

March 2, 2006

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

Subject: ZBA 06-03; 121 N. Lincoln Avenue

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Zoning Board of Appeals submits for your consideration its recommendation on the above referenced petition. The petitioners request a variation to Section 155.415(F)(1) to reduce the front yard setback from thirty feet (30') to twenty-three and one half feet (23.5') to allow the construction of a front porch on an existing legal non-conforming residence in the R2 Single Family Residential District.

The Zoning Board of Appeals conducted a public hearing on February 22, 2006. David Schroeder, owner of the subject property, presented the petition. Mr. Schroeder stated that he would like to reconstruct his front porch. He mentioned that the existing porch is made of concrete and is cracking. He stated that he would like to reconstruct a wooden front porch to keep with the architectural style of the house. He noted that the house is over 150 years old and is a "plaqued" house. He mentioned that the house is nonconforming with the front yard setback. He stated that the wood porch would be the same basic size as the existing porch, except that it will project fourteen inches (14") further from the front of the house.

The architect for the project, Fred Fosnot, also spoke on behalf of the petition. He stated that the property owner's intention was to keep with the historic nature of the house. He noted that if the house were setback at the minimum required thirty feet (30'), code would allow a front porch extending five feet (5') from the house. He stated that the proposed deck will only extend five feet (5') from the house, and Mr. Schroeder is asking for no more than what would be allowed by code had the house met the front yard setback.

Chairperson DeFalco opened the meeting for public comment. No one spoke for or against the petition. He then requested the staff report.

Michelle Kulikowski, Planner I, presented the staff report. She stated that the existing residence on the subject property was constructed in 1852 and is considered legal nonconforming with respect to the front yard setback as it is setback approximately twenty-eight and one half feet (28.5') from the front property line.

She mentioned that the existing front porch consists of concrete steps and a roof that projects eighteen inches (18") from the front wall of the house. She noted that stairs less than four feet above grade are a permitted encroachment within the front yard, and roofed-over porches are also a permitted encroachment within the front yard provided that they do not project more than seven feet (7') from the front wall of the principal structure and maintain a minimum twenty-five foot (25') setback. She stated that the setback for a roofed-over porch is measured from the edge of the roof. She noted that the existing porch maintains a twenty-seven foot (27') setback and projects only (18") from the front wall of the house, and therefore, meets the provisions for front porch encroachments. She stated that the petitioner is proposing to replace the existing concrete steps and roof with wooden stairs and a roof that projects five feet (5') from the front wall of the house. She noted that the roof of the proposed porch will only maintain a twenty-three and one half foot (23.5') setback from the front property line, and therefore a variation is needed.

Ms. Kulikowski stated that the existing porch consists of concrete steps that are cracked and in need of repair. She mentioned that the existing roof is more of an overhang as it does not cover the entire landing and it is not supported by posts. She noted that the petitioners could replace the stairs by a matter of right. She stated that the petitioners would like to renovate the front entrance with a more traditional front porch that would fit in with the architectural style of the house and are proposing a slightly larger landing which would project fourteen inches (14") further from the front wall of the house than the existing landing. She mentioned that the proposed roof would extend over the entire landing and would be supported by two posts.

Ms. Kulikowski noted that there is a precedent for setback variations to allow roofed-over porches within required yards, as a variation was recently granted (ZBA 06-01) to allow a roof over an existing stoop within the corner side yard. She noted that the requested relief is not substantial, as the proposed porch will be setback only one and one half foot (1.5') less than what is allowed by code. She stated that the proposed improvements will not increase the visual bulk within the front yard. She also mentioned that the setback of the house itself will remain the same, and the proposed porch will be unenclosed.

Ms. Kulikowski stated that the proposed porch will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. She noted that there are only three houses east side of Lincoln Avenue between Grove Street and Windsor Avenue. She mentioned that the residence to the south of the subject property is only setback twenty feet (20') from the front property line, and the residence to the north of the subject property has an enclosed front porch which is only setback twenty-three (23') from the front property line. She stated that both of the adjacent properties have more substantial encroachments within the front yard.

Ms. Kulikowski stated that the residence on the subject property was built in 1852. She mentioned that the petitioners stated that they purchased the house a couple years ago with the intention of restoring it. Ms. Kulikowski noted that the proposed roofed-over porch exemplifies the principles of traditional neighborhood design and is consistent with the architectural style of the residence. She stated that staff finds the proposed improvements will enhance the aesthetic value of the house and neighborhood.

Ms. Kulikowski stated that requested variation complies with the standards for variations and recommends approval, subject to the conditions in the IDRC report.

Chairperson DeFalco opened the meeting for discussion among the members.

Chairperson DeFalco referred to the case presented at last month's Zoning Board of Appeals meeting (January 25, 2005). He mentioned that one of the conditions of approval was that the front porch shall remain unenclosed. He noted that this condition of approval was also outlined in the staff report for the subject petition.

After due consideration of the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the Zoning Board of Appeals submits this petition to the Corporate Authorities with a recommendation of approval of ZBA 06-03 by a roll call vote of 5-0, subject to the following conditions:

1. That the petitioners shall construct the porch in accordance with the plans submitted as part of the petition and dated December 16, 2005.
2. That the petitioners shall apply for and receive a building permit for the proposed improvements.
3. That the variation shall be limited to the existing residence. Should the existing residence be damaged or destroyed by any means, any new structures shall meet the thirty-foot front yard provisions.
4. The roofed-over porch shall remain unenclosed.

Respectfully,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

John DeFalco
Chairperson
Zoning Board of Appeals