

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS-RM. 201**

A recording of this meeting is available on the Village of Oak Park Website: <https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/citizen-commissions/commission-tv>

Call to order and Roll Call

PRESENT: Chair Quinn and Members Steve Ruszczyk, Mark Hansen, Jim Lencioni and David Brumirski

ABSENT: Members Deborah McQueen and Don DeBruin

ALSO PRESENT: Rasheda Jackson, Counsel; Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

QUORUM: Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and declared that a quorum was present.

Public Comment

None

Introduction and Procedure Outline

Chair Quinn explains the procedure for the evening, indicating that we have three public hearing scheduled tonight.

Public Hearings

CALENDAR NUMBER: 06-20-Z: 1120 Lake Street

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“Board”) will conduct a public hearing on an application for a variance filed by the Applicant, 1120 Retail, LLC, to operate an office use on the ground floor within 50 feet of a street line at the property located at 1120 Lake Street, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Numbers 16-07-119-029-0000 & 16-07-119-031-0000 in the DT-1 Downtown Zoning Sub-District pursuant to Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance.

The Applicant says that he has tried to market the vacant property for over 2 years and there has been very little interest. He says that Downtown Oak Park is already peppered with many empty spaces and growing. Although the property has Lake Street frontage, most of its space is located towards the back. This makes it more difficult to rent to retailers/restaurants because they look for a lot of visibility/frontage. He says that we have had offers to rent the front space, but that would kill the viability of the back space and make it un-rentable.

The Applicant argues that the unique circumstance is not from mismanagement or any person having a proprietary interest in the property. The unique circumstances are from a change in people’s shopping and eating habits. The market has changed and it is something we have to acknowledge and try to adapt to it. Co-working space is, however, on the rise.

Member Brumirski moved to approve the application. Member Lencioni seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Member Ruszczyk moved to approve a draft Resolution approving the application. Member Brumirski seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

CALENDAR NUMBER: 08-20-Z: 306-312 Madison Street

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“Board”) will conduct a public hearing on a special use permit application filed by the Applicant, Mary Lubinus, to operate a day care center pursuant to Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance at the property located at 306-312 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Numbers 16-08-318-007-0000; 16-08-318-008 & 16-08-318-009-0000 (“Premises”) in the MS Madison Street Zoning District.

The Applicant says that Montessori Academy Spanish Immersion is a well known daycare, which will provide education and care in a full day setting, for children 15 months to 6 years old, and an after school program for children up to 12 years old. The Applicant says her day care facility would provide a nurturing, safe and stimulating environment that promotes respect for diversity, independence, positive self-esteem, and social-cognitive development in children helping them to become successful in all areas of life. She says that the childcare market is in the Oak Park is competitive. There are over 15 Montessori programs, of which at least 4 of them offer Spanish immersion programs. She says the children who have gone through her program can read in Spanish, and are able to fluently use the language in spoken and written form, and arrive at kindergarten with superior skills in areas essential for their growth.

Member Brumirski moved to approve the application. Member Hansen seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

Member Brumirski moved to approve a draft Resolution approving the application. Member Ruszczyk seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

CALENDAR NUMBER: 09-20-Z: 103 N. Oak Park Avenue

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“Board”) will conduct a public hearing on an application for a special use permit filed by the Applicant, Nora Curtin, to operate an educational facility-vocational use pursuant to Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance to permit a driving school at the property located at 103 N. Oak Park Avenue, Unit C, Property Index Number 16-07-129-036-1002 in the DT Downtown Zoning District.

The Applicant says that the space would be used as a classroom for driver’s education that provides lessons in safety and rules of the road, so there would be no health, safety or welfare issues. The students who take these classes would be from the local neighborhood/schools. These classes are typically two hours in length, and held one to three days a week. Enrollment typically ranges from 8-15 students per class, based on the time of the year. Rarely would driving lessons originate or end at the facility, as students are typically picked up from their homes, so no added traffic or parking would be brought to the downtown Oak Park area. Excel’s instructor also keeps their vehicles at their homes, so there would be no need for parking vehicles in the downtown area.

Member Lencioni moved to recommend approval of the application. Member Hansen seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

The ZBA Attorney presented a draft positive Recommendation that will go to the Village Board. Member Lencioni moved to approve the Recommendation. Member Brumirski seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

The meeting was adjourned.