



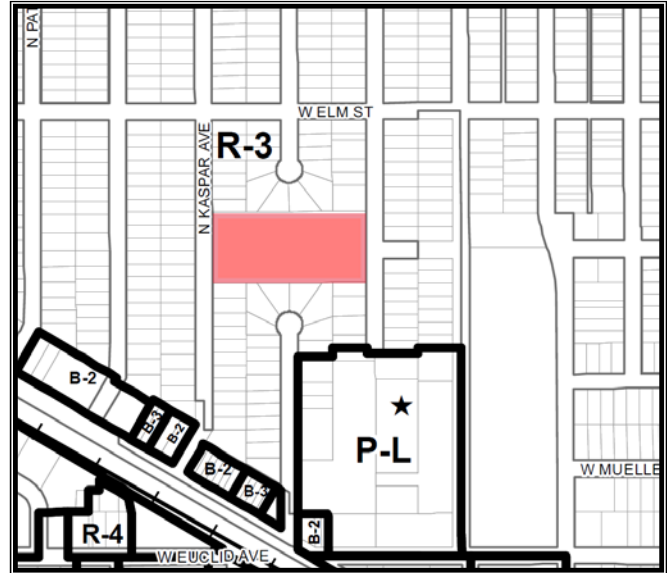
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
STAFF DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE REPORT

Project Number: PC 22-004
Project Title: St. Anne Home (Maryville)
Location: 800 N. Fernandez Avenue
PIN: 03-17-301-009

To: Plan Commission
Prepared By: Sam Hubbard, Development Planner
Meeting Date: June 22, 2022
Date Prepared: June 17, 2022

Petitioner: Maryville Academy
Address: 1150 N. River Road
 Des Plaines, IL 60016

Existing Zoning: R-3: One-Family Dwelling District
Comprehensive Plan: Institutional



SURROUNDING LAND USES

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use	Comprehensive Plan
North	R-3: One-Family Dwelling District	Single-Family Homes	Single-Family Detached
South	R-3: One-Family Dwelling District	Single-Family Homes	Single-Family Detached
East	R-3: One-Family Dwelling District	Single-Family Homes	Single-Family Detached
West	R-3: One-Family Dwelling District	Single-Family Homes	Single-Family Detached

Requested Action:

1. Special Use Permit to allow a “Sheltered Care Home” on the subject property.

Variations Required:

1. Variation from Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code, Section 6.12-1.3, to waive the requirement for a traffic and parking study.

Project Background:

The subject property is approximately 3.76 acres in size and bounded by Fernandez Avenue to the east and Kaspar Avenue to the west. The site is owned and occupied by Sisters of the Living Word, a religious institution whose mission is to spread the word of God through ministry. The eastern half of the subject property includes an approximately 28,725 square foot two-story building with a partial basement, as well as 52 surface parking stalls dispersed primarily around the sides and rear of the building. The western half of the site consists of an open field and a small fenced/mulched area formerly used as a children's playground. The Village is aware that Sisters of the Living Word is no longer running at full capacity and staffing has been reduced. Additionally, a portion of the building was previously leased to the Northwest Suburban Montessori School, but they have since vacated and are no longer tenants.

Maryville, a social service agency that provides a range of programs including residential care, mental health services, healthcare services, family support services, educational offerings and youth development programs through-out the Chicagoland area, has the subject property under contract. They are proposing reuse of the entire building as the St. Anne Program, a sheltered home for girls aged 12-17 who are in the United States as unaccompanied children under the care of the Administration of Children and Families and Office of Refugee Resettlement until they are 18 years old.

The St. Anne Program would have space for up to ten teenage girls and up to six teenage girls who are either pregnant or parenting, all of whom would live at the facility and attend local schools. Maryville would provide shelter and care for these individuals, as well as assistance in identifying family members in the United States who may be able to provide a permanent home and care for the girls. The facility would be staffed 24-hours a day, seven days a week. During daytime business hours the site would have no less than 3-6 staff members assisting with services and providing care for the residents. During the evening shift there would be no less than 2-3 employees awake and onsite throughout the entire night. In addition, case managers, clinicians, and a nurse would be onsite during the day to meet with the children for scheduled appointments. At peak times there could be as many as 15 individuals at the home providing care for the residents.

Program Attributes

As stated above, the St. Anne home will provide a residence and services to 16 girls between 12-17 years of age that are in the United States as unaccompanied minors without parents or guardians. This unique program will provide care for these individuals until they turn 18 years old, at which point they would be transferred to a suitable group home for young adult women. A summary of the primary attributes of this program is included below:

- Prior to arrival at the home, each girl is screened by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). If deemed suitable for the program, the ORR will refer the child to Maryville, who will review case files, medical reports, clinical reports, education reports, and history of any significant incidents. If the child is determined to be a good candidate, Maryville will conduct an interview with the girl prior to formal acceptance into the St. Anne Program. Maryville has the right to decline placement if a child does not appear to be a good fit.
- All girls will receive supportive services while staying at the home, which may include vocational support, language support, counselling/therapy, leadership and life skills classes, educational supports, etc. Transportation and meals will be provided by Maryville staff. Two vans will be stored on the property.

- All residents will be required to follow the house rules, which include attending local schools, completing homework, participating in meal preparation, keeping a clean room, attending in-house meetings and learning groups, washing their clothes, etc.
- While providing services to each girl, Maryville staff also work to identify family members to serve as sponsors for the girls and to assume their care.
- Each girl will have their own room while living at St. Anne home. Childcare will be provided onsite for any of the six girls who may have infants while those girls attend school and participate in required activities.
- Recreational opportunities will be provided to the residents, including cultural outings (museum trips, theater trips, park outings, etc.). In addition, girls can participate on local sports teams and partake in religious services of the denomination of their choice. Summer recreational opportunities will be available through the Arlington Heights Park District and other local sources. The home will also include a music and art room, a computer/homework room, and a lounge area.
- Residents will not own cars and will not be allowed to leave the property on their own. Any visitors must be pre-approved and supervision is provided when visitors are present.
- Girls that are unable to follow house rules will be required to meet with staff and a contract with clear goals will be drafted, by which the individual must abide. Extra oversight is provided in these instances, and if a girl cannot follow the contract, an alternative placement may be sought.
- All staff must complete a full two-week training program prior to working with the children. Additionally, staff is required to complete frequent refresher courses through-out the year. Staff will be skilled in a variety of areas, such as trauma-informed care, adolescent development, CPR and first aid, cultural competency, non-violent conflict intervention, etc.
- The building will include controlled entry and exit doors, video monitoring in the common areas, kitchen, and exterior areas of the building, and daily logs on resident presence and locations outside of the facility. Staff must be awake at all times and are responsible for conducting line-of-site observations and bedroom checks.

Zoning and Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is zoned R-3, One-Family Dwelling District, which allows single-family homes and religious institutions as permitted uses. The proposed St. Anne Program falls under a “Sheltered Care” use classification, which requires a special use permit in the R-3 District. The petitioner has provided a written response to the three criteria necessary for Special Use Permit approval and this response has been attached to the packet provided to the Plan Commission. For reference, the standards for special use permit are included below:

- 1. That said special use is deemed necessary for the public convenience at this location.***
- 2. That such case will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, morals or general welfare of persons residing or working in the vicinity.***
- 3. 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 Comprehensive Plan designates the subject property as “Institutional”, which corresponds to the current religious institution usage, as well as the prior use of the property. The proposed facility is institutional in nature and appropriate for the Institutional classification as designated in the Comprehensive Plan (Sheltered Care homes are only allowed in residential districts and the institutional district via special use permit issuance).

Relative to the Special Use Permit criteria, the Staff Development Committee concurs with the petitioner that the necessary criteria for approval have been met. In addition, staff notes the following:

- The proposed use, with 16 residents and a peak staff of 15 employees, is a low intensity use for a 28,725 square foot building on a 3.76 acre site. Over the last two years, staff has reviewed redevelopment concepts for this property, one of which included a 13-lot single-family residential subdivision. With average household sizes in Arlington Heights at around 2.42 persons per household, this would have translated to an expected population of at least 31 new residents. By way of comparison, 16 girls with a typical daytime staff of 3-6 employees (and a typical overnight staff of 2-3 employees) is a less intense use of the property.
- The proposed use is compatible with the character of the area. Previous uses on the property included a District 25 public school (Ridge School), and more recently a daycare coupled with the Sisters of the Living Word convent. The former uses of this property have been institutional or have involved providing supervision and care for children. The proposed use is in harmony with the historical usage of this property.
- Given the age of the individuals that would reside at the home, the household rule prohibiting car ownership by residents, and the low number of peak staff, the proposed sheltered care home will not generate a significant amount of traffic. A 13-lot residential subdivision on the subject property would have a more substantial traffic impact than the proposed facility.
- The Comprehensive Plan designates the site as appropriate for “Institutional” uses and the proposed use is therefore compatible with the Village’s long-term vision for use of the subject property.
- Maryville staff undergo substantial training to be able to provide residents with the necessary services to be successful in the community. Additionally, prior to acceptance into the program, prospective residents undergo screening to determine if they are a good fit for the St. Anne home. The program is not designed to be a home for girls with extensive behavioral or mental health needs.
- The petitioner has provided an analysis from a certified appraiser that has evaluated home values in the proximity of a similar facility operated by Maryville located in Chicago, which was approved for a Special Use Permit in October of 2019. The analysis concluded that the Chicago facility did not have an adverse impact upon the value of other properties within the vicinity. A copy of the report is included in the packet provide to the Plan Commission.

Conceptual Plan Review Committee:

The petitioner appeared before the Conceptual Plan Review Committee on March 9, 2022, for a preliminary review of their proposed re-use of the site. Discussion at the meeting centered around the rules and procedures for the program, the previous use of the property (which was most recently used by Sisters of the Living Word as a convent and for their administrative offices), and the recommendation for a neighborhood meeting. The Conceptual Plan Review Committee was generally positive towards the proposed re-use of the building but asked for additional information as part of the more formal Plan Commission review process.

Neighborhood Meeting:

On April 5, 2022, Maryville held a community meeting for nearby residents who were interested in providing feedback on the proposal and learning more about what the St. Anne Program would entail. Invitations were sent out to all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. Additionally, on December 6, 2021, Maryville held a similar meeting where a smaller number of immediate neighbors were invited via door to door canvassing by the petitioner. Notes on the discussion that occurred at the April 5th neighborhood meeting, as prepared by the petitioner, have been included in the packet to the Plan Commission.

Building, Site, and Landscaping:

Given that the building was most recently used as a convent for Sisters of the Living Word, the interior of the structure is well suited for residential occupancy. Many of the existing spaces within the building require no alterations and can be simply repurposed for the newly proposed use. No significant alterations to the interior layout are necessary to accommodate for the St. Anne Home, however, certain life safety upgrades will be necessary to upgrade the facility to be in compliance with current Building Code requirements (new emergency egress exits, fire alarm system, fire suppression system, smoke detectors, etc.). The petitioner is not proposing any exterior changes to the building or site at this time, although the existing wall sign on the east side of the building will be removed. New wall signage may be proposed, however, it should be noted that wall signage in residential districts is restricted to a maximum of 45 square feet or 25% of the signable area (whichever is less), so any future sign will be relatively modest in size. As part of the permits necessary for the life safety upgrades, the petitioner will need to provide a plan for enhancing some of the onsite landscaping, where the perimeter landscape screen (arborvitae) has thinned over the years and certain parking lot landscape island shade trees are missing.

Parking & Traffic:

Per code, a traffic and parking study is required for any special use permit proposed on land that does not abut a major or secondary arterial. Fernandez Avenue and Kaspar Avenue are both classified as local streets and therefore the petitioner is required to provide a detailed traffic and parking study from a Certified Traffic Engineer that assesses access (location, design, and Level of Service), on-site circulation, trip generation and distribution, and parking. In lieu of this requirement, the petitioner has requested the following variation:

- **Variation from Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code, Section 6.12-1.3, to waive the requirement for a traffic and parking study.**

The petitioner has provided a written response to the four hardship criteria necessary for variation approval, which criteria has been summarized below:

- **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 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 proposed variation is in harmony with the spirit and intent of this Chapter.**
- **The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to allow reasonable use of the property.**

The Staff Development Committee believes that the variation request conforms to the criteria necessary to waive the traffic and parking study requirement. The proposed facility will not generate a substantial amount of traffic and onsite parking conforms to code requirements and is sufficient to accommodate for expected demand.

Relative to parking, sheltered care homes do not have a line item within the table of parking requirements, and as such, staff must apply the requirements for the most similar use listed in the table. Accordingly, the most similar use is a "Dormitory", which requires two spaces per three residents and one space for each staff member. At a maximum capacity of 16 girls, 11 spaces would be required for the residents and 15 spaces for the peak onsite employee population, totaling 26 spaces required. As outlined above, the subject property contains 52 parking stalls, however, some of these stalls are located within the required fire lanes and must be eliminated. The site would have approximately 43 parking spaces as a result, which exceeds code requirements for St. Anne Home. The two vans, which will be used for resident transportation, will be stored onsite and parked towards the rear of the property. The vans will not contain any advertising.

The proposed change in use from a convent/administrative offices for Sisters of the Living Word to a sheltered care home does not result in an increase in the required amount of vehicular parking stalls. Therefore, no bike parking spaces are required at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

The Staff Development Committee reviewed the Special Use Permit to allow a "Sheltered Care" home on the subject property, as well as the Variation from Chapter 28, Section 6.12-1.3, to waive the requirement for a traffic and parking study, and recommends **APPROVAL** of the application subject to the following:

1. All Maryville staff shall complete the two-week training prior to working at the facility as outlined by the petitioner in their response to the Round 1 Departmental comments. Additionally, staff shall complete frequent refresher training throughout the year to ensure that they remain knowledgeable on all topics taught during the initial two-week training.
2. An appropriate number of staff must be present on the subject property at all times, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, so adequate supervision of the residents can be provided.
3. The petitioner must establish and follow internal screening procedures for identification and acceptance of the most appropriate candidates for residency on the subject property.
4. The petitioner shall comply with all Federal, State, and Village Codes, Regulations, and Policies.

June 17, 2022

Bill Enright, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development

Cc: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager
All Department Heads