

Case 22-048-CU

1683 Elk Blvd

Conditional Use

Case 22-053-CU-LASR

1600 E. Golf

Conditional Use

Localized Alternative Sign Regulation



DES PLAINES PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING

December 13, 2022

APPROVED MINUTES

The Des Plaines Planning and Zoning Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 102 of the Des Plaines Civic Center.

Chair Szabo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll call was established.

PRESENT: Szabo, Fowler, Hofherr, Veremis, Weaver

ABSENT: Catalano, Saletnik

ALSO PRESENT: Jonathan Stytz, AICP, Senior Planner
Samantha Redman, Associate Planner
Margie Mosele, CED Executive Assistant

A quorum was present.

Chair Announcement: The public hearing for 1378 Margret Street, Case Number 22-055-APPEAL, is not on the agenda this evening. Any attendees that are present for this case can comment during public comment for matters that are not on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEM

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Board Member Fowler, seconded by Board Member Veremis to approve the meeting minutes of November 22, 2022.

AYES: Fowler, Veremis, Hofherr, Weaver, Szabo

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

*****MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY ****

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Pending Applications:

1. Address: 1683 Elk Boulevard Case Number: 22-048-CU

The petitioner is requesting (i) a variation from the collective off-street parking requirements for the mix of uses proposed at the subject property and (ii) a conditional use permit to operate a Commercially Zoned Assembly Use in the C-3 General Commercial District, as well as any other variations, waivers, and zoning relief as may be necessary.

PINs: 09-16-300-119-0000 & 09-216-300-120-0000

Petitioner: Jiju Matthew, Living Hope Church, 1683 Elk Blvd, Des Plaines, IL 60016

Owner: Thomas H. Ahlbeck, Elk Creek LLC, 1651 Elk Blvd Des Plaines, IL 60016
Property Control and Elk Boulevard LLC, 1665-1695 Elk Blvd., Des Plaines, IL 60016)

Ward Number: #1, Alderman Mark Lysakowski
Existing Zoning: C-3, General Commercial
Surrounding Zoning: North: C-3, General Commercial
South: C-3, General Commercial
East: R-1, Single Family
West: C-3, General Commercial

Surrounding Land Uses:
North: Commercial buildings
South: Open space/river
East: Single Family Residence
West: Commercial Building

Street Classification: Elk Blvd is classified as a local street.

Comprehensive Plan : Commercial is the recommended use of the property.

Property/Zoning History: This property is one unit of a two-building, six-unit office complex (west building: 1651 Elk Blvd., east building: 1665-1695 Elk Blvd.), and is one zoning lot. The property is zoned C-3 and the uses operating at this site have consisted of commercial office space throughout the known history of the development. This site is located within the 100-year floodplain, requiring adherence to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations for any construction in this location.

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Project Description: The petitioner, Jiju Mathew of the Living Hope Church, is proposing a conditional use to allow a commercially zoned assembly at 1683 Elk Blvd. Specifically, the petitioner is interested in using one unit of the 1665-1695 building (east building) for worship services. The church has used this property as an office space for approximately three years and now proposes to host worship services on Sundays and weeknights after standard business hours. A conditional use permit is necessary to operate a commercially zoned assembly use in this location.

Proposed Use and Hours of Operation

1683 Elk is one unit out of six in a two-building, multi-tenant office complex (six total uses/tenants). All other tenants are classified as “office” in the Zoning Ordinance, including Ahlbeck and Company, an accounting company; a dentist office; an IT company; a video production company; and the Center of Concern, a nonprofit organization that provides housing and social services to senior and other at-risk populations.

The attached floor plan of the 1683 Elk unit includes office space and a common meeting area that the petitioner intends to use for worship services. The proposed hours of operation are as follows:

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for hours of the office use (Tuesday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday for occasional office use)
- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. for assembly uses on weekdays (Monday through Friday)
- 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. for assembly uses on Sundays

Generally, the hours of operation for the other tenants in this office building are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Off-Street Parking

Pursuant to Section 12-9-7, commercially zoned assembly uses for places of worship are required to provide 1 space for every 60 square feet of gross floor area. For comparison, the existing office use for the 1683 space requires 1 space for every 250 square feet of gross floor area. The definition of “floor area” in Section 12-13-3 allows spaces such as restrooms, mechanical rooms, hallways, and storage areas to be excluded. The following reflects the required parking.

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Address	Business	Use	Gross Floor Area	Existing Required Parking	New Required Parking
1651 Elk Blvd	Ahlbeck and Company	Office	2,673	10.69	10.69
1665 Elk Blvd	Center of Concern	Office	3,632	14.53	14.53
1677 Elk Blvd	H M S Media	Office	1,848	7.4	7.4
1683 Elk Blvd	Living Hope Church	Office (existing); Commercially Zoned Assembly (proposed)	1,727	6.9	28.78
1689 Elk Blvd	Jensen	Office	1,727	6.91	6.91
1695 Elk Blvd	Des Plaines Family Dentistry	Office	1,713	6.85	6.85
Total*				54	76
*Spaces rounded up to next whole number					

The parking lot currently includes 56 standard parking spaces and two accessible spaces (58 total) to serve the two buildings collectively. Although the 1651 Elk (office building) adjoins 1645 Elk (Pavestone Brick Paving), Pavestone is a separate zoning lot, with its own parking lot and does not use this parking area.

A minimum of three accessible spaces are required, so designating additional accessible parking spaces to satisfy Section 12-9-8 is a recommended approval condition. The spaces in front of 1683 Elk have striping for a loading zone and a handicap-accessible curb but are missing some necessary striping and signage. These may be an option for the petitioner to fulfill the condition.

Staff determined the available parking for all tenants in the complex – without the proposed assembly use – meets the requirement. Section 12-9-3.A provides that required parking may be provided collectively. Adding the assembly use increases the total requirement to 76, making the parking lot 18 spaces short of the requirement without the practical ability to add more. However, it is important to note the assembly use is not proposed to overlap in hours with the other office uses. The petitioner states in the attached Response to Standards that they have confirmed that no tenants in this office complex currently operate on Sunday, and therefore the parking lot would not be in regular use by the other businesses in the complex on this day of the week. Note the

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neighboring tenants do not have hours of operation after 5 p.m. on any day of the week, leaving many spaces unoccupied. In addition, per the Fire Prevention Bureau, the maximum occupancy load for the unit is 21.

The attached Parking Study completed in October 2022 indicates an average of 32 spaces are occupied on a weekday and average of 2 spaces occupied on Sundays. Additionally, the church requests to use the space on occasional evenings for meetings or other worship activities, intending to operate after 5 p.m. and not exceeding 20 attendees.

Standards for Variation

Variation requests are subject to the standards set forth in Section 12-3-6(H) of the Zoning Ordinance. The petitioner’s rationale for how the proposal would satisfy each of the standards is attached. The PZB may use this rationale as its findings, or the Board may create its own. The standards that should serve as the basis of findings are the following:

- 1. Hardship: No variation shall be granted pursuant to this subsection H unless the applicant shall establish that carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this title would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty.**

Comment: The existing 58 parking spaces are not sufficient to meet the parking requirement for the proposed mix of uses on this property. However, 1683 Elk for the proposed use will have limited occupancy: a maximum 21 attendees per the determination of the Fire Prevention Bureau Chief. Requiring parking to meet the Zoning Ordinance would be unreasonable given this limitation in the size of assembly. Twenty-eight spaces are required when a maximum of only 21 attendees could be present—and presumably if any of these attendees are in the same family, they would likely come to the property together.

Without the variation, to meet the existing parking requirements the occupants and/or the property owner would need to (i) expand the parking lot to accommodate the proposed assembly use or (ii) acquire or sign a parking agreement with property owners with available parking on nearby parcels to meet the collective parking requirements in Section 12-9-3. In staff’s view, the second option would necessitate pedestrian crossings of Elk Boulevard where there is a not a convenient or reasonably close pedestrian crossing.

As discussed in Standard 2 below, expansion of the parking area is not feasible due to physical constraints. Due the limitations on the size of the assembly and the location of the property, it presents a hardship and practical difficulty to meet the parking requirements in Section 12-9-7.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

- 2. Unique Physical Condition: The subject lot is exceptional as compared to other lots subject to the same provision by reason of a unique physical condition, including presence of an existing use, structure, or sign, whether conforming or nonconforming; irregular or substandard shape or size; exceptional topographical features; or other extraordinary physical conditions peculiar to and inherent in the subject lot that amount to more than a mere inconvenience to the owner and that**

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relate to or arise out of the lot rather than the personal situation of the current owner of the lot.

Comment: 1683 Elk is a small space and limited to 21 occupants per the fire code, reducing parking demand for this use. In addition, this property is within a 100-year floodplain in close proximity to the river and a water feature to the south, which presents constraints to construction and expansion of impervious surface (parking lot) due to local and federal regulations.

If required to meet collective parking standards pursuant to Section 12-9-7, the acquisition of other parking areas would also present a challenge due to the location. The collective parking requirements limit the location of any off-street parking spaces to properties that are partially or fully unoccupied (i.e., no existing uses) within 1,000 feet of the subject parcel. There are few available vacant or partially vacant properties within 1000 feet that could provide an additional 18 parking spaces, and anything across the street might induce unsafe crossings.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

3. Not Self-Created: The aforesaid unique physical condition is not the result of any action or inaction of the owner or its predecessors in title and existed at the time of the enactment of the provisions from which a variance is sought or was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this title.

Comment: At the time of construction, the site met parking requirements and did not have the same physical constraints (floodplain and development of the surrounding parcels) that now limit the expansion of the parking lot. When constructed, an assembly use was not envisioned to occupy any of the office spaces. However, it is increasingly common for churches and other places of worship to occupy office spaces, as it is often more economical for smaller churches to lease existing properties rather than purchasing or constructing new facilities.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

4. Denied Substantial Rights: The carrying out of the strict letter of the provision from which a variance is sought would deprive the owner of the subject lot of substantial rights commonly enjoyed by owners of other lots subject to the same provision.

Comment: Due to the fire code, this assembly use could not exceed 21 attendees. The Zoning Ordinance requires 28 spaces to accommodate the parking needs of the assembly use, exceeding the total number of possible attendees. Meeting the requirement in this circumstance would be burdensome and unnecessary for the proposed use to harmoniously operate in this location with the other existing tenants and within the neighborhood. If the variation is not approved, the conditional use could not be granted because parking requirements for the new mixture of uses could not be satisfied due to the physical limitations of the site, discussed in Standard 2.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

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- 5. Not Merely Special Privilege: The alleged hardship or difficulty is neither merely the inability of the owner or occupant to enjoy some special privilege or additional right not available to owners or occupants of other lots subject to the same provision, nor merely the inability of the owner to make more money from the use of the subject lot.**

Comment: This variation would not constitute a special privilege for the occupant. It is a reasonable request in this circumstance to reduce the parking standards due to the limited occupancy load for the site and the physical limitations of the property.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

- 6. Title And Plan Purposes: The variation would not result in a use or development of the subject lot that would be not in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this title and the provision from which a variation is sought were enacted or the general purpose and intent of the comprehensive plan.**

Comment: As discussed in the petitioner’s narrative, the petitioner and property owner have confirmed with neighbors that the use of the parking spaces on Sunday and after hours would not disturb their business activities. A parking agreement exists between the property owner and petitioner discussing the exact hours and spaces allocated for Living Hope Church to ensure the proposed use is in harmony with the other tenants and that off-street parking demand is met to limit any potential nuisance to the neighborhood.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

- 7. No Other Remedy: There is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject lot.**

Comment: Expansion of the parking lot to accommodate the new use would be challenging due to the location in the floodplain, constraints with the existing water feature to the south, and the fact the area surrounding this site is already fully developed. If the church was required to find additional parking elsewhere, it would be challenging to meet the collective parking requirements section of the zoning ordinance; the petitioner or the property owner would need to locate and sign an agreement with the owner of a parcel within 1000 feet of 1683 Elk, with available parking that could accommodate this use. This would be unnecessary, as the narrative discusses the lack of overlap in the hours of operation of the other tenants and the availability of parking during the proposed hours of service.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

- 8. Minimum Required: The requested variation is the minimum measure of relief necessary to alleviate the alleged hardship or difficulty presented by the strict application of this title.**

Comment: This is the minimum required relief needed to alleviate the hardship.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if any): _____

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Standards for Conditional Use

The following is a discussion of standards for zoning amendments from Section 12-3-4(E) of the Zoning Ordinance. Rationale for how the proposed amendments would satisfy the standards is provided below and in the petitioner’s response to standards. The PZB may use this rationale toward its recommendation, or the Board may make up its own.

1. The proposed Conditional Use is in fact a Conditional Use established within the specific Zoning district involved:

Comment: Commercially zoned assembly use requires a conditional use permit in the C-3 Zoning District.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

2. The proposed Conditional Use is in accordance with the objectives of the City’s Comprehensive Plan:

Comment: The 2019 Comprehensive Plan illustrates this area to be used for commercial activities. This use would not conflict with any policies of the comprehensive plan.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

3. The proposed Conditional Use is designed, constructed, operated and maintained to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity:

Comment: All uses will be located within an existing building; no changes to the appearance are proposed. The worship services will occur indoors. Although an office complex, this use will not alter the appearance of this property and will not result in excess traffic or deliveries.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

4. The proposed Conditional Use is not hazardous or disturbing to existing neighboring uses:

Comment: As discussed in the Petitioner’s Response to Standards, the petitioner discussed the proposed worship services with each of the existing tenants in the office complex and confirmed no businesses operate on Sunday. The businesses in this complex operate during typical business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The proposed worship services will occur between 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and no activities after 9 p.m. are proposed after business hours during weeknights. Parking can be accommodated on site and will not require any overflow parking into the adjacent neighborhood.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

5. The proposed Conditional Use is to be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage

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structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer, and schools; or, agencies responsible for establishing the Conditional Use shall provide adequately any such services:

Comment: The existing building has been adequately served by essential public facilities and services. Staff has no concerns that the proposed use will not be adequately served with essential public facilities and services.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

6. The proposed Conditional Use does not create excessive additional requirements at public expense for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic well-being of the entire community:

Comment: The proposed use would neither create a burden on public facilities, nor would it be a detriment to the economic well-being of the community.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

7. The proposed Conditional Use does not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke fumes, glare or odors:

Comment: As discussed in this staff report and the Petitioner’s Narrative and Response to Standards, the hours of operation for the proposed uses do not overlap with the hours of operation for the other existing tenants; therefore, the parking demand of this request would be met. No larger truck traffic will be generated by any uses. All proposed activities would take place inside the building reducing any noise, smoke fumes, light, glare, odors, or other concerns.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

8. The proposed Conditional Use provides vehicular access to the property designed so that it does not create an interference with traffic on surrounding public thoroughfares:

Comment: Vehicular access will continue to be provided through one access point on Elk Blvd. This use will generate new traffic and parking on Sundays. However, the site is located on Elk Blvd, a generally low-traffic connection between Rand Road and River Road with two lanes of traffic in either direction, and near two arterial roads; therefore, the existing street network is capable of accommodating new traffic. The number of vehicles entering/exiting the parking lot would not exceed the number of vehicles typically located at the site Monday through Friday. As discussed in the parking section of this report, adequate parking would be available for this use given the worship services will not overlap with the normal business owners of the other businesses in the complex. Refer to the Parking Study for additional details.

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9. The proposed Conditional Use does not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of natural, scenic, or historic features of major importance:

Comment: The subject property is within an existing building and thus would not result in the loss or damage of natural, scenic, or historic features. No new development is proposed for this site.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

10. The proposed Conditional Use complies with all additional regulations in the Zoning Ordinance specific to the Conditional Use requested:

Comment: The proposed uses comply with all applicable requirements as stated in the Zoning Ordinance. A Standard Variation for parking is necessary and submitted concurrently with this application to provide relief to the parking standards for this conditional use.

PZB Additions or Modifications (if necessary): _____

PZB Procedure and Recommended Conditions: There are two requests upon which the PZB must take action. First, a Standard Variation, for which the PZB is the deciding body, and second, a recommendation to the City Council regarding a conditional use permit.

Standard Variation

Pursuant to Sections 12-3-6(F), (I), and (J) of the Zoning Ordinance, the PZB may vote to approve, approve with conditions, deny, or approve relief less than requested. The request is to vary the off-street parking requirement for the proposed mix of uses, which includes a commercially zoned assembly, from 76 spaces to 58 total spaces. This relief is 24 percent of the requirement, which falls under a Standard Variation (up to 30 percent relief).

If the variation fails, consideration of the conditional use will be moot.

Conditional Use

Pursuant to Section 12-3-4(E) of the Zoning Ordinance, the PZB may vote to recommend approval, approval with modifications, or disapproval of the conditional use. The City Council has final authority over both requests.

Should the PZB vote to approve the variation and recommend approval of the conditional use, staff suggests the following conditions:

Recommend Conditions of Approval:

1. The Subject Property shall only be used for the Activities during the following times:
 - a. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for hours of the office use (Tuesday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday for employees, as needed).
 - b. 5 pm to 9 pm for assembly uses on weeknights (Monday through Friday).

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- c. 7:30 am to 1:30 pm for assembly uses on Sundays.
 - d. Any other hours of operation that are approved by the Director of Community and Economic Development.
2. Additional accessible parking for the development shall be located on site to meet the mobility accessible standards pursuant to Section 12-9-8.
 3. The Activities and the Subject Property must comply at all times with the maximum occupancy load prescribed by the Fire Department.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Location Map
- Attachment 2: Site and Context Photos
- Attachment 3: Project Narrative and Responses to Standards
- Attachment 4: Parking Study
- Attachment 5: Floor Plan
- Attachment 6: Plat of Survey/Site Plan

Chair Szabo swore in JiJu Matthew and Jimi Vilson from Living Hope Church and Thomas H. Ahlbeck, property owner. Mr. Matthews explained that they are requesting to operate a commercially zoned assembly use specially a place of worship in C-3 District. Mr. Vilson gave a summary of requests which include a variation from the off-street parking requirements for the existing uses and proposed assembly use at the subject property and a conditional use permit to operate a Commercially Zoned Assembly Use in the C-3 General Commercial District. Mr. Vilson stated that they leased 1683 Elk Blvd about one year ago. They want to open this faith-based church to get to know the community better. He believes his services will be beneficial for the community. They want to open a space where everyone feels they belong. Mr. Matthews stated the hours of operation for services would be Sundays from 7:00-1:30 pm. Looking to have music/worship practice starting at 7:30 a.m. and services after. He expects about 21 people at the music practice. In terms of parking, Tom the owner emailed all the neighbors and they have been very welcoming. An engineer did a parking study and said the subject property has ample parking for Sundays.

Member Fowler asked how many members their and if they would be having events during the week.

Mr. Vilson stated that they currently have 40-50 members and do not have plans for events during the week but they do have meetings in the office space.

Samantha Redman, Associate Planner, reviewed the staff report. Ms. Redman explained the application. There are two requests for this application which includes a Conditional Use for a Commercially Zoned Assembly Use and a related Standard Variation for parking.

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Ms. Redman went over the power point presentation. The Standard Variation is to reduce the parking requirement by less than 30 percent. The Conditional Use is for commercially zoned assembly. The hours of operation are 9-5 Tuesday - Friday. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for hours of the office use (Tuesday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday for employees, as needed), 5 pm to 9 pm for assembly uses on weeknights (Monday through Friday) and 7:30 am to 2 pm for assembly uses on Sundays.

Ms. Redman added that all activities are indoors. Fire Code occupancy limit is not to exceed 21. For the parking variation, there are no concerns on parking because adequate parking is available for the hours in the proposal. The petitioners do not overlap with the tenants in this complex. For the parking variation request, the petitioner is requesting a reduction in the required parking spaces, required 76 spaces to the available 58 spaces.

Chair Szabo asked the petitioners how many services they would have every week. Mr. Matthews responded that they would have one service.

Chair Szabo asked how many members would attend each service. Mr. Matthews responded 20-50 people.

Chair Szabo asked if they would be having more than one service on Sundays since there is an occupancy limit. He asked if he expect the membership to grow.

Member Weaver asked if this location would allow your congregation to grow given the occupancy restriction.

Mr. Vilson started that the fire department originally said that we were allowed 50 people and that they were just notified on the reduction to 21 last week. They are still looking at all our options for multiple services. He stated that he will consider all options.

Chair Szabo asked how long the services would last. Mr. Matthew responded 1.5 hours.

Member Weaver asked if having a Saturday service would affect other tenants. Mr. Ahlbeck responded that the subject property is not busy on Saturdays because most businesses operate Monday to Friday.

Thomas H. Ahlbeck, property owner, stated that the petitioners are always conscience about following the law. They have been working to follow all the rules and procedures so he does not believe they would ever not follow the law.

Member Veremis asked if adding Saturday services would be an option.

Ms. Redman stated that staff does not have an issue with Saturday but that it was not requested by the petitioners. She added it is something that PZB can amend in their conditions of approval.

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A motion was made by Board Member Weaver, seconded by Board Member Fowler to approve the Standard Variation for 1683 Elk Blvd to vary the off-street parking requirement for the proposed mix of uses, which includes a commercially zoned assembly, from 76 spaces to 58 total spaces.

AYES: Weaver, Fowler, Hofherr, Veremis, Szabo
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None

*****MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY ****

A motion was made by Board Member Weaver, seconded by Board Member Fowler to approve the Conditional Use Pursuant to Section 12-3-4(E) of the Zoning Ordinance with the following.

- 1. The Subject Property shall only be used for the Activities during the following times:**
 - a. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. for hours of the office use (Tuesday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday for employees, as needed).**
 - b. 5 pm to 10 pm for assembly uses on weeknights (Monday through Friday).**
 - c. 7 am to 3 pm for assembly uses on Saturdays and Sundays.**
 - d. Any other hours of operation that are approved by the Director of Community and Economic Development.**
- 2. Additional accessible parking for the development shall be located on site to meet the mobility accessible standards pursuant to Section 12-9-8.**
- 3. The Activities and the Subject Property must comply at all times with the maximum occupancy load prescribed by the Fire Department.**

AYES: Weaver, Fowler Hofherr, Veremis, Szabo
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None

*****MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY ****

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2. Address: 1600 E. Golf Road **Case Number:** 22-053-CU LASR

The petitioner is requesting a conditional use permit for a Localized Alternative Sign Regulation (LASR) in the I-1 zoning district and any other variations, waivers, and zoning relief as may be necessary.

PINs: 09-08-200-006-0000; 09-08-400-013-0000; & 09-09-300-021-0000

Petitioner: Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Rd, Des Plaines, IL 60016

Owner: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 333, Springfield, IL 62701

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Ward: #1, Alderman Mark A. Lysakowski

Existing Zoning: I-1, Institutional District

Surrounding Zoning:

North: I-1, Restricted Industrial District (Cook County) / P-1, Open Land District (Cook County)
South: R-1, Single Family Residential District (Des Plaines) / P-1, Open Land District (Cook County)
East: P-1, Open Land District (Cook County)
West: River; then I-1, Institutional District (Des Plaines) / P-2, Open Land District (Cook County)

Existing Land Use: Community College Campus and Surface Parking Areas

Surrounding Land Use:

North: Landfill (Industrial) / Open Space (Recreational)
South: Vacant Lot / Open Space (Recreational)
East: Open Space (Recreational)
West: River; then Hospital(Institutional)/Open Space (Recreational)

Street Classification: Golf Road is classified as an other principal arterial and Central Road is classified as a minor arterial.

Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan illustrates the site as institutional.

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Project Description: Mike Brodnan and Matt Pyter of Olympik Signs on behalf of petitioner, Oakton Community College have requested a Conditional Use for a LASR to allow for increased and updated signage on the property located at 1600 E. Golf Road. The existing property contains a multi-building college campus with multiple surface parking areas, multiple pedestrian walkways, and separate drive aisles for different areas of the campus, which connect to Golf Road and Central Road. With all lots combined, the property encompasses 167.2 acres in land area.

The existing building and site as a whole currently contain a variety of different static, non-illuminated freestanding signs including parking entrance identity, building entrance identity, vehicle directional, and pedestrian directional signs as illustrated in the Existing Conditions and Sign Plan. However, the petitioner is requesting to add six new vehicle directional signs, replace nine existing vehicle directional signs, and add seven new pedestrian directional/building identification signs, totaling 13 new signs altogether:

- ***Vehicle Directional Signs:*** The new vehicle directional sign locations are concentrated along the main access drives near parking lot entrances and main campus entrances to direct traffic to parking areas and various portions of the campus. The existing vehicle directional signs to be replaced are directional signs to assist motorists and pedestrians in navigating the property.
- ***Pedestrian Directional/Building Identification Signs:*** The new pedestrian directional/building identification sign locations are in high visible areas to identify various buildings and services throughout the campus for pedestrians. These signs are interspersed throughout the subject property along paved walkways and at main building entrances to further direct pedestrians and motorists to their desired destinations.

All proposed signage is shown in the table on the following page. The Project Narrative and Existing Conditions and Sign Plan provide additional information.

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1683 Elk Blvd

Conditional Use

Case 22-053-CU-LASR

1600 E. Golf

Conditional Use

Localized Alternative Sign Regulation

Vehicle Directional Signs		
Sign ID	Location	Sign Area
A2 – S011 NEW	Southwest corner of Entrance to Parking Lot A	31 SF
A2 – S014 NEW	Northeast corner of Entrance to Parking Lot D (near Central Rd)	31 SF
A2 – S035 NEW	Southeast corner of Entrance to Parking Lot D (near Central Rd)	31 SF
A2.1 – S012 REPLACE	South of Entrance to Parking Lot B	31 SF
A2.1 – S013 REPLACE	Southwest corner of Entrance to Parking Lot C	31 SF
B1 – S001 REPLACE	Main Central Directional Sign Facing Golf Road Entrance	86 SF
B1 – S002 REPLACE	Main Central Directional Sign Facing East Towards Campus	61 SF
B1 – S003 REPLACE	Main South Directional Sign Facing Golf Road Entrance	74 SF
B1 – S004 REPLACE	Main Central Directional Sign Facing Central Road Entrance	61 SF
B1 – S005 REPLACE	Main North Directional Sign Facing Central Road Entrance	61 SF
B1 – S036 REPLACE	Main South Directional Sign Facing Golf Road Entrance	61 SF
B1 – S037 REPLACE	Sport Court Directional Sign Facing Golf Road Entrance	42 SF
B2 – S006 NEW	Southwest corner of Parking Lot D	19 SF
B2 – S007 NEW	South of lake near Main Campus Building (Zone 3)	19 SF
B2 – S008 NEW	Southeast corner of Parking Lot A	19 SF
B2 – S009 NEW	South of lake near Main Campus Building (Zone 3)	19 SF
B2 – S010 NEW	South of Parking Lot A	19 SF
	TOTAL	696 SF
Pedestrian Directional/Building Identification Signs		
Sign ID	Location	Sign Area
A4 – S015 NEW	West Entrance ID sign for Main Building West (Zone 2)	16 SF
A4 – S016 NEW	South Entrance ID sign for Main Building West (Zone 3)	16 SF
A4 – S017 NEW	South Entrance ID sign for Main Building East (Zone 4)	16 SF
A4 – S020 NEW	North Entrance ID sign for Main Building West (Zone 1)	16 SF
A4 – S034 NEW	East Entrance ID sign for Main Building East (Zone 3)	16 SF
	TOTAL	80 SF
GRAND TOTAL		776 SF

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Conditional Use Findings: Conditional Use requests are subject to the standards set forth in Section 12-3-4(E) of the Des Plaines Zoning Ordinance. The following is a discussion of standards for zoning amendments from Section 12-3-7.E of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board should review staff and the petitioner’s responses. The Board may use the petitioner’s responses as written as its rationale, modify, or adopt its own.

1. The proposed Conditional Use is in fact a Conditional Use established within the specific Zoning district involved:

Comment: A Localized Alternative Sign Regulation is a Conditional Use, as specified in Section 12-11-8 of the Zoning Ordinance.

2. The proposed Conditional Use is in accordance with the objectives of the City’s Comprehensive Plan:

Comment: The use of the site as a public college, which consists of multiple buildings and surface parking areas, requires ample signage to identify its buildings and services. The proposed signage for the site is intended to help further identify the college campus and assist both residents and visitors alike in navigating the site.

3. The proposed Conditional Use is designed, constructed, operated and maintained to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity:

Comment: The proposed Conditional Use for a Localized Alternative Sign Regulation requests additional signage to assist in the identification of the college campus and help both motorists and pedestrians navigate the property. The petitioner has designed the sign plan to reutilize existing ground signs on the property and add new ground signs for enhanced wayfinding that match the character of the college campus. The proposal does not impact the surrounding vegetation and open space surrounding the college campus as new signs are located on areas that have already been developed.

4. The proposed Conditional Use is not hazardous or disturbing to existing neighboring uses:

Comment: The proposed signs are not hazardous or disturbing to the existing neighboring uses as the college campus is surrounded by open space and the signs will not be illuminated. All signs will meet all required performance standards as outlined in Section 12-11-6(B) of the Zoning Ordinance.

5. The proposed Conditional Use is to be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer, and schools; or, agencies responsible for establishing the Conditional Use shall provide adequately any such services:

Comment: The proposed signs have no effect on essential public facilities and services. Instead the new and upgraded signs will improve wayfinding services for motorists and pedestrians alike.

6. The proposed Conditional Use does not create excessive additional requirements at

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public expense for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic well-being of the entire community:

Comment: The proposed signs would not create a burden on public facilities, nor would they be a detriment to the economic well-being of the community. The signs are intended to share information and help visitors safely and easily access the site.

- 7. The proposed Conditional Use does not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke fumes, glare or odors:**

Comment: The proposed signs will not create additional traffic or noise that could be detrimental to surrounding land uses. Instead the signs will help better direct and circulate traffic throughout the site.

- 8. The proposed Conditional Use provides vehicular access to the property designed so that it does not create an interference with traffic on surrounding public thoroughfares:**

Comment: The proposed signs will not create an interference with traffic on surrounding public thoroughfares but rather establish building identification and wayfinding for both motorists and pedestrians.

- 9. The proposed Conditional Use does not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of natural, scenic, or historic features of major importance:**

Comment: The proposed new signs would not cause the destruction, loss, or damage of any natural, scenic or historic features of major importance. The signs will be used to enhance a site that has already been developed.

- 10. The proposed Conditional Use complies with all additional regulations in the Zoning Ordinance specific to the Conditional Use requested:**

Comment: All signs do comply with setback requirements as stated in the Zoning Ordinance.

PZB Procedure and Recommended Conditions: Under Section 12-3-4(D) (Procedure for Review and Decision for Conditional Uses) of the Zoning Ordinance, the PZB has the authority to *recommend* that the City Council approve, approve subject to conditions, or deny the above-mentioned conditional use for a LASR at 1600 E. Golf Road. City Council has final authority on the proposal.

Consideration of the request should be based on a review of the information presented by the applicant and the findings made above, as specified in Section 12-3-4(E) (Standards for Conditional Uses) of the Zoning Ordinance. If the PZB recommends and City Council ultimately approves the request, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. A three-foot landscape bed in all directions be provided at the base of all freestanding signs, per the standards set forth in Section 12-11-4(G). This landscaping shall be comprised of low-lying evergreen shrubs, perennials, and annuals.

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2. That structural design plans shall be provided for all signage at time of permit.
3. The applicant shall provide sight line analysis for vehicle-to-vehicle sightlines and vehicle-to-pedestrian/bicycle sightlines showing that the sign position does not intrude upon the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Green Book sight triangles for the freestanding signs proposed along the roadway driveways and site access drives. The location of the freestanding signs may have to be slightly adjusted at the time of building permit review to comply with AASHTO site triangle clearance.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Location and Zoning Map
- Attachment 2: Site and Context Photos
- Attachment 3: Plat of Survey
- Attachment 4: Petitioner's Standards for a Conditional Use
- Attachment 5: Petitioner's Project Narrative
- Attachment 6: Existing Conditions and Sign Plan

Chari Szabo swore in Mike Brodman, Olympic Signs, and Kunal Patel from Oakton College. Mr. Brodman explained that they are requesting a conditional use to replace signage. The signage is used as way finding and directory signage and to help motorist find the exits. There is no electric that is needed for the signs. The signs will bring the College up to date. He added that no ADA signs outside because there are no sidewalks and no foot traffic. The signs will be on the campus interior roads for vehicular traffic and not on the streets.

Jonathan Stytz, Senior Planner, reviewed the staff report. The request is for a conditional use for localized alternative sign regulations LASR. Mr. Stytz went over the application though power point. This location is over 160 acres in size and is zoned I-1 Institutional District. The petitioner is planning to add six new vehicle directional signs, replace nine existing vehicle directional signs and add seven new pedestrian / building identification signs. Mr. Stytz went over the signs and their locations.

Member Weaver asked if the signs are required to have braille on them. Mr. Brodman stated that the signs do not have braille on them because they are wayfinding signs, not ADA signs. M. Patel added that they do have signs with braille inside the campus buildings.

Member Weaver asked that the ADA requirements are met inside but not outside. Mr. Patel mentioned that they do not have a need for the exterior signs to have ADA requirements because there are no walkways along Golf Road or Central Road and therefore no pedestrian traffic coming to and from the subject

Chair Szabo asked if the petitioner is familiar with the three conditions that the city is proposing and if it passes at the PZB to be prepared to bring it to City Council. Mr. Brodman responded no. Chair Szabo read the recommended conditions of approval as written in the staff report.

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A motion was made by Board Member Veremis, seconded by Board Member Hofherr to recommend approval the Conditional Use LASR, 12-3-4(D) of the Zoning Ordinance, authority to *recommend* that the City Council approve, , mentioned conditional use for a LASR at 1600 E. Golf Road as proposed in the staff memo including these conditions:

- 1. A three-foot landscape bed in all directions be provided at the base of all freestanding signs, per the standards set forth in Section 12-11-4(G). This landscaping shall be comprised of low-lying evergreen shrubs, perennials, and annuals.**
- 2. That structural design plans shall be provided for all signage at time of permit.**
- 3. The applicant shall provide sight line analysis for vehicle-to-vehicle sightlines and vehicle-to-pedestrian/bicycle sightlines showing that the sign position does not intrude upon the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Green Book sight triangles for the freestanding signs proposed along the roadway driveways and site access drives. The location of the freestanding signs may have to be slightly adjusted at the time of building permit review to comply with AASHTO site triangle clearance.**

AYES: Veremis, Hofherr, Fowler, Weaver, Szabo
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None

*****MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY ****

New Business – Approval of the 2023 Calendar

A motion was made by Board Member Weaver, seconded by Board Member Veremis to approve the Planning and Zoning Board 2023 Calendar:

AYES: Weaver, Veremis, Fowler, Hofherr, Szabo,
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None

*****MOTION CARRIES UNANIMOUSLY ****

ADJOURNMENT

The next scheduled Planning & Zoning Board meeting is Tuesday January 10, 2023.
Chairman Szabo adjourned the meeting by voice vote at 7:50 p.m.

Sincerely,
Margie Mosele, Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
cc: City Officials, Aldermen, Planning & Zoning Board, Petitioners