

MINUTES
CITY OF DARIEN
MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, July 27, 2026

PRESENT: Alderman Thomas Belczak – Chairman, Alderman Ted Schauer

ABSENT: Alderman Ralph Stompanato

OTHERS: Mr. Dan Gombac – Director, Mr. Ryan Murphy – City Planner

Establish Quorum

Chairperson Thomas Belczak called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the City of Darien City Hall, 1702 Plainfield Road, Darien, Illinois. Chairperson Belczak declared a quorum present. Mr. Dan Gombac, Director, submitted for the record supplemental information provided by Alderman Ralph Stompanato regarding his notes on each item on the agenda.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

- a. **PZC-26-9 (Variation)** - Bryan Wozny – 1623 Golfview Drive - A petition from Bryan Wozny for a variation from Section 5A-7-2-6(A) of the City Code to permit an enclosed patio within the rear yard of 1623 Golfview Drive, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-33-112-028).

Mr. Ryan Murphy, City Planner, reported that the subject property is located on the north side of the golf course and the petition was regarding an attached legal, non-conforming deck. He stated that the petitioner would construct a screened-in patio enclosure, as well as replace the whole deck, and reported that his justification included golf balls preventing the use of his property. He further stated that the petition would comply with zoning and would bring the property to conformance with the variation. Mr. Murphy reported that the Planning, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee recommended approval of the petition with a 5-0 vote.

The Committee expressed their lack of issue with the petition.

Mr. Gombac confirmed there would be no drainage issues.

Alderman Schauer made a motion, seconded by Alderman Belczak to approve PZC-26-9 (Variation) - Bryan Wozny – 1623 Golfview Drive - A petition from Bryan Wozny for a

variation from Section 5A-7-2-6(A) of the City Code to permit an enclosed patio within the rear yard of 1623 Golfview Drive, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-33-112-028).

Upon voice vote, the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 2-0.

Mr. Gombac noted for the record that the listed petitioner in the packet would be changed from Mark Garber to Bryan Wozny on this item.

- b. PZC-26-10 (Sign Variation) - 541 Plainfield Road – DM Darien RF, LLC - Petition from DM Darien RF, LLC for a variation from Section 4-3-10-(B)-3 of the City's Sign Code to permit an electronic messaging sign instead of a manual changeable copy sign for a remodeled Culver's ground sign located in the B-2 Community Shopping Center Business District at 541 Plainfield Road, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-27-207-032).**

Mr. Murphy reported that the sign contractor had submitted the petition, and that there is currently a manual sign that they wanted to bring to today's standards. He stated that a variation would be required, but this was an item previously allowed at other establishments. He further stated that staff and the PZEDC had recommended approval, adding that they should adhere to city recommendations of having the sign run every 30 seconds and from 6 a.m. until close.

The petitioner stated that Culver's would want to bring the sign up to date with other locations, and that they would have a remodel in the near future that would coincide with the update. He stated that they would be flexible about the hours, confirming that most locations shut their signs off at close. He further stated that the sign would be used for restaurant advertising and community engagement, consistent with their other signs in the Chicago area.

Chairperson Belczak questioned if they would be changing just the monument sign and not the footprint.

The petitioner confirmed that the footprint would remain the same.

Mr. Murphy reported that the PZEDC recommended this item for approval unanimously. He further reported that they had requested staff to research signs by right and an ordinance update.

Chairperson Belczak stated that they should review that as a council.

Alderman Schauer made a motion, seconded by Alderman Belcak to approve PZC-26-10 (Sign Variation) - 541 Plainfield Road – DM Darien RF, LLC - Petition from DM Darien RF, LLC for a variation from Section 4-3-10-(B)-3 of the City's Sign Code to permit an electronic messaging sign instead of a manual changeable copy sign for a remodeled Culver's ground sign located in the B-2 Community Shopping Center Business District at 541 Plainfield Road, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-27-207-032).

Upon voice vote, the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 2-0.

Mr. Gombac reported that the PZEDC would like to see the ordinance updated to today's standards, as electronic signs are more common now. He stated that the motion would be to further research, including the national standard on timing for electronic signs and to determine what other municipalities are doing. He further stated that the City Council shouldn't look at this item anymore as it is regulated.

There was some discussion regarding electronic signs at gas stations.

Mr. Murphy reported that the PZEDC had recommended the motion for approval unanimously.

Alderman Belczak made a motion, seconded by Alderman Schauer to request staff to seek City Council authorization to research and prepare amendments to the sign code allowing electronic message centers.

Upon voice vote, the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 2-0.

- c. **PZC-26-11 (Variation) - Cynthia Haney – 1008 Juniper Lane - A petition from Cynthia Haney for a variation from Section 5A-5-11(A) of the City Code to permit a recreational vehicle within the front yard of 1008 Juniper Lane, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-27-308-015).**

Mr. Murphy reported that the petition would be to park an RV in the front yard, adding that the petitioner stated it would be hard to place on the side due to pine trees and the sloping of the lot. He reported that the PZEDC voted with a failed motion 0-5, and that the petitioner updated the justification letter after with additional photos showing the camper screened by two evergreen trees. He further stated that there were additional site constraints including overhead utility lines, shed, drainage ditch and limited alternative parking. Mr. Murphy stated that if the Committee found it agreeable, the petitioner would move the RV to the side yard if the trees were dead or removed in the future. He further stated that staff recommended that if the item were approved, they limit the length of the trailer to 25 feet, and that the petitioner had proposed that the variation be null and void if the trees were to be removed or dead. Mr. Murphy reported that there had been two public comments, one neighbor in support and another sharing concerns.

Alderman Schauer questioned why the one neighbor had been in support.

Mr. Murphy stated that they also had an RV, so they wanted to support a similar circumstance.

There was some clarification as to where the tree is located on the subject property.

Mr. Gombac reported that the petitioner had concerns that the property would be unsightly if the tree was raised.

Ms. Cynthia Haney stated that it would damage the tree as she would have to remove 15 feet of branches to fit the RV. She stated that they way the house is angled, the side is in full view of

Juniper, and her neighbor is not understanding that it's a matter of where she can park it, not if she can park it.

Chairperson Belczak questioned how her car could get to the side and not the RV.

Ms. Haney stated that the camper was too large and it was difficult to back it in. She stated that the pine tree doesn't allow for the full length of the trailer to be on the side.

There was some clarification regarding the photos Ms. Haney provided.

Alderman Schauer gave some background on the subject ordinance. He stated that if this petition passed, there would be a precedent to have these variations all the time.

Ms. Haney stated that there were no sidewalks in her neighborhood, and that the length of the trailer would be close to the power lines. She questioned if the spirit of the ordinance is to limit visibility to neighbors.

Alderman Schauer gave a past example on Greenbriar Lane where a resident took extreme matter to comply. He stated that no matter the result, there would always be an issue.

Mr. Gombac stated that similar requests had come in and the simple answer from staff is no.

There was some clarification on the side yard setbacks.

Chairperson Belczak questioned if the subject RV had been in violation the entire life of the ordinance.

Ms. Haney stated that she bought the home in 2019, and that corner lots pose a unique situation for ordinance compliance. She stated that she would uphold the spirit of the ordinance with the pine tree screening her property.

Chairperson Belczak stated that she could remove the pine tree, that others have taken dramatic steps to come to compliance. He stated that she would need better justification as to why she couldn't comply with the code.

Mr. Gombac provided some background on the subject ordinance, and he stated that in the end multiple government associations agreed that the side or rear yard would be the best solution.

Alderman Belczak made a motion, seconded by Alderman Schauer to approve PZC-26-11 (Variation) - Cynthia Haney – 1008 Juniper Lane - A petition from Cynthia Haney for a variation from Section 5A-5-11(A) of the City Code to permit a recreational vehicle within the front yard of 1008 Juniper Lane, Darien IL 60561 (PIN 09-27-308-015).

Upon voice vote, the MOTION FAILED 0-2.

AYES: None

NAYS: Belczak, Schauer

d. Minutes – May 26, 2026 Municipal Services Committee.

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

Alderman Schauer made a motion, seconded by Alderman Belczak to approve the May 26, 2026 Municipal Services Committee Meeting Minutes.

Upon voice vote, the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 2-0.

Director's Report

There was some discussion regarding the sign ordinance update.

Mr. Gombac reported that the storms have been pushing back the timeline for the Plainfield Road wall project. He reported that they would be pushing into October, with plantings most likely going in in the spring.

Mr. Gombac announced that there would be a Special Meeting on Monday, August 3, 2026 at 6:40 p.m. regarding a Public Works project.

Next Scheduled Meeting

Chairperson Belczak announced that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 24, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Committee, Alderman Schauer made a motion, seconded by Alderman Belczak to adjourn. Upon voice vote, the MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, and the meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

X

Thomas Belczak
Chairman

X

Ted Schauer
Alderman

X

Ralph Stompanato
Alderman