

**SUMMARY NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION
MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2009
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD**

On Monday, June 8, 2009, at the Northfield Village Board Room, 361 Happ Road, the Architectural Commission met at 7:00 P.M. to consider three issues:

Members in Attendance:

Pat Karr, Chairperson
Steve Hirsch
Steve Page
Tom Jennings
Jason Felicione
Patricia Leonard

Members Absent:

Juergen Fuss

OTHERS PRESENT: Linnea O'Neill and Anne Kane (see attached sign-in sheet).

Chairperson Karr requested approval of the Summary Notes of the April 13, 2009 Architectural Commission meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Leonard, Seconded by Commissioner Page to approve the Architectural Commission Summary Notes of April 13, 2009.

The vote was as follows:

AYES: 6

Pat Karr, Chairperson
Steve Hirsch
Steve Page
Tom Jennings
Jason Felicione
Patricia Leonard

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

Juergen Fuss

Motion Carried

ISSUE #1: Consideration of a request for permanent signage for Northfield Village Square located at 301 Happ Road. The petitioner is Friedman Properties, Ltd.

Nick Helmer, attorney for the shopping center owner and Bruce Vogle, sign consultant and designer, were present. Mr. Helmer indicated that the signs were long overdue for an upgrade and since the restaurant was recently redone, this encouraged the property owner to redo the ground sign and wall signs.

Commissioner Page asked if the main site signage would be internally lit. Mr. Vogle indicated it would. Commissioner Page then asked if the mall sign would be lit also. Mr. Vogle said it would. The proposal includes new tenant sign inserts into the existing frames with a slightly smaller letter height.

Commissioner Leonard questioned whether the "retail space" sign connected to the ground sign would be removable. Mr. Vogle indicated it would be removable.

After Chairperson Karr questioned whether all the signs for the properties owned by Friedman would change color to the green scheme, Mr. Vogle replied that all the existing signs would be repainted to this color. There are spaces available for three tenants available on the front entrance mall sign. The rendering shows two (2) existing internal tenants and the address. The address panel will be removed when a perspective third tenant requests a sign.

Commissioner Hirsch asked whether the lights would be back lit. Mr. Vogle said they would continue to be backlit.

Chairperson Karr then asked if banners would be placed on the light poles in the parking lot and she was informed they would.

It was agreed that the signs were an improvement and helped to coordinate the stores.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Leonard, Seconded by Commissioner Jennings to approve the permanent signage as submitted.

The vote was as follows:

AYES: 6

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

Pat Karr, Chairperson

Juergen Fuss

Steve Hirsch

Steve Page

Tom Jennings

Jason Felicione

Patricia Leonard

Motion Carried

ISSUE #2: Consideration of a request for a variation to allow for permanent signage that exceeds the allowable square footage for The Happ Inn Restaurant located at 305 Happ Road. The petitioner is C & D Northfield, LLC.

Nick Helmer, attorney on behalf of Carlos Nieto and Bruce Vogle, design consultant, were present for petitioner. Mr. Helmer said they plan to open within the next thirty days and began by explaining the desire for the newly proposed windscreens to mark the restaurant entrance and the need for a variance because of the increase in the aggregate square footage of proposed signage.

Commissioner Leonard was told that the gooseneck lighting would remain the same.

Commissioner Page asked if there is a sign change on the main building. Mr. Vogle indicated it was not, just a color change to a cranberry color. They also are alternating the wording on the awnings – one will read “Bar & Grill” and the next will read “The Happ Inn” and the next “Bar & Grill” and the final awning “The Happ Inn.” There will be outside seating below these awnings.

Commissioner Jennings asked Ms. O’Neill to explain the staff’s recommendations. Ms. O’Neill indicated that the Village Center Design Guidelines recommend a 6” awning

lettering height on the valance only; the proposed awnings have increased lettering height.

Commissioner Jennings then asked if former tenant Brasserie T had windscreens and Commissioner Hirsch questioned whether Brasserie T had received variances. Ms. O'Neill said she didn't find further information in past Architectural Commission approvals at this site regarding the windscreens. Last month, the petitioner's signage submittal was at the top of aggregate total signage square footage and now they exceed the requirement and need a variation because of the increase in the size of the letters and by adding the windscreens with signs on them. Mr. Helmer interjected that the proposed valances are smaller than Brasserie T's. He feels the larger lettering is for marketing identification and to stand out. The proposed awnings are more aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Helmer said that the purpose of the windscreens is to separate the entrance from the outside patio.

Commissioner Felicione said that he likes the signage and colors and welcomes the new business.

Commissioner Hirsch indicated that Brasserie T had planter boxes and wondered if they had been taken into account. Ms. O'Neill said she couldn't find any background information on that issue.

Commissioner Page asked if the valance on the canopies were all the same height. Mr. Vogle indicated they are all the same height. Commissioner Page was then concerned about the windscreens creating a hazard. Mr. Helmer said they have not had any problems with them.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Jennings, Seconded by Commissioner Hirsch to approve the proposed sign, awning signs designs, and two (2) windscreen designs with approval of a variance to allow for the permanent signage to exceed the allowable square footage.

The vote was as follows:

AYES: 6

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

Pat Karr, Chairperson

Juergen Fuss

Steve Hirsch

Steve Page

Tom Jennings

Jason Felicione

Patricia Leonard

Motion Carried

ISSUE #3: Consideration of a request for approval of site plan, exterior façade, site lighting, landscaping and signage for the proposed construction of a one story 32,380 square foot automobile dealership for The Fields Auto Group at 770 Frontage Road. The petitioner is Fields Imports, Inc.

Jeffrey Brown, Principal of The JRB Group Architects and Craig Dowden, landscape architect were present, along with the General Manager of the new Volvo Building, Ms. Pat Hubert.

Mr. Brown handed out a new proposal to each of the Commission members. He indicated that there had been a crisis with the purchase of the Subaru franchise in that they were challenged by the Evanston franchise as to the location. Fields has decided to not carry the Subaru franchise. The petitioner was approved by the Plan and Zoning Commission to build the full size showroom of 32,380 feet, but they will only be building 27,303 square feet at this time due to opting out of Subaru. Mr. Brown went on to say that the same materials and colors used on the BMW building would be used except the Volvo building will use blue signage as accounted for in the signage package. The pylon sign will have the words "Volvo" illuminated only. The service building will be a white pre-cast to match the latest addition to the BMW facility. Clear glass glazing with a blue band will be used at a 9' level to create the Volvo identity.

Additional landscaping will be placed where the showroom would have been which should increase their landscaping requirements. Mr. Brown also indicated that they do not have a problem with staff's recommendation of using 21' tall (instead of the proposed 25') lights in the front and 15' in the back with 400 ft. candles. There will be a continuous traffic movement around the building and around the entire site. There is a trash enclosure big enough on the BMW site for the entire property. They will be eliminating the road entrance on the north for the office building and the main entrance from Frontage Road to the building.

Commissioner Hirsch asked if the open area will be used for car inventory. Mr. Brown indicated outside will include an entryway with additional trees and the inside will include a customer lounge area similar to the BMW lounge. Mr. Dowden explained the entryway area will be used for landscaping and will give a garden atmosphere with more colorful varieties of plants.

Commissioner Hirsch also questioned the lighting. Mr. Brown said the lighting would be consistent with what is there now along Frontage Road, maybe one head added.

Commissioner Jennings asked Mr. Dowden to explain the landscaping. Mr. Dowden, President of Dowden Landscaping, explained that the landscaping around the new building will be a natural extension to the existing southern facility. There will be a row of trees along Frontage Road and ornamentals along the property lines. A new colorful garden area will be planted where the showroom would have been. Mr. Dowden indicated he has been in contact with Ms. O'Neill regarding the landscaping requirements. Commissioner Jennings questioned staff's recommendation for the two parkway trees. Mr. Brown explained that 7 trees are required. Two trees already exist and there will be 5 new trees planted every 30 feet. Mr. Dowden also said there are an existing Ash and Hawthorne tree along the property line.

Commissioner Page felt the 3" diameter tree requirement would not allow for consistency with the parkway trees and the caliper should be increased. He stressed the importance for the caliper in the front to match the existing trees. Mr. Brown said they will sit down with Linnea and work on this.

Chairperson Karr presented a question to Mr. Dowden regarding the pear tree variety which will be planted on the site and heard they are prone to disease. Mr. Dowden indicated he has one planted at his home and uses them quite often because of their

blooming quality, fall color and retain their leaves late in the fall. He had not heard of any disease problems with this variety of pear tree.

Commissioner Felicione questioned what the plan was for the back of the property. Mr. Dowden indicated that there had been a possibility of moving some evergreens on the property to the Village property to the west. However, he went to look at them and the trees are either too large in caliper to move or they are not in good enough shape to move. Commissioner Felicione then asked if they are adding the 8 trees to the back. Mr. Brown indicated they cannot move these evergreens to the back of the property because they cannot be moved successfully. Mr. Dowden explained that the spruce is still too big to move and has a funny growth. He needs to know what utilities are there. Commissioner Felicione then asked if an inch by inch replacement was required. Ms. O'Neill indicated that they were hoping to replace the trees with those evergreens, but something else may need to be done. Mr. Dowden said that he will bring a tree spade expert in to talk to Ms. O'Neill as to what could be moved safely.

Chairperson Karr asked Ms. O'Neill where on Happ Road does the north end of Fields property hit. Ms. O'Neill indicated about 749 North Happ Road. Pine Street is toward the south end of the property. Chairperson Karr indicated this shouldn't impact the homes on Earl Drive.

Jim Hayes, 630 Earl Drive, indicated he was on this Commission when Fields redeveloped the property and were required to put in trees. He couldn't believe that they are just getting around to planting the trees which were promised back then. His concern is that it will never happen. If it doesn't appear in the approval of the motion, it won't happen. Mr. Brown countered that the money was given to the Village for the evergreen screening as required by the last approved BMW remodeling. Ms. O'Neill indicated that in 2005, 30 evergreens were required to be planted, but Fields did not go ahead with their 2005 plans. She indicated the Evergreen Screening Project went out to bid in May 2009 and bids came back between \$29,000 and \$52,000. They chose the \$29,000 bid resulting in a \$10,000 slush fund to be allocated for potential uncompleted problems or an additional screening project.

Dave Woodyall, 2050 Norfolk Road, indicated that the west side of Happ Road has not been adversely effected by Fields, but the neighbors on the east side have complained for years. He walked along the space between Fields and the homes on Happ Road. He discovered that 18 homes are negatively impacted, 11 homes on Happ Road from Pine Street (2 homes) to Earl Drive (northern 5 homes), Pine Street at the southern border of Fields. His thought was that the lighting was the problem. He visited with all the homeowners and found there is also a noise problem. The lighting problem is more of a winter annoyance because of the lack of foliage. What happens is that there is a general aura of light from the facility. A common complaint is the constant squawking noise when cars are trying to be located and the horns beep and the lights go on. He feels there is a potential win/win situation, because we all like the tax revenue, but Fields needs to be concerned about the residents. Fields needs to meaningfully reduce the lights, especially in the winter and to eliminate the squawking noise. A firm commitment needs to be given from Fields. Fields could save a lot of utility costs by turning off lights at night.

Chairperson Karr responded that Planning and Zoning have been cognizant to having the least amount of noise and light to the residents. Since she lives in the area, she is aware also of the concerns. However, she feels that Fields has tried to be a good neighbor in the past and have lowered the height of the poles. She suggested that

maybe a copy of the minutes should be sent to the corporate offices to hear the concerns of the residents. Mr. Woodyall recalls many letters which have been sent to Mr. Fields and others to no avail. Chairperson Karr indicated that the Director of Community Development is at this meeting and will follow through on these concerns.

Pat Hubert, General Manager of the Volvo franchise was present and indicated that Volvos do not beep when the door lock is pressed. Only the lights will go on. Therefore, this will not increase the noise.

Commissioner Felicione asked Mr. Brown if petitioner could look at the lighting situation again. Mr. Brown said that in 1996 when they first expanded, all the light poles had to be cut down and wattages lowered with flat lenses.

Philip Preston, 705 Happ Road, said that he has been impacted by the BMW dealership and expansion. He asked Mr. Brown why lights are needed at night. Mr. Brown responded that they are needed for security reasons and that it is BMW policy. Mr. Preston suggested using motion detectors as he uses them in his backyard. Mr. Brown reminded him that there is 1,000 feet of property which would have to be on sensors. Mr. Preston then asked what the service hours are and was told 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. He therefore asked why the area is lit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mr. Brown said it is part of BMW's operating policies. Mr. Preston then said that the Board needs to address the lighting issue. Also at least six times a day, car alarms are heard. Mr. Brown responded to additional lighting by saying that only the letters on the Volvo sign will be illuminated and they face north and south.

Mr. Preston then questioned Ms. O'Neill about the Village receiving \$39,000 and wanted to know how many trees that will buy. Ms. O'Neill indicated 39 evergreens seven to nine feet tall. He indicated that his property is 115' and he would have 1-1/2 trees allocated for his property. He went on to say that he has spent a considerable amount of money to purchase thirty 12' white pine trees. He still sees the lights. Because of the sloping right of way, each tree needs an irrigation system. Therefore, any trees planted probably wouldn't survive. He understands that Fields brings in a lot of tax dollars, but feels they should be good neighbors in the process. They do not sell cars at night. Fields should have respect for the residents. He feels there are alternatives to be looked into.

Mr. Mark Gantner, 723 Happ Road, agrees with Mr. Preston and Mr. Woodyall. He too believes there have been no results. He doesn't feel anything will happen soon. He believes the lights should be turned down or off at night. Use old style standards – advertise, but not by using lights. Fields has a lot more to do for the residents.

Commissioner Hirsch agreed that the lights have always been an issue. He suggested that the lights be brought down and felt motion sensors wouldn't work. He asked what the current policy is regarding the lights and if every other light could be turned off. Mr. Brown said that the lights are not programmable. He said the biggest problem is that the homes are at a higher elevation than the Fields property. They already established a 50% reduction and are relying on their landscape plan to screen further. It was discussed at one time to put up a 30' wall but because of the elevation it couldn't be done. They have gone to flat lenses which doesn't throw any light past the sight.

Mr. Preston said the lights are bright enough to read a book at night. He believes regardless of what has been done, there is still a significant impact to the neighbors.

Even with the trees on his property, there has been no impact. The only way is to turn down the lights. He said the Fields dealership looks like a federal prison.

Commissioner Felicione suggested using programmable lights for the Volvo addition. This should be a favorable suggestion to Fields by cutting their utility bills.

Commissioner Page felt that the motion detection would not turn on quickly enough, but asked if the lights could be dimmed. Another suggestion is to put the back lights on timers.

Anne Kane, Director of Community Development indicated that representatives from Fields indicated that they have been exploring every other light to reduce the condition if the approval would be based on this. She compared the Park District putting new lights in to solve their problem. Chairperson Karr responded that this Commission could place a "subject to" clause on their recommendations to explore light reduction.

Mr. Jim Hayes felt that nothing would be done if this were just "considered". He said with technology today, any lighting can be put in. Mr. Preston said "don't hope for the tooth fairy." Mr. Preston went on to say that the lights were most likely on a breaker box, not just one switch and that every other light (breaker) could feasibly be turned off.

Commissioner Page asked if there was a monument sign. Mr. Brown said a pylon sign monument was in the original package. The height is consistent with the BMW monument sign. He then asked Ms. O'Neill what was being done for the neighbors. Ms. O'Neill said that the Evergreen Screening Project begins in the Village right of way on June 22nd. There have been extreme constraints because of existing plants, shade and soil problems but, they have tried to plant to screen each neighbor's view. The evergreens have a one year warranty.

Commissioner Jennings asked Ms. O'Neill how much discussion has been made with Fields regarding the neighbors' concerns. She said the concerns have been discussed at length with each submittal. Staff will discuss further landscaping issues with Fields.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Felicione, Seconded by Commissioner Page to approve the new building including site plans, building elevations, materials, lighting, signage and landscape design for Concept A and B at Fields Volvo at 770 Frontage Road in conformance with the plans submitted May 7, 2009 and amended June 8, 2009, subject to the following:

- 1. In lieu of the transplanting of the additional eight evergreens, there will be an inch-by-inch replacement of the trees based on the Tree Preservation Ordinance based on the original tree survey.**
- 2. Additional parkway trees will be planted at least 5" in caliper every 30' to meet the requirements of the Landscape Ordinance and to match the existing line of parkway trees in front of Fields BMW.**
- 3. In lieu of incorporating four landscape islands the minimum green space requirements should be met.**

4. An additional five trees and a continuous hedge at the western property line will be planted to meet the requirements of the Landscape Ordinance and to help buffer the noise and view and to add green relief.
5. Seven light standards will be placed along Frontage Road at a height of 21 feet.
6. Petitioner will return to this Commission with a written statement as to their plans to be approved by this Commission to reduce the overall lighting impact on the neighborhood immediately to the west of the property during non-use hours.

The vote was as follows:

AYES: 6

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

Pat Karr, Chairperson

Juergen Fuss

Steve Hirsch

Steve Page

Tom Jennings

Jason Felicione

Patricia Leonard

Motion Carried

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Karr addressed the Commission as a member of the Gateway Sign Committee. She explained that a Committee was formed to determine a need for new gateway signs. They met five times, twice with Hitchcock Design, who helped guide the design review. Pictures of the renderings were shown to the Commission. A primary sign will be a 5' tall and 14'10" long ground sign with two stone pillars, a stone masonry base and a 2' x 9' wood sign panel. A secondary sign will be 8.5' tall and utilizes a similar 36" high stone masonry base with a black metal post and arm assembly and a 2' x 3' metal or wood sign panel. Both will have a cream background with the Northfield font in green and the grasses below.

The sign located at Fox Meadow will be changed by removing the goose and changing the color to conform to the new look.

It is requested that the first sign will be erected as a primary sign at Willow Road at Forest Way. Other signs are being suggested for later dates.

The Commission approved the new primary sign at Willow Road and Forest Way.

There being no further issues to discuss upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Felicione, seconded by Commissioner Hirsch and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

HGM 6/9/09

Approved 7/13/09