Call to order and Roll Call

PRESENT: Chair Michael Quinn and Members David Brumirski, Steve Ruszczyk, Mark Hansen and Jim Lencioni

ABSENT: Members Adrienne Eyer and Maya Katznelson

ALSO PRESENT: Jacob Karaca, Counsel; Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

QUORUM: Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. and declared that a quorum was present.

**Public Comment**

None.

Introduction and Procedure Outline

Chair Quinn explained the procedure for the public hearing.

**Public Hearing**

Cal. No. 07-14-Z: 615 S. Grove Avenue, Robert Reid & Amy Maglio

Robert Reid & Amy Maglio, owners and applicants, request that a variation be granted from Section 4.10.1 (A) and Section 4.10.3 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Oak Park, which sections regulate all items and structures permitted in the required front and side yards, respectively, to permit the construction of an off-street parking space in the required front and side yard setback at the property commonly known as 615 S. Grove Avenue, Oak Park, IL. (Tabled from July 9, 2014)

Mr. Bruce swore in the witnesses.

Ms. Maglio presented her application. She said she was proposing a LEED-rated parking pad to help alleviate water retention issues. She said they do not have an alley on their street and most homes have a driveway to park their car. She said her neighbor to the south has a driveway with no garage and parks two cars along the side of their house up to the parkway.

Mr. Reid said they were seeking to park one car at a time. He said the parking pad would look like grass but would be permeable pavers that allow grass to grow in between but at the same time distribute the weight of a car. He said it would be a benefit to the neighborhood as it would increase green space. Mr. Reid went over each standard in the application. He said a Realtor estimated the lack of parking impacted the value of the house by $50,000. He said when they purchased the house they rented a parking space across the street. However, the home was sold six years ago and the new owners did not rent the space to them anymore. He said they rent a garage a block and a half away now, he said the hardship had evolved. He said almost every home on the block has a driveway in front of the home.

Member Brumirski asked the applicants how they would get around the parkway tree. Ms. Maglio said they have been in touch with the village’s engineering and public works departments and they advised for them to apply for a variance first, if it was approved, they would go over the options available for the parkway tree. Member Brumirski said it looked as if there was no way to drive around the tree, so what was the plan. Mr. Reid said the engineers would look at the roots of the tree, and then determine whether the parking pad would injure the same.

Chair Quinn asked where the neighbors to the north park. Ms. Maglio said the owner of the house rents parking spaces in the neighborhood for his two tenants.

Chair Quinn opened up deliberations.

Member Hansen asked staff how many situations were like this in the Village. Mr. Bruce said he did not have a number but that it was worse on the south side of the Village because the lot size was smaller. Chair Quinn said the aerial photo in the 600 block showed all the homes appeared to have a driveway or garage except for 613 and 615. He said 619’s photo has a garage but testimony has shown that the owners had removed the garage and now park along the side of the home.

Member Brumirski said he doesn’t believe they will be able to park without removing the tree as it was a large tree. Member Hansen asked if there were any parking permit spaces on the section of the street. Mr. Bruce said not for overnight parking. Member Ruszczyk asked about the other homes with curb cuts, if they were variances as well. Mr. Bruce said curb cuts were allowed, as long as there is a driveway that leads to a legal parking space. Chair Quinn said from the aerial photograph most of the other lots appear to be considerably wider than the subject property, so the other homes have room for driveways and garages in back. Chair Quinn referenced an email from a neighbor who was not opposed to the application, but wanted to ensure it wouldn’t affect neighboring properties.

Member Lencioni asked if generally the ZBA did not approve parking in the front of houses. Chair Quinn agreed, but said they look at each application independently to see whether the standards are met for the variance, there was no blanket policy. Mr. Bruce indicated that this proposal featured a pad that would be partially on the side of the house and partial in the front of the house.

Member Ruszczyk asked if anyone had thoughts on the first and second standards. Chair Quinn said the first standard had testimony from a Realtor that they were taking a hit on the price without the parking. Member Brumirski said he thought the estimate from the Realtor was too low and he didn’t believe the property lost value due to not having parking- it was priced accordingly when the applicants bought the property.

Member Hansen asked if they could restrict the size and type of vehicle. Chair Quinn said a condition could be placed on the variance but enforcement would be difficult. Member Ruszczyk asked if homeowners could block the public sidewalk. Mr. Bruce said if a complaint was received they could be ticketed.

Member Ruszczyk said he liked the creativity in the application and appreciated the applicants trying to do something environmentally sensitive. He said it was an improvement by adding grass and it had better aesthetics than other parking spots on the block.

Member Hansen moved to instruct counsel to draft a resolution approving the variance with the condition that they use permeable pavers and work with the Village’s Forestry department on saving the tree, if possible, and that it be in compliance with all Oak Park ordinances. Member Ruszczyk seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Quinn – yes

Ruszczyk- yes

Hansen- yes

Lencioni- yes

Brumirski- no

The motion passed 4-1.

**Approval of Resolution/Recommendation**

None

Approval of Minutes

June 4, 2014

Chair Quinn noted he was not present at this meeting. Member Hansen moved to approve the minutes as presented. Member Ruszczyk seconded. A verbal vote was taken. The motion passed with Chair Quinn abstaining.

June 25, 2014 Special Meeting

Member Lencioni moved to approve the minutes as presented. Member Hansen seconded. A verbal vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously.

July 9, 2014 Special Meeting

Member Ruszczyk moved to approve the minutes as presented. Member Hansen seconded. A verbal vote was taken and the minutes were approve with Member Brumirski abstaining.

**Other Business**

Chair Quinn noted that this should have been Member Katznelson’s last meeting but she was unable to attend. He said he would invite her to the August meeting to offer thanks for her service.

**New Business**

None

Adjournment

Member Hansen moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Angela Schell,

Recording Secretary