



MEETING MINUTES

LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 24 , 2024

7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

Members Present: George Halik, Max Puchtel, Jeanne Lindwall, Kiril Mirintchev, Kristine Westerberg, Myrna Arevalo and Matt Rodgers

Members Absent: John Hewko

Staff Present: Neighborhood and Land Use Planner Meagan Jones, and Zoning Administrator Melissa Klotz

Presiding Member: Matt Rodgers

Call to Order

Chair Rodgers opened the meeting at 7:02 PM. A roll call was then done and a quorum was determined to be present.

Approval of January 10th, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Chair Rodgers stated minutes from January 10th, 2024, are not available; therefore, approval is deferred to the next meeting.

Old Business

A. Public Hearing: Appeal | 2649 Crawford Avenue | 23ZMJV-0070 Michele Walker, property owner, appeals the determination of Minor Variation 23ZMNV-0057 at 2649 Crawford Avenue. The Applicant originally requested, and was subsequently denied, zoning relief to construct a 20' x 20' detached garage within the front yard, where detached garages are only allowed in rear yards (Section 6-4-6-3) in the R2 Single Family Residential District. The Land Use Commission is the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-8-8 of the Evanston Zoning Code. PINs: 05-33-311-015-0000, 05-33-311-016-0000.

The applicants presented changes made based on the commission's previous discussion. The garage placement and driveway width were adjusted. Staff recommended approval.

Commissioner Questions

Chair Rodgers called for public comment. There was none.

Public Comment

Chair Rodgers called for public comment. There was none.

Chair Rodgers closed public testimony.

Deliberations

The Chair reviewed the Standards for Minor Variations (Section 6-3-8-12.A).

1. The practical difficulty is not self-created: Chair Rodgers acknowledged that the property in question is unique. They concurred that the practical difficulty leading to the need for a variation was not self-created by the property owner, so this standard is met.
2. The requested variation will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment or property values of adjoining properties: Chair Rodgers discussed the impact of placing a garage in the front yard and considered the surrounding properties. Given the unique shape of the property and the lack of opposition from neighboring properties, they concluded that there would be no substantial adverse impact, so this standard is met.
3. The requested variation is in keeping with the comprehensive general plan and the zoning ordinance: Chair Rodgers examined how the proposed variation aligns with the city's comprehensive general plan and zoning ordinance. They highlighted the importance of off-street parking, especially on busier streets, and found the proposal consistent with the goals outlined in both the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance, so this standard is met.
4. The requested variation is consistent with the preservation policies set forth in the comprehensive general plan: Chair Rodgers noted that there were no specific preservation policy considerations raised during the meeting. As such, they deemed this standard not applicable to the case.
5. The requested variation requires the least deviation from the applicable regulation among the feasible options identified before the Zoning Administrator issues his/her decision regarding said variation: Chair Rodgers revisited the modifications made by the applicant in response to the commission's feedback. They acknowledged the adjustments to the garage placement and driveway width and found that the proposal now aligns with zoning regulations while minimizing deviations, so this standard is met

Commissioner Lindwall made a motion to grant the requested variation and overturn the Zoning Administrator's decision. Commissioner Westerberg seconded. Commissioner Westerberg clarified that this matter is not an overturning of the zoning

administrator's decision on anything erroneous, it's simply new information that has now been placed in front of the board. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously with seven votes in favor.

Ayes: Arevalo, Lindwall, Halik, Westerberg, Puchtel, Mirintchev, and Rodgers

Nays:

Absent: Hewko

Communications

Ms. Jones stated that discussion on the comprehensive plan will take place on February 7th, 2024.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Chair Rodgers motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Westerberg seconded, and the motion carried, 7-0.

Adjourned 7:14 PM.

The next meeting of the Evanston Land Use Commission is to be held on **Wednesday, February 7th, 2024, at 7:00 PM, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.**

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Bock, Administrative Lead

Reviewed by,
Meagan Jones, AICP, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner