



Village of Oak Park

STAFF REPORT

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

REVIEW DATE: September 17, 2020

FROM: Project Review Team

PREPARED BY: Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

PROJECT TITLE

CALENDAR NUMBER: 09-20-Z: Excel Driving School

The Zoning Board of Appeals ("Board") will conduct a public hearing on an application for a special use permit filed by the Applicant, Nora Curtin, to operate an educational facility-vocational use pursuant to Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance to permit a driving school at the property located at 103 N. Oak Park Avenue, Unit C, Property Index Number 16-07-129-036-1002 in the DT Downtown Zoning District.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Rey Shallwani
412 W. 5th Avenue
Naperville, IL 60563

PROPERTY OWNER: Nora Curtin
103 N. Oak Park Avenue, Unit 103 C
Oak Park, IL 60301

PROPERTY INFORMATION

EXISTING ZONING: DT Downtown Zone District
EXISTING LAND USE: Mixed-Use Commercial/Office
PROPERTY SIZE: N/A
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Commercial

SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

NORTH: DT Downtown Zone District—*Mixed-Use Building*

SOUTH: DT Downtown Zone District— *(Mixed-Use Building)*

EAST: Oak Park Avenue followed by DT Downtown Zone District--*(Mixed-Use Building)*

WEST: Public Alley followed DT Downtown Zone District-1030 Lake Street *(Mixed-Use Building)*

A n a l y s i s

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. Response to the Standards Article 14.2 (E)
3. Project Summary

Description

The Subject Property is located within the DT Downtown District. The DT District is divided into three sub-districts known as DT-1 Downtown Central Sub-District, the DT-2 Hemingway Sub-District, and the DT-3 Pleasant Sub-District. The DT-2 Hemingway Sub-District is intended to accommodate the vital, historic business community located in Downtown Oak Park, and characterized by an environment that is pedestrian-friendly, mid-rise in scale, and mixed-use in nature while providing a wide range of retail and service uses.

The Subject Property at 103 N. Oak Park Avenue is located on the west side of Oak Park Avenue. The Applicant seeks to operate Excel Driving School at the premises. The space would be used as a classroom for driver's education that provides lessons in safety and rules of the road to nearby high school students. The students who take these classes would be from the local neighborhood/schools. According to the Applicant, these classes are typically two hours in length, and held one to three days a week. Enrollment typically ranges from 8-15 students per class, based on the time of the year. According to the Applicant, driving lessons rarely originate or end at the facility so no added traffic or parking would be brought to the downtown Oak Park area. In addition, Excel's instructors store their vehicles at their homes so there would be no need for parking vehicles in the downtown area.

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 Applicant seeks a special use permit from Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Oak Park, which section requires a special use permit for an educational facility – vocational use located in the DT Downtown District, to operate Excel Driving School located on the ground floor of the premises commonly known as 103 N. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois.

An educational facility-vocational is defined as follows:

"A facility that offers instruction in industrial, clerical, computer, managerial, automotive, repair (electrical, plumbing, carpentry, etc.), or commercial skills, or a business conducted as a commercial enterprise, such as a driving school or school for *general educational development*. Educational facility –vocational also applies to privately operated schools that do not offer a completed educational curriculum."

The Applicant is not requesting any allowances within the special use permit. 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 or denial of the special use.

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 his application.

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 character of the neighborhood is concentrated retail, office and service uses. A driving school can help the vibrancy of the area by bringing foot traffic to the downtown. A classroom for only 8-15 students per class is compatible with other office type uses that exist in the downtown area on the upper floors. For the above stated reasons, the proposal 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

Project Review Team

The Project Review Team met to review the proposal. The Team consists of representatives from various departments and divisions within the Village government. Staff does not have any objections to the proposed driving school at this location.

End of Report.

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