

August 24, 2005

Mr. William J. Mueller,  
Village President, and  
Board of Trustees  
Village of Lombard

**Subject: PC 05-30; 369 N. Stewart**

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Plan Commission transmits for your consideration its recommendation regarding the above-referenced petition. The petitioners request that the Village take the following actions on the subject property.

1. Approval of a conditional use for a religious institution;
2. A variation from Section 155.406 (G) to allow for a church spire that will exceed the maximum building height;
3. A variation from Section 155.406 (F) to reduce the minimum required front yard setback from thirty (30) feet to six (6) feet;
4. A variation from Section 155.602 (C) to reduce the number of minimum required parking spaces;
5. A variation from Section 155.406 (H) to exceed the minimum required 50% open space.
6. A variation from Section 155.602 (A)(C) reducing the minimum parking space and aisle dimensions.

After due notice and as required by law, the Plan Commission conducted a public hearing for this petition on August 15, 2005. David Brown, representing Lombard Gospel Chapel, presented the petition. He stated that the building was constructed in 1955. He stated that it was actually two buildings including the sanctuary, a breezeway, and a basement. Mr. Brown stated that they are rectifying the use of the sanctuary by making it more handicap accessible and improving the general flow of the building. He stated that they believe they have a plan to address these issues and keep the footprint of building and enhance the neighborhood. Mr. Brown stated that the site would remain under parked. He noted the requested variations. He stated that a new entryway would be constructed in the parking lot area. He stated that the front porch would be removed and the new area would be

landscaped. He stated that the new entry area would have an elevator to make it accessible. Mr. Brown stated that the addition would increase the flow of the building and improve their sanctuary space. He mentioned when the building opened there was no use of musical instruments. He stated that their worship space is different now and includes those things. He stated that the one change in the footprint besides the entry is the bump off north of the building for a small platform. He stated that they plan to put a baptismal tank floor level.

Mark Ridolphi, of Church Building Architects in Wheaton, showed display boards that were not included in the Plan Commission package. He noted that the display showed Pleasant from two different directions. He mentioned the requested relief. He stated that a conditional use had not been previously granted, therefore they were seeking one at this time. He noted the spire. He stated that the height of the spire was not changing, but would be relocated from its current location. Mr. Ridolphi referenced the current front yard setback. He stated that it was 11.90 feet at the northwest corner. He stated that the building is not parallel with the street or sidewalk. He stated that from the center of the building they would add a section that increased the space in the sanctuary and would reduce six feet in the center. He stated that in regards to open space they are not taking away any impervious area. He stated that currently the only landscaping on the site was on the Pleasant side. He stated that they are tearing down the entry on the west side of the building and will landscape that area. Mr. Ridolphi stated that if they were allowed to go with 8' parking stalls they would not reduce the parking.

He stated that the church is an "L" shaped building and noted the different uses in their locations on the floor plan. He stated that currently the floors and basement do not line up. He stated that they would like to make all floors accessible. He stated that they looked at various options, which led them to the new entry in the center. He stated that it would change the orientation of the sanctuary. He stated that the entry is currently on the west side of the building. He stated that people would enter the sanctuary from the south after the reorienting of the seating. He noted that the plan shows 202 seats with the expansion. He stated that based on the code provisions, each person would be allowed eighteen inches. He stated that this is not realistic. Mr. Ridolphi stated that they are not increasing the sanctuary size. He stated that they also intended to remodel the kitchen.

Chairperson Ryan then opened the meeting for public comment. No one spoke for or against the petition.

Chairperson Ryan then requested the staff report.

Angela Clark, Planner II, presented the staff report. She stated the request and noted that the church is currently nonconforming. She stated that the spire is an architectural element and the zoning ordinance does not address it. She stated that the building itself would meet the height requirements. Ms. Clark stated that a conditional use was never granted in the past. She mentioned the need for additional parking spaces. She stated that the site is currently deficient. She stated that some areas of the site plan are short of the minimum stall and aisle width.

Ms. Clark noted that staff is not opposed to the conditional use approval as the church was not changing or adding any services. She noted the maximum allowable height and the height of the spire. She stated that the northern addition was approximately 150 square feet. She stated that the new setback for the addition would be six feet at the closest point. She stated that staff was not supportive of the front yard variation as it would bring additional bulk closer to the street. She stated that there was no hardship associated with the variation and staff believed that the reconfiguration could be done within the existing footprint of the building. She stated that the narthax area would not require any additional parking and it would meet all setbacks. She stated that several parking spaces would be lost for the narthex addition, however staff felt that making the building more handicap accessible was an appropriate trade off.

Ms. Clark noted the open space. She stated that the parking area as well as the building is included within calculations. She stated that the petitioner is adding some landscaped areas, but the northern addition would slightly reduce that. Ms. Clark noted that religious institutions are required to provide one parking space per three seats. She stated that 64 spaces are required for the site, but there are 45 presently. She stated that the petitioner tried to compensate for the loss of spaces by adding spaces at the end of aisles that were currently shorter in width than required by code. She stated that staff does not object to the parking request, but staff would like to see the eastern most parking space just south of the building relocated as not to further reduce the aisle width.

Ms. Clark noted that the use is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan and surrounding land uses. She stated that the use has been in existence for over fifty years and staff could support the conditional use. She stated that staff recommended approval of all requested relief with the exception of the addition to the northern elevation, subject to the conditions in the staff report.

Chairperson Ryan then opened the meeting for discussion among the Plan Commission members.

Mr. Ridolphi noted the Pleasant Lane display boards. He stated that the addition does not extend any further along Pleasant than neighboring garages or houses east of their property. He stated that they were trying to enhance the building.

Commissioner Sweetser asked about the bump out on the northern elevation. She asked if it would still fall short of the setbacks if it were cantilevered. William Heniff, Senior Planner, stated that it would constitute an encroachment into the front yard.

Commissioner Sweetser referenced the comment in the staff report that discussed reconfiguring the sanctuary within the existing footprint of the building. Ms. Clark stated that the interior layout could be changed within the existing footprint, however they would lose approximately ten seats. She stated that would also reduce the need for additional parking spaces.

Chairperson Ryan stated that they currently have 192 seats and the new plan would bring them up to 202 seats. Ms. Clark stated that if the layout were done within the existing footprint they would be held to the current number of seats.

Commissioner Sweetser asked what was the rationale for not being able to work within the existing footprint. Mr. Ridolphi stated that placing the baptismal tank in the front as a feature at the center of the church would take up four and a half feet in width. He stated that if the tank were moved it would take away ten seats. He stated it would remove the ten seats in the center which are the most important seats.

Commissioner Ryan asked if the baptismal tank is currently in the center. Mr. Brown replied yes and showed where it was on the diagram. He stated that from an architectural standpoint it would look better than it does now.

Commissioner Burke agreed. He stated that there were no objections from the neighborhood and it does not seem intrusive for a religious institution. He stated that the Plan Commission has recommended approval of requests where the size was much more significant than this one and would recommend approval the way it is.

Chairperson Ryan asked if the northern addition extended no further than the garage on the next lot. Ms. Clark stated that they appear to be even. She stated that Pleasant is the church's front yard whereas it is the corner side yard for the home east of the church. She stated that the house might not comply with the corner side yard setback.

Chairperson Ryan stated that the front entrance is not located on Pleasant. Ms. Clark stated that yards are assigned based on which way the structure is most conforming regardless of the front entrance.

Commissioner Flint stated that he concurred with Commissioner Burke. He stated that the addition will add to the front façade and does not significantly impact the front elevation.

Commissioner Olbrysh stated that he concurred with respect to the bump out. He asked staff about the open space requirements. Ms. Clark noted that fifty percent is required in the zoning district and the church currently has approximately ten percent open space. Commissioner Olbrysh stated that this is much less than other religious institutions in Lombard. Mr. Heniff replied yes.

George Wagner, Village Counsel, stated that a recommendation for approval including the northern addition must exclude any findings for the front yard setback.

After due consideration of the petition and the testimony presented, the Plan Commission found that the proposed conditional use and variations comply with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Therefore, the Plan Commission, by a roll call vote of 4 to 0, recommended to the Corporate Authorities, **approval** of the PC 05-30 in its entirety, subject to the following conditions:

1. The petitioner shall develop the site essentially in accordance with site plan prepared by Church Building Architects, Inc., dated July 15, 2005 and made a part of this request, except where amended by the conditions of approval.
2. That the petitioner shall satisfactorily address the comments included within the IDRC report.
3. That the petitioner will resubmit a parking lot striping plan reflecting the noted changes within the IDRC report. The petitioner shall provide a minimum of 42 parking spaces on the subject property.

Respectfully,

**VILLAGE OF LOMBARD**

Donald J. Ryan, Chairperson  
Lombard Plan Commission

att-

c. Petitioner  
Lombard Plan Commission