

218 Madison Street Oak Park, IL 60302 Phone: 708.725.2000 Fax: 708.725.2301

www.pdop.org

August 7, 2025

Zoning Board of Appeals

Village of Oak Park 123 Madison Street Oak Park, IL 60302

Subject: Zoning Variance Request for 301-307 Madison Due to Hardship

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing to formally request a zoning variance under the hardship provisions of the Village of Oak Park Zoning Ordinance for the property located at 301-307 Madison Street, Oak Park 60302.

Description of Request

I am seeking relief from Section 9.3.(A)(6) of the zoning code, which restricts the coverage of accessory structures to not exceed 20% of a lot.

Due to the need to add additional solar structure for energy generation, strict compliance with the zoning regulations imposes a substantial hardship.

Justification of Hardship

The hardship arises from the 20% limitation for having accessory structures.

Strict enforcement of the zoning requirement would:

- Prevent reasonable use of the property, and
- Limit the ability to generate additional energy for the CRC to be net zero.

Proposed Relief

We respectfully request that the Board grant a variance to allow up to 60% of the lot to be accessory structure.

Community Impact

The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or be detrimental to public welfare. In fact, the additional structure will reduce environmental impact by generating green energy. The height and location of the structure should not create glare concerns for the home located on the south side of the property.









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Conclusion

We believe this request meets the criteria for a hardship variance under Village Code and respectfully ask the Zoning Board to approve our application. We are happy to provide additional documentation or to discuss this request in further detail.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jan R. Arnold

Jan R. Arnold, Executive Director









Application for Public Hearing VARIANCE

YOU MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED, ATTACH EXTRA PAGES TO THE PETITION.

Name of Business (if Applicable):Park District of Oak Park					
Address/Location of Property in Question:301-307 Madison Street					
Property Identification Number(s)(PIN):16-17-101-004-0000;16-17-101-004-0000;16-17-101-004-0000;					
Name of Property Owner(s):Park District of Oak Park Address of Property Owner(s):218 Madison St, Oak Park, IL 60302					
If Land Trust, name(s) of all beneficial owners: (A Certificate of Trust must be filed.)					
Name of Applicant(s) (if different than Property Owner):					
Applicant's Address:					
Applicant's Contact Information: PhoneE-Mail					
Other:					
Property Interest of Applicant:XOwnerLegal RepresentativeContract PurchaserOther (If Other - Describe):					
Property Type: ☐1 or 2 Family Residential ☐Multiple-Family ☐Commercial ☐Mixed-Use ☐Hospital ☒Institutional					
Zoning District: \square R-1 \square R-2 \square R-3(50) \square R-3(35) \square R-4 \square R-5 \square R-6 \square R-7 \square DT (1 – 2 - 3) \square GC \square HS \square MS \square NA \square NC \square RR \square H \square OS \square I					

Describe Variance Proposal: __Requesting to exceed parking lot accessory structures coverage from the allowable 20% to 60% by adding two additional solar canopies.

Size of Parcel (fr	om Plat of Survey):	84.31 * 110.05	Square Feet
Adjacent:	Zoning Districts	Land Uses	
To the North:	MS and I	Commercial	
To the South:	_R-4_	Residential	
To the East:	MS	Instutional	
To the West:	MS	Commercial	
	-	_	Ordinance?YesXNo
le the property i	n auestion currently su	bject to any zoning reli	ef?YesXNo
is the property in	ii quoonoii ourronny ou	, ,	··· ··· _ · _ · _ · · · · · · · · ·
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If Yes, h	ow?lease provide relevant O		
If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes:	ow? lease provide relevant O roperty located within a □ Frank Lloyd Wright	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? _ □ Ridgeland/Oak Park	YesX No
If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes:	ow? lease provide relevant O roperty located within a □ Frank Lloyd Wright ion(s) of the Zoning Ord	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? _ □ Ridgeland/Oak Park dinance are you request	YesXNo □ Gunderson ing approval / relief?
If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes: From what Section	ow?	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? _ □ Ridgeland/Oak Park dinance are you request Section:	Yes _X No Gunderson ing approval / relief?9.3.(A)(6)
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If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes: From what Section Article: Article:	ow?	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? Ridgeland/Oak Park dinance are you request Section: Section:	Yes _X No Gunderson ing approval / relief?9.3.(A)(6)
If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes: From what Section Article: Article: Explain why, in ye	ow?	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? Ridgeland/Oak Park dinance are you request Section:Section:Section:	Yes _X _ No Gunderson ing approval / relief? _9.3.(A)(6) harmony with the neighborhood and not
If Yes, h If Yes, p Is the subject pr If Yes: From what Section Article: Article: Explain why, in yes contrary to the interest	ow?	rdinance No.'s ny Historic District? Ridgeland/Oak Park dinance are you request Section: Section:	Yes _X _ No Gunderson ing approval / relief? _9.3.(A)(6) harmony with the neighborhood and not

I (we) certify that all the above statements and the statements contained in any papers or plans submitted herewith are true to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

I (we) consent to the entry in or upon the premises described in this application by any authorized official of the Village of Oak Park for the purpose of securing information, posting, maintaining and removing such notices as may be required by law.

Owner's Signature must be notarized

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS

DAY OF august

2025

OFFICIAL SEAL
SUSAN C CURTIN
NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF ILLINOIS
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: 07/12/2026

(Notary Public)





Doc# 1933022041 Fee \$88.00

RHSP FEE:\$9.00 RPRF FEE: \$1.00

EDWARD M. MOODY

COOK COUNTY RECORDER OF DEEDS

DATE: 11/26/2019 10:06 AM PG: 1 OF 4

THE GRANTOR, to Parks Foundation of Oak Park, an Illinois not for profit corporation with its principal business located at 218 Madison St., Oak Park, Illinois 60302, of the County of Cook, State of Illinois, and duly authorized to transact business in the State of Illinois, for and in consideration of the sum of TEN & 00/100 DOLLARS, and other good and valuable consideration in hand paid, and pursuant to the authority given by the Board of said company, CONVEYS and WARRANTS to Park District of Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois, a Park District Pursuant to the Illinois Park District Code 70 ILCS 1205, and a body politic and corporate of the State of Illinois with its principal business located at 218 Madison St., Oak Park, Illinois 60302, of the County of Cook, State of Illinois, GRANTEE, all right, title and interest in the following described Real Estate situated in the County of Cook in the State of Illinois, to wit:

SEE EXHIBIT A ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the interest, privileges and easements appurtenant thereto; any and all improvements located thereon belonging or in any wise appertaining, unto the Grantee and the Grantee's heirs and assigns in fee simple forever.

The Grantor hereby covenants with the Grantee that the Grantor is lawfully seized of the aforesaid real property, has a good and indefeasible estate in fee simple, and has good right to convey the same in the manner aforesaid, and that the same is free and clear from all encumbrances;

SUBJECT TO: utility easements of record and general taxes for the year 2019 and subsequent years

Grantor will forever warrant and defend the title to the aforesaid real property, with the appurtenances thereunto belonging, to the Grantee and its heirs and assigns, against all lawful claims and demands whatsoever, except as aforesaid.

This is not a homestead property.

Permanent Real Estate Index Number(s): See Exhibit A Address(es) of Real Estate: See Exhibit A

Dated this 7 day of November, 2019

Parks Foundation of Oak Park, an Illinois not for profit corporation

By: Benjamin fon Ahring, President

19019161AL

Steven E. Drazner, CFO Village of Oak Park

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF COOK

SS.

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County, in the State aforesaid, CERTIFY THAT Benjamin Jon Ahring, President of Parks Foundation of Oak Park, an Illinois not for profit corporation, ("Company"), appeared before me this day in person, and acknowledged that he signed and delivered said instrument as his free and voluntary act and as the free and voluntary act of the Company, for the uses and purposes therein set forth.

Given under my hand and official seal, this

day of

November, 2014

OFFICIAL SEAL
KRISTY HALE
NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF ILLINOIS
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES:01/18/22

(Notary Public)

Prepared By: Megan R. Cawley

Holland & Knight LLP

150 N. Riverside Plaza, 27th Floor

Chicago, Illinois 60606

Mail To:

Mark Burkland, Esq. Holland & Knight LLP 150 N. Riverside Plaza, 27th Floor Chicago, Illinois 60606

Name & Address of Taxpayer: Park District of Oak Park 218 Madison St. Oak Park, Illinois 60302 Exempt under provisions of Paragraph

Section 4, Real Estate Transfer Tax Act.

Date

11/24/19 -2

Buyer, Seller or Representative

Steven E. Drazmer, CFO Village of Oak Park

EXHIBIT A LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS:

PARCEL 1:

LOTS 8, 9 AND 10 IN BLOCK 1 IN HARNSTROM'S ADDITION TO OAK PARK, SAID ADDITION BEING A SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST ½ OF THE WEST ½ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 13, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN. IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

PIN: 16-17-101-004-0000, 16-17-101-005-0000, 16-17-101-006-0000

Commonly known as: 301-307 Madison Street, Oak Park, IL

PARCEL 2:

LOTS 176 THROUGH 185, BOTH INCLUSIVE, IN THE HIGHLANDS, A SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST ½ OF THE WEST ½ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 13, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PIN: 16-17-102-008-0000

Commonly known as: 229 Madison St., Oak Park, IL (Lot 176)

PIN: 16-17-102-007-0000

Commonly known as: 231 Madison St., Oak Park, IL (Lot 177)

PIN: 16-17-102-006-0000

Commonly known as: 233 Madison St., Oak Park, IL (Lot 178)

PIN: 16-17-102-005-0000

Commonly known as: 235 Madison St., Oak Park, IL (Lot 179)

PIN: 16-17-102-038-0000

Commonly known as: 239 Madison St. Oak Park IL (Lots180, 181, 182)

PIN: 16-17-102-001-0000,

Commonly known as: 245 Madison Street, Oak Park, IL (Lots 183, 184 and 185)

PARCEL 3:

THAT PART OF A 14 FOOT WIDE VACATED PUBLIC ALLEY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 176 IN THE HIGHLANDS, A SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST ½ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 13 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE EAST LINE OF LOT 176, SAID LINE ALSO BEING THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY OF HARVEY AVENUE, FOR A DISTANCE OF 115.00 FEET TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID LOT 176 AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE EXTENDED 14.00 FEET TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 227 IN SAID THE HIGHLANDS SUBDIVISION; THENCE WEST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID LOT 227, SAID LINE ALSO BEING THE SOUTH LINE OF A 14 FOOT WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY, FOR A DISTANCE OF 125.03 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 227; THENCE NORTH ALONG THE EXTENSION OF THE WEST LINE OF SAID LOT 227 FOR A DISTANCE OF 14.00 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE 14 FOOT WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY, SAID LINE ALSO BEING THE SOUTH LINE OF LOT 180 IN SAID THE HIGHLANDS SUBDIVISION; THENCE EAST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF PUBLIC ALLEY TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID LOT 176 AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

PIN: assigned PIN pending

Commonly known as: Vacated alley

Steven E. Drazrier, CFO
Village of Oak Park

STATEMENT BY GRANTOR AND GRANTEE

The grantor or its agent affirms that, to the best of his knowledge, the name of the grantor shown on the deed or assignment of beneficial interest in a land trust is either a natural person, an Illinois corporation or foreign corporation authorized to do business or acquire and hold title to real estate in Illinois, a partnership authorized to do business or acquire and hold title to real estate in Illinois, or other entity recognized as a person and authorized to do business or acquire title to real estate under the laws of the State of Illinois.

Grantor or Agent:

	*
Dated November	Signature: Bendley Name: BEN 5. AHRING Title: PRESIDENT
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2 day of November, 2019. OFFICIAL SEAL JOHN R FLYNN Notary Public NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF ILL MY COMMISSION EXPIRES:09.	
beneficial interest in a land trust is either a natu authorized to do business or acquire and hold titl	ne name of the grantee shown on the deed or assignment of siral person, an Illinois corporation or foreign corporation e to real estate in Illinois, a partnership authorized to do linois, or other entity recognized as a person and authorized under the laws of the State of Illinois.
	Grantee or Agent:
Dated November 7, 2019.	Signature: an R amold Name: Trun R. Amold Title: Executive Director, Paul Dital & Care Par
Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of November, 2019. Notary Public OFFICIAL SEAL JOHN R FLYNN NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF ILLINOIS	

Project Summary

Zoning Variance Request – Hardship Justification Park District of Oak Park:301–307 Madison Street, Oak Park, IL

The Park District of Oak Park respectfully requests a zoning variance under the hardship clause to allow for the installation of two additional accessory structures in the parking lot of the Community Recreation Center (CRC), located at 301–307 Madison Street. These structures are necessary to expand our solar energy system and support the facility's goal of functioning as a net zero energy building.

When the CRC was designed, our solar energy system was sized based on an estimated membership of approximately 6,000 individuals. Since opening two years ago, community demand has significantly exceeded projections, with current membership averaging over 11,000. This strong and sustained growth underscores the value of the CRC to the Oak Park community—but it has also resulted in energy consumption levels that exceed the original design assumptions.

To meet these increased energy needs and remain on track with our net zero goals, the Park District proposes installing two additional solar canopy structures in the CRC parking lot. These canopies will match the existing solar structure in design and scale (photos included) and one will measure approximately 22.9 feet wide by 78.5 feet long and the other 24.4 feet wide by 78.5 feet long.

Summary of Solar Expansion Proposal:

- **Total lot area:** 9,278.32 sq. ft. (84.31' x 110.05')
- **Existing solar canopy:** 1,800 sq. ft. (30' x 60')
- **Proposed additional structures:** 3,640 sq. ft. total (22.9' x 78.5') & (24.4' x 78.5')
- Total coverage after expansion: 5,440 sq. ft., or 59% of the lot area
- Code allowance for accessory structure coverage: 20%
- Requested variance: Increase from 20% to 60% coverage
- Additional system size: 68.04 kW
- Expected first-year energy production: 86,282 kWh

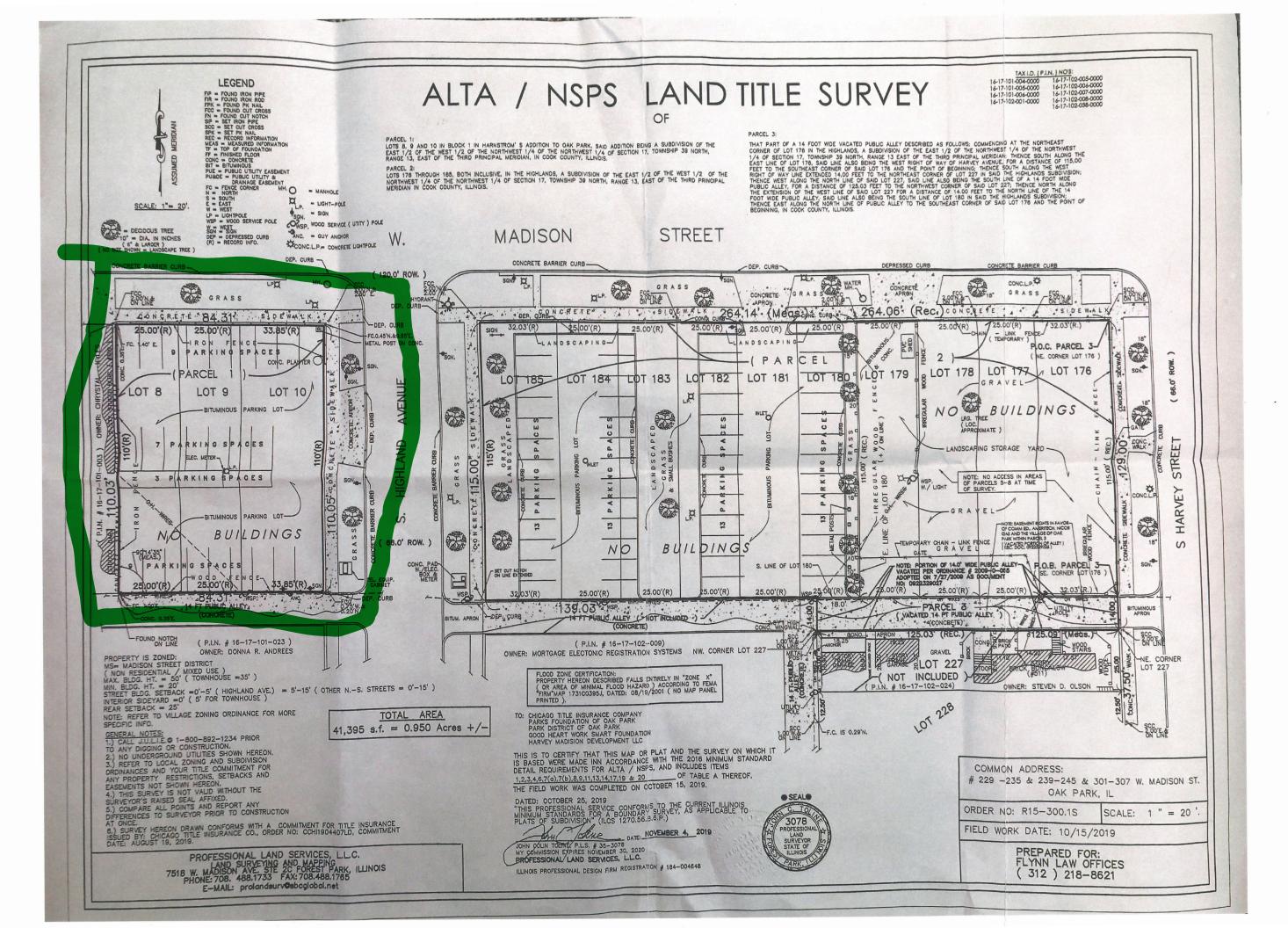
This expansion is critical to ensuring that the CRC can sustainably serve the growing number of community members who rely on its programming. The proposed solar structures will maintain visual and architectural consistency with those already in place and will not negatively affect the appearance or function of the parking lot.

The hardship in this case is the need to utilize additional surface area to generate sufficient renewable energy to serve the expanded user base. Without these additional structures, the CRC will not be able to meet its originally intended net zero performance.

Response to Approval Standards

- 1. The Zoning Board of Appeals decision must make findings to support each of the following:
 - a. The strict application of the terms of this Ordinance will result in undue hardship unless the specific relief requested is granted. We would actually argue that the ordinance creates a hardship for the community as a whole. The goal of installing solar panels benefit everyone with reduced electricity usage and by extension, costs to the taxpayers for the operation of the CRC while minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.
 - b. The particular physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property impose a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out. The reality is that solar production needs to be proximate to the building it serves in this case. This property allows for that, which could not have been anticipated when planning the project.
 - c. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances inherent to the subject property and not from the personal situation of the owner and has not been created by any person presently having a proprietary interest in the property in question. The hardship is the result of an ordinance that likely did not anticipate this type of usage which could be beneficial to the entire community. It was hot created or affected by anyone having an interest in the property.
- 2. The Zoning Board of Appeals, in making its findings, may inquire into the following evidentiary issues, as well as any others deemed appropriate:
 - a. The granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare in the neighborhood in which the property is located. We believe the solar canopies are actually an improvement on the typical accessory structure that be built here because that structure would be a solid building. The solar canopies will be lower than a code allowed building and be open at the bottom allowing sight lines and air flow through them and feel much more open. So while larger than Zoning allows, the impact will be significantly less imposing than an allowable structure.

- b. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, substantially increase congestion in the public streets, increase the danger of fire, endanger the public safety, or impair property values within the neighborhood. Again, we believe the solar canopies are an improvement on what is allowed by code because they are so low and open below. They will not impede light to adjacent structures because they are lower than those structures. As noted above, the nature of the canopies will actually allow much more air flow than a more traditional building use that could be put here. And the will not change the traffic flow to the property as it's use will not change. Overall, the solar canopies will have no impact on public safety.
- c. The proposed variation is consistent with the spirit and intent of this Ordinance and the adopted land use policies. We understand the spirit of the ordinance is to avoid having a site be too full of buildings that block light and site lines. We believe the nature of the canopies is very much in that spirit because of how open and transparent they are at the ground level and how their height is very limited relative to what code would allow.



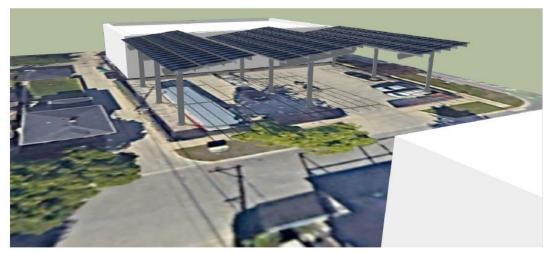
Location Map

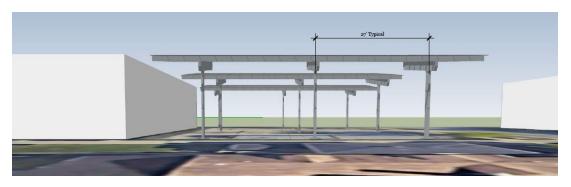




Site Plan







Elevations

The height of the structures will be approximately 13'8" on the North and 8'6" on the South which is the same as the current structure.



Photos of Surrounding Properties and Buildings

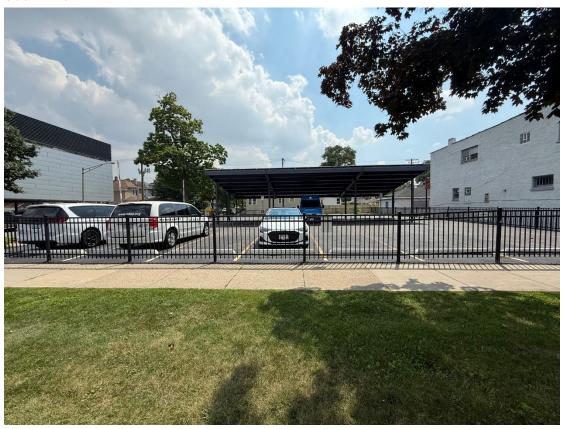
North View



East View



South View



House on south end of lot



West View



North View





Site Assessment

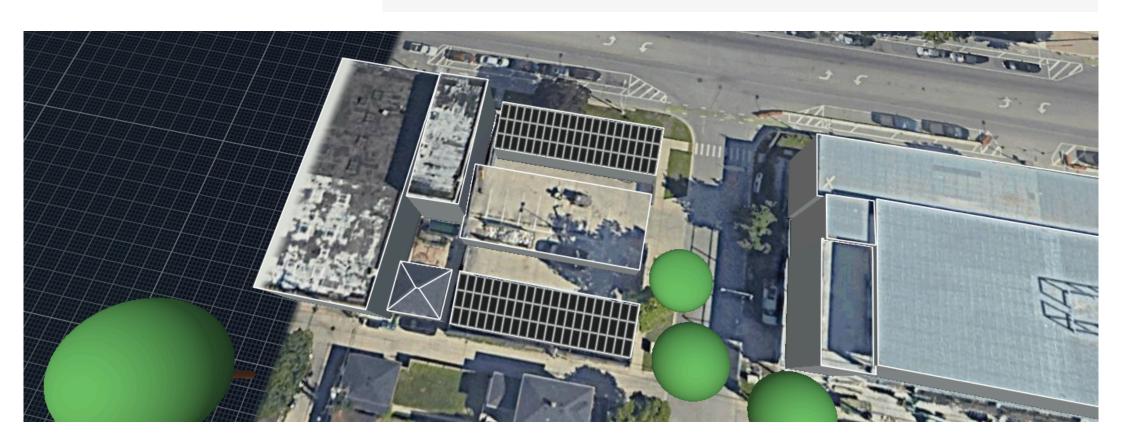
Customer: Park Dist. Oak Park

Address: 123 Madison St, Oak Park, IL

60302, USA

System Size:68.04 kWYear 1 Production:86,282 kWhDesigner:Eric Heineman

Date:



Site Assessment

Customer: Address:

Park Dist. Oak Park 123 Madison St, Oak Park, IL 60302, USA



Component List

LR5-72HBD-540M Longi Solar

CPS SCA25KTL-DO-R/US-480

Qty: 126

Qty: 6



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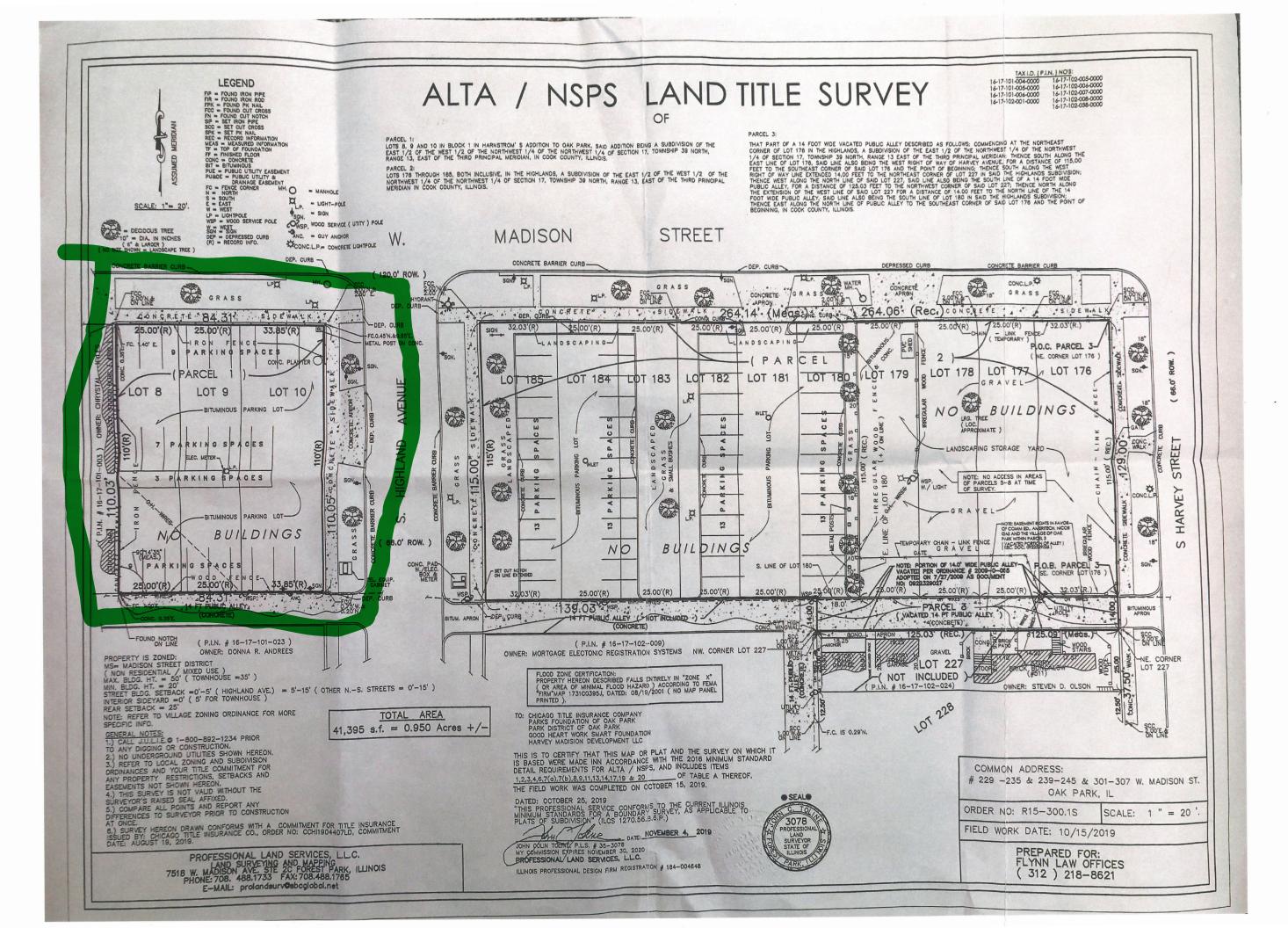
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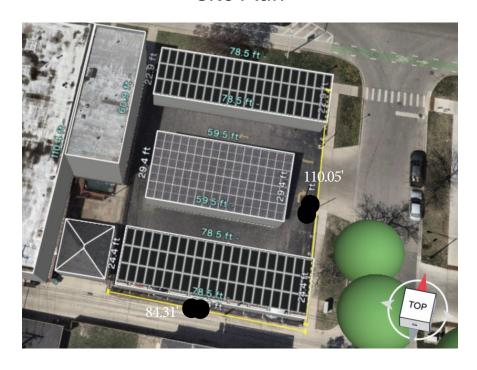


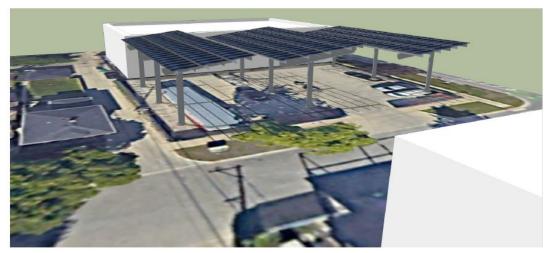
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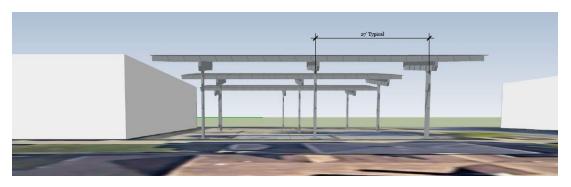




Site Plan







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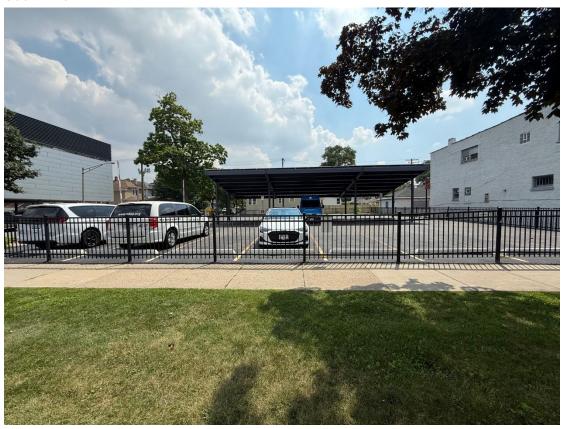
North View



East View



South View



House on south end of lot



West View



North View

