

Approved

**Village of Gurnee  
Planning and Zoning Board Minutes  
January 6, 2021**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:55 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Board Members Present: Chairman James Sula, Brian Baugh, Tim Garrity (remote), David Nordentoft (remote), Edwin Paff, Josh Pejsach (remote), and Laura Reilly (remote)

Planning and Zoning Members Absent: None

Other Officials Present: David Ziegler, Community Development Director; Tracy Velkover, Planning Manager; Clara Gable, Associate Planner; and Bryan Winter, Village Attorney

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Sula announced that, in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order in response to COVID-19 #2020-07, in-person attendance requirements under the Open Meeting Act have been suspended and relaxed. Therefore, tonight, certain members of the Planning & Zoning Board will be attending remotely which will be reflected in the minutes. He also announced that the meeting is being live streamed onto YouTube in view-only mode, so no live comments will be taken.

**3. Approval of the December 2, 2020 PZB Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Paff stated that the minutes reflected his attendance as remote, but that he attended the meeting in person. Mr. Paff motioned, seconded by Mr. Baugh, to approve the meeting minutes from December 2, 2020, as amended.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baugh, Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Reilly, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion Approved: 7-0-0

**4. Minor Sign Exception for Northwestern Medicine (6155 Route 132)**

*Northwestern Medicine, located at 6155 Route 132, is seeking a Minor Sign Exception to allow text on the face of a ground sign along Grand Avenue to be less than the required 6" height for the main business name.*

Ms. Gable stated that Northwestern Medicine is requesting a Minor Sign Exception to allow the height for lowercase lettering in their main business name to be less than the 6" requirement;

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the lowercase lettering will be 4 ¼” tall and the uppercase lettering will be 6” tall, meeting code. A Minor Sign Exception can be granted by the Planning & Zoning Board if they find that the number, size, design, and placement of all proposed signs within the development are consistent with the stated purpose of the sign regulations. The Planning & Zoning Board has the final decision making authority in this matter.

Mr. Sula asked if there was anyone present to speak on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Ron Powers, Director of Planning and Construction for Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital, stated the lettering would still be readable from the street, and— noting the other signage on the building—felt that the business would be easily identified. He noted that the concern with enlarging the lettering is that, to do so, the sign would be so large that it may possibly overshadow the building itself.

The consensus of the Board members was that this request was in keeping with the intent of the sign ordinance.

Mr. Pejsach motioned, seconded by Ms. Reilly, to approve the petition of Northwestern Medicine, located at 6155 Route 132, for a Minor Sign Exception to allow the height of the lowercase lettering in the main business name on the ground sign to be less than the 6” requirement (lower case lettering to be 4.5”).

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baugh, Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Reilly, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion Approved: 7-0-0

**5. Public Hearing: Petition of Anthony Buick GMC, Inc. for property located at Northridge Plaza:**

- a. Special Use Permits to allow exceptions from the Zoning Ordinance use standards for a car dealership, lighting standards, landscaping standards, and design/building material standards; and*
- b. Variance to allow exceptions to the lighting standards to allow foot candle readings to exceed 50 internal to the site.*

Ms. Gable stated that Anthony Buick GMC, Inc., an Illinois corporation, is seeking Special Use Permits to allow exceptions from the following Articles of the Zoning Ordinance, on property located at Northridge Plaza (5589 Northridge Drive): 1) Article 5.4.1 (C-2 District Design Standards); 2) Article 8.2.29 (Use Standards for Vehicle Dealerships); 3) Article 10.1.3 (Exterior Lighting Standards); and 4) Article 12 (Landscaping & Screening). The applicant is also seeking a Variance for lighting levels exceeding 50 foot-candles internal to the site. The subject property

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is zoned C-2, Community Commercial District and is completely surrounded by C-2 zoning, however, there are R-2 residentially-zoned properties located on the other side of a 100-foot wide out-lot immediately south of the subject property. In regards to the requested items, the Planning and Zoning Board will make a recommendation that will be forwarded to the Village Board for their determination.

As this is a Public Hearing, Mr. Sula asked that all wishing to speak on this matter be sworn in; Mr. Winter conducted the swearing-in.

Mr. Sula then turned the floor over to the Petitioner.

Mr. Jason Christopoulos, Attorney for the Petitioner (Anthony Buick GMC) attended the meeting remotely, while Mr. Bill Blum, President of Anthony Buick GMC, and--Mr. Jerry Mortier, project engineer with the Redmond Group--are attending in person. Mr. Mortier stated that they heard the concerns of the PZB at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing, and made the following plan adjustments:

- In addressing concerns over the west façade, a horizontal accent band has been added to the back of the west elevation. This band will be different color and texture from the rest of the wall material. In addition, this band will either be recessed or pushed out slightly from the wall (approximately one inch) to provide dimension. This band will also have clerestory windows incorporated within it. The band accent band carries the idea of the black horizontal panel that wraps around the side of the building from the front.
- In regard to landscaping, the trees along the south buffer yard have all been changed to be evergreen. Additional trees were added to this area to provide year-round screening for the residents to the south. In addition, shade trees were added along Northridge Drive, interior to the site, and along the east property line.
- In regards to lighting, all light fixtures below the blue line on the plan (approximately the south 190 feet of the property) have been lowered from 25 feet in height to 15 feet.
- All perimeter light fixtures have back side shields installed to limit the spill of light to the back side.

Mr. Mortier continued, stating that—in regards to the variance for the photometric readings internal to the site—the maximum light readings are consistent with other car dealerships in town (including the new Rohrman dealership). He admitted that the photometric plans were ran using a .9 light loss factor (LLF); acknowledging this as incorrect, he conceded that they should have been run using a 1.0 LLF, and assured that the petitioners are committed to meeting the maximum foot-candle readings on this plan with a 1.0 LLF. He then thanked the Board.

Mr. Sula asked the petitioner to address the lighting levels interior to the site.

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Mr. Mortier explained that the levels are consistent with other car dealerships, with the purpose being to emphasize the vehicles that are outside.

Mr. Sula then asked each member of the Board if he/she had any questions or comments.

Mr. Nordentoft stated that he appreciated the changes to the west elevation, lighting, and landscaping, and that he feels the plans are significantly improved—noting, in particular, the addition of evergreen trees to provide the year-round screening in consideration of nearby residential properties. He also clarified with Mr. Mortier that all the perimeter fixtures have back-side shields, not just those on the south 190 feet of the property.

Mr. Mortier confirmed that all perimeter fixtures will have back-side shields.

Mr. Pejsach stated that he just wanted to echo Mr. Nordentoft's comments.

Ms. Reilly asked how late the dealership was open, noting that the minutes from the December 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing indicated something about 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Sula clarified that this time period is their peak traffic time.

Ms. Reilly inquired as to the changes in levels of lighting (during business hours versus while the business was closed).

Ms. Velkover stated that the petitioner has committed to meeting the Village's security lighting level threshold, which is a maximum of 3 foot-candles from one hour after close of business until one hour prior to open of business. Per the plans, the fixtures are dimmable and the petitioner has indicated that the security lighting levels will be met.

Mr. Mortier confirmed what Ms. Velkover stated and added that each fixture is dimmable so that they are able to meet the required evening (security) lighting levels.

Mr. Garrity stated that he does not have any questions and expressed appreciation for the plan changes.

Mr. Paff stated that his only concern with the revised plans was that he was hoping for a greater change/improvement to the west façade of the building. He clarified with Mr. Mortier that some variance was made (a subtle reveal/some vertical joints), but that the vertical lines on the drawing are more prominent than the lines will be in reality.

Mr. Sula opened the floor to the public on this matter; the following testimony was made at this meeting.

Ms. Mary Beck, 5609 Woodhill Drive, stated that she doesn't understand why the dealership needs to exceed the lighting levels allowed by code—that she feels normal commercial lighting should allow appropriate viewing of the cars—and, asked that the Board hold the petitioner to the permitted lighting standards.

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Mr. Sula then asked the petitioner to respond to the reason for the request for additional lighting.

Mr. Mortier responded that a vehicle dealership is different than a typical retail use. Their product is outside and it is important that a buyer be able to properly see all aspects of the vehicle. This is not like a typical retailer (i.e., department store) where the product is inside and the lighting is not used to illuminate product. He also indicated that their maximum foot-candle level is not inconsistent with other vehicle dealerships in Gurnee.

Mr. Sula closed the floor to the public as there were no other people wishing to speak.

Mr. Sula asked members of the Board if there were any more questions/comments. As there were no more, he suggested that a motion would be in order. He clarified with Mr. Ziegler that two separate motions—one for the Special Use Permit, and another for the Variance--would be necessary.

Mr. Pejsach motioned, seconded by Mr. Paff, to forward a favorable recommendation on the petition of Anthony Buick GMC, Inc. for a Special Use Permit to allow exceptions from the following: Article 5.4.1 (C-2 District Design Standards); Article 8.2.29 (Use Standards for Vehicle Dealerships); Article 10.1.3 (Exterior Lighting Standards); and Article 12 (Landscaping & Screening), in substantial conformance with the plans submitted as part of the petition.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baugh, Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Reilly, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 7-0-0

Mr. Pejsach motioned, seconded by Ms. Reilly, to forward a favorable recommendation to the Village Board on the petition of Anthony Buick GMC for a Variance to allow lighting levels interior to the site to exceed the allowed level, in substantial conformance with the plans submitted as part of the petition and on the condition that the photometric plan be run using a 1.0 Light Loss Factor and with no burn-in time.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Reilly, and Sula

Nays: Baugh

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 6-1-0

Mr. Sula then offered the petitioner good luck with the project.

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**6. Next Meeting Date: January 20, 2021**

Ms. Gable stated that there are no public hearings scheduled for this night, but that there could be a non-public hearing item.

**7. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**8. Adjournment**

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by Mr. Paff, to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baugh, Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Reilly, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 7-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Metzger,  
Recording Secretary, Planning and Zoning Board