MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
PLAN COMMISSION
APRIL 6, 2017 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLNWOOD VILLAGE HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6900 NORTH LINCOLN AVENUE
LINCOLNWOOD, ILLINOIS 60712

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Chairman Mark Yohanna
Patricia Goldfein
Steven Jakubowski
Henry Novoselsky
Don Sampen

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Anthony Pauletto

STAFF PRESENT:
Steve McNellis, Community Development Director
Doug Hammel, AICP, Community Development Manager
Kathy Kasprzyk, Community Development Coordinator

I. Call to Order
Chairman Yohanna noted a quorum of five members and called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve the March 1, 2017 Plan Commission Minutes was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Novoselsky.

Aye: Sampen, Novoselsky, Goldfein, Jakubowski, and Yohanna
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 5-0

IV. Case #PC - 03-17: 6649 North Lincoln Avenue and 6653-59 North East Prairie Road – Final Plat of Subdivision
Chairman Yohanna announced Case #PC-03-17 for consideration of a Final Plat to re-subdivide nine lots encompassing the Lou Malnati’s Restaurant, with an address of 6649 North Lincoln Avenue, and a single-family residential property at 6659 North East Prairie Road.

Development Director McNellis presented background for consideration for Final Plat approval. The proposed Plat of Subdivision showed the multiple properties to be consolidated between Lou Malnati’s and the residential property to the north. Development Director McNellis noted this Subdivision is related to the 2016 Ordinance granting Zoning relief that required a six- to seven-foot strip of land be conveyed to the residential property north of Lou Malnati’s in conjunction with an easement of five feet on the residential property to maintain the north side of the masonry screening wall, and a covenant on the Plat of Subdivision stating that the wall could not be removed without the approval of the Village. Staff recommends approval, as presented.

Chairman Yohanna asked if anyone in the audience would like to address the Plan Commission regarding this issue. Listed below are comments from the public.

Mr. Mike Stamer, 6648 North Avers Avenue, commented about the how well the work has been going, but expressed concern about the condition of the alley. Mr. Stamer asked if repaving the alley was part of the previous Village approval. He stated if it was not, he believed that Mr. Milosavljevic of Lou Malnati’s had agreed to such a condition during a meeting between Lou Manati’s and the neighbors.

Sasha Milosavljevic, Director of Facilities for Lou Malnati’s, was not aware of any agreement to repave the alley. He noted if he had stated that Malnati’s would repave the alley, he would keep his word and they would do so, but he could not recall offering such. There was discussion with Commissioner Jakubowski trying to have the two parties come to agreement on this matter. Development Director McNellis noted that this was an issue between two private parties, but that if Lou Malnati’s wished to repave the alley, they would need to work with the Village to meet Code requirements.

Motion to approve the Final Plat of Subdivision to consolidate and resub divide nine lots encompassing the Lou Malnati’s Restaurant at 6649 Lincoln Avenue and a single-family residential property at 6659 East Prairie Road was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Novoselsky.

Aye: Sampen, Novoselsky, Goldfein, Jakubowski, and Yohanna
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 5-0

V. Case #PC - 02-17: 6755 North Cicero Avenue – Special Uses and Variations for a New Restaurant

Chairman Yohanna announced Case #PC-02-17 for consideration and review of Zoning Relief for a new Stefani’s Restaurant including Special Use approval, Special Sign approval, and Variation requests. Chairman Yohanna swore in the Petitioner and architect for the property,
Mr. Mark Knauer, President of Knauer Incorporated (Architects), 720 North Waukegan Road, Deerfield, Illinois.

Development Director McNellis presented background for the redevelopment of a restaurant building and off-street parking at 6755 North Cicero Avenue including zoning requirements, site layout, and building design plans for a new restaurant in the B-2, General Business District.

Development Director McNellis reviewed the proposed Special Uses and Variations requested. The Special Uses requested include: 1) to allow a 5,425-square-foot restaurant which is over the Permitted 5,000-square foot maximum square footage; 2) to allow parking in the Front Yard Setback on Pratt Avenue and the Corner Side Yard Setback on Cicero Avenue; and 3) to allow a business within 150 feet of a residentially-zoned property to operate after 11:00 p.m. on any day of the week, as the Petitioner is requesting to operate until 1:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 2:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. There are nine restaurants in the Village that operate after 11:00 p.m.

The requested Variations include the following:

- A Variation to allow a reduced Transition Yard across the east property line from thirty feet to ten feet as a portion of the existing building and a proposed walk-in cooler will be closer than the required thirty-foot required setback line;

- A Variation to allow less than the required number of off-street parking spaces from the required 55 spaces to 51 spaces;

- A Variation to allow parking spaces and parking lot drive aisles to be less than the minimum required dimensional standards as the Petitioner is proposing up to one-foot six-inches less on a drive aisle and six inches less on stall depth. It should be noted this is an existing condition;

- A Variation to allow less than the required minimum landscaped buffer along the south and east property lines. The Petitioner is proposing a five-foot landscaping buffer along the south property line where ten feet is required, and the landscaping buffer is at five feet along the east property line, in conjunction with an eight-foot masonry wall, but is not continuous;

- A Variation to reduce the required eight-foot perimeter landscaping area along Pratt Avenue to three feet. The Cicero Avenue perimeter landscaping area will be eliminated, as proposed;

- A Variation to eliminate the required interior landscape parking lot islands where they are required at the end of each parking row;

- A Variation to permit three feet of foundation landscaping instead of the required six-foot-wide foundation landscaping area on the sides of the building and no foundation landscaping on the front;

- A Special Sign Variation to permit a pole/pylon sign up to eighteen-feet tall;
A Variation to allow a Special Sign with a sign face of 71.6-square feet which is greater than the maximum permitted sign face area of 48-square feet;

A Variation for an illuminated freestanding sign within 75 feet of a residentially-zoned district;

A Variation to allow a Special Sign which is approximately four feet from both the north and west property lines instead of the permitted maximum of ten feet;

A Variation to allow a Wall Sign on the north building elevation that is greater than the maximum permitted area. The permitted maximum wall area would be 11-square feet and they are proposing 16.8-square feet in area;

A Variation to allow less than 75 percent of each exterior building elevation to maintain required high-quality materials. The south elevation is the only elevation to meet the required percentage.

A Variation to allow masonry stucco as more than a minor accent building material.

Development Director McNellis summarized the proposed conditions of approval should the Plan Commission be prepared to recommend approval at the end of tonight’s discussion. He noted that these conditions were a combination of those made by the Development Review Team at their February 17, 2017 meeting and others that have arisen during the review process: 1) An agreement from the Owner to maintain the hedgerow proposed in the Cicero Avenue right-of-way; 2) Painting of the proposed white masonry wall be permitted only on the west side of the wall facing into the restaurant site. The masonry wall side facing the residential properties be painted only if agreed to by all adjacent residential properties adjacent to the wall; 3) Sound from the walk-in cooler fan/motor to comply with Environmental Performance Standards for Noise and Vibration at the property line between the restaurant and residentially-zoned properties. Any testing that is necessary to be undertaken to confirm compliance is to be at the Petitioner’s expense; 4) Provide a copy of the off-site parking agreement between Stefani’s and the Korean Bethany Presbyterian Church at 4707 West Pratt Avenue; 5) Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, a security plan for the building and property be submitted and approved by the Police Chief; and 6) Prior to occupancy, install a Fire Department Knox box at entrance(s) chosen by the Fire Department.

Chairman Yohanna asked Mr. Knauer to begin his presentation. Mr. Knauer reviewed all of the pertinent design plans for the site. He stated that the site has many existing nonconforming issues due to the narrowness of the site which requires having to request many of the landscaping and parking Variations. The foundation and parking will stay as is, but they plan on enhancing the site as much as possible. This restaurant will be a fine dining establishment with one of Chicago’s greatest restauranteurs, who is also a life-long resident of Lincolnwood.

The plans for a new 170-seat (approximate) upscale casual dining restaurant includes tearing down the porte-cochere in the front section of the building and keeping the masonry structure in the back of the building that will house the kitchen. They propose to tear down the front section of the
building and use the foundation wall and add two small additions which will be used for seating. The third curb cut in front of the restaurant (on Cicero Avenue) will be abandoned. They plan on enhancing the landscaping as much as possible and presented a landscaping plan for review. The eight-foot wall will not be included along the south property line due to the mature trees that are present. The addition of a wall could damage these trees. Commissioner Novoselsky inquired about what action would Stefani’s take if the screening along the south property line were to die or be removed, would Stefani’s be willing to add an eight-foot-tall masonry wall. Commissioner Goldfein questioned if there was even enough room for screening along the south property line if something did happen to the trees.

Mr. Knauer explained that the building will have 68 percent premium materials including a combination of brick veneer on the twenty-six-foot tower element, black granite stone around the bottom of the building, black aluminum painted frames for the windows, and the balance of the building will be painted cementitious masonry stucco. There was a lengthy discussion as to whether cementitious masonry stucco could be considered a premium material. A four-season outdoor dining patio with lighting and music will be located at the southwest corner of the property. The windows can be opened weather permitting.

A new service court in the back of the building will be used for deliveries and include an exterior walk-in cooler. This area will also house a gated dumpster area. Trucks will enter this service court off of Pratt Avenue.

There was a lengthy discussion as to hours of operation. Commissioner Jakubowski asked if Stefani’s is receiving an unfair advantage over other restaurants in the Village. Chairman Yohanna swore in Mr. Phil Stefani, 6555 North Le Mai Avenue. Mr. Stefani stated the business hours are for the protection of their liquor license. Mr. Stefani explained that even though he is asking for a 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. closing time, the reality is that they do not foresee people dining that late. In his experience, food is typically served until 10:00 p.m. during the week and 11:00 p.m. on the weekends. The stated late hours is in case customers come in later in the evening for a meal, they would be covered by their liquor license to serve alcohol. The Commissioners asked for clarification regarding the time the kitchen will close. Mr. Stefani reiterated his experience that the kitchen will probably close at 10:00 p.m. on weeknights and 11:00 on weekends. The customers dictate how late the kitchen actually closes.

Commissioner Sampen asked if any neighbors had expressed any concerns about this project. Mr. Stefani stated that comments have been very positive. They have been in business for thirty-seven years, and many of his restaurants are adjacent to residential properties.

Chairman Yohanna asked if anyone in the audience would like to address the Plan Commission regarding this issue. Listed below are comments from the public.

Mr. Irving Fishman, 6642 North Kolmar Avenue, stated that he is very excited about this new business and since the Village does not have a “white linen” restaurant and looks forward to this opening. He believes this approval is in the best interest of the Village.
Ms. Karen Stefano, 6555 North Le Mai Avenue, stated that there are not enough restaurants in the Village where you could go for a drink or a meal late in the evening. She voiced her support.

Ms. Jennifer Spino, 4646 West North Shore Avenue, has spoken to her neighbors and they are excited about having a restaurant to go to that is open later in the evening. Ms. Spino is not aware of any concerns about the restaurant being too noisy or open too late.

Mr. Jim Persino, 6700 North Sauganash Avenue, read the Economic Development Commission’s “white paper”, supporting the redevelopment project, into the record. Mr. Persino said that Mr. Stefani runs a first-class operation and stated that the Economic Development Commission recommends approval of this proposal.

Ms. Georjean Nickell, 6733 North Kedvale Avenue, expressed concern with the white color of the building, and inquired if the color could be toned-down, perhaps to a cream color. Ms. Nickell agreed with Commissioner Jakubowski regarding uniformity with the hours of operation of other restaurants.

Chairman Yohanna read a letter into the record from Mr. John Vranas, 6544 North Leroy Avenue, stating his support for this project.

Commissioner Novoselsky asked if the Petitioner agrees with the Recommended Conditions presented. Mr. Knauer stated they would comply with all Recommended Conditions. Mr. Knauer said they are ready to begin the building permit and engineering process as soon as approval is granted. They anticipate opening by the end of this year.

Motion to recommend approval of the requested relief set forth regarding the Special Uses and Variations subject to the various Recommended Conditions including: 1) An agreement from the Owner to maintain the hedgerow proposed in the Cicero Avenue right-of-way; 2) Painting of the proposed white masonry wall be permitted only on the west side of the wall facing into the restaurant site. The masonry wall side facing the residential properties be painted only if agreed to by all adjacent residential properties adjacent to the wall; 3) Sound from the walk-in cooler fan/motor to comply with Environmental Performance Standards for Noise and Vibration at the property line between the restaurant and residentially-zoned properties. Any testing that is necessary to be undertaken to confirm compliance is to be at the Petitioner’s expense; 4) Provide a copy of the off-site parking agreement between Stefani’s and the Korean Bethany Presbyterian Church at 4707 West Pratt Avenue; 5) Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, a security plan for the building and property be submitted and approved by the Police Chief; and 6) Prior to occupancy, install a Fire Department Knox box at entrance(s) chosen by the Fire Department was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Novoselsky.

Commissioner Sampen added an amendment to his motion with respect to restaurant hours. Motion to recommend approval to close at 1:00 a.m. on Sunday through Thursday and 2:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. Motion seconded by Commissioner Novoselsky.

Aye: Sampen, Novoselsky, Jakubowski, and Yohanna
Nay: Goldfein
Motion Approved: 4-1
Chairman Yohanna asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to address the Plan Commission. Let the record state that no one came forward.

V. Other Business

No other business was discussed. Chairman Yohanna asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to address the Plan Commission. Let the record state that no one came forward.

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, 2017.

X. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Jakubowski. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Aye: Sampen, Jakubowski, Goldfein, Novoselsky, and Yohanna
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn M. Kasprzyk
Community Development Coordinator