

ARCHITECTURAL

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING
BEFORE THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION

COMMISSION

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had before the Village of Northfield Architectural Commission taken at the Village of Northfield, 361 Happ Road, First Floor Board Room, Northfield, Illinois on the 11th day of October, 2023 at the hour of 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

JEFFREY EIGEL, Chairman
PETER WACHTER
NANCY NAZARIAN
ANDY BOWYER
PATRICIA MORRELL

MEMBERS ABSENT:

KATHRYN TALTY
JOE MCINERNEY

ALSO PRESENT:

STEVE GUTIERREZ, Community Development Director
CHARLES ORTH, Trustee Liaison

1 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Let's call to order the
2 October 11th, 2023 meeting of the Architectural
3 Commission. My name is Jeff Eigel and I'm the Chair.
4 We have from the Village, Steve Gutierrez of the Village
5 of Northfield, and our Trustee Liaison Charles Orth.

6 If the Commissioners could please
7 introduce themselves?

8 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Nancy Nazarian.

9 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Peter Wachter.

10 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Andy Bowyer.

11 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Patty Morrell.

12 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: We have one item on the
13 agenda this evening, 334 Wagner Road, consideration of a
14 request for approval for a proposed sport court located
15 at 334 Wagner Road. The Petitioner is requesting relief
16 from the Village Code, Chapter 18, Section 18-34 which
17 requires a 40,000 square-foot minimum lot size for sport
18 courts. The subject lot is 12,559 square feet. We have
19 our Petitioner here.

20 MS. GAINSBURG: Patricia Gainsberg, I am the
21 owner at 334 Wagner Road.

22 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Okay, so if we can quickly
23 swear you in?

24 (Witness sworn.)

25 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Okay, you should present
26 your issue.

27 MS. GAINSBURG: Well, thank you, members of
28 the Commission for meeting now on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
29 I know everybody's schedule is a little bit busy, so I
30 appreciate that, including the two children that you see
31 here. I'm thankful for their accompaniment.

32 You guys received my packet so you're
33 aware that the real reason we're here is because of a
34 basketball hoop. We can't even put up the portable ones
35 in our own front yard just the way it was designed. We
36 hadn't thought about it when we bought the house, the
37 kids were little then. Then fast forward to this past
38 summer, we took down the old swing set there, and it's
39 amazing how giant it was and tall in size that when it
40 came down, it really opened up this beautiful wide space
41 and it was like a light bulb went off and I could just
42 see a basketball court there for these two to be out
43 there. In case you don't have children, technical
44 knowledge really pulls on their hearts, so any activity
45 or anything that I can do to get them outside and not on
46 a device is a win.

47 So, Steve has talked me through this
48 whole process. It has been laborious and long but here
49 we are tonight, and basically my entire lot is not
50 40,000 square feet that you guys require. But I'm not
51 trying to build a giant sports court. I just need like
52 a little pad to basically bounce a ball if, I assume
53 that -- it's just basically like a free throw line.
54 It's not very big.

1 I have approval from my very immediate
2 neighbors Manzini and the Petrowskis. Andrew
3 Petrowski's dad is actually the builder and I was
4 talking with Charles how Rudy worked for the Fire
5 Department of Northfield for years and years. Both of
6 those neighbors looked at me and said why are you going
7 through the city, you should have just put the court in.
8 I said no, I have to do this the right way, but they
9 were very, very supportive, they're like, eh, you go put
10 that court in, good luck to you.

11 So, I hope that there's no other
12 objections from the Architectural Commission. It is in
13 my backyard, out of sight, out of mind. It is meeting
14 all of the Village requirements and codes as far as
15 building and impervious surfaces. It's meeting
16 requirements for my home and, you know, the buildable
17 surfaces. I've read through the packet of building
18 expensive sport courts which I am not building. It will
19 not have lights. It will have, you know, sound
20 barriers, it will be, you know, blocked from my
21 neighbor's view, all of the things.

22 So, if you guys are giving me approval, I
23 would love to call and schedule and install it before
24 basketball season starts this month.

25 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: And this is specifically
26 for basketball? The application says sport court, but
27 we have these drawings here that show a basketball
28 court.

29 MS. GAINSBURG: It's specifically for
30 basketball, correct. I mean, could we put like a little
31 net in the summer or to practice volleyball, sure. But
32 I mean, the size of the court is not even a half court
33 in relation to sizes. It's only a pad.

34 Questions?

35 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: I see on the survey of
36 the plat, there's a bunch of lines on here.

37 MS. GAINSBURG: Right.

38 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Do they indicate the
39 water flow towards the manhole?

40 MS. GAINSBURG: Well, so they, when I spoke
41 with the company, and I had three different companies
42 come out and give me a quote, the way that they build a
43 court is whatever material they use isn't completely
44 impervious. It drains. So, it's built to drain like a
45 tennis court would.

46 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Right, it will drain to
47 the concrete --

48 MS. GAINSBURG: Correct. So, I happen to have
49 two giant drains in my backyard, like two giant manhole
50 drains. So, they said that they would build it, but it
51 would not slope. It would be level, but underneath
52 would drain towards all this drainage.

53 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Yes, and there's no
54 flood plain there.

1 MS. GAINSBURG: No, no.
2 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Okay.
3 MS. GAINSBURG: Thankfully.
4 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: I was looking, you have
5 the drainage over there, and I was thinking there is
6 another advantage to it, that the court backs up to your
7 other neighbor's garage.
8 MS. GAINSBURG: Correct.
9 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: So, that's --
10 MS. GAINSBURG: The garage really gave me the
11 idea in the first place.
12 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: That's an acoustical
13 plus.
14 MS. GAINSBURG: Right, correct. It's not, it
15 is the first point from all of the neighbors' yards
16 including my own.
17 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Out of full
18 disclosure, I've been to that backyard many, many times
19 because my daughter plays with the kids. I will say I
20 didn't realize how much that swing set, yes, so that's a
21 huge space back there. The fact that there are fences
22 there is great and, you know, I don't see a problem with
23 the location, where it would be in relation to the
24 neighbors.
25 MS. GAINSBURG: Well, and I've enclosed a
26 couple of pictures so you can get a general idea. I
27 mean, that swing set was really taking up a big
28 footprint that I didn't realize. It was massive. When
29 we brought it down, it really opened up the backyard and
30 almost left a big, gaping, inviting hole saying hi,
31 something belongs here.
32 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Any questions?
33 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Yes. Have you talked to
34 the two neighbors behind you at 341 and 331?
35 MS. GAINSBURG: Yes. You should see in your
36 packet, I have signed affidavits from them. I spoke to
37 them in person, I presented them with the plans. I also
38 left the enclosed letter to the neighbors that they
39 could keep after we spoke and I did take their
40 signatures in person.
41 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Great, so there's --
42 MS. GAINSBURG: There's no, no, no, they were
43 all --
44 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: This looks like a room
45 looking --
46 MS. GAINSBURG: That's his garage. That is
47 Manzini's garage.
48 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: His garage.
49 MS. GAINSBURG: Yes, and his garage is
50 detached so the house is very far.
51 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: I thought it was like a
52 family room or something.
53 MS. GAINSBURG: Oh, yes, yes. No, it's the
54 side of the garage and it's at the very farthest point

1 of where his house is. You're welcome to drive by the
2 location, you could see it from the main street if you
3 just drive by 334. You'll see his garage, and all the
4 way in the back is where that wall is. It is not part
5 of the home; it is a detached garage.

6 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: The only question I
8 would have, and I don't even know if it's under our
9 purview to ask, is would you provide any landscaping?

10 MS. GAINSBURG: So, there was no landscaping
11 there because the swing set was there.

12 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: The swing set was
13 there.

14 MS. GAINSBURG: So, I actually would really
15 like, I planted additional trees in my yard because I
16 had taken up gardening. I planted a pear tree and an
17 apple tree and I would love to see like one big tree in
18 the corner sort of. But I would be willing to put up
19 larger fencing if it's an issue for privacy or noise
20 reduction, only simply because when playing basketball,
21 I don't want them running into bushes. But I do see
22 right in that corner where my property ends one giant
23 tree.

24 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: A tree would be really
25 nice.

26 MS. GAINSBURG: It would be so nice.

27 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: It would help the
28 people that are, these people here, and it does help
29 with noise and just the bouncing of the ball, you know.

30 MS. GAINSBURG: Right. Well, and you know,
31 it's funny because Archon used to be able to see my kids
32 playing on the swing set because it was so tall, right?

33 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Right.

34 MS. GAINSBURG: Where with this, they wouldn't
35 really technically see them, but I also thought of
36 providing a mature tree, but I can't do that until I get
37 approval, until you tell me yes --

38 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Right, right.

39 MS. GAINSBURG: -- because it's a massive
40 tree.

41 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Well, can you even
42 plant a tree given the easements in that corner?

43 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: But that's what I don't
44 know because nobody commented in the notes about that.

45 COMMISSIONER NAZARIAN: Right.

46 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: But, I mean, me
47 personally which is neither here nor there, I love to
48 hear a kid playing basketball sitting in my family room.
49 They make me happy. I'd like to live near the park with
50 the lights, you know. I'd love to hear them cracking a
51 bat, but not everybody feels that way.

52 MS. GAINSBURG: Well, so Archon has children
53 and to address the noise issue --

54 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: -- somebody playing

1 basketball --

2 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: That's true, yes.

3 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: I can send George over.

4 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Thank you, I'd love

5 that.

6 MS. GAINSBURG: So, in trying to address the

7 noise issue, the sports court is going to be built of

8 the same material like a tennis court would be. But

9 because it's for basketball, there's going to be an

10 additional like power grid almost that will further be

11 sound abating, I mean, the guys like really wouldn't

12 hear a kid playing basketball over there other than the

13 swoosh, right?

14 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Yes, right.

15 MS. GAINSBURG: When they're making that spin.

16 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: That's definitely --

17 MS. GAINSBURG: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: So, is that like the

19 square grids or something?

20 MS. GAINSBURG: Yes, correct. So, it's not

21 just a sports court. It's got additional grid on top of

22 that.

23 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Well, in light of the

25 fact that the Petitioner has done such a thorough job

26 presenting her case, and all of the adjacent neighbors

27 have approved of your plan and, therefore, will not have

28 any reason to complain in the future, may I make a

29 motion?

30 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Please.

31 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: **I make a motion to**

32 **approve the proposed sport court and associated relief**

33 **from the lot size requirement at 334 Wagner Road.**

34 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Second.

35 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Quick voice vote?

36 (Chorus of ayes.)

37 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: The motion has carried.

38 MS. GAINSBURG: Thank you, Architectural

39 Commission. I'm sorry --

40 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: -- that they go to the

41 NBA or something like that. We need to get --

42 MS. GAINSBURG: This one wants to, but she'll

43 be playing at Sunset Ridge --

44 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Really? I'll come to

45 that. I'd come to that.

46 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Enjoy it, kids.

47 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Yes, enjoy it.

48 MS. GAINSBURG: Thank you so much. What do

49 you guys say?

50 (The kids say thank you.)

51 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Take care.

52 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: We'll be by on Friday

53 after Thanksgiving to do some --

54 MS. GAINSBURG: Yes, we'll have a game on

1 Sunday the 25th. Thank you so much.

2 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Okay, the city kids
3 that I grew up with tell me that that stuff, the edge is
4 better on concrete like what they're doing with the
5 park. They go up against kids that are playing on this
6 stuff and for the kids that are being not brought up on
7 this stuff compared to the city kids that are, you know,
8 on general concrete.

9 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: Is this like the --
10 stuff they have in front of L.L. Bean at Old Orchard?

11 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: It's a little higher
12 tech than that. It's pretty cool actually; I've seen
13 it. A friend of mine has it, but people are putting
14 them in everywhere so their kids can play.

15 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: What's the advantage?
16 The unscraped knees or acoustics or what?

17 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: No, it's everything.
18 It's just less noise but, you know, go talk to the
19 basketball coach at New Trier, he thinks it helps with
20 everything, dribbling and managing the ball and all of
21 that.

22 COMMISSIONER BOWYER: Well, it has more give
23 like a wood floor does rather than asphalt or concrete.

24 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Right, but in terms of
25 the ball and handling the ball, you know, the kids I
26 work with at the city, it does not give. I have no idea
27 if that's a scientific statement or not.

28 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: The Chair will entertain a
29 motion to adjourn.

30 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Oh, I'm sorry.

31 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Yes, and real quick, do we
32 have a meeting set for next month?

33 MR. GUTIERREZ: Not at this point, no.

34 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: So, we'll just sort of not
35 make an announcement on that. Look for an e-mail.

36 MR. GUTIERREZ: We will. We'll let you know.

37 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: All right, perfect.

38 COMMISSIONER WACHTER: In that case, may I
39 make the motion to the Chair that we adjourn?

40 COMMISSIONER MORRELL: Second.

41 CHAIRPERSON EIGEL: Adjourned.

42 (Whereupon, at 7:19 p.m., the above
43 meeting was adjourned.)
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45
46

47 APPROVED 11/13/23
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