

Approved

**Village of Gurnee
Planning and Zoning Board Minutes
August 4, 2021**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Board Members Present: Chairman James Sula, Brian Baugh, R. Todd Campbell, Tim Garrity, David Nordentoft, and Edwin Paff

Planning and Zoning Members Absent: Josh Pejsach

Other Officials Present: Tracy Velkover, Planning Manager and Clara Gable, Associate Planner

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Final Subdivision Plat: Resubdivision of Lot 1 Dilleys & Grand Avenue (1508 And 1512 Nations Drive)

Ms. Gable introduced the item by stating Pete Katres is seeking resubdivision of lots in the Dilleys & Grand PUD. The original development at this corner was executed in 2001, creating four lease parcels on a single lot. A subsequent subdivision in 2013 broke off two lots. The owner is requesting to modify the ownership structure again, allowing the buildings and associated parking for 1508 and 1512 Nations Drive to be on separate lots. The subdivision of this overall parcel was anticipated in the original PUD and is consistent with that original plan. Engineering staff recommends that the Village of Gurnee Planning and Zoning Board forward a favorable recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees for the resubdivision. On this matter, the Planning and Zoning Board will make a recommendation that will be forwarded to the Village Board for their determination.

After members of the audience expressed concerns about not being able to hear, the audio technician was consulted and the technical difficulties were tended to.

Mr. Sula then asked if there was anyone present on behalf of the petitioner, and if there was anything he/she would like to add to this application. The representatives stated that they had nothing else to add.

Mr. Sula asked if there were any comments/questions from member of the board. As there were none, he asked that a motion be made in the form of a recommendation.

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by Mr. Paff, to forward a favorable recommendation on the Resubdivision of Lot 1 Dilleys & Grand Avenue (1508 And 1512 Nations Drive)

Mr. Sula asked if there was discussion on the motion. As there was not, a vote was taken.

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Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Baugh, Campbell, Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried: 6-0-0

Mr. Sula then advised the petitioner that the recommendation would be forwarded to the Village Board to make its decision, and that staff would advise as to when that would occur.

4. Informal Review: Amendment of Pembroke Commercial PUD

Ms. Gable introduced this item by stating that a contract purchaser represented by Kolpak & Grcic, Attorneys at Law, is seeking feedback on a plan to amend the Pembroke Commercial PUD agreement to add “Car Wash” to the use list, as a Special Use. The Pembroke Commercial PUD includes property that is zoned C-1 PUD at both the northwest and northeast corners of Grand Avenue and Lawson Boulevard. The applicant of the informal review is here to present their request.

Mr. Sula remind that this is to give potential petitioners a chance to receive feedback on potential projects, and that no decisions regarding any such projects would be made by the Board at this time.

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

Ms. Colleen Doherty, with Kolpak & Grcic, LLC, introduced the contract purchasers, Greg and Terry Mruk before offering presentation on their plan to request the addition of “Car Wash” to the list of Special Uses to the Pembroke Commercial PUD agreement. After stating that there had once been a carwash on the property, it was questioned by Mr. Sula and several Board members whether or not there had, in fact, ever been a car wash at that location. It was clarified by Ms. Velkover that, while a car wash had once been possible as a Special Use on that property, there was no record of any car wash actually being located there.

Proceeding, Ms. Doherty handed out site plans to the PZB members and—as she did—members of the audience began to ask her questions.

Mr. Sula interjected, explaining that even though this was not a Public Hearing, he would allow members of the audience to speak, but not until after the presentation on the matter was completed.

Mr. Terry Mruk explained that they operate several car washes in the area, including one in nearby Park City, and that they hope to purchase the property upon which the now-vacant bank sits, so as to construct a car wash there. He noted it will be a tunnel-type wash, with self-service vacuums and pay stations. He claimed they were the first to bring such car washes to the Chicago area.

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Mr. Garrity and other Board members asked for copies of the site plans, as they did not receive any in prior to the meeting. They were provided copies.

Once again, after a member of the audience directed a question to the presenters, Mr. Sula stated that the presenters be allowed to speak, and that those with questions will have their chance afterwards. Mr. Sula then reminded that—even though this was an informal presentation, proper procedures need to be followed.

Mr. Terry Mruk continued on with the presentation, explaining that the plan is to buy the property, tear down the vacant bank structure and construct the car wash. He noted the facility would be a full-service, tunnel car wash with self-service vacuums. He cited one of the other car washes they own, in Park City, as an example of what the proposed structure would look like. Offering a bit of history, he said that they have six other car washes in the Chicago area and are experienced operators with about 45 employees. He stated that this style of car wash is popular in surrounding communities, and added that their car washes are safe, attractive (brick and stone), well-lit, and landscaped. He also noted the appeal of automatic drying, with no employees looking for tips as they wipe down customers' cars.

Before offering any feedback to this would-be proposal, Mr. Baugh sought more information as to the history of this site and its zoning. He clarified with Ms. Velkover that "Car Wash" was once on the list of uses for this PUD, but removed for reasons she was unable to discover even after her rather thorough research through old files. Following up, and over the concern of precedent being set--Mr. Baugh asked if car washes are a use in commercial districts, although generally requiring a Special Use Permit in current, as well as older PUDs. Ms. Velkover and Ms. Gable advised that even today, in the current Zoning Ordinance, car washes require a Special Use Permit in the C-2, C-3, C-6, and I-1 districts. They are not permitted uses in any district.

In summary, Mr. Sula clarified with Village staff that it's not unusual for car washes to be Special Uses in commercial areas in the Village.

Mr. Nordentoft felt that other lots in the Village would lend themselves better for such a development considering the overall streetscape of the area and its proximity to residential property. He stated that he doesn't feel a car wash—with the noise, challenge of aesthetics, and hours of operation—would be a good fit for this site.

Mr. Garrity expressed that he really didn't have enough details as to the actual layout of the proposed structure. After a brief detailing of its layout by the presenters, he felt concerns of aesthetics, traffic, noise, and the stress from traffic on the poorly maintained access drive through the commercial are substantial, as well as the question of whether or not this type of structure should be in an area that is a sort of entry-way into the Village.

Mr. Paff concurred with Mr. Garrity and Mr. Nordentoft, particularly in regards to their concerns over traffic.

Mr. Campbell also concurred with fellow Board members, adding that the snow and ice may create even more problems with traffic and such in the winter.

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Mr. Sula expressed that he doesn't have a problem with the idea of a car wash as a Special Use in a PUD, but—without more information as to the plans—he doesn't feel he can form an opinion as to whether or not this particular development would be a good fit in this area.

Ms. Velkover spelled out the two questions to be answered in this matter: 1) whether or not the car wash should be added to the use list, as a special use permit, for this PUD based the other uses that are allowed; and 2) whether a car wash would be successful in securing a SUP for this specific site based on the specifics of the plans. She noted that the intent of this meeting is only to try to get feedback on the first question, as no specific plans for the site were given to staff prior to tonight. She suggested that, in determining whether or not the would-petitioners would want to proceed, it would be helpful if Board members could address the former (question #1) at this time.

Mr. Garrity expressed that he would not be opposed to a car wash as a Special Use in a PUD, but not in this particular area. Mr. Paff, Mr. Nordentoft, Mr. Campbell, and Mr. Baugh were all hesitant to allow such use this particular area.

Mr. Sula then offered members of the audience to ask any questions or offer any comments. However, he reminded that absolutely no decisions are being made this evening, and—as a formal proposal is not being made—some questions may not be answered with specifics not yet determined.

A woman from the audience, who lives at Gurnee Meadows, stated that her building faces the lot in question. She claimed to speak for the 90 people living in that building, including herself, when expressing concern over additional traffic in that area, especially when large amounts of snow amass. She also stated that she lived on the top floor of the building—saw everything around it—and that she did not want to see a car wash. She then noted several other car washes in Gurnee and asked how many are actually needed.

A woman accompanying the first woman who spoke from the audience stated that she lives across the street from the lot, in Pembroke. She also noted the number of other car washes in the area and expressed concerns over additional traffic in the area and the condition of the road (private drive aisle) running behind several of the businesses due to the constant traffic in and out of those businesses.

A third woman from the audience, who also lives in Pembroke, expressed concern over the intersection of Lawson Boulevard, Pauly Drive, and Grand Avenue—specifically questioning where the ingress and egress to the car wash be located.

Mr. Sula reminded her that, in the absence of a formal proposal for the actual Special Use Permit, her questions could not be answered without any real specifics. But, he acknowledged the validity of her concerns, and suggested that the would-be petitioners would benefit from her bringing up such concerns so as to address them in an actual proposal.

Mr. Sula stated that he believes the PZB members provided feedback to the petitioner and encouraged the presenters to work with Village staff so as to “fine-tune” their plans if proceeding.

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5. Next Meeting Date: August 18, 2021

Ms. Sula confirmed with staff that there are several public hearings scheduled for the next meeting.

6. Public Comment

Mr. Sula then opened the floor to comments regarding any issues not on this evening's agenda.

A gentleman spoke in regards to a matter that he mistakenly thought was to be on this evening's agenda. It was determined by Mr. Sula that it was actually a matter before the Village Board. The same gentleman then spoke about the condition of the railroad bridge over old Grand Avenue near Depot Road. Mr. Sula advised that this was also not a matter for the PZB. Ms. Velkover offered to speak with the gentleman after the meeting so as to direct him to whom it is he should speak to regarding his concerns.

The first woman from the audience to speak in response to the informal review earlier in the meeting spoke again, this time in regard to panhandling and concerns with littering.

Mr. Sula explained that panhandling was not a matter under the jurisdiction of the PZB. As she continued on—insisting she be allowed to ask her question—Mr. Sula again explained that the PZB has no authority over such matters, and recommended she attend the next meeting of the Village Board.

Mr. Sula then closed the floor to the public.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by all Planning & Zoning Board members in attendance, to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion Carried: 6-0-0

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Metzger,
Recording Secretary, Planning and Zoning Board