

AGENDA
PARK FOREST PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Park Forest Village Hall
Board Room

7:00 P.M.

TUESDAY
December 10, 2024

1. Planning and Zoning Commission Call to Order
2. Review of Minutes
 - a. October 8, 2024 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
3. Petitions
4. Audience to Visitors
5. New Business
6. Old Business
 - a. 2024 Sexual Harassment Training
 - b. Short Term Rentals Public Participation
7. Communications
 - a. Member Communications
 - b. Trustee Comments
 - c. Staff Communications
8. Adjournment

Any individual with a disability requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a public meeting should contact the Village Manager's Office at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Village Manager's Office can be reached via telephone at 708-283-5605 or via email at athurston@vopf.com. Every effort will be made to allow for meeting participation.

**Park Forest
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes
Park Forest Board Room
Tuesday, October 8, 2024**

Present: Chair Vernita Wickliffe Lewis; Commissioners Samuel Brooks, Cynthia Burton-Prete, Denise Poston, Doug Price; Trustee John Moore

Staff: Andrew Brown, Assistant Director of Economic Development and Planning; Carrie Malfeo, Sustainability Coordinator

Absent: Vice Chair Marguerite Hutchins

Visitors: Dr. Erika Johnson, Director of Instructional Services & Grants for Chicago Heights School District 163; Mecca Eaves, 7th grade ELA Teacher at Michelle Obama School of Technology and the Arts, School District 163

Call to Order: Wickliffe Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Review of Minutes:

a. April 9, 2024 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

On the top of page three, the sentence currently states "...bike path adjacent to Sauk Trail" and it should say "...bike path adjacent to Sauk Trail." The "to" between "adjacent" and "Sauk" needed to be added. A motion to approve the minutes with corrections was made by Poston and seconded by Brooks. All in favor. The minutes were approved with corrections.

Wickliffe Lewis opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 pm.

Petitions:

a. Public Hearing to consider a Text Amendment to Article III (Uses) of the Unified Development Ordinance, to amend Chicken Coop from Section III-4.C Use Standards for Accessory Structures

Brown reviewed the petition for a text amendment to Section III-4.C of the ordinance, related to chicken coops. Michelle Obama School of Technology and the Arts reached out to Village staff regarding their plan to incorporate agricultural education into their curriculum, beginning in spring 2025. The school intends to include chicken coops as part of the program to provide students hands-on experience. This initiative led to a broader discussion on how the Village could accommodate school requests for chicken coops. Staff research revealed supporting precedents for this educational use.

The required public hearing notice was published in the *Daily Southtown*. No additional notice was required.

The floor was then given to Dr. Erika Johnson of School District 163 and Mecca Eaves, a 7th Grade ELA teacher at Michelle Obama Middle School. Dr. Johnson provided background on the school's commitment to agricultural engagement, noting the existing community garden at Barack Obama School and the plan to expand these efforts with chicken coops. She emphasized the educational and developmental benefits for students.

Eaves stated that the chicken coop program would support both social-emotional learning and academic growth. She also shared that students interact well with other animals already present at the school.

Commissioner Malfeo noted that the program would help students understand food sources and environmental stewardship. She expressed strong support, referencing the staff recommendation favorably.

Discussion and Inquiries:

Burton-Prete asked about plans for caring for the chickens during school breaks. Dr. Johnson replied that the school had applied for an agricultural grant to fund a teacher who would maintain the chickens outside of regular school hours, including summer. Eaves confirmed that care is provided for other animals during breaks.

Burton-Prete inquired about plans for the eggs. Dr. Johnson stated that the school does not have a formal plan yet, as they are awaiting School Board approval.

Burton-Prete also confirmed with Brown that the ordinance prohibits on-site egg sales but allows off-site sales or distribution, provided public health regulations are followed.

Regarding the coop's location, Dr. Johnson explained that it would be housed in the school's outdoor science classroom within the courtyard, with additional space adjacent to the area for expansion if needed.

Burton-Prete raised the possibility of neighboring property owner objections. Brown responded that notification and community feedback are essential. The Zoning Administrator would consider any feedback from neighbors after proper notification.

Commissioner Price asked about the administrative review process. Brown confirmed that Malfeo would submit the application to the Building Department for permitting and ongoing tracking.

Price also inquired about the program's history. Brown stated that the chicken coop ordinance has been in place since 2017, with 15 applications submitted, and all were approved.

Commissioner Wickliffe Lewis asked about the retirement age for the chickens in the program. Dr. Johnson offered to provide this information later.

Wickliffe Lewis also inquired about health and sanitation measures for the chickens. Dr. Johnson confirmed that they would follow all health guidelines for care and medical check-ups.

Commissioner Moore asked if different regulations would apply to institutional coops versus residential ones, specifically regarding on-site sales. Brown indicated that this would fall under Economic Development Advisory Group (EDAG) purview, noting that the primary regulatory focus would be on the number of chickens permitted rather than on on-site sales or slaughter.

Wickliffe Lewis closed the hearing to the public at 7:52 pm

The Commission then collectively reviewed the Standards for Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards for Zoning Amendments worksheet. Each standard was presented, allowing Commissioners the opportunity for discussion as needed. The details of these standards, the discussions that ensued, and the results of the voting are documented subsequently.

The Commissioners with over the proposal

- 1. The proposed amendment will not endanger the health, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the public.***

Poston stated that she was unsure about the amendment meeting this standard. She thought some people may feel like having chicken coops at schools could be a nuisance. She stated that it may warrant the Commission to take a look and see if it would be a nuisance. Burton-Prete stated that she would like to see what 16 chickens might look like in one coop and stated that she feels very strongly against chicken coops to begin with.

For the first Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Three (3) votes (Brooks, Price, Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative with the first Standard and two (2) votes (Burton-Prete, Poston) in opposition to the assertion of the first Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standard.

- 2. The proposed amendment is compatible with the existing uses, character, and zoning of adjacent properties and other property within the immediate vicinity of the proposed amendment.***

Burton-Prete noted that since some homes already have chicken coops adding the use to schools would be compatible to the existing uses in the R-1 district.

For the second Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the second Standard.

- 3. The proposed amendment provides a relative gain to the public, as compared to any hardship imposed upon an individual property owner.***

There was no discussion and the Commission went straight to voting on the Standard.
For the third Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the third Standard.

- 4. The proposed amendment makes it more feasible to develop property relative to the present zoning classification of the property.***

There was no discussion and the Commission went straight to voting on the Standard.

For the fourth Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the fourth Standard.

- 5. The proposed amendment addresses the community need for a specific use.***

There was no discussion and the Commission went straight to voting on the Standard.

For the fifth Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the fifth Standard.

- 6. The proposed amendment corrects an error, adds clarification, or reflects a change in policy.***

There was no discussion and the Commission went straight to voting on the Standard.

For the sixth Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the sixth Standard.

- 7. The proposed amendment rectifies existing nonconformities and, if so, the extent of such nonconformities.***

The Commission voted unanimously that this standard was not applicable to this Text Amendment.

- 8. The proposed variation is consistent with the intent of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, this Unified Development Ordinance, and the other land use policies of the Village.***

There was no discussion and the Commission went straight to voting on the Standard.

For the eighth Zoning Text and Map Amendment Standards the Commission then voted as follows: Five (5) votes (Brooks, Burton-Prete, Poston, Price, & Wickliffe Lewis) in the affirmative of the eighth Standard.

Price made a motion to move to recommend the text amendment as presented by Staff in the September 25, 2024, Staff Report memorandum given that the majority of the Planning and Zoning Commission agreed on all seven applicable Standards were met. It was seconded by Burton-Prete. The motion was unanimously approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The motion was approved.

Audience to Visitors: None.

New Business:

a. 2024 Sexual Harassment Training

Brown let the Commissioners know that it is time for the 2024 sexual harassment training. The training is currently not available but he will send the Commission more information once Administration sends it to Commission Liaisons.

Old Business: None.

Communications:

- a. Member Communications:** Brooks asked about the status of the proposed annexation at the corner of Western Avenue and Steger Road. Brown replied that, as far as he knows, the annexation is still being pursued, although he is uncertain of the current stage of the building process. Brooks also inquired if Mr. Wells of Robbins LLC is still moving forward with his project. Brown confirmed that, to his knowledge, Mr. Wells is indeed still pursuing it.

Price asked if there has been any recent communication with the Cook County Forest Preserve, noting that it doesn't appear any work has been done regarding vegetation on the Park Forest side of the forest preserve. Brown responded that he had spoken with the District, which recently appointed a new Deputy Director of Planning & Development. Brown has reached out to the new Deputy Director but has not yet received a response.

Burton-Prete mentioned a new food truck on Western Avenue and asked if it was a pop-up. Brown replied that he wasn't sure of the marketing details but confirmed that the truck was only there for a single day.

Poston remarked that over the summer, there was a lot of activity on the Village Green, with parking lots in the former grocery store area filled to capacity. She asked if the Village owns those lots. Brown clarified that the lots are privately owned.

- b. Trustee Comments:** None.

- c. **Staff Communications:** Brown informed the Commissioners about the upcoming Commissioner Holiday Dinner, scheduled for November 12th at 6:00 pm. Commissioners should RSVP Evelyn Randle by November 1st.

Additionally, a virtual meeting regarding the bike path on Sauk Trail will be held on October 22nd from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, during which public comments on the project will be accepted.

Brown also noted that IFF and the Village closed on the development on September 20th, and construction has begun. A camera on top of the Village Hall will record a time-lapse of the construction progress.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Burton-Prete and seconded by Price. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.