

CITY OF PALOS HEIGHTS



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Public Hearing Minutes

February 18, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

SPECIAL LOCATION:

Parks & Recreation Building, Orchard Room
6601 W 127th Street, Palos Heights, IL 60463

Call to Order

The public hearing held by the Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order by Chairman Tom Stuchly at 7:02pm on February 18, 2021.

Roll Call

The following board members were present: Chairman Thomas Stuchly, John Hanley, Shannon Harvey, Jim Hughes, and Tom Gregory. Also present were Community Development Coordinator Ken Busse, Recording Secretary Liz Gutierrez, the petitioners and members of the community. Chairman Stuchly swore all members in.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Hanley made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 23, 2020 meeting as presented, seconded by Commissioner Gregory. All in favor and motion carried.

Before discussion began, the board observed a moment of silence for Gerald Keller, a member of the ZBA Board that passed away in December.

DOCKET 2021-01: a petition filed by Eric Cusack to allow a Front Yard Fence to extend four (4) feet beyond the front building line of the home, and two (2) feet into the Front Yard setback along 125th Street for this single-family residential home located at 12512 S Melvina Avenue (PIN: 24-29-302-060-0000)

The petitioner, Mr. Cusack, came forward and explained that they placed a new pool on the 125th Street side due to all the underground utility placement. He hopes he can bump out the fence because of the placement of the pool and for safety reasons.

Commissioner Hanley asked how high the fence will be - it will be a 6 foot high privacy fence on three fourths of the lot.

Commissioner Harvey asked if this would obstruct any view of the street or corner - Mr. Cusack responded it would not.

Commissioner Gregory asked if he had talked to the neighbors. The neighbors have no issue with the fence.

Motion

Commissioner Hanley moved to recommend approval of Docket 2021-01: to allow a Front Yard Fence to extend four (4) feet beyond the front building line of the home, and two (2) feet into the Front Yard setback along 125th Street for this single-family residential home located at 12512 S Melvina Avenue, seconded by Commissioner Hughes.

On a roll call, the vote was,

Ayes: 5 - Stuchly, Hanley, Harvey, Hughes, Gregory

Nays: 0

There being a 5-0 vote, motion carried.

Community Development Coordinator Ken Busse, advised Mr. Cusack that he should plan to attend the next Planning and Zoning meeting on February 23, 2021 and the next City Council meeting on March 2, 2021.

DOCKET 2021-02: a petition filed by Charles Wagner, CEO of United Trust Bank, to allow a B-1 use to operate within an existing structure within a B District, specifically a bank (mortgage lending) to operate within the existing building located at 12330 S Harlem Avenue, Unit B (formerly occupied by Mona Lisa), and contained within the following PIN: 23-25-409-006-0000

Mr. Charles Wagner stated that there has been very few inquires for the vacant property that used to be Mona Lisa. The natural progression would be to expand the business of the bank into this spot. The current mortgage lending branch of the bank is in Plainfield. They would move into this location bringing 11 employees that are highly compensated. Mr. Wagner feels that this would be a benefit to the City of Palos Heights because these employees would be spending money in the city at the restaurants and various shops in town. The vision would be to grow the staff to about 20-25 employees who are all highly compensated. There would need to be some renovating done to the current space.

Commissioner Hanley asked if the current bank building would be open to the mortgage lending office. Mr. Wagner explained they would not be taking down any walls and this would be a separate office space.

Commissioner Harvey asked about signage. She also asked about the \$1,000 a month that they pay. Mr. Wagner explained that this was a tax equalizer that the bank pays. She questioned if this type of tax should be reconsidered given the current climate of the world. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Stuchly asked about parking and if they had a reciprocal parking agreement with the Franklin House. Mr. Wagner responded that the Franklin House uses their parking lot and they have a mutual understanding that the customers of the Franklin House are able to use these parking spots when they are visiting the restaurant.

Public Comment

Mr. Mike Coogan, a resident and owner of the Franklin Public House came on his own tonight to support Charles and this expansion of his business. He feels that by allowing service businesses in retail spaces is a benefit to the city. He commended the board for being able to change and grow to progress Palos Heights. He also feels that any type of tax equalizer should be reconsidered and done away with.

Mr. Wagner's associate, Jason Sudar (Mortgage Sales Manager) thanked the board for the opportunity to present this evening and is excited about the prospect of working in Palos Heights as he is from the area.

Motion

Commissioner Hanley moved to recommend approval for Docket 2021-02: to allow a B-1 use to operate within an existing structure within a B District, specifically a bank (mortgage lending) to operate within the existing building located at 12330 S Harlem Avenue, Unit B, seconded by Commissioner Hughes.

On a roll call, the vote was:

Ayes: 5 - Stuchly, Hanley, Harvey, Hughes, Gregory

Nays: 0

There being a 5-0 vote, motion carried

Community Development Coordinator Ken Busse, advised Mr. Wagner that he should plan on attending the next Planning and Zoning meeting on February 23, 2021 and the City Council meeting on March 2, 2021.

Finding of Facts for Docket 2021-02

- Commissioner Hughes stated that he believes it is time for the city to look at zoning and to get rid of the tax equalizer. He feels the current process and the tax equalizer will deter people from bringing business to town. Mr. Hughes also stated that having service businesses occupy retail spaces is a positive thing and brings more foot traffic to existing businesses.
- Commissioner Gregory agrees with Commissioner Hughes.
- Commissioner Harvey agrees with Commissioner Hughes and states that small specialized retail shops have a difficult time surviving. She also feels like the service businesses will help drive the existing restaurants and retail to be successful.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Commissioner Hanley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Harvey. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Gutierrez
Recording Secretary