

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
**THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE**

OF THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS PLAN COMMISSION

HELD AT VILLAGE HALL VIRTUALLY ON:

May 26, 2021

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**Project Title:** Shelter, Inc. SUP  
**Address:** 207-209 E. Valley Lane  
Arlington Heights, IL 60004  
**Petitioner:** Carina H. Santa Maria - Shelter, Inc.  
**Address:** 1616 Arlington Heights Road,  
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

**Requested Action:**

1. Special Use Permit to allow a "Shelter Care Home" on the subject property.

**Variations Required:**

1. Variation to Chapter 28, Section 10.4, Schedule of Parking Requirements, to reduce the number of onsite parking spaces from 10 spaces to two spaces.

**Attendees:**

David Bea  
Carina H. Santa Maria, Petitioner  
John Sigalos, Plan Commissioner  
Bruce Green, Plan Commissioner  
Jay Cherwin, Plan Commissioner  
Lynn Jensen, Plan Commissioner  
Sam Hubbard, Development Planner

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**Project Summary:**

The subject property is located along East Valley Lane and is 7,932 square feet in size and occupied by a two-story duplex that is currently partially vacant. The structure includes an attached two-car garage, plus sufficient space to park two additional cars (tandem style) within the driveway. The site borders a Chase bank to the south, duplexes on both the east and west sides, and is located across the street from single-family homes. At its intersection with Arlington Heights Road approximately 80' to the west of the subject property, East Valley Lane provides a full access under stop sign control at the westbound approach.

The petitioner, Shelter, Inc, would like to use the building for its Transitional Living Program (TLP), which provides a home for youths assigned male at birth, under guardianship by DCFS, and are between the ages of 17.5-21 and are aging out of the welfare system. The youths would spend two years in the program and would then receive resources and guidance to find permanent housing and secure job opportunities. While residing at the subject property, the youths would receive medical and dental care, clothing, and assistance with general living and social skills so they can be successful upon graduation.

The structure provides two units, one on each floor. Each unit contains three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, and a living/common area. The two-car garage is shared between both units and at the rear of the garage is a separate laundry/storage room. Total capacity would be for 10 youths (five in each unit) with the possibility to increase to 12 youths total with additional staffing. Up to two staff members would be on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week to monitor and provide support services to residents. A portion of the ground floor would be transitioned into office space for staff.

**Meeting Discussion:**

**Ms. Santa Maria** began by stating that Shelter, Inc. has been operating in Arlington Heights since 1975. One of the programs they offer is a Transitional Living Program. This program assists individuals aging out of the foster care system, providing them with housing for 2 years with life skills training, preparing them for independent living. Currently, the program is run out of a home at Golf Road and Arlington Heights Road, however that home is for sale so a new site is needed. Shelter, Inc. already has a contract on the subject property, with sale contingent upon receiving Village Board approval. The facility would be staffed 24/7, and all DCFS rules and regulations would be followed. Staff members are accredited by the Council on Accreditation, and licensed by DCFS. Residents in the program are required to be employed in the community, or be enrolled in school. Every year Shelter, Inc. serves 1,000 youth and their families in and around Arlington Heights.

**Commissioner Green** asked **Mr. Hubbard** to provide the Staff report.

**Mr. Hubbard** stated that the proposed use is classified as a "Shelter Care Home", which is only permitted in the R-6 Zoning District with a Special Use Permit. The subject site is zoned R-6. The petitioner must provide a written response to Special Use Permit justification criteria for Staff review. Staff has not yet formed an opinion on the project, and needs additional information on what the use will entail. The current home in Arlington Heights operated by Shelter, Inc. has been in use for 10 years, so they do have an established history in the community. Over the years, the Police Department has received a significant number of calls for service at the current home. Staff does have concerns given this history, as the new site is in a much different area than the current home, and Staff needs to adequately assess the impact on the neighborhood that this use would have. The petitioner should hold a neighborhood meeting if they elect to move forward, and Village Staff can assist with identifying properties that should be included in the meeting. The parking classification for this use would be a "Dormitory", and 10 spaces would be required. Only 2 garage spaces are provided, and as such a variation would be required. Information has been provided that residents rarely have cars, so that may be adequate justification for this variation.

Emails received were then read into the record. **Mr. Hubbard** reminded the audience that this meeting is informational, and no action will be taken tonight. The emails are as follows:

*I am writing in regards to shelter-207-209 E Valley Lane. I strongly oppose this variance!! The neighborhood is full of children walking to school and playing outside. The grade school is a block away. Our children deserve the right to be kids and not have to be scared in their own neighborhood. They also don't need to see some of the behavior I have heard about in the golf road site. Based on the one on Golf road and the number of police calls, it just doesn't work in this family friendly neighborhood.*

*Thanks for you consideration.*

*Linda Brelsford*

*Dear Village planning committee,*

*It has come to our attention that a shelter is being considered on E Valley Lane in Arlington Heights. I live in this neighborhood and am very concerned since this would be located close to Ivy Hill School and in the path of many students walking to school. For this reason, please do not consider this location for the above referenced shelter.*

*Sincerely,*

*Laura and Jeff Heissel*

*Hello. I urge you to please not pass the zoning for a youth shelter on valley lane. First of all there are a lot of kids that live on valley and circle hill that go to ivy hill school. They walk to and from School every day. I worry about having this shelter with the amount of calls to the police at the last location. I am worried for our neighborhood bringing in this tile of home. Please vote no and ask them to choose a location not so close to an elementary school.*

*Thank you,  
Christy and Matt Goduto*

**Commissioner Jensen** asked the petitioner to comment on the emails received, with respect to the mentions of activities and police calls at the Golf Road home.

**Ms. Santa Maria** stated that they are in a commercial area currently, so calls are primarily from Shelter, Inc. Most calls are related to mental health concerns, which pose no threat to the community. In order to better support residents, an in-house counseling program has been created, so each member has a therapist to meet with on a regular basis. Each member is also screened prior to admittance. Within the last few months, there have been no police calls. Police calls are also related to missing persons reports. Members are of an age to be able to come and go as they please, however if they do not return by midnight, per DCFS rules Shelter, Inc. is required to submit a missing persons report.

**Commissioner Jensen** asked to confirm that most of the police calls were from Shelter, Inc., and that changes have been implemented to reduce the number of calls, including the provision of mental health services.

**Ms. Santa Maria** confirmed **Commissioner Jensen's** statement. She added that partnerships have been formed so that if members need mental health medication, they will not have to wait on a list for a psychiatrist.

**Commissioner Jensen** asked if there were any incidents that would confirm the concerns in the emails related to children.

**Ms. Santa Maria** stated that there were no incidents to elicit this concern. She believes that those who wrote the letters do not have a complete understanding of the facility or its operation.

**Commissioner Cherwin** asked where the closest residence is to their current home.

**Ms. Santa Maria** stated that the closest residence currently is about one-quarter to one-half mile away.

**Commissioner Cherwin** stated that this new proposal, being in the middle of a residential area, is different than their current facility which is in a commercial area. While the proposal mentions "youth", as the ages of residents are 17 to 21 the individuals are more or less adults. He is concerned about parking, with 12 adults and only 2 spaces for cars. He is also concerned about the 53 police calls. This amount of activity could be a disturbance for a neighbor. He urged Village Staff to put together more detail on the nature of the 53 calls. The only way a Special Use Permit can be approved is if the proposal is not detrimental to those in the community, and that level of police activity could be detrimental.

**Mr. Hubbard** stated that the meeting had to conclude due to the scheduled Plan Commission meeting. As there was no time to open the meeting to public comment, the project will have to continue on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Conceptual Plan Review Committee did not provide a recommendation, and will continue the hearing of this proposal on June 9, 2021.

**Bruce Green, Chair**  
**CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**Jake Schmidt, Recorder**