

**MINUTES
CITY OF DARIEN
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
February 21, 2018**

PRESENT: Chairperson Lou Mallers, Robert Cortez, Michael Desmond, Bryan Gay, Robert Erickson, Mary Sullivan, Steven Manning - City Planner

ABSENT: Brian Liedtke, John Laratta

Chairperson Mallers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Darien Police Station, Darien, Illinois and declared a quorum present. He swore in the audience members wishing to present public testimony.

Chairperson Mallers welcomed new Commissioner Michael Desmond.

A. Public Hearing Case: PZC 2018-02 2000 Manning Road (Ide School-driveway variation) School District 66 seeks approval of a zoning variation for a new driveway at Fairview Avenue as part of their program to expand building, parking, bus lane, walkways, athletic field, and landscaping.

Mr. Steve Manning, City Planner reported that this is a variation for a new driveway onto Fairview Avenue where the school parcel has 56 feet of frontage and City Code otherwise requires a minimum of 100 feet of frontage. There are presently two driveways on Manning Road that would remain as is. Mr. Manning reported that the purpose of this hearing is to review traffic safety and the variation request. The site plan review of the building, engineering, and landscaping will be done by the Municipal Services Committee. He further reported that if the variance is approved it will then be forwarded to the Municipal Services Committee. Mr. Manning stated that proper notice of this hearing has been published, posted, and mailed.

Petitioner and Superintendent District 66 Tim Arnold introduced the plan. He reported that School District 66 is planning to construct an addition to Elizabeth Ide Elementary School including classroom and office space along with additional parking, bus lanes, athletic field, utilities, and landscaping. Mr. Arnold stated that they did a study which concluded that there will probably be no increase in student population or staff in the near future. He stated the plan includes a new parking lot with access from Fairview Avenue for visitors and parents with a student drop-off lane to serve the new main entrance at the northwest corner of the school building and a separate bus lane west of the school building with access to Manning Road. He said there are times during the school day when buses and parent vehicles are waiting to turn into the school and are stacked on Manning Road. He also said that special events at the school have caused the parking lot to fill up and overflow parking on Manning and Fairview and other side streets. The most vehicles he has counted at special events has been 94. He stated the main objectives of the plan are increasing the number of parking spaces and separating teacher, parent, and bus traffic resulting in less congestion and increased safety.

Mr. Dan Kritta, Architect, Wold Ruck Pate reported stated that this plan is a safer environment for the children.

Mr. Steven Corcoran, Director of Traffic Engineering, Eriksson Engineering Associates stated that he prepared the traffic study. He explained the traffic study process noting that cars were counted and traffic patterns analyzed. Mr. Corcoran reported on the current parking issues and

that the students are walking through the buses and cars in order to get to the school. He explained that the present parking situation involves a lot of adult supervision.

Mr. Corcoran stated that they received comments from the City's Traffic Consultant and agree that there should be a school speed zone sign. He further stated that the comments also suggest a crosswalk across the driveway but that they would be constructing a concrete sidewalk. Mr. Corcoran stated that he was communicating with the consultant regarding additional information requested.

Mr. Corcoran reported on the parking spaces and stated that there will be enough parking for staff and visitors totaling 94 spaces. He stated that they anticipated a count for after school events and at times there may be a few overflow on the street.

Commissioner Mallers asked about the timing of the project.

Mr. Arnold stated that if approved, they are looking to begin the project for the 2019-20 school year completing the parking in April and the main building before school starts in the fall.

Mr. Corcoran reported that there was correspondence from a resident concerned with the site restrictions. He stated that there will be no trees in the parkway.

Mr. Manning said he had received an email from Katie Hodak saying the exit of Judd onto Fairview is already difficult with the blind turn – there have been a few in our neighborhood who have been involved in an accident at that intersection – that she was concerned that another heavily used driveway onto Fairview could propose difficulties for safety. Mr. Manning also shared a report from the Darien Police Department that said one accident at this intersection was due to ‘vision obscured’ and ‘failure to yield right-of-way’.

Mr. Corcoran said he obtained a crash report from the Department of Transportation. He reported that the data showed that there were only two crashes since 2006 in that area. Mr. Corcoran did explain that only accidents over \$1,500 are reported.

Commissioner Cortez asked if there was thought about putting in a right-in and right-out for the new driveway on Fairview.

Mr. Corcoran stated that they did not see a need for that since there were no issues. He stated that the current configuration is only traffic and the buses coming out on Manning.

Commissioner Erickson questioned the delivery schedule.

Mr. Corcoran reported that the deliveries do not pose a problem since they deliver while school is in session.

Chairperson Mallers opened the meeting to anyone wishing to present public comment.

Mr. Gary Holmes, 2001 Judd Street stated that he was concerned about the safety on Fairview from all the truck traffic going to and from the school and the absence of a street light where the new driveway would be located. He stated that he was also concerned about the headlights from vehicles exiting onto Fairview from the new driveway shining into his house. Mr. Holmes also questioned what signs would be added.

Mr. Corcoran stated that it was recommended by the City to add a school speed zone sign on Fairview and a stop sign exiting to Fairview. He stated that the current posted speed limit on Fairview is 25 MPH and there is already the school zone speed on Manning which is 20 MPH.

Mr. Manning reported that the City has to request a school zone speed limit and meet state standards. He stated that it is something that the City has to initiate but that the PZC could make a recommendation to the City Council. Mr. Manning stated that he thought a school zone speed limit was a good idea.

Mr. Manning questioned if Mr. Holmes observes speeding cars on Fairview. Mr. Holmes stated yes.

Mr. Ed Gergits, 7635 Wilton Court stated that there is no dividing line painted in the center of Fairview Avenue and he has observed cars veering into on-coming traffic. He also said that the curve and slope of Fairview and the on-street parking for school events and the backup of vehicles turning into the new driveway would be a safety problem for drivers and bike riders and kids crossing the street.

Mr. Corcoran responded that it his observation that there sufficiently safe sighting distance for all traffic on Fairview Avenue.

Mr. Arnold said all students are bused.

Several commissioners asked if there had been consideration of routing cars to and from the parking lot north of the school via Manning thus not needing a new driveway on Fairview. They also asked if there was any way to provide for all ingress for cars, trucks, and buses from Manning and all to exit on Fairview.

Mr. Corcoran stated that neither would be practical and would negate benefits of separating teacher vehicles, parent vehicles and buses for safety. He stated that they need to document the sight distance.

There was no one else in the audience wishing to present public comment.

Mr. Manning advised that the PZC could take a conditional vote to recommend approval listing safety concerns to be resolved for MSC consideration or this hearing could be continued to give a chance for Eriksson to complete their analysis and for KLOA to review.

Mr. Arnold stated that a continuation of this hearing for a vote on March 7 would not delay their project.

Commissioner Mallers made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Sullivan to continue Public Hearing Case: PZC 2018-02 2000 Manning Road (Ide School-driveway variation) to March 7, 2017.

Upon roll call vote, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 6-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Erickson made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Cortez to approve the January 17, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Upon roll call vote, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 6-0.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Manning announced that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Erickson made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Gay. Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

APPROVED:

Elizabeth Lahey
Secretary

Lou Mallers
Chairman