



Village of Oak Park

STAFF REPORT

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

REVIEW DATE: September 3, 2025

FROM: Project Review Team

PREPARED BY: Bob Bernhart, Zoning Administrator

PROJECT TITLE

CALENDAR NUMBER: 14-25-Z

The Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") will conduct a public hearing on a special use permit application filed by the Applicant, KidSpace Academy, 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 505 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Number 16-06-424-023-0000, 16-06-424-024,0000, 16-06-424-026-0000 ("Subject Property") in the NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: KidSpace Academy LLC
505 North Ridgeland Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60302

PROPERTY OWNER: Garland Properties – TB Oak Park LLC
805 Madison Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

PROJECT CONTACT: Maya Garland, Bold Developments LLC
Nick Vandervoort, Vandy Projects, Inc.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

EXISTING ZONING: NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District
EXISTING LAND USE: Vacant Medical/Dental Office
PROPERTY SIZE: 17,618 square feet (total for three parcels)
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Neighborhood Commercial/ Mixed Use

SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

NORTH: NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District (Single-Family Residence)
SOUTH: Chicago Avenue followed by NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District (Strip Commercial)
EAST: Ridgeland Avenue followed by NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District (Gas Station)
WEST: Public Alley followed by R-2 Single-Family Residential Zoning District (Single-Family Residence)

A n a l y s i s

Submittals

This report is based on the following documents which were filed with the Zoning Administrator-Development Services Department:

1. Application for Special Use Permit;
2. Project Summary;
3. Site Plan;
4. Plat of Survey;
5. Pick-Up and Drop-Off Plan Details;
6. Response to special use standards pursuant to Section 14.2 (E); and

Description

The subject site is made up of three parcels under common ownership and totaling ~17,618 square feet. It is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Chicago Avenue and North Ridgeland Avenue, within the Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District. The existing structure is a non-contributing resource in the district and has been used as a dental clinic in recent decades. It has been vacant for several years.

The Applicant, KidSpace Academy, is proposing to make site and building modifications in order to open a day care facility for approximately 94 children. The applicant is required to obtain a special use permit for the proposed business in the NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District. Proposed improvements include repaving and restriping the parking lot, adding a new driveway to limit traffic impacts on the adjacent alley, providing designated drop-off/pick-up areas both internal to the site and along Chicago Avenue (with the latter only being used during designated hours), erecting fencing to protect an outdoor play area, building an addition on the west side of the existing structure to facilitate the proposed use, and additional interior renovations. The Applicant indicates in their application that they have extensive experience operating similar facilities and have consulted with the relevant agencies to ensure the location is suitable for the proposed use.

Image of Subject Property:



C o m p l i a n c e w i t h t h e Z o n i n g O r d i n a n c e

The previous use of the property was a medical/dental clinic and the Applicant is proposing a change of use to operate a day care center, which requires special use approval. Thus, the ZBA will conduct a public hearing on a special use permit application filed by said Applicant 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 the Subject Property in the NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District. The Applicant's proposal meets all of the principal use standards/requirements in the Zoning Ordinance (8.4(G)).

Special Use:

The listing of a use as a special use within a zoning district does not constitute an assurance or presumption that such special use permit will be approved. Rather, each special use must be evaluated on an individual basis in relation to all applicable standards of this Ordinance. Such evaluation will determine whether an approval of the special use is appropriate at the particular location and manner proposed. The recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals and decision of the Village Board must make findings to support each of the following conclusions:

1. 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.
2. The proposed special use is compatible with the general land use of adjacent properties and other property within the immediate vicinity.
3. 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.
4. The special use meets the requirements for such classification in this Ordinance.

The Applicant has responded to the approval standards within its application.

Following the hearing, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall transmit to the Village Board a written report of its

findings as to compliance of the special use approval standards listed in Section 14.2 (E) (Approval Standards) and give its recommendation to either approve, approve with condition or deny the special use.

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses

The subject property is surrounded by the following uses: To the south across Chicago Avenue is a strip commercial center. To the west across the alley (R-2 Single-Family zoning) and to the north (NC Neighborhood Commercial zoning) are existing single-family homes. To the east across North Ridgeland Avenue is a gas station/convenience store.

The site was previously a medical/dental clinic but has remained vacant for several years. The Applicant is proposing a change of use to a day care center. They have existing access from an adjacent alley to the west, which is 20 feet in width, but are proposing to add a curb cut and new driveway in order to mitigate potential impacts to the alley and adjacent residential neighborhood. Their proposed vehicle circulation would allow the stacking of vehicles within the site as they approach the building, and the proposed pick-up/drop-off zones (both on-street and off-street) will allow for quick unloading and handoff of children to staff. The site also features off-street parking in excess of the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the proposed improvements should enhance the character of the property, with repaving and restriping of the parking lot, a rear building addition, renovations, and new fencing for the play area.

The Applicant has provided details regarding proposed staffing and controls for circulation at pick-up and drop-off times and the proposed site modifications are intended to mitigate any major impacts. The proposed day care center should be compatible with the surrounding uses and provides a neighborhood-serving use on a currently vacant site.

General Information

Project Review Team

The Project Review Team consists of representatives from various departments and divisions within the Village government. Discussion of the application included comments regarding the proposed addition and occupancy, the proposed play area fencing, pick-up/drop-off operations, the adjacent on-street parking spaces, and the primary entrance to the facility. The Applicant made substantial revisions to the plans to address and satisfy comments from Public Works staff regarding traffic and pick-up/drop-off, and they have consulted with the Forestry team regarding the trees on the site. Parking has approved the proposed modifications, and the Applicant will continue to work with Public Works to prevent any impacts and ensure smooth operations.

End of Report.

c. Applicant
Zoning Board of Appeals members
Rasheda Jackson, Zoning Board of Appeals Attorney
Mike Bruce, Village Planner
