

**MINUTES**  
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION  
Council Chambers, Village Hall  
August 1, 2024  
7:00 p.m.

A recording of this meeting is available on the Village of Oak Park Website: <https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/citizen-commissions/commission-tv>

**PRESENT:** Chair Mike Sturino, Commissioners; Juan Betancur, Paul Beckwith, Jeff Clark and Jon Hale.

**EXCUSED:** Commissioners: Nick Bridge, Miriam Tamayo, and Frank Sullivan.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Craig Failor-Village Planner and Courtney Willits - Plan Commission Attorney

**Roll Call:** Roll was called at 7:05pm. A quorum was present.

**Agenda Approval:** Motion by Commissioner Beckwith, Seconded by Commissioner Betancur. A voice vote was taken and the agenda was unanimously approved.

**Non-Agenda Public Participation:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** July 10, 2024: Motion by Commissioner Hale, Seconded by Commissioner Beckwith to approve the draft minutes as submitted. A vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Commissioner Beckwith made a statement regarding his indirect relationship with the applicant's organization indicating he would be able to be fair and impartial.

**New Business: Public Hearings & Findings of Fact:**

The Chair opened both public hearings in order to hear both in combination as they are interrelated.

The Plan Commission attorney swore in those wishing to provide testimony.

**PC 24-05: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment: Housing Forward;** The Petitioner, Housing Forward, seeks a text amendment to the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance as follows: An amendment to Article 2 ("Definitions & Rules of Measurement"), Section 2.3 ("Definitions"), by adding a definition for "Community Service Center", amending Article 8 ("Uses") to add "Community Service Center" as a special use in the I-Institutional District, and amending Section 8.4 ("Principal Use Standards"), by adding a new section "X. Community Service Center" with standards.

**PC 24-06: Special Use Permit: Housing Forward; 38 North Austin Boulevard;** The Applicant is requesting a Special Use permit to allow a Community Service Center at the above referenced property address.

Kenna MacKinnon, representative for The Neighborhood Bridge, a not-for-profit working with Housing Forward, opened the presentation by introducing the team, site and requests. Ms. Janet Hotch, Director

of Emergency Services for Housing Forward provided an overview of their organization and in particular their past and current activities related to the emergency shelter use at St. Catherine / St. Lucy's ("SCSL") rectory. Ms. MacKinnon returned with a review of the zoning requests and a review of the text amendment and special use standards.

Architect Mark Jolicoeur with Perkins and Will introduced the project proposed for the SCSL rectory. His associate Carl Giometti provided an overview of the specific changes proposed for the rectory. He indicated that they would be looking into the fire suppression system. Fire alarm, protecting open stairwells and ADA renovations among others.

Ms. MacKinnon closed with an overview of the project timeline from 2024 through 2026.

Village Planner Craig Failor provided the staff's report indicating support for both applications. Planner Failor indicated that, if approved, the proposal will result in a stable solution to a persistent need for our community.

The Plan Commission Chair opened the hearing for questions, first for staff then for the applicants.

The Plan Commission inquired of staff how was the definition title developed. Commissioner Hale was concerned that the title was not indicative of the intended use. Planner Failor indicated that it was selected based on similar language within the Zoning Ordinance, but a change could be discussed if so desired by the Plan Commission. Commissioners had questions about the 5-year contract with the Archdiocese concerned it may be too short and does not provide permanency. Commissioner Clark questioned the number of bathrooms. The applicant indicated further review was needed, but Housing Forward indicated the number was adequate for the proposed number of occupants. Chair Sturino inquired about Fire and Police concerns. Planner Failor indicated the Fire suppression and Fire alarm systems were a concern for the Fire department. He asked the applicant about safety or the occupants. Housing Forward staff indicated that they have a tried and true protocol that supports crisis prevention and they have been fortunate not to have had any major incidents at their locations. Commissioner Betancur asked about exterior changes. The architect indicated only minor improvements.

The Plan Commissioner Chair opened the hearing for public comment.

Ms. Connie Macaster indicated that she supports the applications. She stated that she was glad that the building can be used and not sit vacant.

The public hearing was closed.

The Plan Commission began deliberations.

The Plan Commission discussed the title of the proposed use and concluded to keep it as proposed. They also indicated an appreciation for the facility and applauded the applicants for their commitment to the unhoused population.

The Chair called for a motion for the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment. Commissioner Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the text amendment as written. Commissioner Betancur seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote as follows:

Clark – yes  
Betancur – yes  
Beckwith – yes  
Hale – yes  
Chair Sturino - yes

The Chair called for a motion for the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment finding of fact report. Commissioner Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the text amendment findings of fact report as written. Commissioner Betancur seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote as follows:

Clark – yes  
Betancur – yes  
Beckwith – yes  
Hale – yes  
Chair Sturino - yes

The Chair called for a motion for the Special Use Permit. Commissioner Betancur made a motion to recommend approval of the text amendment as written. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote as follows:

Betancur – yes  
Hale – yes  
Clark – yes  
Beckwith – yes  
Chair Sturino - yes

The Chair called for a motion for the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment finding of fact report. Commissioner Betancur made a motion to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit findings of fact report as written. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote as follows:

Betancur – yes  
Clark – yes  
Beckwith – yes  
Hale – yes  
Chair Sturino - yes

**Other Business: None**

Village Planner Failor updated the Commission on Village Board approvals for Keystone Apartments at 1106 Madison Street and the missing middle housing initiative with Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Opticos Design.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Motion by Commissioner Clark, Seconded by Commissioner Hale. A voice vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by: Craig Failor, Village Planner-Staff Liaison