

September 21, 2017

Village President and Board of Trustees
Village of Oak Park
123 Madison Street
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

**Re: Application of Rush Oak Park Hospital for
 an Amended Special Use Ordinance,
 Rezoning and Alley Vacation on the South
 Side of Madison Street between Maple
 Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue – PC 17-03**

Dear Trustees:

History of Project.

On or about June 21, 2017, Rush Oak Park Hospital, of 520 South Maple Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60304 (“Applicant”) filed an application for approval of an amended special use ordinance, rezoning and alley vacation at and around 520 South Maple Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois (“Subject Property”), related to a fifty five thousand (55,000) square foot emergency facility addition.

In conjunction with its application, the Applicant requests the Plan Commission (“Commission”) give recommendations regarding the requests set forth above.

The Application and Notice.

On July 19, 2017, legal notice of the public hearing was published in *The Wednesday Journal*, a newspaper of general circulation in the Village of Oak Park. A notice of the public hearing was posted at the Subject Property and certified letters were also mailed by the Applicant to taxpayers of record for property within five hundred

(500) feet of the Subject Property, advising them of the proposal and the public hearing to be held.

Pursuant to legal notice, the Plan Commission ("Commission") conducted a public hearing on the application on September 7, 2017, at which time and place a quorum of the members of the Commission was present.

Having heard and considered the testimony and evidence at the public hearing, the Commission makes the following findings of fact:

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Subject Property.

1. The Subject Property is a three hundred twenty thousand nine hundred sixty two (320,962) square feet zoning lot, located south side of Madison Street between Maple Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue. The Subject Property is located in the H Hospital District.

2. The Subject Property is surrounded by the following uses: to the north, Madison Street and commercial/retail properties zoned within the MS Madison Street District; to the south, a medical office, which is zoned within the H Hospital District, and the R-4 Single Family Residence District; to the east, Wisconsin Avenue and commercial/retail properties zoned within the MS Madison Street District; to the west, Maple Avenue and a parking lot and utilities zoned within the MS Madison Street District.

The Applicant.

3. The Applicant is the owner and operator of Rush Oak Park Hospital.

The Project.

4. The Applicant proposes to expand a surface parking lot in the area of the northwest corner of Wenonah Avenue and Monroe Street on the Subject Property.

Requested Approvals – Amended Special Use Ordinance.

5. The Applicant seeks amend special use Ordinance 1999-O-52 (“Original Special Use Ordinance”) to allow for the expansion of its existing surface parking lot located west of Wenonah Avenue and north of Monroe Street by removing the two (2) remaining residential buildings located at 533 and 535 Wenonah Avenue (“Amended Special Use Ordinance”). The Original Special Use Ordinance restricts the removal of 533 Wenonah in order to provide a buffer from the parking lot to 535 Wenonah Avenue.

6. In 1999, the Village’s corporate authorities approved the Original Special Use Ordinance to allow the construction of a medical office building on the Subject Property at 620 South Maple Avenue along with ancillary surface parking lots.

7. As part of that approval, the Applicant requested the construction of surface parking lots on the 600 block of Maple Avenue, 600 block of Wisconsin Avenue and the 500 block of Wenonah Avenue with the exception of 622 South Maple Avenue, 621 Wisconsin Avenue and 533 Wenonah Avenue, at this time 535 Wenonah Avenue was privately owned.

8. The Applicant also asked for the vacation of the public alley abutting the west side of the 500 block of Wenonah Avenue except for that portion abutting 535 Wenonah Avenue.

9. The only property subject to the Original Special Use Ordinance amendment request is 533 Wenonah Avenue, as the Original Special Use Ordinance states that 533

Wenonah Avenue, which was, and is currently, owned by the Applicant, shall be reserved in perpetuity for single family residential purposes “unless” a change is specifically approved by the Village’s corporate authorities after a public hearing.

10. The reason for this requirement in the Original Special Use Permit was to ensure that 533 Wenonah Avenue provides a residential building buffer between the privately-owned 535 Wenonah Avenue and the Applicant’s proposed surface parking lot.

11. Recently, the Applicant acquired 535 Wenonah Avenue and wishes to expand the existing parking lot, and with the sale of 535 Wenonah Avenue, the need for screening to protect 535 Wenonah Avenue from the Applicant’s parking lot is no longer necessary.

12. In order for the restriction to be removed, the Original Special Use Ordinance must be amended as requested in the Amended Special Use Ordinance.

13. During the public hearing there was discussion regarding the Original Special Use Ordinance and the Amended Special Use Ordinance.

14. The consensus of the Commission members was that approval of the Amended Special Use Ordinance would serve the public’s interest and not interfere with the enjoyment of property owned by others in the vicinity.

15. Section 2.2.3(D) of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following standards which must be met for the Amended Special Use Ordinance to be approved, which all the members of the Commission felt were met by the Applicant:

- (1) The proposed building or use at the particular location requested is necessary or desirable to provide a service or a facility that is in the

interest of the public convenience and will contribute to the general welfare of the neighborhood or community;

- (2) The proposed building or use will not have a substantial or undue adverse effect upon adjacent property, the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, utility facilities and other matters affecting the public health, safety and general welfare;
- (3) The proposed building or use will be designed, arranged and operated so as to permit the development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable district regulations;
- (4) The proposed building or use complies with the more specific standards and criteria established for the particular building or use in question by Sections 2.2.7 and 4.5 of this Zoning Ordinance;
- (5) The proposed building or use has been considered in relation to the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan or the Village of Oak Park; and
- (6) There shall be reasonable assurance that the proposed buildings or use will be completed and maintained in a timely manner, if authorized.

Requested Approvals – Rezoning.

16. The Applicant seeks to rezone 535 Wenonah Avenue lot from the R-3 Single Family Residential to the H Hospital District, as this property has been recently purchased by the Applicant (“Rezoning”).

17. Under the Original Special Use Ordinance, the Village reclassified certain properties from single family residential zoning districts to the H Hospital District which allowed development of hospital-related surface parking lots and the medical office building.

18. 535 Wenonah Avenue was not included in the rezoning action in the Original Special Use Ordinance as it was privately owned at the time.

19. Now that the Applicant owns 535 Wenonah Avenue, the Applicant wishes to rezone it to the H Hospital District in order to allow the expansion of their existing surface parking lot as allowed by-right within the H Hospital District.

20. During the public hearing there was discussion regarding the Rezoning.

21. The consensus of the Commission members was that the Rezoning is a reasonable request given the location of the property and its relationship to the Applicant's hospital campus.

22. Section 2.2.2(D) of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following standards which must be met for the Rezoning, which all the members of the Commission felt were met by the Applicant:

- (1) The character of the neighborhood;
- (2) The extent to which property values are diminished by the particular zoning restrictions;
- (3) The extent to which the removal of the existing limitation would depreciate the value of other property in the area;
- (4) The suitability of the property for the zoned purposes;

- (5) The length of time, under the existing zoning, that the property has remained unimproved, considered in the context of land development in the area;
- (6) The existing uses and zoning of nearby property;
- (7) The relative gain to the public as compared to the hardship imposed on any individual property owner;
- (8) The extent to which the ordinance promotes the health, safety, morals or general welfare of the public; and
- (9) Where applicable, the goals, objectives and policies presented in the Comprehensive Plan.

Requested Approvals – Alley Vacation.

23. The Applicant seeks to obtain the remaining portion of a public alley abutting 535 Wenonah Avenue to the west from the Village through a vacation (“Vacation”). While the physical alley surface still exists north of 535 Wenonah Avenue, it has been vacated and is owned by the Applicant.

24. The north/south alley that runs along the west side of the 500 block of Wenonah Avenue has been vacated except for that portion abutting 535 Wenonah Avenue. In addition to the vacation, the Applicant is proposing to remove a portion of the alley abutting 535 Wenonah Avenue (which will become parkway green space and be incorporated into the proposed twenty foot (20’) landscape buffer along that portion of the Subject Property) and the alley apron which accesses Monroe Street.

25. During the public hearing there was discussion regarding the Vacation.

26. The consensus of the Commission members was that the Vacation is a reasonable request given that the Applicant owns the property abutting the alley on three (3) sides, and that relieving the Village of the maintenance obligations relative to the remaining portion of alley would serve the Village's interest, but any existing overhead utilities shall be permitted to remain and be granted easements by the Applicant.

Envision Oak Park Comprehensive Plan and the Madison Street Corridor Plan.

27. The Subject Property is governed by both the Envision Oak Park Comprehensive Plan ("Comprehensive Plan") and the Madison Street Corridor Plan ("Corridor Plan").

28. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Village President and Board of Trustees in September of 2014 after an extensive public input process.

29. The application primarily affects three (3) recommendation Chapters within the Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 4, "Land Use & Built Environment," Chapter 12, "Economic Health & Vitality" and Chapter 13, "Environmental Sustainability."

30. The Comprehensive Plan establishes goals and objectives which set the standards for development, and it discusses the idea of strengthening commercial districts in the Village as well as the symbiotic relationship between economic development and the overall quality of the community.

31. Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan sets out the Village's goals regarding land use and the built environment. The Village's goals in these areas are to strengthen and protect the character, integrity and cohesion of the Village and its neighborhoods (goal 4.1), enhance the architectural integrity of the Village through both preservation

and innovation (goal 4.2), diversify the economy and strengthen the tax base through land use and development (goal 4.3) and seek innovative and creative solutions to provide redevelopment opportunities and to recapture open space at a variety of scales (goal 4.4).

32. The hospital on the Subject Property supports and strengthens the Village and the commercial district nearby through employment, patronizing businesses and as an anchor for the corridor, and the expanded surface parking lot authorized by the Amended Special Use Ordinance, Rezoning and Vacation would further the goals set forth in Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan.

33. Chapter 12 of the Comprehensive Plan sets out the Village's goals regarding economic health and vitality. The Village's goals in these areas are to ensure that economic vitality is spread through the Village (goal 12.1), to ensure that the Village remains a "business friendly" environment (goal 12.2), to expand and promote business support services (goal 12.3), to diversity and stabilize the Village's tax base (goal 12.4) and to position the Village as a destination for shopping, dining, entertainment and culture (goal 12.5).

34. The expanded surface parking lot authorized by the Amended Special Use Ordinance, Rezoning and Vacation, if constructed, would be a reasonable expansion of the hospital's operations to serve a need in the Village for the surrounding areas, and therefore the goals of Chapter 12 of the Comprehensive Plan would be met by approval of the Amended Special Use Ordinance, the Rezoning and the Vacation.

35. Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan sets out the Village's goals regarding environmental sustainability. The Village's goals in this area are to minimize overall

energy consumption and increase investment in renewable energy sources (goal 13.1), to conserve water and improve water quality (goal 13.2), to provide access to locally produced, healthy and sustainable food (goal 13.3), to advance regulations and programs for green infrastructure to build a resilient and sustainable community (goal 13.4) and to create a zero waste Village (goal 13.5).

36. As recognized by Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan, sustainability is increasingly important in society. The expanded surface parking lot authorized by the Amended Special Use Ordinance, Rezoning and Vacation would further the Village's environmental sustainability goals and therefore the goals of Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan will be met if the Amended Special Use Ordinance, Rezoning and Vacation are approved.

37. The Corridor Plan was adopted by the Village President and Board of Trustees in June of 2006. The purpose of the Corridor Plan is to assist in the revitalization of the Madison Street corridor by envisioning a mix of uses, aesthetic improvements, gateway enhancements, and business retention and recruitment strategies for the corridor.

38. The Corridor Plan states further that a focus on ancillary uses to the hospital should be made, that the Applicant's property west of Maple Avenue should be developed in accordance with their Master Plan and that the Village should work with them to help achieve a neighborhood parking strategy within their parking garage.

39. The Corridor Plan does discuss potential changes to the lane geometry and encourages significant enhancements to the streetscape including trees, lighting,

wayfinding signage, benches, public parking structures, and gathering areas to improve appearance and to accommodate pedestrians.

40. The Amended Special Use Ordinance, the Rezoning and the Vacation are consistent with, and further the goals of, the Comprehensive Plan and the Corridor Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Pursuant to the authority vested in it by the statutes of the State of Illinois and the ordinances of the Village of Oak Park, and based on the above findings, the testimony and the evidence presented at the public hearing, this Commission, sitting as a Zoning Commission, hereby unanimously recommends to the Village President and Board of Trustees that the Amended Special Use Ordinance, Rezoning and Vacation be APPROVED.

This report adopted by a 7 to 0 vote of
the Plan Commission, sitting as a Zoning
Commission, this 21st day of September, 2017.