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# Written Justification

## Special Use Permit & Variations

Petitioner Name: Jonathan Kuzynowski, Wold Architects & Engineers on behalf of NSSEO

Date: March 1, 2021 (**Updated 4.14.2021 per Round 2 review comments.**)

Project: Timber Ridge School Gymnasium Addition – NSSEO

Location: 201 S. Evanston Ave, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Thank you for taking the time to review the Northwest Suburban Special Education Organizations request for special use permit and variances to the Village of Arlington Heights Municipal Code.

**- A Special Use Permit is requested for a Public K-8 School in the R-3 One Family Dwelling District. This request is to allow an addition to the existing school**

Upon review of conceptual plans presented to the Village Planning and Community Development, the Village code requires that all Special Use Permits conform to the approval criteria as called out below. To demonstrate conformance, please find the following responses to the four criteria outlined in comments received from the Village Department of Planning and Community Development.

That said special use is deemed necessary for the public convenience at this location.

The Timber Ridge School provides education to school age children with special needs in the surrounding area as well as multiple member districts that are made up of several neighboring communities. An addition will allow a much needed means of accessibility for their students and staff as well as provide improved learning environments to support school curriculum. NSSEO has operated the Timber Ridge School as a therapeutic day school since XXXX (insert year). NSSEO serves the needs of students from eight member public school districts in the surrounding area. Prior to ownership by NSSEO, the site was a public school owned and operated by Arlington Heights School District 25, originally constructed in the 1960's.

That such case will not, under any circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals or general welfare of persons residing or working in the vicinity.

Proposed additions shall comply with the School Code of Illinois, including all related and current building, life safety and ADA accessibility codes. The school is regularly inspected for health and life safety in accordance with Illinois State Board of Education requirements. The addition, in particular, will support the health, performance, and wellness needs of the student population. The use of the gymnasium and fitness space will support physical education, and athletic competition as a part of daily education, and community use during non-school hours.

That the proposed use will comply with the regulations and conditions specified in this ordinance for such use, and with the stipulations and conditions made a part of the authorization granted by the Village Board of Trustees.

The proposed building addition shall not change the use of the building to any other classification. Elementary Schools are a permitted Special Use in an R-3 district per Chapter 28, section 5.5-1 Permitted Use Table as being similar and compatible uses.

**- A Variation is requested from Chapter 28, Section 5.1-3.5, to allow a 30.5 foot tall building where building heights are restricted to 25 feet.** *\*Note: Total building height has been revised since the conceptual review submittal to accommodate additional drop off of the site. The overall roof line height with relation to the existing building remains the same.*

- The proposed use will not alter the essential character of the locality and will be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.

The building function will not change as a result of the building addition. The intent of the addition is to provide similar functions to those already in the building that are currently inadequately sized for their function and users.

- The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances, which may include the length of time the subject property has been vacant as zoned.

Maintaining or providing a lesser building height than proposed restricts the floor to floor height for the building addition as prescribed in section 5.1-3.5 would limit the owners options and potentially have impacts on efficiency and the buildings operational systems. The height would also prevent the owner from being able to provide the height in the gymnasium that is required to accommodate normal competitive activities such as basketball and volleyball.

- The proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.

The Proposed variation requested is necessary in order to provide the interior vertical clearance required for the functions inside the building, while maintaining as similar an elevation to the existing building as possible.

- The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.

The proposed height variance is the minimum height needed to provide the structure and building envelope while also providing the interior height needed for the functions inside the building.

**- A variation is requested from Chapter 28, Section 6.15-1.2b, to waive the requirement for landscape islands at the ends of certain parking rows.**

- The proposed use will not alter the essential character of the locality and will be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.

Only minor alterations are being proposed to the existing parking area. The modifications proposed are in order to provide additional parking at the east parking lot with the lowest impact to the existing conditions. The project consists primarily of re-stripping without replacement of the existing lot.

- The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances, which may include the length of time the subject property has been vacant as zoned.

The existing parking area on the east side of the building is proposed to have only minor modifications to its arrangement and would require significant alterations in order to comply with needed parking islands and landscaping. The parking islands could also adversely affect drainage patterns and limit the school's ability to adequately remove snow during the winter months.

- The proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.

The intent of the proposed parking arrangement is to provide potential visitors with additional spaces with minimal impact to the existing off street parking in that area.

- The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.

The variance requested is intended to provide as much available parking as possible and safe navigation while also creating the best situation possible to maintain said parking area over time and keep the area safe for visitors.

**- A variation is requested to Chapter 28, Section 10.4-4, to reduce the required off-street parking from 81 spaces to 75 spaces.** *\*Note: Parking arrangement has been revised since the conceptual review submittal to accommodate 2 additional parking spaces.*

- The proposed use will not alter the essential character of the locality and will be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.

Proposed parking allows for the added footprint of a building addition while maintaining as much outdoor space for students and staff as possible. Although the aggregate number of spaces has been reduced, the number of accessible spaces has been increased by one to meet current code.

- The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances, which may include the length of time the subject property has been vacant as zoned.

Section 10.4-4 requires parking calculations based on quantity of classrooms. For this particular school, the situation is unique in that class sizes are 40-50% smaller than found in typical elementary schools.

- The proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.

Proposed parking is intended to meet actual need vs the prescribed need. Section 10.5-9 does allow accommodations for existing developed parcels to be within substantial compliance if the deficit in parking is less than 10 spaces or no more than 5 percent less than the number of required parking spaces.

- The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.

Maintaining a similar parking count to existing will allow the school to continue use of the property. A traffic and parking study supports the reduction in the number of required off-street parking spaces.

**- A variation is requested to Chapter 28, Section 10.8-4, to reduce the number of bicycle parking from a total of eight bike parking spaces to zero.**

- The proposed use will not alter the essential character of the locality and will be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.

The existing use of the facilities are not being altered by the proposed building addition.

- The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances, which may include the length of time the subject property has been vacant as zoned.

A significant majority of students from each of the eight member school districts, and staff travel from distances that make it difficult to bike to the site. Although there is no current need for on-site bicycle parking, the owner has committed to providing bicycle parking in the future, especially should a need arise for a staff member or student.

- The proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.

The spirit and intent of this chapter is provide bicycle parking for those who would use it. The owner is committed to providing such at such time as a need becomes apparent.

- The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.

The variance requested is based upon current and anticipated future need. It does not change or reduce the number of existing on-site bicycle parking spaces.

**- A variation is requested to Chapter 28, Section 6.5-2, to allow an accessory structure (shed) in a side yard where accessory structures are only allowed within a rear yard.**

- *The proposed use will not alter the essential character of the locality and will be compatible with existing uses and zoning of nearby property.*

*Neither the use nor the character of the locality shall change as a result of the indicated accessory structure relocation.*

- *The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances, which may include the length of time the subject property has been vacant as zoned.*

*The school district manages their own property maintenance and upkeep. Pieces of necessary equipment for maintaining the property are stored in the accessory structures. A letter received from the Village of Arlington Heights dated November 13, 2020 has cited four accessory structures (sheds) on the site, two of which are in non-compliant locations (with one located in a parking space). The owner has committed to reducing the total number of on-site accessory structures from four to a total of 2 in order to address the two non-compliant structures as well as provide an additional parking stall.*

- *The proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.*

*The spirit and intent of this chapter is to locate any accessory structure in a rear yard. The Timber Ridge School site is bordered on three sides by Kensington Rd, Evanston Ave, and E Mayfair Rd. The proposed relocation of an existing shed would maintain a location that would be considered "rear yard" placement.*

- *The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.*

*The variance requested is based upon current and anticipated future need. In response to comments from the village, the owner has consolidated the number of sheds from four to two in order to remove two non-compliant accessory structures.*

Thank you very much for your consideration.