



Application for Public Hearing VARIANCE

YOU MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED, ATTACH EXTRA PAGES TO THE PETITION.

Name of Business (if Applicable): First Baptist Church of Oak Park

Address/Location of Property in Question: 820 Ontario Street, Oak Park, IL 60302

Property Identification Number(s)(PIN):

Name of Property Owner(s): First Baptist Church of Oak Park, Karen Borgstadt, Board Chairman of the Ministry Support Team

Address of Property Owner(s): 820 Ontario Street, Oak Park, IL 60302

E-Mail of Property Owner(s): djhailey@fbcoakpark.org *fbcop820@gmail.com* **Phone:** 708.848.4070

If Land Trust, name(s) of all beneficial owners: (A Certificate of Trust must be filed.) _____

Name of Applicant(s) (if different than Property Owner): The Children's School of Oak Park

Applicant's Address: 820 Ontario Street, Oak Park, IL 60302

Applicant's Contact Information: Phone 708.484.8033 E-Mail: Admin@tcsconnect.org

Other: _____

Property Interest of Applicant: _____ Owner _____ Legal Representative _____ Contract Purchaser X Other

(If Other - Describe): Tenant

Property Type: 1 or 2 Family Residential Multiple-Family Commercial Mixed-Use Hospital Institutional

Zoning District: R-1 R-2 R-3(50) R-3(35) R-4 R-5 R-6 R-7
 DT (1 - 2 - 3) GC HS MS NA NC RR
 H OS I

Describe Variance Proposal: The proposed use will be similar to that of Alcuin Montessori School located at 324 N. Oak Park Avenue. We envision a 40'x40' outside classroom conducive for schoolwork, outdoor exploration, and play on the east side of the First Baptist Church building. We intend for the entire area to be enclosed with a 3'-5' fence open fence and landscaping. Materials in the space will be natural (e.g., wooden, tree stumps) and to child scale. Accessory structures envisioned include a storage shed (no larger than 10'x10') and a children's playhouse (also not larger than 10'x10') in neutral tones. Neither will be constructed with a permanent foundation. No items will obstruct driver site pose public risk. The area will be used throughout the school day and occasionally for evening school family events.

Size of Parcel (from Plat of Survey): _____ Square Feet

Adjacent:	Zoning Districts	Land Uses
To the North:	R7 Multi-Family	Write Inn; multi-family buildings
To the South:	OS	Scoville Park
To the East:	R7 Multi-Family	Free Church; multi-family building
To the West:	R7 Multi-Family	Multi-family buildings

Is the property in question currently in violation of the Zoning Ordinance? ____ Yes ___X___ No

If Yes, how? _____

Is the property in question currently subject to any zoning relief? ____ Yes ___X___ No

If Yes, how? _____

If Yes, please provide relevant Ordinance No.'s _____

Is the subject property located within any Historic District? ___x___ Yes _____ No

If Yes: Frank Lloyd Wright Ridgeland/Oak Park Gunderson

From what Section(s) of the Zoning Ordinance are you requesting approval / relief?

Article: 9.3 Accessory Structures and Uses Section: 9.3 (A)(5)(b)

Article: _____ Section: _____

Article: _____ Section: _____

Explain why, in your opinion, the grant of this request will be in harmony with the neighborhood and not contrary to the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance or Comprehensive Plan;

The proposed use will be similar to that of Alcuin Montessori School located at 324 N. Oak Park Avenue. We envision an outside classroom conducive to schoolwork, outdoor exploration, and play using natural materials (e.g., wooden, tree stumps) and suitable for children. Accessory structures envisioned include a storage shed (no larger than 10'x10') and a children's playhouse (also not larger than 10'x10') will be neutral tones and close to the main building. Neither will be constructed with a permanent foundation. We intend for the entire area to be fenced. The area will be used throughout the school day and occasionally for evening family events. Fencing will not obstruct driver site lines or pose any public risk. The existing play area on the west end of the building is specific to younger children (2-5 year olds) who attend the preschool that has operated onsite since 1926. We aim to create a safe space for older children that also fits the historic feel of the neighborhood.

I (we) certify that all the above statements and the statements contained in any papers or plans submitted herewith are true to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

I (we) consent to the entry in or upon the premises described in this application by any authorized official of the Village of Oak Park for the purpose of securing information, posting, maintaining and removing such notices as may be required by law.

Pamela Freese

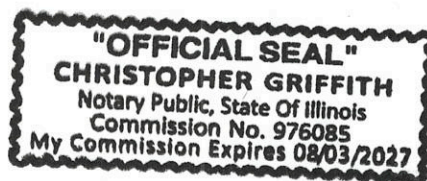
(Printed Name) Applicant

Pamela Freese

(Signature) Applicant

10.5.2023

Date



~~David John Hailey~~

Karen Borgstadt

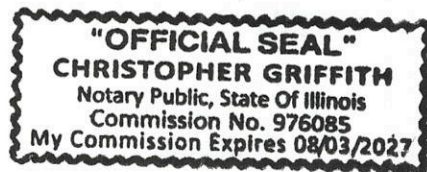
(Printed Name) Owner

Karen Borgstadt

(Signature) Owner

10.5.2023

Date



Owner's Signature must be notarized

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS

5th DAY OF October, 2023

Ch R Griffith

(Notary Public)



The Children's School · K - 8

Variance Application Project Summary
The Children's School/First Baptist Church of Oak Park
820 Ontario Street, Oak Park

The proposed use will be similar to that of Alcuin Montessori School located at 324 N. Oak Park Avenue. We envision a 40' x 40' outside classroom conducive for schoolwork, outdoor exploration, and play on the east side of the First Baptist church building. We intend for the entire area to be enclosed with a 3' - 5' open fence and landscaping. Materials in the space will be natural (e.g., wooden, tree stumps) and to child scale. Accessory structures envisioned include a storage shed (no larger than 10' x 10') and a children's playhouse (also not larger than 10' x 10') in neutral tones. Neither will be constructed with a permanent foundation. No items will obstruct driver sight lines or pose a public risk. The area will be used throughout the school day and occasionally for evening school family events.

Variation Standards from First Baptist Church of Oak Park & The Children's School
October 5, 2023

1. The Zoning Board of Appeals decision must make findings to support each of the following:
 - a. The strict application of the terms of the Ordinance will result in undue hardship unless the specific relief requested is granted.

Undue hardship will result from strict application of the terms of the Ordinance because learning by doing and outdoor education are integral parts of [The Children's School's](#) educational philosophy and pedagogy (see <https://www.thechildrensschool.info/nature-play-learning>). The Children's School cannot carry out its educational mission and provide appropriate educational experiences to its students without a dedicated outdoor learning and play space for building, exploring, experimenting, collaborating, and interacting with natural materials. There is no other suitable location on the property for such a space. The existing play area on the west side of the building is built for children ages 2-5 and per DCFS regulations cannot be shared with school age children from The Children's School.

- b. The particular physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property impose a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out.

Due to the size and location of the building on its lot, there is no other yard space where an outdoor learning and play space could be located. The First Baptist Church of Oak Park facility that The Children's School will use was built as and has historically been used as an educational facility, serving students of various ages over many decades, and this variance is needed to continue the building's historic use as an educational facility.

- c. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances inherent to the subject property and not from the personal situation of the owner and has not been created by any person presently having a proprietary interest in the property in question.

Unique circumstances inherent to the subject property (the size, shape, and location of the building on the lot) creates three separate front yards but no back or side yards where an outdoor learning and play space could be created. The yard on Grove Avenue, although technically a front yard, was previously allowed to be created as a play space for the First Baptist Preschool. The First Baptist Preschool play space on Grove Avenue is built for children ages 2-5 and per Department of Children and Family Services

regulations cannot be shared with school age children from The Children's School. We are asking that the northern portion of the Oak Park Avenue yard be allowed as a fenced outdoor learning and play space for The Children's School, to allow TCS to carry out its educational mission on this unique property.

2. The Zoning Board of Appeals, in making its findings, may inquire into the following evidentiary issues, as well as any others deemed appropriate:

- a. The granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare in the neighborhood in which the property is located.

The Children's School hopes to create an outdoor learning and play space on the north side of the property's yard along Oak Park Avenue. The south portion of this yard will remain open. There are no elements that will create any threats to health, safety, or welfare.

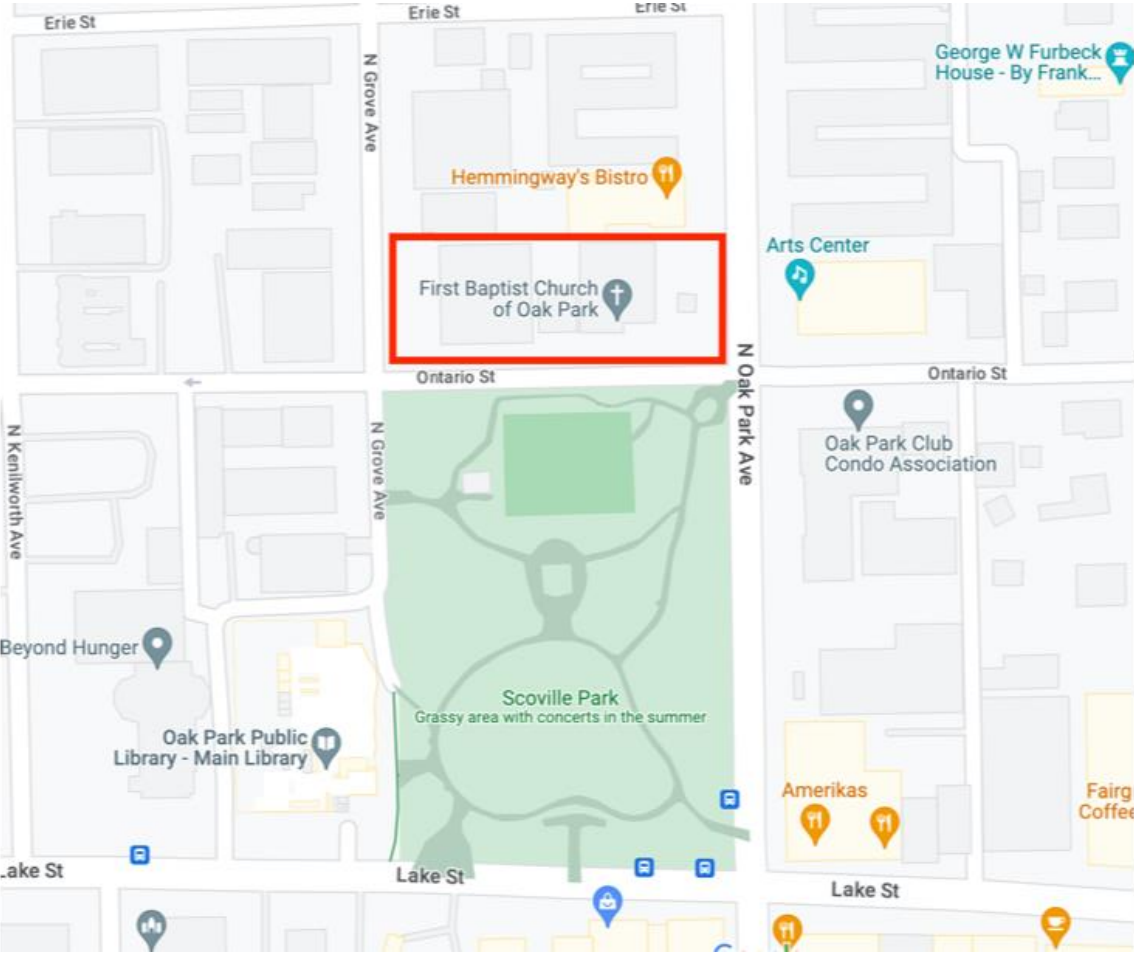
- b. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, substantially increase congestion in the public streets, increase the danger of fire, endanger the public safety, or impair property values within the neighborhood.

The proposed variance will not impair supply of light or air, increase congestion, increase the danger of fire, endanger public safety, or impair property values within the neighborhood. Indeed this proposed variation will substantially enhance the property as it will take an under-utilized space and create a vibrant space for learning and play consistent with The Children's School's educational mission and First Baptist Church of Oak Park's community engagement mission.

- c. The proposed variation is consistent with the spirit and intent of this Ordinance and the adopted land use policies.

The Village Zoning Ordinance recognizes that at times unique properties can be unfairly burdened by regulations necessary for the general good of the community. The Ordinance provides for flexibility in addressing unique circumstances such as ours. We believe that our proposed use of this property is consistent with the original intent of the building as an educational space and the spirit and intent of the Village's Zoning Ordinance.

First Baptist Church of Oak Park / The Children's School of Oak Park
Application for Zoning Variance



Subject property in red. Fronts on Grove Avenue (west), Ontario Street (south), and Oak Park Avenue (east).

First Baptist Church of Oak Park / The Children's School of Oak Park
Application for Zoning Variance



Proposed site of outdoor learning and play space relative to the school building.

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Subject property seen from corner of Oak Park Avenue (on the right) and Ontario Street (bottom). Existing sign and landscaping to remain.

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This area north of and behind the sign (far left) at the corner of Oak Park Avenue and Pleasant Street remains open, free and clear.

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Site of proposed outdoor learning / play area. The roughly 40' by 40' area will span along the north edge of the path (bottom left) to approximately 7'5" from the sidewalk lot line (on the right).

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Looking south toward the proposed outdoor learning and play area. Trees on the right in this image are visual border to Hemmingway's Bistro outdoor dining area. Proposed open fencing to enclose learning and play area will not obstruct traffic or sight lines.

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Easternmost edge of proposed learning and play area. The fence will enclose existing short light posts leaving roughly 7'10" to the sidewalk.



