STAFF REPORT

2023-09P: Site Plan Approval

To: Paul Luke, Chairman, Skokie Plan Commission
From: Mike Voitik, Planning Technician
Re: 2023-09P: Site Plan Approval
8000 East Prairie Road

Related Cases – 2023-07P: Zoning Map Amendment
2023-08P: Subdivision

General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>8000 East Prairie Road</th>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>A request for site plan approval to construct a one-story building for equipment storage and offices, and any relief discovered during the review of this case.</td>
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<td>Petitioner</td>
<td>GreenAssociates Architects, on behalf of Skokie School District 73.5</td>
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<td>Size of Site</td>
<td>215,447 square feet (4.934 acres) with frontage on Harding Avenue, East Prairie Road, Oakton Street, and Crawford Avenue.</td>
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<td>Existing Zoning &amp; Land Use</td>
<td>B2 Commercial (proposed) – junior and middle high school, office and administrative services</td>
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<td>Adjacent Zoning &amp; Land Use</td>
<td>North R2 Single-Family – detached residences</td>
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<td>South B2 Commercial – home hospice and health care agency, fine and performing arts education, sports and recreation education, bakery, office and administrative services, limited service restaurant with outdoor dining, vacant commercial</td>
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<td>East R2 Single-Family – detached residences</td>
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<td>West R2 Single-Family – detached residences,B2 Commercial – grocery store, vacant land</td>
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<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>The site is designated as retail/service employment.</td>
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SITE INFORMATION

- Public sidewalks run along East Prairie Road, Oakton Street, and Crawford Avenue.
- A portion of the public sidewalk at the northeast corner of Oakton Street and Crawford Avenue is located on the subject site.
The public alleys to the north of the school building provide access to the school’s parking lots.

A driveway off Oakton Street provides access to 5 additional parking spaces as well as the existing maintenance garage.

A circular driveway for student drop off and pick up is located off East Prairie Road, at the front entrance to the school.

The site is directly served by the CTA 97 Skokie and Pace 215 Crawford-Howard buses.

PETITIONER’S SUBMITTAL

The petitioner is requesting site plan approval to construct a one-story building for equipment storage and offices at Oliver McCracken Middle School, located at 8000 East Prairie Road. Site plan approval is required in this instance because modifications are being made to buildings on a site 1 acre or larger in size.

The petitioner stated:

The new [buildings and grounds office] will replace existing deteriorated residential style storage garages. The new building walls will now match the balance of the school. This will enhance the character of the neighborhood.

Well maintained and desirable schools are a significant contributor to property values. Improving the functionality and appearance of an existing school will positively impact surrounding property values.

There are no anticipated changes to traffic patterns or volumes due to the construction of the building. Only a limited number of staff vehicles currently access and will continue to access the lot and use the buildings and grounds office and storage facility. No additional parking is proposed.

All utilities will be buried and will meet the requirements of the Village and authorities having jurisdiction.

School buildings and their accessory structures are a vital part of the social fabric of a community. Schools educate our children. School facilities provide locations for community events. Schools assist in identifying and addressing students and community members that are experiencing financial and social hardships. Support buildings that assist in keeping a district’s equipment, facilities, and maintenance personnel secure and organized lay the foundation for all the benefits a school brings to a community to be realized.

In addition to the construction of the new building, the petitioner will also be making several improvements to the site, including:

- Adding a second handicapped parking space to the parking lot on the north side of the building to bring the site into compliance with the State of Illinois Administrative Code.
• Installing sod within the currently gravel-covered area that exists between the north end of the parking lot and the fences behind the residences at 3907 and 3911 Keeney Street.
• Constructing a new garden shed and a bio-retention facility and relocating a planter to the southeast corner of the school building.

The petitioners are also requesting a map amendment to rezone the property from R2 Single-Family to B2 Commercial (2023-07P) and a subdivision of the subject site into a single lot (2023-08P).

STAFF ANALYSIS

All pertinent departments and divisions were offered an opportunity to comment on this case. The Engineering, Forestry, Fire Prevention, and Planning Divisions provided comments on the subject case.

Engineering Division

A total of 35 parking spaces are required for the subject site and 48 parking spaces are provided, meeting the parking requirement for the school.

Oakton Street is owned and maintained by the Cook County Highway Department. Any work within the Oakton Street right-of-way will require a permit from Cook County.

The petitioner must obtain an MWRD determination letter to determine if an MWRD permit is required for the proposal. Any existing or proposed overhead telecommunication, fiber optic, electric, etc. services to the buildings and grounds office shall be buried or installed underground.

Forestry Division

Forestry staff requires that the petitioner install protection fencing around the 4 parkway trees on Oakton Street. The fencing must remain in place for the duration of the construction project.

Additionally, grass must not be planted any closer than 3 feet from the base of the trunk of the existing tree that is located between the school building and the proposed building. The area around the tree shall not be graded after removal of the tree protection fencing.

The proposed swale area to the east of the proposed building must be maintained to keep out invasive species.

Fire Prevention Division

A set of fire alarm plans for the proposed building must be submitted to the Building Department for review. The floor plan must be revised to indicate the locations of all emergency and exit lighting and fire extinguishers.
Planning Division

The Planning Division supports the proposed site plan approval request. The proposed maintenance building will consolidate vehicle and materials storage into a single, modern building that will contain 2 vehicle bays, an office, and 2 bathrooms. The building will be screened from Oakton Street by a row of arborvitae evergreens that will be planted between the fence and the south wall of the building.

The site plan must be revised to convert the striped loading area to the north of the northern handicapped parking space to a regular parking space. Both handicapped parking spaces are permitted to share a common loading area.

Planning staff requests that curbing be installed around the south, east, and west sides of the sodded area to the north of the parking lot in order to prevent vehicles from parking within that area.

APPEARANCE COMMISSION

Appearance Commission review is not required for the proposal as public school facilities are not subject to appearance review unless relief is needed from the Village Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the petitioner’s request for site plan approval to construct a one-story building for equipment storage and offices in a B2 Commercial zoning district be APPROVED based upon the Proposed Positive Findings of Fact for the site plan approval and subject to the recommended site plan approval conditions listed below.

RECOMMENDED SITE PLAN APPROVAL CONDITIONS

1. Prior to the hearing of the subject case before the Board of Trustees, the petitioner must:
   a. Revise the landscape plan to depict the existing tree that is located between the school building and the proposed equipment storage and offices building and indicate that grass will not be planted any closer than 3 feet to the base of the trunk.
   b. Submit a set of fire alarm plans for the proposed equipment storage and offices building to the Building Division for review.
   c. Revise the floor plan to indicate the locations of all emergency and exit lighting and fire extinguishers.
   d. Revise the site plan to show the conversion of the striped loading area to the north of the northern handicapped parking space to a regular parking space.
e. Revise the site plan to show the installation of curbing around the south, east, and west sides of the sodded area to the north of the parking lot in order to prevent vehicles from parking within that area.

2. The petitioner must install protection fencing around the 4 parkway trees on Oakton Street. The fencing must remain in place for the duration of the construction project.

3. The proposed swale area to the east of the proposed equipment storage and offices building must be maintained to keep out invasive species.

4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the petitioner must obtain an MWRD determination letter to determine if an MWRD permit is required for the proposal.

5. The petitioners shall develop the Subject Property in substantial conformance with the final Village approved site plan, dated <insert date of final approved plan>, landscape plan, dated <insert date of final approved plan>, floor plan, dated <insert date of final approved plan>, mezzanine plan, dated <insert date of final approved plan>, and elevations, dated <insert date of final approved plan>.

6. Parking lot and exterior lighting shall meet Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES) standards, be full cut-off design, and be directed away from adjacent properties, subject to the approval of the Engineering Division. (Standard)

7. All existing damaged public sidewalks or public sidewalks damaged due to the implementation of this plan shall be replaced. (Standard)

8. No objects are allowed within a 15-foot sight distance triangle between 30” and 84” from grade except traffic control devices listed in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. (Standard)

9. All fencing, walls, sidewalks, driveways, curbs, wheel stops, parking areas, signage, landscaping, structures, and any other facilities or infrastructure on the Subject Property shall be maintained in a good state of repair, and when needed, be repaired or replaced in a timely manner. (Standard)

10. All private and public sidewalks shall be maintained free of snow, ice, sleet, or other objects that may impede travel. (Standard)

11. Trash shall only be allowed within a designated trash enclosure and shall be screened from public view in an enclosure approved by the Appearance Commission. All trash shall be contained in such a way as to remain out of sight at all times. (Standard)

12. All off-street parking spaces shall be legibly striped and maintained. (Standard)

13. Any plan to modify parking lot striping must be approved by the Director of Engineering. (Standard)

14. The proposed development shall have a minimum of 49 on-site off-street vehicle parking spaces. (Standard)
15. The handicapped parking spaces shall be installed and maintained in compliance with State of Illinois Accessibility Standards and the Skokie Village Code, including required signage. (Standard)

16. Vehicles shall not be allowed to be parked in or otherwise block common driveways, sidewalks, aisles, or other points of access at any time, shall only be parked in designated parking spaces, and shall not overlap the striped lines of designated parking spaces. (Standard)

17. The owner of the Subject Property shall ensure that employees park on the Subject Property or in approved off-site parking spaces approved by the Engineering Division. (Standard)

18. All overhead new utilities on the Subject Property shall be placed or relocated underground. The petitioner shall bear the full cost of any utility relocation and/or conflicts. (Standard)

19. The petitioner shall sign an "Agreement for Installation and Maintenance of Landscaping" to assure that the Subject Property and parkway landscaping is completed and maintained, including trimming, watering, and replacing of dead plant materials in a timely manner in accordance with the final approved landscape plan. A copy of said Agreement is attached hereto, marked Exhibit "A" and hereby made part of this Ordinance. This "Agreement for Installation and Maintenance of Landscaping" shall be recorded at the petitioner’s expense. (Standard)

20. All new construction, alterations, and remodeling shall meet current International Building and NFPA Life Safety Codes as amended. (Standard)

21. The petitioner shall obtain all required permits and approvals for improvements to County, State, or Federal rights-of-way from the governing jurisdiction. (Standard)

22. The Subject Property must conform to the Village's storm water control requirements as contained in the Skokie Village Code, including the disconnection of any downspouts. (Standard)

23. All signage shall conform to the Skokie Village Code, except as provided in this ordinance. (Standard)

24. The petitioner shall submit to the Planning Division electronic files of the plat of survey, site plan, and landscape plan in their approved and finalized form. The files shall be scaled 2-dimensional drawing files on non-compressed, non-read only CD-ROM *.dwg AutoCAD format. (Standard)

25. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the petitioner shall submit to the Planning Division of the Community Development Department the name, property address, email address, and telephone number of the company and contact person responsible for site maintenance in compliance with this <special use permit or site plan approval>. (Standard)

26. If work is to be performed on public property or if public property is utilized or
impacted during construction and/or development, the owner shall provide, or
shall cause the developer and/or contractor to provide, the Village of Skokie with
a certificate of insurance naming the Village of Skokie as additionally insured for
any and all claims related to any and all work. The owner shall hold, and shall
cause the developer and/or contractor to hold, the Village of Skokie harmless
and indemnify the Village for any and all claims for property damage or personal
injury related to work on or use of public property. (Standard)

27. The petitioner shall comply with all Federal and State statutes, laws, rules and
regulations and all Village codes, ordinances, rules, and regulations. (Standard)

28. Failure to abide by any and all terms of this Ordinance shall be cause for the
Village to initiate hearings to determine whether the subject Ordinance, as well
as any applicable business licenses, should be revised or revoked. The petitioner
shall pay all costs related to any hearings conducted as a result of non-
compliance with any of the provisions of the enabling ordinance. The costs shall
include but not be limited to court reporter fees, attorney fees, and staff time
required researching and conducting said hearing. (Standard)

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Positive Findings of Fact for Site Plan Approval for 2023-09P
2. Site Plan, dated March 16, 2023
3. Landscape Plan, dated March 16, 2023
4. Buildings and Grounds Office Floor Plan, dated March 16, 2023
5. Buildings and Grounds Office Mezzanine Plan, dated March 16, 2023
7. Photos of Subject Property
8. Land Use and Zoning Map
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<th>Consideration</th>
<th>Finding</th>
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<td>The request is harmonious with and does not adversely affect adjacent properties.</td>
<td>The proposed buildings and grounds office will replace two older garages and will be constructed with materials that match the appearance of the school building. Additionally, the buildings and grounds office will be screened by a row of arborvitae shrubs.</td>
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<td>The request can demonstrate that adequate public facilities, including roads,</td>
<td>Adequate public facilities exist to serve the proposed building.</td>
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<td>drainage, utilities, and police and fire protection exist or will exist to serve</td>
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<td>the requested use at the time such facilities are needed.</td>
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<td>The request demonstrates adequate provision for maintenance of the associated</td>
<td>No problems are anticipated with respect to the maintenance of the associated structures.</td>
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<td>structures.</td>
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<td>The request has considered and, to the degree possible, addressed the adverse</td>
<td>The installation of solar panels on the roof of the proposed buildings and grounds office will positively affect the environment.</td>
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<td>effects on the natural environment.</td>
<td>The petitioner will also be increasing the amount of permeable surface at the subject site by removing some of the pavement between the new building and the existing school building and replacing it with grass.</td>
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<td>The request will not create undue traffic congestion.</td>
<td>Undue traffic congestion will not be created by the request.</td>
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<td>The request will not adversely affect public health, safety, and welfare.</td>
<td>Public safety at the driveway at Oakton Street will be improved due to the addition of a stop sign and a stop bar.</td>
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<td>The request conforms to all applicable provisions of this code, except where</td>
<td>The request conforms to all applicable provisions of this code.</td>
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<td>relief is granted with the request.</td>
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PHOTOS OF SURROUNDING PROPERTIES