

ARCHITECTURAL

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING
BEFORE THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION

COMMISSION

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had before the Village of Northfield Architectural Commission held remotely due to the COVID-19 crisis, on the 8th of June, 2020, at the hour of hour of 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

TEV BOND, Chairperson
JOE McINERNEY
NANCY NAZARIAN
KATHRYN TALTY
BARNABY DINGES
ANDY BOWYER

MEMBERS ABSENT:

PATRICIA MORRELL

ALSO PRESENT:

STEVE GUTIERREZ, Community Development Director
LINNEA PALMER-O'NEILL, Village Planner
JOHN GOODWIN, Village Board Liaison

1 CHAIRPERSON BOND: I'm calling to order the
2 June 8th, 2020 meeting of the Architectural Commission.
3 Good evening. My name is Tev Bond; I'm the Chair.
4 This meeting is being held remotely under
5 the State of Illinois Executive Order 2020-32, Section
6 2, requiring us to stay at home or place of residence.
7 Notice to interested parties was given and they were
8 invited to participate.
9 We have this evening Linnea O'Neill with
10 the Village of Northfield; John Goodwin, the Village
11 Board Liaison; Barnaby Dinges, Commissioner;
12 Commissioner Joe McInerney; Commissioner Kathryn Talty;
13 Commissioner Nancy Nazarian; and we're anticipating
14 Commissioner Andy Bowyer to join.
15 May I have approval of the minutes from
16 the May 11th, 2020 meeting?
17 COMMISSIONER McCINERNEY: I'll approve them.
18 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Second?
19 COMMISSIONER TALTY: I'll second.
20 CHAIRPERSON BOND: All in favor?
21 (Chorus of ayes.)
22 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Any opposed?
23 (No response.)
24 CHAIRPERSON BOND: The meeting minutes passed.
25 We have two items on the agenda this
26 evening: 510 Briar Lane and 423 Central Avenue.
27 Our first item is 510 Briar Lane;
28 consideration of a request for a fence variation from
29 Chapter 18, Section 18-9, for a fence taller than six-
30 feet, four inches required by Village Code to allow for
31 an eight-foot fence located at 510 Briar Lane.
32 So, our Petitioner is, I believe Andrew
33 Hixson. Did you just join us?
34 MR. HIXSON: Can you guys hear me?
35 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes.
36 MR. HIXSON: Okay, I've been trying to speak
37 for about five minutes.
38 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Oh, sorry.
39 MR. HIXSON: I think I was muted.
40 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right, because this is your
41 first opportunity to speak, but before you speak, I have
42 to swear you in.
43 MR. HIXSON: Oh, okay.
44 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, if you can hold up your
45 hand please?
46 (Witness sworn.)
47 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Please state your name.
48 MR. HIXSON: Andrew Hixson.
49 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, so now --
50 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: All right, now John you
51 wave the sword and cut his hand off.
52 MR. HIXSON: No, it's here, it's here. I have

1 two.
2 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, now the floor is yours
3 to explain your proposal to us.
4 MR. HIXSON: Sure.
5 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, thank you.
6 MR. HIXSON: Would you like -- I can share my
7 screen if that helps or --
8 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes, I believe, Steve,
9 don't we have a way for the --
10 MR. HIXSON: I should be able to do it this
11 way.
12 MR. GUTIERREZ: He can at this point as a
13 panelist, yes.
14 MR. HIXSON: Yes, if you can see that?
15 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes, thank you.
16 MR. HIXSON: Okay, so when our home was built
17 back in, or was finished in 2016, we installed a pool in
18 our backyard. At the time, we followed the Village
19 ordinance that we would have a six-foot fence. That
20 fence is a little bit tricky because the way our land is
21 set up, there's a slope in the land itself. So, if you
22 were to walk in the front door and continually walking
23 out to where you'd walk out to the pool, that area is
24 level. But what that meant was that the pool was then
25 raised about two feet or so above the soil height, okay?
26 You can see that in this picture.
27 Okay, so as you see, there's a retaining
28 wall that starts and as it slopes down, you know, this
29 part, they measured it basically in the middle, that was
30 what the inspector wanted us to do at the time. So, the
31 stone wall is approximately two-feet high, and then the
32 fence on top of it is four-feet for a total of six,
33 okay?
34 The problem with it for our sake is that,
35 there's two things. One, from a safety standpoint; the
36 whole point of having a fence around your pool is to
37 keep animals and children and teenagers or whoever from
38 getting in. This fence is very easily scalable because
39 all you would need to do is just step up on this wall
40 and then climb over, okay? The latch for the gate is at
41 the top, but again, if you step up there you can easily
42 reach it. That, and then from a privacy standpoint,
43 having a fence of four feet around the pool isn't ideal.
44 I have three small children and would like to keep it as
45 private as possible.
46 The reason I'm petitioning now is that,
47 as you see here, about six weeks or so ago, we had a
48 tree that died and needed to be cut down. The service
49 that came out dropped the tree on the fence, and this is
50 their attempt at a repair. Clearly, not something I'm
51 happy with and I'm sure really nobody who drives by
52 would be happy with. The fence for that matter isn't

1 very sturdy anyway, I mean, if one of us leaned on, it
2 would easily fall over, so --

3 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Andy, that's only their
4 temporary fix, isn't it?

5 MR. HIXSON: They are, but what happened was
6 the guy who fixed it basically said I'm not going to fix
7 it. Then he gave me, he just said I'm going to cut you
8 a check basically.

9 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Oh.

10 MR. HIXSON: He gave me virtually nothing, but
11 just to go away and I didn't want to deal with him.

12 So, given that the majority of the fence
13 needs to be replaced anyway, and the issues I mentioned
14 before about safety and privacy, I'd like permission to
15 be able to go, you know, six-feet from the pool deck
16 instead of six-feet from that middle of that sloped
17 area.

18 From a standpoint as far as where the
19 property sits, this is our lot, to give you an idea.
20 So, if you can see my mouse moving, this is Old Willow
21 over here, and then Briar is over here, okay? So, the
22 fence would be this orange line if you will; I think
23 that's orange, yellow-ish orange. So, you'd be able to
24 see that one wall.

25 Those first pictures I was showing you
26 with the rocks, I was standing in front of a couple of
27 evergreens. So, to the extent you can see around the
28 evergreen or through them, then that would be the view
29 from Old Willow. The rest of it would be to the Smith
30 residence next door, or I suppose, or actually Courtney
31 Penn lives back here; she has a driveway right here.
32 So, those two would be able to see it. I've spoken with
33 her and she certainly wants it fixed compared to what it
34 is now and she has no issue with it being taller. Then
35 this part over here would be visible only to anybody
36 that was on our property.

37 So, that's the reason for my petition. I
38 don't know if you have any questions. I can tell you
39 that the fence will, the new fence will look the same as
40 this or very, very close to it. I like this design.
41 So, it will be a white or an off-white with some form of
42 lattice on the top, most likely. The intent is to do
43 wood. We might do some form of vinyl or PVC composite
44 that looks like wood, but most likely will be wood.

45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, so Mr. Hixson, what
46 happens now is the Commissioners will ask you questions.

47 MR. HIXSON: Sure.

48 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Then we open it, if there's
49 anybody in the queue, in the public that wants to speak,
50 and then we vote on it. So, now let's open for the
51 Commissioners to ask questions.

52 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Can I ask one maybe

1 clarification?
2 MR. HIXSON: Sure.
3 COMMISSIONER TALTY: The retaining wall that
4 you're seeing, does it wrap the west side of the pool?
5 Does it go all the way to the property line?
6 MR. HIXSON: Yes, it's under the entire fence.
7 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Okay, so the fence is
8 being replaced exactly where it is located now?
9 MR. HIXSON: Correct. Yes, that retaining
10 wall will remain.
11 COMMISSIONER TALTY: And the retaining wall
12 remains.
13 MR. HIXSON: Yes, it would just simply be two-
14 feet higher.
15 CHAIRPERSON BOND: It's a height issue. To
16 the west, there are actually two drives, and then the
17 neighbor is set back.
18 MR. HIXSON: Correct.
19 CHAIRPERSON BOND: That neighbor is not
20 directly on that west side. Then on the view that we're
21 looking at, it's from Old Willow Road, so this is a
22 south elevation?
23 MR. HIXSON: Correct.
24 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Tev, I have two
25 questions.
26 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes.
27 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: The first one, Linnea,
28 is Linnea, she's not on my screen, but is she here?
29 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: I'm here.
30 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Linnea, is that correct,
31 that the code would be from outside looking, so from the
32 grass taking into account the retaining wall? Or should
33 it be from the inside on the terrace that he's got six-
34 feet? What is the code interpretation?
35 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: The code would be the
36 outside from the grass area that you're talking about.
37 It's from the grade on the outside that we can see in
38 the pictures he has up right now.
39 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Okay, and my second
40 question, Andy or Mr. Hixson, is have you done any
41 consideration at the east end of that fence where it
42 abuts a stone column? Your fence should be two-feet
43 higher than that column. Have you thought about how
44 that would interact?
45 MR. HIXSON: That's a good question. It is
46 lower than that column, but you're right, it might go a
47 little bit above it. I would work with whoever the
48 builders are on that to make sure it looks right, but
49 it's a good point. You know, I suppose we could have a
50 little portion of it be shorter or maybe even slant down
51 to meet that at the end.
52 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Well, you might want to

1 work with your architect because it looks like the stone
2 wall behind it slants down.

3 MR. HIXSON: Yes, there's --

4 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: And maybe that panel or
5 fencing could slant as well.

6 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Could scallop, yes.
7 Could scallop, yes.

8 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Thank you, Kathryn.
9 Scallop is a much nicer word.

10 MR. HIXSON: That's a good point.

11 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yes, when I drove by
12 the other day, that was my first question. My second
13 question, it seems like the far end, opposite end of
14 that corner is significantly higher than six-feet
15 already. Do you know what the measurement is on the
16 opposite corner?

17 MR. HIXSON: Yes, it's not a whole lot higher,
18 but it was a little under seven when I measured it.

19 COMMISSIONER MCINERNEY: So, that's going to
20 be nine-feet?

21 MR. HIXSON: It will be, yes, just in that
22 corner, correct.

23 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: So, in that corner, the
24 retaining wall, that's stone is about three-feet?

25 MR. HIXSON: Yes, approximately. It's just
26 under three-feet.

27 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Are you planning on
28 putting any additional landscaping around that fencing?

29 MR. HIXSON: That is absolutely the plan. You
30 can see there's plenty of plants that are smaller there.
31 There are other things that I have tried that have died
32 for various reasons. But yes, I've had landscapers out
33 and the plan is certainly for this to grow. You're also
34 seeing it, these pictures are, you know, six weeks ago.
35 So, we had a lot of the flowers and
36 things like that that do go throughout the year haven't
37 bloom yet. So, yes, it's bigger right now but, yes, the
38 plan is certainly that those will continue to grow and
39 hide it even more. You know, again, the house is, you
40 know, three-and-a-half years old, four years old, and
41 the landscaping was done the following screen. So, the
42 landscaping is three years old, so it's still growing
43 and the plan is certainly to hide it even more than I
44 can. That was one of the initial thoughts was to just
45 find a bunch of, you know, hedges or bushes that were
46 tall enough to do it, but it was very cost prohibitive,
47 especially to go the entire perimeter.

48 So, but yes, that is definitely in the
49 works.

50 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Mr. Hixson, have you had
51 any conversation with your neighbor across that driveway
52 that would be the house that's affected by this?

1 MR. HIXSON: So, the way that the property,
2 the property next to mine to the west at some point was
3 subdivided into two properties. So, right on the other
4 side of this fence, to the west of that is a driveway.
5 First of all, there's a tree line, and then there's a
6 driveway, and then there's another group of trees.

7 You can see it maybe better in this
8 picture a little bit. You see on the right here, you
9 see the driveway that's here and the trees. So, this
10 driveway goes all the way back, well past the fence,
11 probably 150 feet past the fence before their home.
12 Then the other home is probably 200 feet from the fence,
13 but through two sets of tree lines over two driveways to
14 their home.

15 I had spoken to them. It's a mother and
16 father live here and the daughter lives here with her
17 kids. I'd spoken to the daughter; she's completely fine
18 with it. She told me she spoke with her mother and
19 she's fine with it. We have a good neighborly
20 relationship, so --

21 COMMISSIONER TALTY: I mean, it's wooded, it
22 appears to be wooded. So, I would think --

23 MR. HIXSON: It is very wooded, yes.

24 COMMISSIONER TALTY: -- it minimizes the
25 appearance.

26 MR. HIXSON: Right, and again, you're seeing
27 it with no leaves on trees either.

28 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Yes.

29 MR. HIXON: So, yes.

30 COMMISSIONER TALTY: The stone wall is
31 attractive, I mean, I don't, and the fence is
32 attractive. It's just where it's nine-feet, I could see
33 that being, you know, a little visually overwhelming.
34 But if it's within the wooded area, I mean, I'm less
35 concerned about it, I guess.

36 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: I think that's
37 where --

38 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: I think if he were to
39 plant -- I'm sorry, Nancy.

40 I was just going to say I think if he
41 were to plant like six-foot arborvitaes all along that
42 stone wall, just, you know, like a hedge and you only
43 saw like a foot or two of the fence above it, I don't
44 know that he has to do it anywhere. But especially that
45 wall on the west side, I think that would really bring
46 the scale of it down some, because from the street you
47 would see all the green.

48 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: That's exactly what I
49 was about to say, that if you had something on the
50 southwest corner of that fence because that's where it's
51 going to be the tallest or the most imposing, that that
52 would minimize any problem with the way you see it when

1 you're passing by on Old Willow Road, or for that matter
2 for the neighbor to the west.

3 MR. HIXSON: Right. Yes, this picture is a
4 little tricky because there's a tree line right here.
5 So, you know, yes, but you're right, and again there's
6 definitely plans for that to continue to grow.

7 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Yes.

8 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Is that an arborvitae
9 that's in front of that fence right now? That kind of
10 tall bush?

11 COMMISSIONER TALTY: It looks like a boxwood.

12 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: yes, it is.

13 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Boxwood?

14 MR. HIXSON: No, it's too big. Well, I don't
15 know, it's too big to be a boxwood, I think it is. By
16 no means am I an expert on this.

17 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: So, whatever that is, if
18 that was like an arborvitae; I think if you were to take
19 from that point west and just do a whole hedge of that
20 height, that would really help. Because I wouldn't be
21 offended by it, but I think anybody who would be
22 offended by it would be less offended because it's
23 hidden behind greens.

24 MR. HIXSON: Sure.

25 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Like the highest house
26 going down that way, I mean, they've got so much green
27 around it, you can't really tell what's happening behind
28 it. You don't really care because it's so green.

29 MR. HIXSON: Yes, and keep in mind, too, that
30 I'm standing in front of, you know, some evergreens and
31 some other trees that are already, you know, in the yard
32 that are part of that view from Old Willow. So, even
33 this picture on the left, I'm still 50 or 60 feet from
34 Old Willow where I'm standing to take the picture, and
35 I'm a good distance back. I can't remember the initial
36 setback we used, but whatever the city recommendation
37 is, what this setback line is, so here it's 60 feet I
38 think it looks like to here. Then the fence is another,
39 call it 10 feet back. So, the fence is 70 feet or so
40 from the street already, and again, there's trees behind
41 me. But I hear your point and there definitely is plans
42 in the works for that, so --

43 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: So, let me, that far
44 corner that then turns the corner along the woods, it
45 looks to me like, so that's seven-feet, that whole area
46 around the woods is already seven-feet, is that correct?

47 MR. HIXSON: No, because it slopes down. It
48 slopes down from there. So, if you were to look at the
49 fence right here, so the north side of that fence?

50 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yes?

51 MR. HIXSON: Then you're back to six-feet.

52 CHAIRPERSON BOND: But it's higher again at

1 that point where he has the hand, the cursor.
2 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yes.
3 CHAIRPERSON BOND: It's higher there just like
4 it's higher in the front, and then it slopes down to
5 that corner that gets --
6 MR. HIXSON: It's slope to this corner, right
7 here.
8 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes, it slopes downward to
9 that corner.
10 MR. HIXSON: Yes, right. Yes, so you're
11 right, it is seven-feet, but then it slowly gets lower
12 as you go.
13 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right.
14 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: And then, Linnea,
15 because it's on Old Willow, is that not considered a
16 front yard?
17 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: He's back from the front
18 yard. Old Willow is considered a front yard, but he's
19 out of the front yard at this point.
20 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Okay, because if this
21 was the front yard, it would just be four-feet then.
22 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: Correct.
23 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: And then you add the
24 pool, because it has to be six-feet over on the pool.
25 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: Yes.
26 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: His front yard isn't
27 Briar?
28 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: It is, but if you're
29 on a corner lot --
30 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: He has two front yards.
31 COMMISSIONER TALTY: I think, I like the
32 suggestion Andy Bowyer made regarding landscape, but I
33 would, my only input would be you're kind of in a
34 naturalized area. It's more wooded, sort of naturalized
35 landscape. So, I think if you do consider additional
36 landscape in that southwest corner, I would just keep in
37 mind, you know, the style of landscaping you get
38 going --
39 MR. HIXSON: For sure.
40 COMMISSIONER TALTY: -- and the fact you're
41 going to have a lot of shade cast from the wooded
42 portion.
43 MR. HIXSON: Right, and that's why some of the
44 plants that we've tried haven't made it, because while
45 you see plenty of sunlight here, this is also early
46 April, you know. When there's leaves on these trees,
47 there's not nearly as much sun here.
48 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Right.
49 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: I'm just struggling
50 here to see how this whole thing is going to tie
51 together with that post there and then adding two-feet.
52 It just seems to me to be pretty big without any idea of

1 what this is going to look like with plantings.
2 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, I think, Mr. Hixson,
3 and Commissioners, where we are is that you have
4 support; however, we feel we need more information. So,
5 in order to give you a variance, this is a unique
6 situation and the setback of the property is around you.
7 But we have to make sure that everything is covered
8 because of setting any sort of precedent and having
9 other residents come.
10 MR. HIXSON: Sure.
11 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, there's enough unknown
12 that I believe a continuance is probably the best way to
13 go, which is when you have the design of your fence with
14 the resolution of how you're going to work with that
15 corner that we're talking about that we're looking at
16 the Willow Road elevation, and your landscaping plan for
17 that corner --
18 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: And the post.
19 CHAIRPERSON BOND: -- then you bring it back
20 to us. I think that the discussion will hopefully be
21 favorable, but I think a continuance is probably where
22 we're headed today.
23 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: And the stone post, Tev.
24 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right, that's what I meant,
25 the stone post. Like that elevation of how you're going
26 to resolve --
27 MR. HIXSON: This corner right here?
28 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes, that connection. Then
29 also, it would be advantageous to know what that design
30 is, rather than, well, I think it will be this. We need
31 to be able to say, okay, we know exactly what this
32 design is and what you're planning to do with the
33 landscaping, and then we have a solid decision.
34 MR. HIXSON: Sure. Yes, I mean, I can tell
35 you that the fence, I like the design of the fence and
36 the way it looks. I mean, I'm flexible with, you know,
37 what you guys might think would look good. But I mean
38 even, I just think just even if it had the same thing,
39 but it just slanted down to meet that, again, this post
40 is a little bit misleading. That post is, especially
41 with the light on it, is already, if you include the
42 light, it's taller than what the fence will be.
43 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: But the fence has to
44 terminate into that post.
45 MR. HIXSON: I understand that.
46 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right.
47 MR. HIXSON: I'm just saying if you include,
48 but if you include the top of the post, that's still six
49 or eight inches. So, we're talking about a slope of a
50 foot-and-a-half maybe.
51 COMMISSIONER TALTY: But the current fence,
52 isn't the current fence four-feet tall, right?

1 MR. HIXSON: It's four, yes, it's four-feet,
2 correct.
3 COMMISSIONER TALTY: And it's going to six-
4 feet, so it will be two-feet higher.
5 MR. HIXSON: Right, but I'm saying that
6 currently, this post is higher than the fence.
7 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Not by much.
8 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, the top of it, the
9 limestone cap is above your fencepost. I know you can't
10 zoom in, but I actually, I have driven by your property
11 and that has to be resolved, because you cannot take
12 that fencepost straight up. It will run into that
13 limestone cap. So, that does need a resolution of how
14 that's going to happen in order to go up two-feet.
15 MR. HIXSON: Okay.
16 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yes, and I think, I
17 mean, you know, what's the material? You had said it
18 was either going to be vinyl or wood. I think we need a
19 firm answer on that I would say on that.
20 MR. HIXSON: All I'm saying is I'm flexible
21 either way. My goal is design and look more than
22 anything, you know. Wood is much harder to maintain and
23 to keep it looking nice. I mean, the fence --
24 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right.
25 MR. HIXSON: -- honestly needs to be painted,
26 but I'm not going to paint a fence that's coming down,
27 whereas something that's vinyl or PVC doesn't need
28 anywhere the upkeep.
29 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right, and Mr. Hixson,
30 we're not telling you you have to go with wood versus
31 vinyl. We're just saying when you come back, please
32 have a decision on which one you're using.
33 MR. HIXSON: Okay, what is the process of
34 coming back? How does that work?
35 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, Linnea, does he have to
36 be back by July 13th? Or if he would like to take until
37 August, can he come back August? Oh, no, we don't have
38 a meeting in August.
39 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: Yes, I was going to say
40 July 13th would be preferable.
41 MR. HIXSON: That's --
42 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Do you think that you will
43 be able to come back to our July 13th meeting?
44 MR. HIXSON: Sure.
45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, so what happens is
46 you come back and at July 13th we then give you a yes/no
47 vote. We do not continue, continue, continue.
48 MR. HIXSON: Certainly, understood.
49 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, please have all your
50 materials so that we can make a definitive -- we won't
51 make you keep coming back. So, July 13th will be a
52 final vote, okay?

1 MR. HIXSON: Yes.
2 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, we'll have, is there
3 anything else you would like to say? Yes, Commissioner
4 Bowyer?
5 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: So, Mr. Hixson, I think
6 just, I'm not sure you're, because just, you know, you
7 may be new to this. I think all we're saying is go away
8 and pretend we said yes and work with your landscaper,
9 work with your fence company, decide what you would do
10 if you could and then bring that back.
11 MR. HIXSON: Right.
12 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: That's all we're really
13 asking you to do.
14 MR. HIXSON: No, no, I understand. That's
15 fine. Yes.
16 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: I would assume you're
17 wanting to do it as soon as possible.
18 MR. HIXSON: Absolutely.
19 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: So, you've probably got
20 people lined up. So, then ideally you come back by July
21 13th and then, you know, we'll wrap it up.
22 MR. HIXSON: Good, okay. Yes, that's fine.
23 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: I think we'd all
24 probably prefer that you go with composite because it is
25 such an easier material. Like that picture you had
26 where the upper parts on the west side were already
27 peeling.
28 MR. HIXSON: Right, yes.
29 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Yes.
30 MR. HIXSON: Okay, yes, I mean, yes, I'm
31 flexible either way. So, okay, great.
32 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, may I have Linnea, do
33 you want to listen to the motion for a continuance and
34 let me know if there's anything you feel we should add
35 to this before we vote on it please?
36 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: Sure.
37 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, may I have a **motion for**
38 **a continuance to July 13th for the proposed fence**
39 **variation of an eight-foot fence at 510 Briar Lane as**
40 **shown on the plans submitted May 28th, 2020, including a**
41 **south elevation, landscaping, material to be used,**
42 **color, and design detail at the stone pier.**
43 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: That's what I had.
44 CHAIRPERSON BOND: May I have a motion from
45 one of the Commissioners?
46 MR. GUTIERREZ: Tev?
47 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes?
48 MR. GUTIERREZ: I'm sorry to interrupt. There
49 are two phone numbers, call-ins that I --
50 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Oh, right, I'm sorry. I'm
51 sorry. Thank you very much.
52 Is there anyone else who wishes to be

1 heard on this proposal?
2 MR. GUTIERREZ: So, to those attendees, I'm
3 going to unmute you one at a time. So, when you do
4 that, please just indicate whether you wish to speak on
5 this item or the next item, okay?
6 So, I'm going to start with 403-874-3276,
7 and you are unmuted.
8 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Is there anyone from the
9 public who wishes to be heard on 510 Briar Lane?
10 PUBLIC CALLER: No.
11 CHAIRPERSON BOND: No?
12 MR. GUTIERREZ: I'm going to go to the next
13 person.
14 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you.
15 MR. GUTIERREZ: Okay, this is 847-224-4341.
16 They just disconnected, so I assume that they don't want
17 to talk.
18 Okay, that's all I have out there that I
19 know is not the next item.
20 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, and then, Linnea, we
21 need to do a roll call vote for this continuance?
22 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: Yes, please.
23 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, do I need to repeat
24 it?
25 MS. PALMER-O'NEILL: No, I have it written
26 down.
27 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, thank you.
28 So, a roll call vote for the continuance.
29 When I call your name, if you could please say yea or
30 nay. Kathryn Talty.
31 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Yea.
32 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Joe McInerney.
33 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yea.
34 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Barnaby Dinges.
35 COMMISSIONER DINGES: Yea.
36 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Andrew Bowyer.
37 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Yea.
38 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Nancy Nazarian.
39 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Yea.
40 CHAIRPERSON BOND: All right, thank you very
41 much. So, it is passed that there is a continuance.
42 Mr. Hixson, thank you very much. We will
43 see you July 13th.
44 MR. HIXSON: Okay, sounds good. Thank you.
45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: All right, bye. Have a
46 good evening.
47 MR. HIXSON: Thank you.
48 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Our next action item is 423
49 Central Avenue; consideration of a request for approval
50 of site elevations, exterior facade and lighting, to
51 allow for exterior commercial building alterations
52 located at 423 Central Avenue.

1 The Petitioner who would like to speak is
2 here hopefully?
3 MR. GUTIERREZ: He is there. Can you give us
4 minute? Because they do not have their video on. There
5 they go.
6 CHAIRPERSON BOND: There we are. So, whoever
7 is going to speak, or if you choose to speak, I have to
8 swear you in please. So, if you could raise your hand?
9 (Witnesses sworn.)
10 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Please state your name.
11 MR. SWARTHOUT: My name is Thomas Swarthout.
12 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you very much. The
13 floor is yours.
14 MR. SWARTHOUT: Thank you, ma'am. I'm joined
15 by the Petitioner, Ron Bernardi, and his partner Beth
16 Bernardi, who are the owners of the property.
17 Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Again, my
18 name is Tom Swarthout. I'm a contractor out of Lake
19 Forest, Illinois. I had the privilege of working in
20 Northfield 45 years ago, built a house for a man I
21 admire greatly, a guy named Jim Otis on Bridlewood Lane
22 a long time ago, and then ended my career in Northfield.
23 I was involved in the Village Center not too far from
24 the Village Hall, the old site of the bowling alley. I
25 was lucky enough to work for Jim for about seven years,
26 a real mentor of mine.
27 A little about our company, we are
28 contractors out of Lake Forest, and do a lot of home
29 building as well as commercial work. Ron and Beth have
30 been almost like friends and came to me. We looked at a
31 dozen office buildings, small office buildings in and
32 around the North Shore, and really kind of found this
33 unique piece of property, great access, and in a
34 terrific village, and really an under-utilized building.
35 So, they made the jump and putting in all their funds to
36 really I think turn into a really unique building.
37 So, I'll go through, and Ron, if you'd
38 like to add a comment, I would certainly welcome that,
39 because Ron is a very successful firm in the city of
40 Chicago.
41 CHAIRPERSON BOND: If Ron wants to speak
42 simultaneously with you, may I please swear him in?
43 MR. SWARTHOUT: I think he also did --
44 MR. BERNARDI: Certainly.
45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, so if you could
46 please raise your hand?
47 (Witness sworn.)
48 CHAIRPERSON BOND: If you could state your
49 whole name please?
50 MR. BERNARDI: Ronald Bernardi.
51 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you so much. All
52 right, so please continue.

1 MR. SWARTHOUT: Ron, I was hoping you could
2 give them a little background about your firm?
3 MR. BERNARDI: Yes. So, I'm here this evening
4 joined by Beth, my spouse. The Bernardi family
5 purchased 423 at the end of March. Separately, I am the
6 President and CEO of Bernardi Securities. We're
7 headquartered in Chicago. We have 25 employees at the
8 Chicago office, and we will make 423 the corporate
9 headquarters as soon as we finish construction late
10 2020, sometime in 2021.

11 This request before you this evening is
12 the initial manifestation of our commitment to the
13 community. We intend to be there for many years, be a
14 business pillar in the community. This is, as I said,
15 the initial steps.

16 So, we look forward to presenting this
17 evening, and obviously we'll answer to the best of our
18 ability the questions you're going to pose. So, thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you.

21 MR. SWARTHOUT: Thank you, Ron. That's just
22 to the right of my shoulder. I don't know what you can
23 see on the screen, if you can, but I'd like to take you
24 through the plan. If you can --

25 CHAIRPERSON BOND: We can see it.

26 MR. SWARTHOUT: Okay, what you see in front of
27 you is the existing site plan that incorporates the
28 building, 10 parking spots. You can see this area right
29 here, the front entrance will be modified, and four
30 windows will be placed on the south elevation.

31 So, let me take you to the existing
32 photos and then we'll drop back to the new proposal.
33 So, we're going to zoom through these. I'm sure you're
34 all familiar with this building; this is the front
35 elevation, faces Central Avenue. We will make some
36 modifications to the front entrance right here, very
37 small modifications, as well as changing the coping.
38 Right now there's a drip edge, aluminum drip edge.

39 Currently, the building HVAC on the
40 second floor only is utilized, what most people are
41 familiar with in hotels. So, all these vent frames will
42 be removed and we'll put new, replicating very closely
43 to the existing condition.

44 This is the south elevation. This is the
45 area that we would like to put four windows that will
46 mimic the existing windows that are on the other side of
47 this wall. Here are those windows as they exist. It's
48 kind of an L-shaped building.

49 Then we'll also, I don't know what I just
50 did there, remove this existing slider and then replace
51 it. The same opening, taking some of the remnants of
52 the brick we remove and place it underneath the window.

1 This is the elevation that is on the east
2 side, very little is being done. With some of the
3 leftover brick, we'll actually close up this vent.

4 This is the elevation on the north. Very
5 little will be done to this except the replacement of
6 these vents again, and closing in this area right here.
7 These three light fixtures will be replaced with new
8 fixtures.

9 Here is the entrance that will be closed
10 in, a very modest area, done for a couple of reasons,
11 security primarily, but also because of the wind in the
12 winter months. As you may know, this is the building to
13 the right side, and the building across the street off
14 of Ash, and across the street the bank building, and
15 this is in the alley.

16 So, I'll scroll back to the top and we'll
17 walk through the new elevations. So, here's the new
18 elevations. Again, closing in this window, this
19 vestibule; on the west elevation, doing the same.
20 Again, six-inch limestone capping that will be put
21 around the entire building.

22 Currently, there is no insulation
23 whatsoever in the building. This allows us to put six-
24 inches of foam and do a new membrane roof and, you know,
25 give a nicer detail to the building. It needs to have a
26 proper finish, and so we're going to invest in a six-
27 inch coping.

28 Here is the new replacement window where
29 the slider is, and here is really the primary area
30 that's probably of concern to the Board. These four
31 replacement windows, we're removing the brick and they
32 will be the same size as the windows on the south
33 elevation.

34 Here are the three light fixtures that we
35 will replace. We have a cut-sheet if one is interested
36 in seeing that. That's all the way to the last page
37 that you have in your booklet. These are three LED
38 light fixtures that we will be replacing the existing
39 fixtures with.

40 So, I think that's the summary. I kind
41 of moved quickly.

42 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you.

43 MR. SWARTHOUT: So, Madam Chairperson, we'd be
44 happy to entertain your questions.

45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: All right, thank you so
46 much. Yes, we'll open it up to the Commissioners for
47 questions.

48 MR. SWARTHOUT: We'll take a question from a
49 dog if so.

50 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Are you replacing all
51 the windows or just matching?

52 MR. SWARTHOUT: Just matching the existing

1 windows. The windows were fairly new. They've been
2 new, thermal glazing was installed some years ago. I
3 think when they upgraded the building with the school.
4 So, they're fairly new glazing, so we'll be matching
5 that.

6 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: And you are keeping
7 the air conditioning units, you're just changing the
8 louvers, is that the reasoning?

9 MR. SWARTHOUT: No, we're going to put a new
10 rooftop unit on the roof, and that will be the new HVAC
11 system. So, we're going to remove, there must be 10 of
12 those units and we're going to remove those completely.

13 The interior will kind of reflect the
14 modern design that you'll see in a lot of the loft
15 buildings. So, we're going to have the exposed bar
16 joist, removing some of the ceiling tiles that exist
17 now, and having the exposed spiral duct and giving it a
18 more lofty feel. Then rather than have the dropped
19 ceiling, we will have the rooftop, and that will be the
20 main focus of the HVAC system on the second floor. The
21 existing system on the first floor will stay as is.

22 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Okay, so the louvers
23 then are just a decorative feature?

24 MR. SWARTHOUT: That is correct. If you look
25 closely, they're not in great shape.

26 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: All right.

27 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right. Any other questions
28 from the Commissioners?

29 I am curious when you anticipate you will
30 submit a signage packet; how soon you might have your
31 signage ready for submittal.

32 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Wasn't there signage
33 above the front door, Tev? Can we see that sheet again?

34 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes, but it hasn't been
35 included for us to vote on this evening.

36 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Oh.

37 CHAIRPERSON BOWYER: It's in the elevation,
38 but it's not part of our current package.

39 MR. SWARTHOUT: And I believe that signage
40 that was installed on the building was removed --

41 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes.

42 MR. SWARTHOUT: -- but I think Ron can answer
43 that, but I think they want to go through the process of
44 coming up with a new logo, new design.

45 MR. BERNARDI: Yes. Realistically, we intend
46 to come before you or the proper Commission sometime
47 probably the first quarter, first half of '21 --

48 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay.

49 MR. BERNARDI: -- because we will want
50 signage. There's the existing tombstone there. I'm not
51 quite sure if I -- it's quite imposing.

52 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Oh, the monument sign, is

1 that what you were referring to as tombstone?
2 MR. BERNARDI: Yes, right. It's quite
3 imposing; I was there today. Then there was, the
4 tutoring center had the company logo over the front
5 door. But I want to hire a professional artist firm,
6 design firm to help me with that. Then also as part of
7 that, the landscaping on the corner of Ash and Central
8 and then on the parkway central in front of the building
9 is tired to say the least. So, that's going to be part
10 of a second pass if you will in front of this Commission
11 or the appropriate Commission, probably right after the
12 first of the year. I want to get the construction in
13 there because we need to, we want to start moving, you
14 know, some of the employees to the new headquarters as
15 soon as we can. So, that's going to take precedence at
16 this point.

17 CHAIRPERSON BOND: So, are you anticipating
18 construction being in the fall and move in at the
19 beginning of next year?

20 MR. BERNARDI: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay.

22 MR. SWARTHOUT: Yes. I think construction
23 will start fairly soon, mid-July would be my guess.

24 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, and typically most
25 businesses want their name on their building. So, I'd
26 imagine whenever you're starting to get your people in,
27 you'll probably feel a little more energy towards
28 getting that signage figured out.

29 MR. BERNARDI: Yes, I mean, it's not a matter
30 of, you know, we're in the municipal finance business,
31 so the markets have been hectic to say the least.

32 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes.

33 MR. BERNARDI: We're dealing with this COVID.

34 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right.

35 MR. BERNARDI: It's not a matter of not having
36 energy for this. We're very excited about this project.
37 But the reality of it is, you know, I'm a babe in the
38 woods in terms of going through this, so I don't quite
39 know what to expect in terms of how long or quick the
40 construction project will take. I guess I want to move
41 that along and then we'll, you know, I'm not going to be
42 coming to you with, you know, 14-foot tall, you know,
43 request to put Bernardi on the top of the building. But
44 you know, to your point, yes, we're going to want some
45 sort of signage and I'm presuming that, you know, the
46 prior signage was there, that if we have a reasonable
47 request, that the Village will be looking at what we
48 come up with.

49 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Right.

50 MR. BERNARDI: I want that corner to look very
51 nice. It's our headquarters. This is a significant
52 commitment for the Bernardi family and the firm. You

1 know, as I said, we're going to, we intend to be in
2 Northfield for a long time and I want that corner to
3 look very nice.

4 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Excellent. Typically, when
5 we deal with proposals that bring signage in front of
6 us, they also come with the landscaping. So, whenever
7 you're thinking about the signage, consider that, so
8 that you can get both approved and finished at the same
9 time rather than having to come back. Okay?

10 MR. BERNARDI: That is what we will do.

11 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Excellent. Are there any
12 more questions from the Commissioners?

13 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Is there anyone in the
15 public, in the queue that would like to speak?

16 Steve, do we have anyone?

17 MR. GUTIERREZ: We have a Luke Bernardi out
18 there. I don't know if you wish to speak?

19 MR. BERNARDI: I think he was just listening
20 in.

21 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Okay, all right.

22 MR. GUTIERREZ: We do not have anybody else.

23 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Excellent, thank you so
24 much.

25 So, may I have a motion to approve the
26 site elevation -- oh, I'm sorry, I thought somebody
27 started to say something. **A motion to approve the site
28 elevations, exterior facade and lighting, to allow for
29 exterior commercial building alterations located 423
30 Central Avenue as shown on the plans submitted May 20th,
31 2020. A sample of the dark bronze must be submitted and
32 approved by the Village since we don't have it.**
33 Typically, you would bring that sample with you, so if
34 you would please submit the dark bronze to the Village.

35 May I have a motion to approve, please?

36 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Yes, I'll make that
37 motion.

38 CHAIRPERSON BOND: May I have a second?

39 COMMISSIONER TALTY: I'll second.

40 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Roll call vote, please.
41 Kathryn Talty.

42 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Aye, yea.

43 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Joe McInerney.

44 COMMISSIONER McINERNEY: Aye.

45 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Barnaby Dinges.

46 COMMISSIONER DINGES: Aye.

47 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Andy Bowyer.

48 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Aye.

49 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Nancy Nazarian.

50 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Aye.

51 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Congratulations. Your
52 motion has passed.

1 MR. BERNARDI: Thank you, ma'am.
2 MR. SWARTHOUT: Thank you.
3 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you for your time.
4 MR. SWARTHOUT: I'll just editorialize just
5 for a second. I think that, you know, our family are
6 very involved in real estate in Lake Forest, and I've
7 been saying for sometime that the virus is certainly
8 going to change I think real estate activity, real
9 estate values on the North Shore, even in any of the
10 suburbs. I think Northfield will see that coming very
11 soon. I think Ron and Beth were out there way prior to
12 this unfortunate event, but this is an ideal location.
13 Some of the buildings that are in the area I think will
14 be highly desired in the near future for a lot of
15 reasons I think we all know.
16 So, I'm excited as a friend. I'm excited
17 as a contractor, and certainly excited for the Village.
18 So, thank you very much.
19 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Thank you for your time.
20 Have a good evening.
21 MR. SWARTHOUT: Good night.
22 MR. BERNARDI: Thank you.
23 MRS. BERNARDI: Thank you.
24 MR. GUTIERREZ: Tev?
25 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Yes?
26 MR. GUTIERREZ: I'm sorry. Oh, they just
27 left. Somebody came in as you were voting and they just
28 left again, sorry.
29 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Oh, okay. May I have a
30 motion to adjourn the meeting?
31 COMMISSIONER TALTY: I'll move.
32 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: I so move.
33 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Second?
34 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Kathryn, you can make
35 that motion. No, go ahead, Kathryn, you make it.
36 COMMISSIONER TALTY: Okay, I move to close the
37 meeting.
38 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Adjourn the meeting.
39 Second?
40 COMMISSIONER DINGES: I'll second that.
41 CHAIRPERSON BOND: All in favor?
42 (Chorus of ayes.)
43 CHAIRPERSON BOND: Excellent. Our meeting is
44 adjourned, and our next meeting is scheduled for July
45 13th. So, hopefully, I'll see everyone on July 13th.
46 (Whereupon, at 7:47 p.m., the above
47 meeting was adjourned.)
48
49 APPROVED 7/13/20