

# CITY OF COUNTRYSIDE

*803 Joliet Road  
Countryside, IL 60525  
www.countryside-il.org*



## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Regular Meeting of the Plan Commission**

### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

Tuesday, July 7, 2020

7:15 P.M.

City Hall

### **Board Members**

**Chairman Richard Fullmer, Jr., Secretary Tina Grotzke  
Michael Anderson, Marco Gutierrez, Ronald Ward, Steve Kehr,  
Robert Schwarz, Danielle Edenfield, Jonathan Gertsmeier**

**Roll Call:** Secretary Grotzke called the Roll of Members physically present as follows:

**PRESENT:** Chairman Richard Fullmer, Jr, Secretary Tina Grotzke, Michael Anderson, Steve Kehr, Marco Gutierrez, Ronald Ward, Danielle Edenfield, Robert Schwarz, Jon Gertsmeier

**Also Present:** Attorney Peck, Planning Manager, Richard Trent

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 5, 2020 were previously distributed to the Board Members. Chairman Fullmer asked if there were any corrections to be made to said minutes. There being no corrections or additions, motion made to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 5, 2020, as presented.

**A motion was made by Mr. Ward, seconded by Ms. Grotzke, that this matter be APPROVED, as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye: 9 Chairman Fullmer, Anderson, Grotzke, Ward, Kehr, Schwarz, Edenfield, Gutierrez, Gertsmeier**

**Nay: 0**

### **Chairman's Comments**

Chairman Fullmer stated the Rules of Proceeding for the Hearing before the Plan Commission – Zoning Board of Appeals will follow a strict order of presentation. A sign-in sheet for Interested Persons addressing the Board is located at the podium. This hearing is being recorded. Please silence all cell phones and pagers.

### **Action Items**

#### **1. Case #PZA20-0001: Consideration of a Variance**

- a. To consider granting a Variance to exceed the maximum height of a monument sign from 6' above the curb level to 8' for the construction and installation of a new 8' monument sign at the subject property – 6438 Joliet Road.

Mr. Gutierrez moved to open the Public Hearing in this matter, seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried by unanimous voice vote. Representatives of the Cook County Farm Bureau were sworn in by Chairman Fullmer *en masse* - Bob Rohrer, Daniel Biernacki, Janet McCabe, and Bill VanBruggen. The Building Department has received the required Proof of Notice. The Staff Report was presented by Mr. Trent.

The first matter is a variance request to exceed the maximum height of a monument sign from six (6) feet to eight (8) feet above the curb level – for the construction and installation of a new sign along Joliet Road. The Applicant is Cook County Farm Bureau (CCFB), 6438 Joliet Road, currently zoned O, Limited Office Space. Aerial views depict the exact location as being the SE corner of Joliet Road and Stalford Road. Land-based photographs of all building elevations were presented. The original sign was struck by a FedEx truck and totally destroyed in 2019. The Applicant is working with VanBruggen Signs to replace the sign. The new sign would be large enough to include other building tenants.

Under the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, this parcel is listed as being a part of the Joliet Road Subarea Plan; as such it is identified as being a location recommended for Parking Lot Landscaping improvements. Mr. Trent read the section aloud: "All parking lots should be screened from view from Joliet Road with

perimeter landscaping consisting of turf, shrubs, ornamental trees and shade trees. Plant materials should consider screening during winter months. Landscape hedges . . . should be contiguous and maintained at a height of 30" to 40"." This language was highlighted and suggested as one of Staff's recommendations.

The new sign would be located on the west side of the access drive. The Applicant requests an eight (8) foot high sign because it would be installed directly on the berm. The Applicant would be within the maximum square footage of 65'. The sign would also be set back at least five (5) feet from the property line (Joliet Road right-of-way). The base of the sign would consist of natural stone with landscaping. Photos of neighboring monument signs were presented for comparison purposes. Staff recommends approval of the Variance subject to the six (6) conditions as provided in the Staff Report.

Mr. Bob Rohrer, has been Manager of CCFB for the past 21 years. He introduced other members including Dan Biernacki, Chairman of the CCFB Committee and on the Board of Directors; Janet McCabe, President of CCFB; and Bill VanBruggen, who has guided them through the signage process. He thanked the City Staff for all its helpful advice and recommendations. He described how the FedEx truck struck the sign and demolished it – a total loss. Rather than replace the sign in its former location, they decided to move it across the entranceway where it would be more visible, improve the appearance of the area and help reduce the industrial look of the property. The stone base and landscaping would assist in maintaining the integrity of the berm. Other perimeter landscaping is planned for the parking lot.

Chairman Fullmer stated that because of the berm, the height variance is warranted. Mr. Trent stated that this is the only site along Joliet Road that has a berm. They would like to incorporate the sign into the berm. Chairman Fullmer believes that this request truly merits a variance. The Sign would have a concealed internal illumination with a low maintenance LED lighting system. Board members agreed that the sign is very attractive; there were no other questions. There were no questions from Interested Parties.

Mr. Rohrer thanked the PC/ZBA for its time and consideration in this matter and looks forward to working with them in the future. Ms. Edenfield moved to close the Evidentiary Portion of the Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Anderson; motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Fullmer read the six (6) Staff recommendations aloud:

1. A sign permit shall be submitted subject to the review and approval of the CDD;
2. The proposed monument sign shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Engineer.
3. The original sign and remaining debris from the accident shall be removed and restored to either grass or a landscaped area.
4. A Landscape Plan shall be submitted to address perimeter landscaping subject to the review and approval of the CDD.
5. All construction and operation permitted by such zoning variation shall be subject to all applicable codes, ordinances and regulations of the City of Countryside;
6. That said variation be established within six (6) months from the effective date of any ordinance granting the same.

Attorney Peck stated that this is a recommendation to grant a variance to exceed the maximum height of a monument sign from six (6) feet above curb level to eight (8) feet, for the construction and installation of a new eight (8) foot monument sign on the property commonly known as 6438 Joliet

Road, all in substantial compliance with Exhibit A, the Planning and Zoning Memorandum, and subject to the conditions set forth in the Planning and Zoning Memorandum.

**A motion was made by Ms. Grotzke, seconded by Ms. Edenfield, that this matter be APPROVED, as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye: 9 Chairman Fullmer, Anderson, Grotzke, Ward, Kehr, Schwarz, Edenfield,  
Gutierrez, Gertsmeier**  
**Nay: 0**

Due to the reduced summer schedule, Chairman Fullmer stated that this matter will come before the City Council at its Regular Meeting tomorrow evening, July 8, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

**2. CASE #PZA20-0002: Consideration of a Variance**

- a. To consider granting a Variance to reduce the front yard setback from the minimum required 25' to 15' from the property line for the construction and installation of a new roof structure over an existing deck/patio at the subject property – 10901 Joliet Road.

Ms. Grotzke moved to open the Public Hearing in this matter, seconded by Ms. Edenfield, and carried by unanimous voice vote. The Applicant, Kevin Comer, was sworn in by Chairman Fullmer. The Building Department has received the required Proof of Notice. PM Mr. Trent presented the Staff report.

The second variance request this evening is from Mr. Kevin Comer, 10901 Joliet Road, owner of Rafferty's Irish Pub, currently zoned B-2, Limited Service Business District. The request is a front yard setback variance to locate a roof structure over an existing deck/patio. This is an irregular corner lot so it has two (2) front-yard setbacks, both requiring twenty-five (25) feet each, from the property line. The subject property is on the SW corner of Joliet Road and Brainard Avenue. Background history: In 2009, Mr. Comer received a special use permit for two (2) outdoor patios – one on the east elevation and the other on the south elevation. Tonight's request involves the south elevation patio. In addition, Mr. Comer received a variance in 2009 to allow for the existing canopy to extend into the Brainard Avenue setback. The subject property also falls under the Joliet Road Subarea Plan. In 2004, the former owner, Tone's Roadhouse, used all of the Brainard Avenue frontage as one large access point. The City then deemed the uncoordinated access to the site as being unsafe. Access should be limited to two (2) designated areas along Brainard Avenue. Nothing ever came from that suggestion. Mr. Trent stated that if the entire site is ever redeveloped, consideration should be given to creating only two (2) access points.

Photos of the patios and the proposed roof covering were presented – approximately 23' x 26", or 598 sq. ft.; it would be fifteen (15) feet from the closest corner to the property line. If the dumpster on the south side of the building remains, it should be enclosed. The Applicant provided several photos showing the pergola, which would be removed to add a new roof structure -- simply four (4) posts and a roof covering – not enclosed. The structure would be approximately twelve (12) feet high. This building has been a restaurant for many years; Staff recommends approval of granting the variance to reduce the front yard setback from the minimum required twenty-five (25) feet to fifteen (15) feet from the property line, subject to the four (4) conditions, as provided in the staff report. They are not losing any parking spaces; the building footprint would remain the same.

Mr. Gutierrez asked about landscape proposals – plans have not been included; the site is mostly an impervious surface; the only greenspace is along Joliet Road. IDOT roadwork is anticipated, which may alter the configuration of the subject lot for turning lanes, etc. Ms. Edenfield asked about roofing material. Mr. Comer stated that the business loses 14-15 days per year to weather – due to rain or excessive heat. He will remove the pergola and install a metal roof on the structure; those plans have not been finalized. Mr. Trent stated that the design and building materials are at the discretion of the Applicant, however should be compatible with the overall site. The Building Commissioner would have the final word on roofing materials. This would be a permanent structure. The wooden beams would be cedar. Mr. Gutierrez asked about lighting, TV and sound system – the current outdoor sound system comes from the bar; that will remain. There were no questions from Interested Parties.

Mr. Comer thanked the Board for their assistance and cooperation. Mr. Gutierrez moved to close the Evidentiary Portion of the Public Hearing, seconded by Ms. Grotzke; carried by unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Fullmer read the four (4) Staff recommendations aloud:

1. A building permit shall be submitted subject to review and approval of the CDD;
2. If dumpsters are to be used on site, then a refuse and recycling enclosure shall be installed;
3. All construction and operation permitted by such zoning variation shall be subject to all applicable codes, ordinances and regulations of the City of Countryside;
4. That said variation be established within six (6) months from the effective date of an ordinance granting the same.

Attorney Peck stated that this is a recommendation to grant a variance to reduce the front yard setback from the required twenty-five (25) feet to fifteen (15) feet from the property line along Brainard Avenue for the construction and installation of a new roof structure over an existing deck/patio on the property commonly known as 10901 Joliet Road, all in substantial compliance with the Planning and Zoning Memorandum and subject to the conditions set forth in the Planning and Zoning Memorandum.

**A motion was made by Mr. Ward seconded by Ms. Grotzke, that this matter be APPROVED, as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye: 9 Chairman Fullmer, Anderson, Grotzke, Ward, Kehr, Schwarz, Edenfield,  
Gutierrez, Gertsmeier**

**Nay: 0**

Chairman Fullmer stated that this matter will also come before the City Council at its regular meeting tomorrow evening, July 8, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

#### **Public Comments - None**

#### **Other Business**

1. **5500 S. Edgewood Avenue** – Discuss potential Concept Plan for the construction of a Preschool / Daycare facility on a vacant residential (R-1, One-Family Residence) zoned lot.

Mr. Trent presented the Staff Report. He noted that this matter is for discussion purposes only; the intent is for Mr. Christopher Krohe to get feedback from the Board on whether or not to move forward with this concept prior to proceeding with a formal project. Mr. Krohe provided a packet of info re: 5500 S. Edgewood Avenue, a corner lot on the SW corner of 55th Street and Edgewood Avenue. This

vacant property is currently owned by Hallowell & James Funeral Home. Over the years, many projects have been proposed for this parcel; none have come to fruition. The property is zoned R-1, One Family Residence District. The Concept Plan illustrates a two-story building that would allow for a “preschool and day care facility” on the property. The parcel is approximately 38,700 sq. ft. or .89 acres; it has two (2) PINs. The 2004 Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject property as being in a mature, single-family neighborhood.

The proposed facility would operate Mon-Fri, 6:30 am – 6:30 pm. The building footprint would be approximately 11,750 sq. ft., two (2) floors, catering to students from infancy to age 5. The school would serve 174 students, with 22 staff and two (2) administrators. The document entitled “Traffic Flow Summary” shows 102 cars projected during peak drop off hours of 7-9 am, in 10-minute intervals, and approximately 96 cars during peak pick up hours from 4-6 pm in 10-minute intervals. The Proposed Site Plan shows twenty-five (25) parking spaces. The Code calls for one (1) parking space per employee, plus three (3) parking spaces for visitors and one (1) additional space for a van or bus if associated with the business. The Site Plan shows two (2) access points on Edgewood Avenue with 90 degree parking. Chairman Fullmer interrupted the presentation.

Chairman Fullmer spoke directly to Mr. Krohe. He stated that any business person has a right to pursue any property in town. There is no difference between this particular parcel and the previous parcel discussed five months ago. There is a property across the street that has access to the traffic light for cars going in all directions. This was a terrible traffic situation further east that you have now moved further west on 55<sup>th</sup> Street. There is no light to cross 55<sup>th</sup> Street; how will these cars get in, unload and get out, repeatedly, during peak rush hour times; it is impossible; there is no traffic light. Mr. Krohe was not involved in the first site. He believes this is a different scenario; it is the same tenant and she wishes to remain in Countryside. Mr. Krohe believes there is more traffic generated on LaGrange & 55<sup>th</sup> than there is on Edgewood and 55<sup>th</sup>. He said this plan would add 102 cars to the 19K traveling the street daily; that is a minimal impact. Mr. Krohe does not see the traffic problem. He asked the City to seek a traffic light; Hallowell & James would agree to it. Chairman Fullmer said that would certainly change the situation.

Mr. Krohe is seeking a solution. The site has been vacant for 20 years; no one will ever build a house on the site; it is not feasible. There are no registered daycare centers within the City limits of Countryside; this would bring value to the City. It would draw customers from Hinsdale, LaGrange, Western Springs, and Countryside. The location you mentioned earlier would not have that potential. Chairman Fullmer stated that other Kiddie Academy sites are in shopping centers, off the main streets, with availability of traffic lights and controlled egress out of the property. This site does not have that. Mr. Kehr lives in the immediate vicinity; with both access points on Edgewood, cars would go to Plainfield Road to avoid the traffic on 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Krohe suggested installing a cul-de-sac further south on Edgewood. Chairman Fullmer asked why should residents be inconvenienced by limited home access for the sake of Kiddie Academy? Mr. Krohe would like to see a Traffic Study. Further discussion ensued re: traffic routes taken by residents. Mr. Krohe will discuss alternate sites with the tenant. He is taken aback by the negative feedback. There are no alcohol or tobacco site issues regarding this location.

Mr. Schwarz stated that this site is a mirror image of the previously requested site on 55<sup>th</sup> Street east of LaGrange Road. In looking at the Site Plan, he suggested having ingress and egress off 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Krohe stated that is a possibility and then they could do a “right-in” and “right-out” access onto 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Schwarz stated that would somewhat alleviate the idea of people driving through the neighborhood. Mr. Schwarz believes the City needs a daycare center, but do not put it on a residential

street. There are residential homes next door to the west and south of this site. Ms. Grotzke stated that listening to noisy children on playground equipment may not be desirable for neighbors. Ms. Edenfield stated they could install a privacy sound barrier to mitigate sound. The best idea would be to appeal to IDOT for a traffic light at the corner. They would also have to approve the two (2) curb cuts onto 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Trent stated that a project of this type warrants a Traffic Impact Study by the Applicant – entering and exiting onto 55<sup>th</sup> Street and avoiding Edgewood Avenue. The Traffic Impact Study would indicate the highest and best access points for entering and exiting the parcel.

Comments from Interested Parties – Resident Jerry Welch stated that the last three months are not indicative of the true traffic density both on Plainfield and 55<sup>th</sup> Street. He resides directly south of the subject property; at one time there were two (2) homes on that property. At present, cars come down Edgewood to avoid the stop light at Plainfield Road & Brainard Avenue. People do not turn left from Edgewood onto 55<sup>th</sup> Street anytime of the day; it is virtually impossible. Traffic has noticeably decreased temporarily. Mr. Krohe repeated the suggestion for a traffic light and a cul-de-sac as potential solutions. Mr. Welch discussed potential fencing, both for privacy and noise mitigation.

Mr. Gertsmeier suggested turning the building around and putting the playground equipment on the Edgewood side with traffic access on 55<sup>th</sup> Street only. Mr. Gutierrez stated that a daycare facility is needed in Countryside. He doesn't know if this is the best location. He welcomes a Traffic Impact Study. Mr. Krohe asked if it's worth his time and money to try to find a solution? Is there a potential for yes? Chairman Fullmer stated that years ago a flower shop was suggested for that parcel – a low-impact solution -- residents were against it. They wanted to keep it residential. A Kiddie Academy would cause congestion; too crowded. Mr. Welch doesn't have a problem with the usage; traffic is the main problem. Mr. Krohe thanked everyone for their feedback. He will take this information back to the tenant for further discussion and advise Mr. Trent.

Mr. Trent completed his presentation – this property is zoned R-1 – in order to proceed with the project, property would need to be rezoned and a Special Use request submitted.

### **Old and New Business**

Mr. Trent discussed the Doggie Daycare business (Novi Grooming) approved last year at the corner of Willow Springs Road and Joliet Road; it is coming up on their six (6) month follow-up meeting. It appears that the business was closed some time due to COVID. Mr. Trent stated they were scheduled for a follow up meeting in May, however, due to being closed the meeting was delayed. They didn't open their doors officially until November. There are no other cases; the deadline for filing was Monday. There may be some Text Amendments scheduled for next month. That meeting will be Tuesday, August 4, 2020.

The 2018-2020 Zoning Case List has been updated.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Mr. Kehr, seconded by Mr. Ward that this meeting be ADJOURNED.  
The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye: 9 Chairman Fullmer, Anderson, Grotzke, Ward, Kehr, Schwarz, Edenfield,  
Gutierrez, Gertsmeier**

**Nay: 0**

**Chairman Fullmer declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

APPROVED:

Respectfully Submitted,

/fp

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RICHARD FULLMER, JR., CHAIRMAN