

Minutes - Goshen Board of Zoning Appeals
Tuesday, March 26, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, 111 E. Jefferson Street
Goshen, Indiana

- I. The meeting was called to order with the following members present: Aracelia Manriquez, Richard Aguirre, Tom Holtzinger, and Scott McKee. Also present was Assistant City Planner Rossa Deegan and Assistant City Attorney James Kolbus. Absent: Brad Hunsberger
- II. Approval of Minutes from 2/26/19: Manriquez/McKee 4-0
- III. Filing of Zoning/Subdivision Ordinances and Official Staff Reports into Record: Manriquez/Aguirre 4-0
- IV. Postponements/Withdrawals: None
- V. **Use & Developmental Variances** – public hearing item
19-04DV – Meritage Hospitality Group, Inc., and Wallin/Gomez Architects, Ltd., request a developmental variance to allow a 14’ front yard (north) building setback where 35’ is required, for an approximately 10 square foot building addition and façade extension including expanded overhang. The subject property is generally located at 900 W Pike Street and is zoned Commercial B-3 District.

Staff Report:

Mr. Deegan explained this request has to do with the exterior renovation of the existing Wendy’s restaurant. The proposed façade work requires a developmental variance for a 14’ front setback where 35’ is required by the zoning ordinance. Updates to the façade will include a new overhang and an architectural feature called a “blade” which will increase the building footprint by approximately 10 sf. He referred to a photo in the packet, explaining the blade is the building addition, but the additional square footage will not be occupied space. He explained the proposed façade change will not encroach closer into the setback than the existing façade. A 1977 zoning clearance in the Planning files for the restaurant construction indicated the required setbacks were met. At that time the zoning was B-1 and met the 30’ setback requirement. The zoning has since been changed to B-3 which has an increased setback requirement of 35’. Right-of-way has also been lost when Pike Street has widened over the years. He pointed out neighboring properties have similar setbacks to Wendy’s and would also be unable to meet the required 35’ front setback. Because the new façade will match the existing setback, Staff recommends approval of the request.

Petitioner Presentation:

Ana Pelhank, 45 Ottawa Ave, Suite 600, Grand Rapids, MI spoke on behalf of the petitioner. She stated the blade element is an important part of their design and is basically a brand of Wendy’s. She stated this blade design can be found in most of their stores across the country. She asked that the Board approve the request.

Audience Comments:

There was no one to speak to the petition.

The public hearing was closed.

Staff Discussion:

There was no discussion amongst Board members.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Aguirre/Manriquez, to find with the recommendations and conclusions of the Staff Analysis and approve 19-04DV with the three conditions listed in the Staff Report. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 4-0.

19-05DV – Goshen Community Schools and Commonwealth Engineers, Inc., request developmental variances to allow building height of 44’ where a maximum of 30’ is permitted for a building addition adjacent to Lincolnway East, to allow future development to match existing building height of 48 feet, to allow an approximately 167 square foot illuminated wall sign facing Lincolnway East, where one non-illuminated wall sign 36 square feet in area is permitted, and to allow 691 onsite parking spaces where 761 are required. The subject property is generally located at 501 Lincolnway East and is zoned Residential R-1, Commercial B-1, and Industrial M-1 District.

Staff Report:

Mr. Deegan explained this request is for a total of four variances; two related to the building height of the new addition, one related to parking, and one for a wall sign.

He explained an approximate 14,000 sf addition is planned to the front of Goshen High School, along Lincolnway East. The addition will include 14 new classrooms and a three story stairwell. The majority of the addition will be two stories, matching the height of the south wing. A three-story stairwell, attached to the existing three-story building will be 44 feet in height where 30 feet is permitted in the R-1 zoning district. Planning Staff recommended adding a request to this variance to allow future additions to the main building to match the existing maximum height of the building, which is currently 48 feet in certain areas. He noted the high school property contains approximately 28 acres, allowing ample room for future expansions. He also noted that Planning Staff recommends amending the wording to the request to specify which development in the future may match the existing height of the building. This would eliminate the possibility of accessory buildings being developed at the existing height of the main building.

No additional parking is proposed for this addition and Mr. Deegan noted the required parking is based upon the number of employees and the number of classrooms. No additional staff or increase in the number of students is anticipated with this addition, noting the addition is to keep up with the demand of the number of people already in the building. Based upon the addition of 14 rooms, the parking calculations would require an additional 98 parking spaces. This additional parking requirement would increase the number of required spaces from 691 to 761 spaces and the school cannot meet this requirement. He noted that Staff inspected the various parking lots at the school and found that many spaces are not being used. He also noted that two different lots included in the available parking spaces were closed, meaning there are still several parking spaces available. Because the new addition will not increase the need for additional parking, Staff finds this request reasonable.

Lastly, the petitioner requests an illuminated wall sign, approximately 167 sf in area, where one non-illuminated wall sign is permitted, not to exceed 36 sf. The proposed sign is a metal channel letter sign between the second and third stories of the original building. The sign will be externally lit and will match the building in both character and proportion. The school has approximately 2,000 feet of frontage along Lincolnway East and Staff finds this adequate for the existing and proposed signs.

Mr. Deegan noted condition number four in the Staff Report states that “any parking spaces listed as available before construction and damaged during construction shall be returned to the condition they were in prior to construction”. He pointed this out because a note on the construction detail indicates the grass lot on the southeast corner would be used for contractor parking during the construction.

Based upon the above analysis, Staff recommends approval for each of the requested variances with one amendment.

Petitioner Presentation:

Andy Bearman, 9604 Coldwater Road, Fort Wayne, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. He stated he agrees with the Staff analysis, including all of the listed conditions. He went on to explain the building height is to relocate the stairs and the signage is an architectural feature on the building. The addition will provide an adequate number of classrooms for programs and explained there will be a number of interior renovations as well.

Mr. Holtzinger asked if the illuminated sign would detract from the architectural value of the building. Mr. Bearman stated they have looked at other historic buildings and have modeled these after some they have viewed.

Mr. Holtzinger asked if the brick on the new stairwell would match the existing.

Mr. Bearman referred the question to the architect.

Karen Fisher, 225 Airport North Office Park, Fort Wayne, spoke to Mr. Holtzinger's question. She stated the brickwork will not be as intricate as the existing, but the color will match very closely.

Mr. Aguirre asked how you can add 14 classrooms, but not have an increase in the number of students or staff.

Diane Woodworth, 613 E Purl Street, spoke to Mr. Aguirre's question. She stated there are currently 16 teachers that move around the building using carts because they don't have a classroom.

Mr. Aguirre asked when the work would take place and what impact it will have on traffic.

Mr. Bearman stated work will begin when school is out this summer and will extend through next summer. He added that a traffic plan has been worked out and will be put in place for students, parents, and busses once work has begun.

Audience Comments:

There was no one to speak to the petition.

The public hearing was closed.

Staff Discussion:

There was no discussion amongst Board members.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Manriquez/McKee, to find with the recommendations and conclusions of the Staff Analysis and approve 19-05DV with the four conditions as amended and listed in the Staff Report. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 4-0.

VI. Audience Items:

None

VII. Staff Board Items:

- *Staff report feedback form*

