

CHILI ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
July 13, 2021

A meeting of the Chili Architectural Advisory Committee was held on July 13, 2021 at the Chili Town Hall, 3333 Chili Avenue, Rochester, New York 14624 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson James Ignatowski.

PRESENT: Robert Latragna, Matt Emens and Chairman James Ignatowski.

Chairperson James Ignatowski declared this to be a legally constituted meeting of the Chili Architectural Advisory Committee. He explained the meeting's procedures and introduced the Committee and front table. He announced the fire safety exits.

APPLICANTS:

1. Review of the proposed Clifton Fire Department monument sign located in Clifton, New York.

Matt Emens was present to represent the application.

MATT EMENS: Hi, guys. So yes, I'm representing the Clifton Fire Department this evening.

As I kind of already started to outlay for you guys, I will just do it officially on the record. The Fire Department has been looking to do this monument sign and landscaped island. I will talk a little bit about the rest of the project in case have you any interest in it just so you understand the scope of it.

The existing firehouse that is there now was built in 1991. We did the -- you will see on the site plan there, on S-1, we also did the storage building addition in the back in 2006.

One of the improvements that we have been talking about for decades is doing a monument sign out front. And also we currently have out front a monument -- a concrete monument moved from the original firehouse in downtown Clifton -- which on the outskirts of Clifton, as you know, Jim (Ignatowski). Where it was at the old firehouse, there was a large concrete base that has an old bronze plaque of the Fire Department on it and then it is also -- holds the flagpole. So that actually was relocated down to this firehouse and as a part of this project, we're going to be building this large landscape island.

Probably not -- you can see in CAD there I drew it a little too kidney bean-ish or maybe peanut-like. But it will be more natural when laid out. But an island of that size and proportion that will house that flagpole and monument. Some ground cover and minimal landscaping. We'll have some kind of curbing. Concrete -- either concrete curbing or stone curbing with a mulch bed.

And then the main part, which is why we're here tonight, is to talk about the monument sign. You will see the drawing A-1, it's a schematic drawing of a sign, of the monument sign that we're proposing.

As you guys know -- well, you may or may not know -- we're going before the Zoning Board at the end of this month to request some variances. So that will be what we'll be doing at the Zoning Board the 27th of this month.

So some of the things to kind of just highlight in this, you will see we have two masonry piers flanking the sign. This will be a dual-sided LED message center -- is what we're proposing. You will also see the fixed sign at the top for the Clifton Fire Department, Incorporated. Like I said, once again, it will be on both sides. So whether you're coming out of Clifton or going into Clifton, you will be seeing that from either direction.

The piers would be a concrete foundation, coming up to -- basically a split face CMU would be the main body of the pier. That material you see up in front of you guys -- I believe it's the P-6, the darker one -- I still haven't actually color-matched it to the front of the firehouse since I got the samples last week. But the intent is to match the existing firehouse split-face CMU. And then we would have some sort of -- I -- I represented -- I don't know the exact outline what it looked like, but some kind of a precast, concrete cap that will go on top of both of those piers.

You will also see that on the front post or pier we have 53 -- so we're doing an 8-inch high bronze -- anodized bronze stand-off numeric for the 53 Wheatland Center Road for the address. On both sides of that front pier.

And we're also showing a circle here (indicating). Really that is just kind of to block out the idea -- what we wanted to do is get two more bronze emblems made so we can match the ones that are on this concrete monument. So we're getting that refinished. We'll have hopefully two more made and then they will go on either side of that.

Like I said, you will see some ground plantings around this. But this island itself will be curbed and landscaped to some extent with some ground plantings and mostly mulch probably. Low maintenance.

There would be -- currently proposed, since we are asking for a variance to provide an LED message center -- that comes under the section of the zoning code for the internally lit sign,

so that is actually the variance you're asking for. So in terms of the lighting for the sign, we don't have lighting for the sign necessarily we're proposing. However, there will be light that we're proposing to light the flag so the flag can stay up overnight.

You can see the placement of it. We did do some tests. I showed you some of those pictures up there. If you take a look at them, what we actually did is we took our old message board sign. We set it up on blocks to try to look at the height of it, the elevation of it to see where it would be, how would it look. Then we literally kind of drove by it. We walked by it. We took pictures at a couple different spots in the road for a few reasons.

One, to see how well you can see it. And to see when you can see it, right, and how well you can read it.

And a couple other things. Obviously the size of it. We were trying to figure out how big does this really need to be. We don't want it to get too big. So what we did is we kind of used that as our baseline so that that board is actually a little bit -- a little bit bigger than you actually see here on this sign.

But it gives you a good idea. The other thing -- not that you guys necessarily care tonight -- but just so you're aware, we're asking -- one of the variances we're asking for is to move it closer to the road. Because the road is actually -- even though it's a 66 foot right-of-way, the road, as a country road, is narrow and with a 30-mile-an-hour zone, we kind of wanted that sign pulled closer to the road so people can see it for longer which is what we're trying to show in the pictures there. You can kind of see the break in the tree line. If you look at a couple of these pictures there, if you see -- look at site plan S-1, you can kind of see the rough outline right at the edge of our property where there is -- it is heavily wooded right there to the east and then on the west, we have made it heavily wooded -- back in 1991 -- 1991 when we built the firehouse, the neighbor who still lives in that house there was -- to the west -- was adamant about planting. So there has been years and years of growing trees and planting trees and giving him that natural buffer. So when you break those two, you can kinda see where I have taken those pictures to give you an idea what it will look like at -- location-wise.

And once again, the other thing, I guess -- if you guys let me practice a little more for the end of the month, we did also pull the trucks out. One of the other things is when we're leaving the Fire Department, it is important we don't go blowing out of there. It is a 30-mile-hour zone. You have the wooded areas on both sides. You creep out and then you go.

One of the things we wanted to make sure is whether we were in the pumper where you're sitting up high or even like the pickup trucks, the rescue truck and our squad truck or our grass truck -- just looking at the sight lines to make sure the sign placement didn't impede anything where people would be coming or we wouldn't see pedestrians. So we have also kind of located it off the driveway. You see where we have kind of located it about 20 feet off the side of the asphalt paving. We -- once again, we have looked at quite a few things. We're asking for quite a few things from the Zoning Board at the end of the month.

But, I guess, at this point I will just ask if you guys have any questions.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: How -- I see this will be 7 foot 4 off the landscaped area. How tall is the landscaped area?

MATT EMENS: I hope -- we're asking for 7 foot 4. My hope is we can actually pull that down. One of the things I don't really know yet is -- I haven't spent a lot of time with the signage vendor yet because we haven't gotten there yet, right? So I want to get an idea from them when they do these in schools and other municipal buildings, how high do you keep it off the ground for moisture and snow and whatever? The intent would be to keep it as low as possible and we would do ground cover around that and maybe some foundation plantings to kind of make that -- to bring that back down, right?

ROBERT LATRAGNA: Okay. I was really asking how tall is the landscaping going to be.

MATT EMENS: I think it's mostly going to be ground cover, but I don't really know yet. The only reason we would do -- if we were going to do something more than ground cover or like flowers, I think it would be foundation plantings that probably wouldn't get over 30 inches high. And the placement of those, Robert (Latragna), would have to be pretty strategic and based on how big we actually make the island because I don't want them to become a maintenance issue or get in the way of the sign either.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: Plus we don't want it -- at 7'4", you don't want a 3 foot landscaping area and have it now 10'4", 10 feet 4.

MATT EMENS: Right. To keep the grade down, absolutely. That's not our intention. Correct.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: The other question I have, I assume that is the monument for the flagpole on here (indicating)?

MATT EMENS: Yes.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: You said it would be lighting up the flagpole on the side from the ground?

MATT EMENS: Yeah. It would ground lit. Right now it is one of the top pole lights that is solar. And it is just not -- it works, but it is not great. The long-term plan is when we relocate that out there -- we already have conduit out there from a project -- we did the drainage for the front driveway and paved it. There is already power and data out there. Well, I shouldn't say there is power out there. There is conduits out there so we can run circuits for the different electrical connections as needed.

So sorry -- come all of the way back around. The intent is to have some kind of a

ground-lit fixture that will light the flagpole and the flag.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: Other than the variances, I have no further questions.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: On the main body of the sign, Clifton Fire Department, what color will the letters be?

MATT EMENS: That's a great question. I believe the Zoning Board is going to -- we are going to propose, and if they are interested in approving this LED message sign, they'll hold us to a single color. Typically amber or red. That's typically what you're seeing with LED signs now. With that single color, I guess we would select -- the firehouse being gray now, I think maybe the letters would be a red or quite possibly they would be also an anodized black with a light backdrop. But honestly, I haven't gotten that far. It's one of those two options.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: Basically the top part of the sign will be fixed lettering and it is the bottom part of the sign that is changeable.

MATT EMENS: That's it. You got it.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: In terms of the LED portion of the sign, the changeable portion, what colors -- or you don't know yet. But obviously you're well aware the neighbors may have a cow over this. So, you know, it's bright and whatever so they may have issues with it. I'm assuming you're anticipating that and it will have to be somewhat dimmed or whatever.

MATT EMENS: Yes. Absolutely. There is a set of -- I believe the Zoning Board will propose some limitations on this. That's my understanding. We haven't gotten that far yet to your point. Our intent is that we want -- we do not want this to obviously be an eyesore. It needs to be well done so that we can communicate information, whether it is public safety related, fundraiser related and just once again use it for our -- so we can get information out to the public. So -- but yeah. It's -- where you're trying to use today's technology in the most simple way so that we can communicate via this message board.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: The American Legion on Scottsville Chili Road did a halfway decent job of having a sign out there but not being overly intrusive with the colors and the brightness of the signs. That was one of the things that they had to do.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: There is also one on Chili Avenue and Gates. Very similar sign to this.

MATT EMENS: Okay.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: 7 foot 4 high and 2 foot wide on the posts. Why so big?

MATT EMENS: Because of the -- my understanding is that the box of that double-sided sign -- I want to make it so it is wider than that. Otherwise I think it will look funky proportionally. So if -- but I guess what I would say, Jim (Ignatowski), is if in the development of this sign, with the sign vendor we find that I can make that 20 inches, you know, I'm going to make that smaller.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: So 1 foot taller than me -- actually more than that. So that is getting up there. It will seem -- I know where the road is, but I don't see that heavy a traffic where it is questioning whether it warrants being this big.

MATT EMENS: Okay.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: The amount of traffic that goes through there. That is my only question. If this were on Chili Avenue, then yeah, you need something this big. I'm just wondering if you need something this large where it is. Again, you're already in a 30-mile-an-hour zone and it's not a heavily traveled road.

MATT EMENS: It's very heavily traveled in the summer. When they make the turn from Mill Creek depending which GPS they have.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: Those are just drunken golfers. It doesn't make a difference.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: It's on the record, guys. (Laughter.)

Do you know the size of this sign?

MATT EMENS: Yes. It's about 4 foot tall and about 8 feet wide. So that is why one of the reasons I wanted to do those pictures is this sign is -- to me, I get it, it is big on paper and we just have kind of worked our way into this. And that's why we looked at that. Because when you go down the road proportionally, once again, if you imagine that, some of those foundation plantings, the massing of that and where it sits, it really -- it doesn't look as big as -- it doesn't feel as big as you might think it is.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: So that is approximately the size.

MATT EMENS: So the piers would be in addition to that.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: And one of the things, too, it seems like the LED sign itself is kind of high off the ground. I'm assuming you're doing that because you're anticipating plantings or worried about back splash from the weather.

MATT EMENS: You know, snow -- the other thing, the larger the island gets and the higher we put it up, we can pitch it down. It is really flat out there, out front. I mean there is no ditch there. It goes right to the shoulder. We have -- one of the things I was talking about when we redid the front asphalt apron probably five years ago now, we had to rip that out and redo a bunch of the drainage. We actually added -- you see the black squares on there, that storm drain, we had to tie -- we put those catch basins in. We had to tie it together because it doesn't drain well there. It is super, super flat in that front yard. So the intent is -- back to Robert (Latragna)'s point about the 7 foot -- we're asking for the 7'4". If we can bring that down, I don't want it to be bigger than it needs to be, but I also want to give us the flexibility to pull that up and landscape it up, whether it is ground cover or foundation bushes so it will drain and then it is out of the way and far enough out of the way from mowing.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: Functionally, you definitely don't want it to end up under water.

MATT EMENS: Yeah. Exactly. And so the answer to your question is both of those things. It will be with the signage vendor to say how high do you typically recommend these be off the ground because of the snow and water. And then the next point will be how low can we keep it. It will be a game of inches, is my point. We are conscious of the placement of this, too, because of our snow storage in the front. We have looked at all of that, too.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: Do you store -- from plowing the street?

MATT EMENS: No. From our lot. Because, you know, if you get a good storm, it basically gets stored on the east and west side of that. And it usually -- we typically push it to the east because there is better drainage that way. When you get a lot, it goes to the west side.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: Well, the other thought, too, is if at all possible, maybe considering narrowing the two posts from 2 feet down. Even block dimensions so you don't have to cut anything. It might reduce the scale in terms of the mass that is on the property. Let the sign be more dominant than the posts themselves. That is what you want people to recognize, is the posts -- the sign itself, not the posts.

MATT EMENS: Exactly. If we keep moving forward and things are looking good, then that is where I really want to tweak this and bring a sign vendor on board to really challenge them so that they can do some drawings and that is exactly what I hope to -- to maybe bring it down a bit, to Robert (Latragna)'s point, but also to your point of making those columns a little more stumped so they're not so massive.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: Are we going to see final drawings of this in terms of -- right now it is very open-ended so it is hard to approve anything that is so open-ended.

MATT EMENS: Right. So I think -- we typically see when the signs come through, I haven't -- you know, we haven't engaged a sign vendor yet. I have asked some general questions. If it is double-sided and they build this box, I know it could be up to 20 inches wide so I knew I wanted a 2 foot pier. Some of those minimal things and then I asked some general questions. I haven't gotten deep with them yet. But I would assume, Jim (Ignatowski), what we're going to do is -- is what we typically do with Paul (Wanzenried) in the Building Department, once we get to that point, we would submit a drawing from the signage vendor and I would update this with the colors and any updated dimension, the colors, the labeling of the block and any other notes, obviously, the recommendations you guys have to put on there, so.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: I have no further questions.

ROBERT LATRAGNA: I have no more questions at this time. Thank you for your presentation.

MATT EMENS: Thank you, guys.

JAMES IGNATOWSKI: Next on the agenda would be the approval of the minutes.

Robert Latragna made a motion to approve the 5/12/20 Architectural Advisory Committee meeting minutes, and James Ignatowski seconded the motion. All Board members were in favor of the motion.

(There were no Architectural Advisory Committee meetings in June, July and August 2020.)

Robert Latragna made a motion to approve the 9/8/20 Architectural Advisory Committee meeting minutes, and James Ignatowski seconded the motion. All Board members were in favor of the motion.

(There were no Architectural Advisory Committee meetings in October, November, December 2020 and January, February, March, April, May, June 2021.)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.