



# Village of Oak Park

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Zoning Board of Appeals

**REVIEW DATE:** July 10, 2024

**FROM:** Project Review Team

**PREPARED BY:** Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

### PROJECT TITLE

**CALENDAR NUMBER:** 12-24-Z 6632-6634 Roosevelt Road

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) will conduct a public hearing on a special use permit application filed by the Applicant, Journey’s Community Center, Inc, pursuant to Article 8 (“Uses”), Section 8.3 (“Use Restrictions”), Table 8-1 (“Use Matrix”) and Article 5 (“Commercial Districts”), Section 5.4 (“RR District Dimensional and Design Standards”), Subsection K (“Uses”), Table 5-12 (“RR District Use Restrictions by Building Type”) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance to offer onsite outpatient psychotherapy services and small group mental health workshops, classified as medical/dental clinic uses, at the property located at 6632 Roosevelt Road, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Number 16-18-424-037-0000 (“Subject Property”) in the RR Roosevelt Road Form-Based District.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

**APPLICANT:** Journey’s Community Center, Inc.  
4939 West Fullerton Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60639

**PROPERTY OWNER:** Journey’s Community Center, Inc. Kate Harbert & Louis E. Lopez  
4939 West Fullerton Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60639

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

**EXISTING ZONING:** RR Roosevelt Road Form Based Zoning District  
**EXISTING LAND USE:** Vacant Building (2 Story Mixed Use Shopfront)  
**PROPERTY SIZE:** 6250 SF (50’ x 125’)  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:** Corridor Commercial/Mixed Use

#### SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

**NORTH:** Public Alley followed by R-4 Single-Family Zoning District (Single-Family Use)  
**SOUTH:** Roosevelt Road followed by the City of Berwyn (Single-Story Strip Mall)  
**EAST:** Clarence Ave. followed by RR Roosevelt Road Form Based Zoning District (Town Homes)  
**WEST:** RR Roosevelt Road Form Based Zoning District (2.5 Story Mixed-Use Shopfront)

## **A n a l y s i s**

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### Submittals

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

1. Application for Special Use Permit;
2. Project Summary;
3. Responses to the Special Use Standards pursuant to Section 14.2 (E);
4. Drawings;
5. Location Map;
6. Map of Surrounding Properties; and
7. Photo of Surrounding Properties.

### Description

The Subject Property is located within the RR Roosevelt Road Form-Based District. The lot is located on the north side of Roosevelt Road between Clarence Avenue to the East and Wesley Avenue to the West. The lot is improved with a 2-story mixed-use shopfront building housing Journey's Community Center (Journey's).

Journey's is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization seeking to operate as a non-medical outpatient mental health agency. The property at 6632-6634 Roosevelt Road was vacant from 2018 until 2023 when Journey's acquired the property. Journey's has been working to remodel the interior for corporate office and administrative uses. Journey' is requesting a special use permit to expand the allowed uses of the property to include non-medical outpatient psychotherapy services and small group mental health workshops. Journey's is not a medical practice; however, psychotherapy services are classified by the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance as a medical/dental clinic use.

## **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**

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The Applicant seeks a special use permit from Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) and Section 5.4 (Table 5-12: RR District Use Restrictions by Building Type) of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Oak Park that requires a special use permit for medical/dental clinic uses. The 2017 Zoning Ordinance defines medical/dental clinics as follows:

“A facility operated by one or more physicians, dentists, chiropractors, psychiatrists, physiotherapists, or other licensed practitioners of the healing arts for the examination and treatment of persons solely on an outpatient basis. Medical clinics also include alternative medicine clinics, such as acupuncture and holistic therapies, methadone clinics, and physical therapy offices for physical rehabilitation.”

The above definition covers “professional medical person licensed by the state”, which includes psychotherapists. As stated above, Journey' will not include a medical clinic as part of the services provided at this location.

Article 8 lists permitted and special principal uses for the RR Districts. The RR District includes additional use restrictions pursuant to Table 5-12: Use Restrictions by Building Type, which identifies certain uses that are further restricted by building type. Table 5-12 in the RR Roosevelt Road Form Based Zoning District requires

medical/dental uses located on the first floor and upper floor of the mixed-use shopfront development type as requiring a special use permit. The Subject Property is improved with a 2-story mixed-use shopfront.

### 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 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 her application. After 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(s) or deny the special use.

### **C o m p a t i b i l i t y   w i t h   S u r r o u n d i n g   L a n d   U s e s**

The RR Roosevelt Road Zoning District is intended to promote a more pedestrian-oriented development pattern along Roosevelt Road while also recognizing that the street is a heavily traveled thoroughfare. In many cases, the standards for building form and design are intended to maximize pedestrian comfort and safety. In other circumstances, the intention is to balance the need for a building form that promotes pedestrian shopping and traffic with the need to accommodate high volumes of vehicle traffic and the significant demand for parking associated with certain businesses located along the Roosevelt Road corridor.

The proposal to provide psychotherapy services would be compatible with the adjacent land uses and is an appropriate use for this mixed-use shopfront at this location in the RR-District. Mixed-use building types are the preferred building type along Roosevelt because the combination of retail/commercial space with living or working space above can add vitality and activity to the street. The proposed facility is located near public transportation and could promote foot traffic in the area, which in turn would support the already existing businesses. There are six (6) existing parking spaces onsite. The use should not negatively impact neighboring property, especially since this proposal would be the only outpatient psychotherapy use in the immediate area, which leads to a good mix of uses in the area. The lot is physically suitable for the type, density and intensity of the proposed use. For the foregoing reasons, the proposed use of outpatient psychotherapy services and small group mental health workshops, along with the existing office uses, would be compatible with the surrounding land uses.

## **G e n e r a l I n f o r m a t i o n**

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### Project Review Team

Staff discussed the Applicant's request for a special use permit. Staff consists of representatives from various departments and divisions within the Village government. Staff does not have any objections to the proposed special use permit at this location.

The Project Review Team felt that the proposed land use is appropriate for the area since this would be the only medical services use in the immediate area, and would add to the mix of uses in the area. The Team does not have a problem with the requested special use permit application because the Team feels that the operation of this use at this location should not give rise to unique problems with respect to its impact on neighboring property.

However, it is worth noting that the special use permit application indicates that the sixty-five-hundred-square-foot building would have a maximum occupancy of seventy-five individuals. At the PRT meeting, Staff indicated that the occupancy of the building may be modified to a maximum occupancy for the first floor to 17 persons and the second floor to 15 persons for a total of 32-person maximum occupant load for the building. Staff would like to see a condition placed on the special use permit, if approved, stating that the maximum occupancy of the building shall follow what is approved during the permit review. It was also noted that a commercial fire alarm installation would increase the maximum occupant load for the building to approximately 99 persons.

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### *End of Report.*

- c. Applicant  
Zoning Board of Appeals members  
Rasheda Jackson, Zoning Board of Appeals Attorney  
Craig Failor, Village Planner