



# Village of Oak Park

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Plan Commission

**REVIEW DATE:** July 21, 2022

**FROM:** Village Staff

**PREPARED BY:** Craig Failor, Village Planner

### PROJECT TITLE

**PC 22-02: Special Use Permit – Athletic Field Light Standards – 501 Lake Street.** The Applicant has requested a special use permit to allow the installation of six (6) new athletic field light standards in heights ranging from 80 feet to 90 feet surrounding the south field (South Campus Tract) on Lake Street between East Avenue and Scoville Avenue.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

**APPLICANT/OWNER:** School District #200  
**Oak Park and River Forest High School**  
201 S. Scoville Avenue  
Oak Park, IL 60302

### Analysis

#### Description

The Applicant is requesting a special use permit in order to install six (6) new light standards taller than zoning allows ranging from 80 to 90 feet. The Zoning for this property allows structures no taller than 35 feet. This special use application is ONLY regarding the increased height for the new light standards. The special use application does not pertain to the use of the facility as this use (athletic fields) is allowed within the OS - Open Space zoning district. But for the extremely tall light standards, there would be no need for a public hearing process.

In 2002 after a public hearing before the Plan Commission, the Applicant received special use approval from the Village Board to amend the Zoning Ordinance allowing light standards for athletic fields not higher than 100 feet as a special use. The School District at that time also requested a special use permit to install four (4) 98-foot-tall light standards surrounding the south field. As part of that 2002 approval eleven (11) conditions were applied. Those conditions are as follows:

1. *That the four light standards and landscaping around the South Campus Tract be installed and maintained in substantial conformity with the plan by Wight and Company dated August 8, 2002 which was submitted into evidence.*

2. *That the light standards not exceed 100 feet in height and have a silver, galvanized steel finish.*
3. *That the lights atop the light standards be turned off not later than 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.*
4. *That the lights atop the light standards not be used on Sundays.*
5. *That the gates to the South Campus Tract be locked at 10:00 p.m., Sunday through Saturday, and reopened at 6:00 a.m. each morning.*
6. *That light spillage from the light standards across the streets surrounding the South Campus Tract shall not exceed the foot candles set forth in the attached plan drawn by the Musco Lighting Company.*
7. *That no commercial concessions be provided on the South Campus Tract.*
8. *That adequate trash receptacles and trash clean-up services be provided at the South Campus Tract.*
9. *That signage be provided at each gated entrance to the South Campus Tract, directing users to observe the “permit parking only” status of on-street parking in the neighborhood and other applicable conditions imposed herein.*
10. *That the Applicant not rent the South Campus Tract for commercial purposes to a for-profit entity.*
11. *That in the event that any of the forgoing conditions and restrictions shall not be fulfilled at any time in the future, said events shall be deemed a violation(s) of the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Administrator shall take appropriate action.*

The Applicant has indicated that they will continue to adhere to all of the conditions stated above with one exception. They are requesting that condition number three (3) be modified to allow the lights to remain on until 10:00 p.m. vs. 8:00 p.m. which would mirror that of the Park District field lights across Scoville Avenue. The Applicant has indicated that the School District and Park District will be coordinating usage of the each other's fields via an Intergovernmental Agreement.

Staff is supportive of retaining all of the conditions mentioned above, but modifications would need to be made to coincide with the current application as follows:

1. *That the ~~four light standards and~~ landscaping around the South Campus Tract be ~~installed and~~ maintained in substantial conformity with the plan by Wight and Company dated August 8, 2002 which was submitted into evidence. (See attachment to Ordinance 2002-O-52)*
3. *That the lights atop the light standards be turned off not later than ~~8:00~~ 10:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.*
6. *That light spillage from the light standards ~~across the streets~~ **measured at the property line** surrounding the South Campus Tract shall not exceed the foot candles set forth in the attached plan drawn by ~~the Musco Lighting Company~~ **Amsco Engineering, dated June 29, 2022.***

The proposed special use will replace the existing special use, so to capture any relevant conditions, or close to those conditions as possible, would be appropriate for the new special use.

## Z o n i n g   O r d i n a n c e

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The Applicant is requesting special use approval to allow six (6) light standards to exceed the maximum height allowed in the OS – Open Space Zoning District of thirty-five (35) feet. The proposed height of four (4) of the six (6) standards are to be installed at a height of 80 feet tall and two (2) standards at 90 feet tall, per the attached plan. This is an increase in the number of light standards compared to what currently exists, but a decrease in height ranging between 8 feet and 18 feet less. The section of the Zoning Ordinance the Applicant is requesting approval from is the following:

***Article 9: Site Development Standards; Section 9.2 Exterior Lighting; Subsection E. Exceptions to Lighting Standards; (3). In the OS and I Districts, lighting for outdoor recreation fields in permitted to the maximum building height of the district. A taller height may be allowed through special use approval.***

The Plan Commission and Village Board must make findings to support each of the following Special Use standards. The Applicant has responded to these standards in their application.

- a. The establishment, maintenance, and operation of the proposed special use will not have a substantial or unduly adverse impact on the neighborhood or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare.*
- b. The proposed special use is compatible with the general land use of adjacent properties and other property within the immediate vicinity.*
- c. The special use in the specific location proposed is consistent with the spirit and intent of this Ordinance, adopted land use policies and the Comprehensive Plan.*
- d. The special use meets the requirements for such classification in this Ordinance.*

### Recommendation

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Staff supports the request based on the above written report. Staff recommends re-establishing the approved conditions from the 2002 ordinance with revisions as identified above. Even though the number of light standards is increased, the heights have been lowered and the technology has substantially improved. It is important to note that the illumination measured at the property lines are under what is allowed by code of 1-foot candle. The proposed light standard application is an improvement over what is currently in place.

*End of Report.*

- C.      Plan Commission  
         Greg Smith; Klein, Thorpe & Jenkins / Plan Commission Attorney  
         Tammie Grossman, Development Customer Services Director  
         Michael Bruce, Zoning Administrator