

**Village of Cazenovia  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
June 24, 2014**

5 Members Present: Phil Byrnes, Chair; Sally Ryan; William Keiser; and Jane Nicholson-Dourdas.  
Absent: Howard Hart.

10 Others present: James Stokes, Village Attorney; Mike Skeelee; Shawn Skeelee; and Shea Skeelee.

P. Byrnes called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

15 P. Byrnes asked if anyone had any additions or corrections to the minutes of May 27, 2014.  
There were none noted. S. Ryan made the motion to approve the minutes as drafted. W. Keiser  
seconded. The motion carried.

\* \* \* \* \*

20 **Skeelee Agency, 9 Albany Street, Signs.**  
This is for the ZBA to consider the application of Skeelee Agency, Inc. for an amendment to an  
existing use variance to allow modification of the existing freestanding business identification  
25 sign in the front yard of the premises located at 9 Albany Street, Tax Map Parcel No. 94.51-1-23,  
and to permit two directory signs at the rear of the building to identify tenants within the existing  
office building upon the premises.

30 W. Keiser inquired if there would be a common entrance to the building for all of the tenants.  
Mike Skeelee answered yes, except for the McDowell Agency and they would have their own  
entrance.

35 Shawn Skeelee noted that sandwich signs are allowed in an R-20 zone where each business can  
have its own sandwich sign. W. Keiser observed that people driving past would not be able to  
read all of the signs. Shea Skeelee commented that cars would need to be going really slow or  
stuck at the light and these signs would be more for passersby on the sidewalk.

40 Mike Skeelee said it would be ideal to have a lot bigger directory sign, but it would not be in  
keeping with that property. He stated that they want signage to fit within the guidelines and  
allow identification of the businesses at that location.

45 Shawn Skeelee said he had gone out and measured various signs in the Village. The proposed  
sign would be smaller than the existing Brewster Inn sign, smaller than the existing Brae Loch  
sign, and smaller than the existing sign at the Gothic Cottage. It is closest to the Gothic Cottage  
next door in terms of its mass and size and comparable to that sign.

W. Keiser asked if there would be a business directory within the common entrance. Shea Skeelee said they would be agreeable to that. Mike Skeelee stated that the goal is to eliminate sandwich board signs from being used at this property.

50

P. Byrnes questioned whether they would be allowed a second sign outside of the building if a directory sign is allowed.

55

Mr. Stokes explained that the whole property is governed by a use variance that was originally granted in the 1970s and then modified in the early 1990s. Therefore, none of this is permitted other than the sandwich board signs. Mr. Stokes continued that there is already a sign there. He went back through the records and a sign is mentioned once in a passing reference. His guess is that there was a sign originally and it was continued and was never really addressed in the use variance. Stearns & Wheeler was the first use. His thought for this application is to treat this as a modification of the use variance. The use variance is already there. This can be a modification of an existing sign and amendment of the use variance to permit the sign, if that is what the Board decides. The Board could authorize the sign out front as well as the directory sign.

60

65

P. Byrnes commented that there is a directory sign inside the building and that sign can stay there.

Shea Skeelee said that if the directory sign is granted, they are willing to prohibit sandwich boards as part of the lease.

70

Shea Skeelee observed that the lighting on the sign needs to be there for the benefit and safety of the community as it is a dark stretch of sidewalk.

75

S. Ryan wondered about the number of tenants in the building. Mike Skeelee answered that there are currently five tenants, but there will be six with a potential of seven.

Shea commented that some tenants may not take advantage of the directory sign. A therapist may not want to advertise their presence for the privacy of the clients.

80

S. Ryan questioned whether there would be empty spots on the sign if not everybody wanted to take advantage of it. Mike Skeelee replied that the sign will be arranged and that Paul Parpard will do the sign. Each client's sign will be uniform consisting of black lettering on a white background.

85

P. Byrnes suggested that since the Board cannot allow both options, the applicants need to pick one and tell the Board their preference before the next meeting.

Mr. Stokes advised the applicants to prepare a schedule of signs with dimensions and location on the property and submit it before the next meeting.

90 Shawn Skeele noted that it is important for businesses to advertise and it might make a difference whether or not a tenant wants to rent space in the building.

Shea Skeele stated that the building has multiple uses. This should have been addressed years ago, but with new ownership this is a good time to get signage set with the building.

95

P. Byrnes said that the amount of nonconformance should be minimized. Mr. Stokes agreed that while it is true that the Board should grant the minimum amount of nonconformance to deal with the hardship, the back of the building is not visible from the road and no one will be able to see the front and the back at the same time. He does not see a problem with granting both front and back signs, but it depends on the priorities of the Board and if the Board thinks that getting rid of the sandwich boards is a priority. The Board members agreed that getting rid of the sandwich boards is the number one priority.

100

Shawn Skeele expressed that they may have different tenants in the future and that they want to control sandwich boards right at the beginning.

105

P. Byrnes questioned if the Board adds a condition to disallow sandwich boards and the building is sold in the future, would the condition run with the building. He believes it is incumbent on the Board to put it into the regulations. Mike Skeele thought it was a great idea so that he would not be responsible for including it in the lease.

110

S. Ryan asked what the directory in the back would look like. P. Byrnes said that a sketch of that is required.

115

S. Ryan asked if the sign on the back of the building would be lighted. All Skeeles answered no, but the front sign needs to be lighted. Mr. Stokes observed that there is a Code section that governs lighting of signs.

P. Byrnes made the motion to continue the meeting at 8:00 p.m. on July 10, 2014. W. Keiser seconded. The motion carried.

120

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

125

Marlene A. Westcott  
Recording Secretary