

MINUTES
 BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
 THE CITY OF BELLE MEADE
 July 19, 2016

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Brian Smallwood, Chairman, at 5:00pm.

Board members present

Mary Ann Blaufuss	Brian Smallwood	Pete Zabaski
James Edwards	Mal Wall	

Staff members present

Lyle Patterson, Building Official	Kemishia Sadler, City Recorder
Beth Reardon, City Manager	Bob Patterson, City Attorney

Conflicts - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Dr. Ravi Chari - 112 Belle Meade Blvd (16071)
 Special exception - construction of wall.
Building permit has been denied:
 A. Wall is other than permitted location.

Presentation: John Thompson- Landscape Architect

The existing driveway was renovated approximately 2 years ago. The original driveway was an exit from the property before the land was subdivided into smaller lots. The driveway was at an angle that made it difficult to pull in to from Belle Meade Boulevard. The former entry way had two columns on either side with an iron gate. Construction of the new driveway left the remnants of the columns in the location that is now a part of the lawn. There is an existing 3' stone wall that travels up four properties along Belle Meade Boulevard. The homeowners would like to stay in line with the existing stone wall and build adjoining entrance columns with gas lanterns. They would also like to keep the existing columns at the former entryway. The proposed entrance will sit 35 feet from the road which is significantly further back compared to the other driveways on the street.

Board Questions/Comments:

- Q. Are the other pillars still there?
 A. These (pointing at the map) still exist. They want to keep them. As a landscape architect, I can see growing ivy all over them and leaving them as garden relics. The neighbors down the street also requested to keep them.
 Q. What is the height of those existing pillars?
 A. 7'
 Q. Is there a plan for a gate in the future?
 A. They did not ask for a gate. We are not going to put steel in the columns to support a gate. I believe if they did ask for a gate that they would be in violation.
 Q. What is the height of the proposed column?
 A. 6' 8"
 Q. Can you talk to me a little bit more about the existing columns? I am trying to get my head around why they would need to stay.
 A. They wish to keep them. It was an interesting task when they said that they wanted to keep them and that they did not want to tear them down. I was tasked with how to make the new entrance dominant. The drawing makes it seem as if they are floating out there. They do have the privet hedge, which is where the new wall would be. Then we would have to come back and anchor with boxwoods to keep it in context.

- Q. You wouldn't come to the board and ask for two columns to go there would you?
- A. No
- Q. So it's really just the historical significance?
- A. It is. They wanted to be able to tell the story that this was the old exit before the properties were subdivided along the boulevard.
- Q. Did you angle the new posts based on the location and angle of the others?
- A. I tried to make a connection between the two. I wanted to move it further away from the street and that is where the portion of the driveway narrows coming off of those old columns.
- Q. How old are those columns?
- A. I searched old Nashville and Belle Meade maps before the properties were subdivided. I did not have any luck finding the exact dates.
- Q. Could you trace the existing walls and the proposed new walls with your finger?
- A. There are no existing walls and there are two existing columns.

Board Discussion/ Questions:


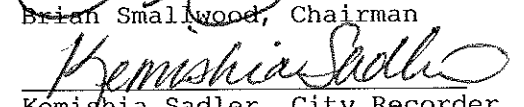
- Blaufuss: The two columns are distracting. I appreciate that you are talking about putting some boxwoods behind the 3' wall but would you consider a park bench and some flowers to make that visually something other than just two columns?
- Thompson: When the privet hedge comes down they are really going to look like they are just floating out there and we're just going to surround it with dogwoods and other trees. There is an existing Maplewood that we are going to keep and a large hackberry that we are going to keep. We are proposing to overgrow it with ivies to make it look like a garden relic and cover it the best I can with plants.
- Zabaski: I am a little perplexed by approving floating columns in a yard.
- Smallwood: There are a couple of issues in terms of precedence setting. One is that you have columns in the yard over 3'. Belle Meade Boulevard has a lot of precedence in terms of that but I would say that majority of that comes before the ordinance was written to preclude those things. They do have existing columns in their yard that are non-compliant. I know that the Belle Meade Country Club had the exact same situation and we asked them to take those down and rebuild them from the corner where the old entrance was to where the current entrance is; the board did approve that.
- Smallwood to the Board: How would you feel about granting two additional columns that are noncompliant? We do have the opportunity to stipulate approval of things that we want to see.
- Zabaski: I like that because it does not establish precedent; it just allows him to move the columns from one location to another.
- Blaufuss: I don't understand why it is 35 feet back from the curb? Why isn't it somewhat closer so that it is clearly a driveway entrance?
- Thompson: So that you can drive through without turning. Proportionately, the columns would have been 20 feet apart which would have been too far apart.
- Edwards: The property directly across the street from the LaGasse house, has low brick walls, curves in, pedestals on each side. The next one to the other side is the entry to Bonaventure and it has curved brick walls, landscaping in front of it, 7 or 8 foot brick pedestals with gas lights on top of them and sits back further away from Belle Meade Boulevard. I don't see it as an out of character proposal.
- Edwards: Is it the properties to the right that have the 3 to 3 ½ foot retaining wall for several lots down or is it to the left?
- Thompson: If you are looking at the house from the boulevard, it is to the right.

- Edwards: Is it actually 3 to 3 ½ foot tall?
 - Thompson: It is roughly 3'.
 - Edwards: And they are retaining walls?
 - Thompson: Yes they do retain.
 - Edwards: Is it your intention to match that stone?
 - Thompson: Yes same coursing, same stone.
 - Edwards: Was there ever a thought to leave the existing driveway in place and add a split off?
 - Thompson: It became a square footage issue.
 - Smallwood to board members: What do you all feel about the existing columns? Is that an issue for you?
 - Wall: It is not for me. It is something that they are going to landscape so that they are not just standing in the middle of a grass field.
 - Smallwood: If I were to make the argument that I would feel more comfortable removing or rebuilding those columns at a new location as a means of protecting the ordinance and not directly approving a violation to the ordinance but instead this becomes a relocation of columns and a relocation of a nonconforming use? Does anybody feel strongly about that stipulation?
 - Edwards: I think that's a reasonable solution.
 - Blaufuss: It will simplify our precedent
- Motion to approve the application with the stipulation that the existing columns be removed and reconstructed as the homeowner sees fit at the new location: Smallwood Second: Wall Vote: All aye.

 Consideration of the Minutes:

Minutes 6/21/2016
 Motion to defer minutes: Wall Second: Blaufuss Vote: All aye.

Meeting adjourned at 5:31pm.


 Brian Smallwood, Chairman

 Kemishia Sadler, City Recorder