



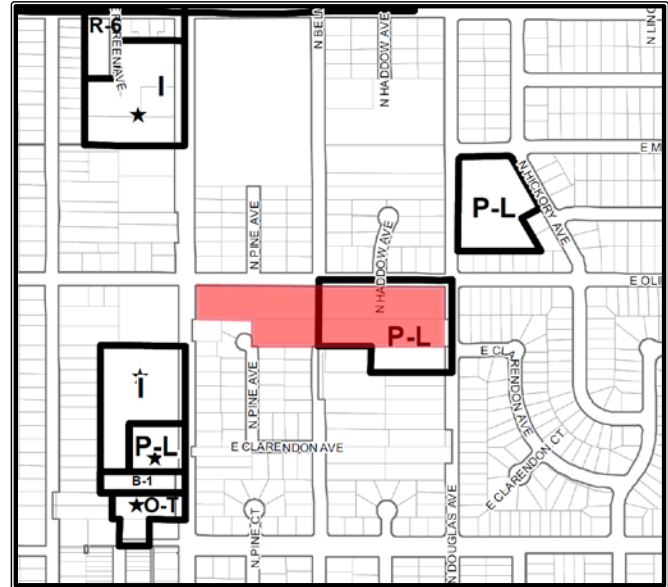
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Project Number: PC #22-018
Project Title: Olive-Mary Stitt School Building Expansion
Address: 303 E. Olive Street
PIN: 03-20-306-039 thru -041, 03-20-306-051

To: Plan Commission
Prepared By: Sam Hubbard, Development Planner
Meeting Date: February 8, 2023
Date Prepared: February 3, 2023

Petitioner: Arlington Heights School District 25
 Ryan Schulz
Address: 1200 South Dunton Avenue
 Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Existing Zoning: P-L, Public Lands District and R-3, One-Family Dwelling District
Comprehensive Plan: Schools, Parks



SURROUNDING LAND USES

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use	Comprehensive Plan
North	R-3, One-Family Dwelling District	Single-Family Homes, Orchard Evangelical Free Church	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	Our Savior's Lutheran Church	Institutional

Requested Action:

1. Amendment to Special Use Ordinance #15-038 to allow a building addition.

Variations Required:

- Amendment to the Variation granted in Ordinance #15-038 to permit 49 spaces where 79 spaces are required by Code as a result of the proposed building addition, where previously 49 parking spaces had been allowed where Code currently requires 76 spaces on the subject property
- Variation to Chapter 28, Section 6.13-3a, to allow a 4' tall fence in a front yard where fence heights are restricted to 3'.

Project Background:

In June of 2022, the Arlington Heights School District 25 community passed a referendum to establish a full day Kindergarten program for all children within District 25. As a result, the District will transition away from the current half-day Kindergarten model where approximately half of the Kindergarten cohort arrives at 9:05am and is dismissed for the day at 11:50am, and the remaining Kindergarten students arrive at 12:50pm and are dismissed at 3:35pm. The full day Kindergarten program is scheduled to begin at the start of the 2024/2025 school year. In order to accommodate the entire Kindergarten cohort within each elementary school building at one time, building additions have been proposed at six of the elementary schools within the district, which will result in an increase to the number of staff, classrooms, and overall student population at each of these six schools.

Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary School is one of the six schools that needs additional space for the full day Kindergarten program. In order to accommodate anticipated kindergarten enrollment, as well as to have the appropriate capacity to absorb future variations in student population, the School District is proposing four new classrooms, two smaller group rooms, and new storage and circulation spaces within a building addition located at the west end of the school. In 2015, Olive School received Special Use Permit approval to allow a building addition and modifications to the onsite parking lot. The four newly proposed classrooms would be housed in a one-story addition constructed on the western side of the school and along Arlington Heights Road.

The site has one parking lot located along Olive Street, which is accessed via a full access curb cut at the intersection of Olive Street and Haddow Avenue. Egress from the parking lot is under stop sign control, however, the remaining legs of the intersection have no stop signs. Circulation through the parking lot, which serves as a student drop-off/pick-up area, operates in a one-way orientation that circles around the parking stalls and then back around to the Olive Street curb cut for egress from the lot. An approximately 375 long loading lane is located in the parking lot for parent/guardian vehicles to queue while awaiting dismissal of their child. The parking lot contains a total of 49 parking spaces. No change is proposed to this parking lot, which was recently reconstructed in 2015. Olive School also utilizes the Orchard Church parking lot on the north side of Olive Street, which is used for student drop-off/pick-up and for staff parking.

Olive-Mary Stitt school currently has 624 students, 70 employees, and 31 classrooms. The school is expected to have 628 students, 72 employees, and 35 classrooms as a result of the building addition and full day Kindergarten program. There are two busses that currently serve the school, which are loaded/unloaded along Olive Street in a dedicated loading lane adjacent to the school. There is no change anticipated to bussing as a result of the full day Kindergarten. The standard 9:05am arrival and 3:35pm dismissal times would remain unchanged and there are no anticipated changes to the existing playgrounds on the subject property.

Zoning and Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is within two zoning districts; the western side of the site, which contains the school building, is zoned R-3, One-Family Dwelling District and the eastern side of the site, which contains the parking lot, school playground, and Greens Park, is within the P-L, Public Lands District. Greens Park is operated and maintained by the Arlington Heights Park District via and Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with School District 25. Public elementary schools are allowed in the R-3 District through the issuance of a Special Use Permit, and in 2015, Olive-Mary Stitt received a Special Use Permit to allow the existing elementary school on the subject property. However, the proposed building addition requires an amendment to the 2015 Special Use Permit.

In order to justify the necessary zoning actions, the School District has submitted a written response explaining how the existing school and proposed building addition comply with the three standards for Special Use Permit approval, which standards are summarized below. The written response from the School District has been included in the materials provided to the Plan Commission:

- ***That said special use is deemed necessary for the public convenience at this location.***
- ***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.***
- ***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 Village notes the following with regards to these requests:

- The Staff Development Committee recognizes the need for the school building at this location, which is illustrated by the expected growth in enrollment and passage of a community referendum to provide a full-day kindergarten;
- The school has existed on this site for many years and is part of the essential character of the neighborhood;
- The school is regularly inspected by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) for compliance with ISBE health and safety regulations which will protect the safety, morals, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the vicinity.

The Village's Comprehensive Plan designates the R-3 portion of the property as “Schools” and the P-L portion of the property as “Parks”. Given the IGA with the Park District and use of the P-L zoned property as Greens Park, the subject property is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan.

Neighborhood Meeting

On Tuesday, October 19th, 2022, District 25 held a neighborhood meeting to present their conceptual plans to surrounding property owners and solicit early feedback to understand any potential concerns with the project. According to the petitioner, one resident attended the meeting. Questions generally related to clarifications on where the project was proposed, what would occur in proximity to the proposed addition, and stormwater impacts. The petitioner’s written summary of the discussion has been included as part of the materials provided to the Plan Commission.

Conceptual Plan Review Committee

On December 14, 2022, District 25 appeared before the Conceptual Plan Review Committee. The discussion was primarily related to parking and drop-off/pick-up operations. In general, the Conceptual Plan Review Committee was supportive of the project and encouraged the petitioner to proceed with their Plan Commission application.

Design Commission

The Olive-Mary Stitt School building addition is expected to go before the Design Commission on February 14th, 2023. Any requirements made by the Design Commission must be implemented as part of building permit issuance.

Building and Site

The proposed building addition would be located at the western side of the school within an area that is currently used as a small playground for younger children. The proposed addition conforms to all bulk, height, and setback restrictions within Code. The existing parking lot will remain untouched, and the only exterior change proposed on the east side of the site is enhancements to the outdoor play area by expanding the existing rubberized play surface.

One of the changes proposed along the western side of the site is a 4' tall decorative safety barrier proposed to the west of the building addition and fronting Arlington Heights Road. Per code, the area where the fence is proposed is considered a front yard and fence heights are restricted to a maximum of 3' within a front yard. Accordingly, the following variation is required:

- ***Variation to Chapter 28, Section 6.13-3a, to allow a 4' tall open fence in a front yard where fence heights are restricted to open fences no taller than 3'.***

The Staff Development Committee is supportive of this variation as the fence will be an open style fence that will allow light and air to pass through, will have a decorative finish so as not to appear like a highway barrier, and because the fence will enhance children safety in and around the building addition.

The proposed building addition will be reviewed by the Regional Office of Education for permitting, however, a Village permit for the site changes will be required, along with an MWRD permit relative to the stormwater modifications. While the petitioner has preliminarily demonstrated that the proposed stormwater system will be able to comply with all MWRD and Village requirements, final stormwater calculations are needed and minor details/modifications must be incorporated on the engineering plans prior to site development permit issuance. The petitioner shall continue to work with the Village to provide finalized stormwater information and plans to verify compliance with all MWRD and Village regulations. It should be noted that both the existing building and the proposed addition will be protected by a fire sprinkler system.

Landscaping:

Since the existing parking lot was reconstructed in 2015, no major repair work is proposed as part of the building addition. As such, it may remain in its existing non-conforming state (the two parking rows are missing their interim landscape islands) without requiring a variation. Seventeen new trees, mostly on the west and southwest areas of the site, will be planted as part of this project.

Parking and Loading:

School District 25 has a long-term agreement with the Orchard Church located on the north side of Olive Street, which allows usage of the approximately 290 parking stalls located on the Church property. This agreement is set to expire in 2032, with a 5-year extension available. Both the onsite parking lot and the Orchard Church parking lot are used by staff for parking and parents for drop-off/pick-up. Surveys show the mid-day parking demand for Olive School to be approximately 60 vehicles with cars parked in both the Olive parking lot and the Orchard Church parking lot.

Similar to most schools, the afternoon pick-ups experience the most congestion and can result in traffic back-ups that impact traffic along Olive Street. Specifically, when the school parking lot fills to capacity during afternoon pick-up, parents begin to queue within Olive Street which can temporarily block traffic. The dismissal traffic is only heavy for approximately 10 minutes and by 3:45pm, traffic is typically back to normal

levels. Usage of the church lot for parking and pick-up is integral to the success of the pick-up operations at dismissal.

The following parking variation is required and the details parking calculations for the school are shown below:

- ***Amendment to the Variation granted in Ordinance #15-038 to permit 49 spaces where 79 spaces are required by Code as a result of the proposed building addition, where previously 49 parking spaces had been allowed where Code currently requires 76 spaces on the subject property.***

Location	Use		Ratio	Number of Employees	Number of Classrooms	Number of Students	Parking Required
303 E. Olive St.	Olive-Mary Stitt School	Elementary School	1 per employee + 1 per 5 classrooms	72	35	628	79
Total							
Total Required							79
Total Provided							49
Surplus/Deficit							-30

During the 2015 Special Use Permit approval process, a variation was granted to allow the existing number of parking stalls on the site (49) relative to the existing building size at that time (requires 76 stalls per current Code standards). However, due to the proposed increase to the school building size, the variation must be amended as outlined above.

As mentioned, the School District has a parking agreement with the Orchard Church that abuts the property to the north of Olive Street, which allows the school to use the 290 parking spaces located on the church property. With this agreement set to expire in 2032 (with options to renew for another 5 years), staff does believes that the school and church lots are adequate to accommodate for expected parking and drop-off/pick-up demand. Given the existing agreement with the church, the Staff Development Committee is supportive of the requested variation. However, should the parking agreement with the Orchard Church ever expire, additional drop-off/pick-up loading areas and/or parking may be required, which shall be at the discretion of the Village. Additionally, should the agreement expire, operation changes to address parking issues or drop-off/pick-up issues may need to be implemented to the satisfaction of the Village. To this effect, a condition of approval has been recommended below.

The School District provided a traffic and parking study from Ericksson Engineering Associates (EEA), which accessed the drop-off/pick-up operations, traffic, and parking for the school. The study was predicated on the School District projections for staffing and enrollment in the year 2026/2027 (628 students and 72 staff), however, it is important to note that the number of classrooms proposed is meant to accommodate capacity at 15% above the 2026/2027 projections to allow for future enrollment “bumps” and potential unanticipated growth. Therefore, the school is proposing capacity to accommodate enrollment beyond the findings as outlined with the EEA study. Staff has concerns that, should enrollment increase to fill the 15% excess capacity within the school, unanticipated traffic, parking, and/or drop-off/pick-up issues could be created.

In order to manage possible future problems, a condition has been recommended that would require the School District to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Village staff, that adequate onsite parking can

accommodate peak demand and drop-off/pick-up operations will not create unsafe vehicular or pedestrian movements. Should it be determined that improvements to the site or modifications to the drop-off/pick up procedures are needed to satisfactorily accommodate an increase beyond 628 students, any such improvements or modifications would need to be implemented upon administrative approval by the Village.

Per code, 19 bike parking stalls are required. The existing site has more than 19 bike parking stalls and this number will not be altered as part of this project.

RECOMMENDATION

The Staff Development Committee (SDC) reviewed the proposed Amendment to Special Use Ordinance #15-038 to allow a building addition, as well as the following Variations to Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code:

1. Amendment to the Variation granted in Ordinance #15-038 to permit 49 spaces where 79 spaces are required by Code as a result of the proposed building addition, where previously 49 parking spaces had been allowed where Code currently requires 76 spaces on the subject property
2. Variation to Chapter 28, Section 6.13-3a, to allow a 4' tall fence in a front yard where fence heights are restricted to 3'

The Staff Development Committee recommends **APPROVAL** of the application subject to the following conditions:

1. If enrollment at Olive-Mary Stitt Elementary school exceeds or is projected to exceed 634 students within the proposed building, the school district shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of Village staff, that adequate onsite parking can accommodate peak demand and drop-off/pick-up operations will not create unsafe vehicular or pedestrian movements. Improvements needed to satisfactorily accommodate such increase shall be implemented upon administrative approval by the Village. If administrative approval is not granted, an amendment to this Special Use Permit shall be required.
2. The petitioner shall continue to work with the Village and neighbors to address any drop-off/pick-up concerns.
3. Should the parking agreement with the Orchard Church expire, additional drop-off/pick-up loading areas and/or parking may be required at the discretion of the Village. Additionally, operational changes to address parking issues or drop-off/pick-up issues may also be required, which changes must be implemented to the satisfaction of the Village.
4. The petitioner shall continue to work with the Village to provide stormwater information to verify compliance with all MWRD and Village regulations to the satisfaction of the Village.
5. Compliance with the 2-14-23 Design Commission motion shall be required.
6. The petitioner shall comply with all Federal, State, and Village Codes, Regulations, and Policies.

February 3, 2023

Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development

Cc: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager
All Department Heads