

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
MINUTES OF JUNE 5, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

1. The regularly scheduled meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. A quorum was present. Rhonda Santana, Kathy Mennella, Wayne Bernacki, Bruce Boreson, Frank Grieshamer, Chairman Mark Cwik, Lisa Manzo (Secretary), Ryan Morton (Village Attorney), and Rudy Repa (Village Planner).
Absent: Jenny Corral.
3. Member Grieshamer made a motion to accept the minutes of May 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Member Mennella and approved to place them on file as presented.
4. Old Business: None
5. New Business: ZBA 24-04
Text Amendment
Village of Franklin Park

Chairman Cwik stated that this hearing is for a Text Amendment to Sections 9-13-7 and Table 13-2 regarding signs and sign size permissions.

Chairman Cwik called the petitioner up at this time. He asked the petitioner to sign in and be sworn in. Mr. Rudy Repa, on behalf of the Village as petitioner, came forward. He signed in and was sworn in.

Mr. Repa gave his presentation at this time. He stated that the proposed amendment makes several changes to freestanding sign standards. First, the table regulating freestanding signs is reorganized to clarify area and height restrictions for both monument and pole signs. Next, the amendment prohibits pole signs in the C-1 Neighborhood Convenience and all Downtown districts. Additionally, the amendment prohibits monument signs in the C-1 Neighborhood Convenience district. Finally, the amendment makes various changes to the maximum area and heights of pole and monument signs in several districts. Districts seeing such changes include the C-2 Community Shopping and C-3 General Commercial districts increasing the maximum allowable pole and monument sign area; all Downtown Districts decreasing the maximum allowable monument sign area; and all both Industrial Districts increasing the maximum height of monument signs, as well as the maximum allowable pole and monument sign areas.

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Before the sign code was reorganized with the 2022 Zoning Code Rewrite, freestanding signs could be as large as the total maximum area size that frontage allowed. For example, a property with 200 feet of frontage could have theoretically been permitted a 300sf sign. While the new zoning code was a step in the right direction, the various size limitations were not as well thought through as other code revisions. Over the last year, staff have received several inquiries regarding maximum sign limitations.

Staff investigated the issue and researched several other sign codes in the area regulating freestanding signs. After analysis and discussion, staff believe the following changes may better reflect the needs of businesses in the various zoning districts. The updated standards will benefit trucks delivering product to large warehousing and manufacturing centers in the industrial districts, attract customers to restaurants and retail along Grand Avenue and Mannheim Roads, and maintain the walkable character in the downtown and neighborhood shopping districts.

Overall, the proposed amendment will allow more flexibility for businesses to advertise their operations. Additionally, the amendment will reduce nonconformities in several districts while still upholding the original intent to place a maximum size limit on freestanding signs.

Rudy concluded by stating that staff finds that the proposed Text Amendment provides improved flexibility and appropriate regulations regarding permitted and conditional use locations for a variety of zoning and sign uses. The proposed amendment will equip staff with more tools to properly enforce the zoning ordinance in a manner that builds toward the goals and objectives of the Village's Comprehensive Plan while minimizing the potential for nonconformance on existing properties.

Chairman Cwik opened this hearing to the public at this time. Chairman Cwik stated that since no public came forward, he closed public session.

Board Discussion began at 7:12 p.m.

The members discussed this hearing at this time and Attorney Morton suggested an addition to Section 9-13-7F(1)(a), adding "except as otherwise noted in Table 13-2," since some signs will now be prohibited in certain districts.

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Board Discussion ended at 7:16 p.m.

Member Grieshamer made a motion to “approve the Text Amendment to Sections 9-13-7 and Table 13-2 regarding signs and sign size permissions, with the village attorney’s proposed additional language.” Member Mennella seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote. Member Corral-Absent; Member Bernacki-Yes; Member Boreson-Yes; Member Grieshamer-Yes; Member Mennella-Yes; Chairman Cwik-Yes; Member Santana-Yes. Six (6) Ayes, Zero (0) Nays, One (1) Absent, Zero (0) Abstain. The motion was carried.

Chairman Cwik reminded the applicant that this is a recommending body and all final decisions will be made by the Village Board of Trustees.

Chairman Cwik thanked everyone for attending this evening.

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6. New Business: ZBA 24-06
Map Amendment
Village of Franklin Park

Chairman Cwik stated that this hearing is for a Map Amendment to the boundary lines of the P Public district to rezone and include the property commonly known as 9601 Franklin Avenue, in Cook County, Illinois. The subject property is currently zoned as DT-1 Downtown Core.

Chairman Cwik called the petitioner up at this time. He asked the petitioner to sign in and be sworn in. Mr. Rudy Repa, on behalf of the Village as petitioner, came forward. He signed in and was sworn in.

Rudy began his presentation at this time. He stated that the Village is requesting a Map Amendment to rezone and include the property commonly known as 9601 Franklin Avenue within the boundary lines of the P Public district. Per Village Code section 9-8-1, the P Public district is designed as follows:

9-8-1. - P Public district.

- A. *Purpose. The P Public District is intended to accommodate land and facilities within the Village that are owned and operated by the local, state, or federal government, and are used in the provision of governmental or public services.*

The subject property, which is owned by the Village of Franklin Park, is currently zoned DT-1 Downtown Core. The subject property consists of an underutilized parking lot. The Village acquired the property from the Cook County Landbank Authority in the Spring of 2024 as a result of unpaid taxes by the previous owner. The property was formerly utilized by Mike O'Donnell's Irish Pub as a parking lot. The total site area is 10,512 SF. The area to the north and west is zoned DT-1 Downtown Core. The area to the east is zoned DT-2 Downtown Mix. The area to the south is zoned DT-3 Downtown Edge. The subject property is located on the southwest corner of 25th Ave/Rose St. and Franklin Avenue.

Rudy continued to state that the Public district uses shall provide services or host facilities owned and operated by local, state, or private governments. Due to the current municipal ownership status of the property, Village staff believe a map amendment is necessary to reflect the appropriate zoning district.

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Therefore, staff finds the request to re-zone the subject property within the P Public district to be compatible with surrounding land uses and zoning districts. Staff has no objections to the proposed Map Amendment. Rudy concluded that there are seven (7) standards for a Map Amendment that need to be met for a Map Amendment hearing and the staff believes that these criteria are met for this particular use.

Chairman Cwik opened this hearing to the public at this time. Chairman Cwik stated that anyone wishing to come forward to speak, will please have to sign in and be sworn in before giving any testimony.

Public session began at 7:24 p.m.

James Wade of 9676 Franklin, owner of ATA Karate Studio/Summer Camp came forward at this time. Mr. Wade signed in and was sworn in. Mr. Wade expressed his concern regarding the use of the lot in question. He gave some ideas of other uses for the lot. He stated that Franklin Avenue is in desperate need of additional parking and that lot would be a perfect fit for parking. Chairman Cwik stated that the purpose of the hearing this evening is a map amendment to change the property from a DT-1 zoning to a P (public use). Mr. Wade asked if there will be another hearing to determine the use of the property in question. Mr. Repa responded that there will be public input when it comes to designating it for a particular use.

Violet Pamintuan, owner of 3046 Gustave, came forward at this time. Ms. Pamintuan signed in and was sworn in at this time. Ms. Pamintuan asked how the Village acquired the property. She stated that she is not opposed to the property being used as a park/plaza but expressed interest if there will be a time limitation to any events that may be held there. Mr. Repa responded that the Village acquired the property from the Cook County Landbank Authority in the Spring of 2024 as a result of unpaid taxes by the previous owner.

Mr. Scott Shannon owner of 9670 Franklin came forward at this time. Mr. Shannon signed in and was sworn in. Mr. Shannon stated that there isn't very much parking for the first floor businesses of both the condo and premier apartment complexes. He expressed concern that Franklin Avenue needs more parking.

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Mr. Mike Felau, owner of 9670 Franklin came forward at this time. Mr. Felau signed in and was sworn in. Mr. Felau expressed his concern that the current traffic pattern doesn't take commuters into the downtown area. He stated that there needs to be more of a focus to the downtown to draw in consumers. He also mentioned that Franklin Avenue needs more parking.

Chairman Cwik thanked the public for their time and input this evening. He closed public session at this time and opened up Board Discussion.

Board Discussion began at 7:38 p.m.

The members discussed the hearing at this time stating that it is taking a property on Franklin Avenue that would be commercial as its currently zoned and changing it to public land. This would be beneficial to the area.

Board Discussion ended at 7:42 p.m.

Member Grieshamer made a motion to “approve the Map Amendment to the boundary lines of the P Public district to rezone and include the property commonly known as 9601 Franklin Avenue, in Cook County, Illinois. The subject property is currently zoned as DT-1 Downtown Core.” Member Mennella seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote. Member Corral-Absent; Member Bernacki-Yes; Member Boreson-Yes; Member Grieshamer-Yes; Member Mennella-Yes; Chairman Cwik-Yes; Member Santana-Yes. Six (6) Ayes, Zero (0) Nays, One (1) Absent, Zero (0) Abstain. The motion was carried.

Chairman Cwik reminded the applicant that this is a recommending body and all final decisions will be made by the Village Board of Trustees.

Chairman Cwik thanked everyone for attending this evening.

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7. Public Comment: None.
8. A motion was made by Member Grieshamer to adjourn the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals. It was seconded by Member Mennella. All in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa M Manzo

Lisa M. Manzo
Zoning Board of Appeals Secretary