park District was present.

Ms. O'Neill addressed the Commission with changes to the staff report. She indicated the bottom of page 2, where the detention area is discussed, is to be disregarded. The petitioner will not be installing a wet bottom detention area as previously approved by the Plan and Zoning Commission. Also, disregard the bottom of page 3, the shelter plans have been submitted.

Commissioner Berlinghof questioned what needs to be approved at this time. Ms. O'Neill stated that the shelter, site furnishings, an educational sign, and a few changes in the previously

approved landscaping need to be reviewed. Tree preservation requirements are handled during the building permitting process.

Mr. Alexoff indicated that many approvals have been made already. The educational sign will be located at the riverbank. He is waiting for a sample sign which is used for all park facilities, to present to the Commission. The shelter itself needs approval. They will phase in the shelter because there is no available funding for the entire storage facility. The overall roof structure will be installed now to match the existing peak levels of existing buildings. The building is proposed to be an open shelter. Eventually, there will be garage doors on the back side. Mr. Alexoff showed the Commission the site plan. The electrical storage area will be enclosed with a locked door with cinder block walls. No vehicles will be parked in the garage area, they will remain in the parking lot, until the second phase of the shelter is completed.

Chairperson Karr indicated that Jack Chapman was in the audience and asked if he is an interested party or present in lieu of Ruth Lucchesi. He indicated he was an interested party.

Commissioner Page questioned if there would be plumbing at this time. Mr. Alexoff indicated no.

Commissioner Berlinghof indicated that he was worried that the exposed joists would be a problem and that there was no schedule for completion of the second phase. Commissioner Page questioned the materials used in the framing structure. Mr. Alexoff indicated metal with wood latches, split faced CMU and cinder block for the electrical room. He anticipates completion for the entire shelter in two years. Commissioner Berlinghof asked why they don't wait until they can complete the entire structure. Mr. Alexoff felt it was a cost savings to build the roof structure now. Commissioner Berlinghof felt it would be a very temporary structure for possibly a long time. Commissioner Page asked what the existing structure is constructed of. Mr. Alexoff indicated the upper is aluminum vertical siding and the lower is CMU.

Commissioner Fuss felt it looked like a 1950's style building and asked if other materials had been considered. Mr. Alexoff thought it would tie in with the materials used at the community center. Commissioner Page thought the aluminum siding would be more susceptible to damage with balls, etc.

Commissioner Fuss was concerned about the north wall being so close to the tennis court. Mr. Alexoff indicated there is a 10 foot fence with a pathway. They are trying to get ComEd to locate their new transformers in that area. It also may be an area for portable port-a-pots for special events.

Commissioner Berlinghof felt the material was okay, but not great. He would prefer wood siding, although it is more expensive. He felt it would be a minor addition in the scope of the entire project. He has an issue with the drivit and metal siding.

Commissioner Fuss felt uncomfortable with the damage prone material and does not like the drivit. Mr. Alexoff indicated they tried to blend in with the existing buildings and that the purpose of the building is for storage.

Chairperson Karr informed the Commission that the Clarkson Park was a joint venture, but Willow Park is a stand alone venture with no additional funding. Therefore, the Park District is looking at it in an economical standpoint.

Commissioner Berlinghof suggested filling in the columns to soften the building so it is not so industrial looking.

Patty Dodson, of 309 Eaton, said that this is the first time she has seen the new plans. She noted the garage of the shelter building and potential truck traffic is right next to the baseball diamond, tennis courts and pedestrian traffic. And, she felt the shelter would be an eyesore. Chairperson Karr indicated that currently Waste Management comes through on the east side and the facility is right next to that area. Mr. Alexoff said the vehicles will be parked in the parking lot as they have been currently doing. Ms. Dodson envisions that the shelter will be open for a number of years and become an eyesore. She understands the Park District's needs, but is not happy with the siding used and cannot understand why they cannot wait until they have all the funding available to complete it.

Robert Neustadt, of 313 Eaton Street, indicated that the proposed 81 feet by 81 feet shelter is a large building which will mean less green space. Mr. Alexoff indicated that was the one area that they could build on due to floodway/floodplain constraints. They felt it would be closer to the existing building. The pathways will all intertwine in that area. He felt it would be a nice amenity to the park.

Commissioner Berlinghof said he does not have a problem with the location or the concept. He has a problem with the architecture. He suggested they work with the aesthetics along with the budget and that all the columns should be enclosed with block and brick to make it look more like an open facility. Then tie it all in when it is completed. Mr. Alexoff felt there would then be a problem with the electrical room. Commissioner Berlinghof felt that leaving everything exposed would not look good and be a hazard.

Chairperson Karr agreed that the aesthetics should be dealt with. Commissioner Jennings questioned what the timeframe is for construction. Mr. Alexoff said they plan to start after July 4<sup>th</sup> for the entire site. Commissioner Fuss felt a rendering of the building and materials to be used would help the Commissioner in their determinations.

Commissioner Page understood the phasing schedule, but he has a concern about how long it will actually be until completion. He suggested that they start with completing a smaller section and then construct the rest later. Mr. Alexoff said they will come back with the entire structure, but they planned to do the footprint from the start with the columns built out a little bit more from the start and brick all the way up. Commissioners agreed that would be better.

Commissioner Berlinghof suggested that they price out the exterior now because the columns will be an expense and finishing the entire facility may be more feasible. His fear is that the rest of the building will never be built. Mr. Alexoff suggested that they are in the process of getting bids and are underway in this process and would like to get approval for the structure now if the columns are enclosed.

Chairperson Karr suggested discussing the landscaping. Ms. O'Neill indicated that the landscaping could be approved at this time. The final tree preservation plan is close to

completion and is required during the building permit process. Mr. Alexoff could come back to the Architectural Commission with the material samples.

Commissioner Page also suggested that a portion of the "L" be built and not the entire building, but to tie in later. Commissioner Berlinghof suggested building the larger part of the "L" now. However, Mr. Alexoff was told it was more difficult to tie in the roof then.

The signage is also to be approved. Mr. Alexoff indicated the interpretive sign will be placed by the fitness area along the river's edge. The sign will be acrylic, 3'8" x 2'4" with the post in black. Mr. Alexoff indicated he will have a picture at a later date.

Commissioner Page questioned the lighting for the building. Mr. Alexoff said they will have security lighting only. It was suggested for the back side to have motion lighting for security purposes.

Ms. Patty Dodson indicated that the ball fields are lit until 10:00 p.m. for various games and that the shelter should be lit while the fields are lit. Mr. Alexoff agreed that there will be lighting in the shelter while the games are going on. It will not be bright lighting, but will be placed underneath the roof in the building. The lighting will only be on if there is an activity going on.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was made:

**A motion was made by Commissioner Berlinghof, Seconded by Commissioner Jennings to approve the footprint of the shelter, site furnishings and landscaping as presented for the Park District's Willow Park planned unit development at 401 Wagner Road, subject to the following:**

- 1. The proposed materials for the roof are approved, the columns shall be faced with brick to match the current park district building and a ledge will be incorporated.**
- 2. The open shelter shall be properly lit to avoid any security issues.**
- 3. Petitioner shall return to this Commission with a final layout for the building, building material samples and a rendering.**
- 4. A detailed final tree preservation plan shall be submitted for permit approval prior to any tree removal within the required front or side yards of the site.**
- 5. The originally approved native sapling planting is reinstated in the original location on the landscape plan.**
- 6. Staff recommends no ash trees be transplanted. The five (5) ash trees are to be replaced with 3" caliper trees. The existing ash trees are to be removed this spring by an approved arborist who has signed the Illinois Department of Agriculture Letter of Compliance.**
- 7. Petitioner shall provide additional information relative to the proposed square footage, an outline of the establishment plans and on-going maintenance for**

the naturalized grass areas of the site, particularly if controlled burns are anticipated. This information shall be provided to Village staff for review.

8. The interpretive sign details shall be presented to this Commission when available.

**The vote was as follows:**

**AYES: 5**

Chairperson Pat Karr  
Juergen Fuss  
Todd Berlinghof  
Steve Page  
Tom Jennings

**NAYS: 0**

**ABSTAIN: 0**

**ABSENT: 2**

Steve Hirsch  
James Hayes

**Motion Carried**

There being no further issues to discuss upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Berlinghof, seconded by Commissioner Jennings and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

HGM 4/10/07

*(Approved 6/11/07)*