



Land Use Commission

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
PRESENT:**

Max Putchel,
Brian Johnson,
Jeanne Lindwall, Chair
Loren Berlin,
Jameika Mangum,
Darush Mabadi,
Luke Harris-Ferree,
Myrna Arevalo,
Kiril Mirintchev

**COMMITTEE MEMBER
ABSENT:**

STAFF PRESENT:

Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Elizabeth Williams, Planning Manager

A. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM: JEANNE LINDWALL, CHAIR

B. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. Minutes of January 22, 2025

Approve minutes of January 22, 2025

Motion: Putchel

Second: Mabadi

For Action

Motion Passed 5-0-1

Ayes: Johnson, Lindwall, Mabadi, Arevalo, and Mirintchev

Nays: None

Absent: Mangum

Abstained: Putchel, Berlin, and Harris-Ferree

B. Minutes of January 29, 2025

Approve minutes of January 29, 2025

Motion: Putchel

Second: Arevalo

For Action

Motion Passed 5-0-1

Ayes: Putchel, Lindwall, Mabadi, Arevalo, and Mirintchev

Nays: None

Absent: Mangum

Abstained: Johnson, Berlin, and Harris-Ferree

C. NEW BUSINESS

A. Major Variation | 1630 Ashland Avenue | 25ZMJV-0017

Peter Kaeding, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, requests Major Variations for a north interior side-yard setback of 1' where 5' is required and 6" is the existing legally non-conforming condition (Section 6-8-2-8 (A)(3), and a rear-yard setback of 5' where 30' is required and 28' is the existing legally non-conforming condition (Section 6-8-2-8 (A)(4). The Land Use Commission is the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-8 of the Evanston Zoning Ordinance. PIN:10-13-403-027-0000

Peter Kaeding, architect, presented on behalf of the homeowner, requesting major variations to reduce the north interior side-yard setback to 1 foot where 5 feet is required and 6 inches currently exists, and to reduce the rear-yard setback to 5 feet where 30 feet is required and 28 feet currently exists. The property is located in a historic district and has received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Preservation Commission. The proposal includes demolishing a small 1950s detached garage behind the 1890s home and replacing it with a larger two-car garage in the rear yard, utilizing the existing curb cut and driveway strips from Ashland Avenue. The new design restores original architectural brackets that are currently obscured by the existing garage. Modifications from earlier plans increase the rear setback to 5 feet from 3 feet in response to a neighbor's previous objection, and the north lot line setback would improve from 6 inches to 1 foot. Letters from current neighbors indicate no objection, and the contractor has confirmed there will be minimal need to access the neighboring property during construction. Maintenance and use of the property will remain consistent with existing conditions.

Commissioner Johnson asked for clarification on the neighboring properties, noting that at the previous meeting a neighbor had raised concerns. Kaeding explained that the neighbors to the north are new, a couple with a five-year-old child moving in from North Carolina, while the neighbor to the west remains the same. He stated that the west neighbor, Ellen Prito, had previously objected to the garage's proximity to her lot line, which prompted the design change increasing the rear setback to five feet. He confirmed that she has since retracted

her objection. Johnson also asked about a pedestrian door on the west neighbor's property, and Kaeding clarified that while the door faces the applicant's rear yard, it is not the main entry door to the dwelling.

Commissioner Mabadi noted from the rendering that the project involves a two-car stacked garage and asked whether relocating the structure would affect access to electrical service, as the power currently comes in on that side of the house. Kaeding responded that any adjustments would depend on what ComEd allows, and if relocation of the power line is required, it would be addressed during the permit and building process with the necessary approvals. Mabadi acknowledged the explanation.

Commissioner Puchtel asked whether the north-facing door could present a safety concern by creating a conflict point with vehicles passing in that area. Kaeding explained that the door is positioned within the middle of the structural brackets, which limit the available space and naturally slow vehicle movement. He acknowledged that appropriate caution should be exercised, but noted that the situation is similar to most residential driveways.

Commissioner Lindwall asked whether the garage entry could have been placed further east, noting a window adjacent to the garage and acknowledging the improved five-foot setback compared to the original three-foot proposal. The applicant confirmed that while it would be possible to move the garage closer, the current placement provides better architectural spacing and is therefore preferable.

Mitch Brusky of 1624 Ashland spoke in support of the project, noting that the Updikes have been careful to restore their house to its original state and have done a great job. He also stated that the location of the driveway is acceptable to him.

6-3-8-12.E – Standards for Major Variations

1. The requested variation will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment, or property values of adjoining properties. Have letters from 3 closest neighbors so there is no reason to believe there will be an adverse impact. Met
2. The requested variation is in keeping with the intent of the zoning ordinance. Proposed project provides useable updated garage space and Zoning Ordinance anticipates properties will change over time. Met
3. The alleged hardship or practical difficulty is peculiar to the property. This is a historic house built long before there were cars to contend with and was originally part of a larger property that was subdivided over time. Met
4. The property owner would suffer a particular hardship or practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out. Have been shown almost any location of the garage would trigger need some kind of variation and current locations seems least impactful. Met
5. The purpose of the variation is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income from the property. While granting of the variation may result in additional income to the applicant and the applicant may not have demonstrated that the application is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income, the Land Use Commission or the City Council, depending on final jurisdiction under Section 6-3-8-2 of the Zoning Code, has found that public benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole will be derived from approval of the variation,

including but not limited to any of the standards of Section 6-3-6-3 of the Zoning Code. Proposed variation is intended to provide garage space for the owner and the owner has not indicated any intention to rent out the space. Met

6. The alleged difficulty or hardship has not been created by any person having an interest in the property. House with the garage has existed for nearly 75 years and none of the parties were living there. Met
7. The requested variation requires the least deviation from the applicable regulation among feasible options identified before the Land Use Commission issues its decision or recommendation to the City Council regarding the variation. Current project as proposed increases the rear setback to the west, which is greater than what was previously proposed. north setback is an increase from the current condition. Met

Approve the Major Variation for 1630 Ashland Avenue, case 25ZMJV-0017.

Motion: Putchel

Second: Arevalo

For Action

Motion Passed 8-0-1

Ayes: Putchel, Johnson, Lindwall, Berlin, Mabadi, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, and Mirintchev

Nays: None

Absent: Mangum

D. COMMUNICATIONS

E. PUBLIC COMMENT

F. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Arevalo made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Berlin.
Adjourned at 7:26 pm