

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025
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>

Call to order / Roll Call

PRESENT: Chair Masaru Takiguchi, Members Peter Weismantle, Matthew Shoener, Kimberly Zeiser, Kimberlee Smith, Glenn Brewer, and Seth Jansen

ALSO, PRESENT: Rasheda Jackson, Counsel; Michael Bruce, Village Planner

QUORUM: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and declared that a quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the September 3, 2025 Agenda. The motion was seconded. A voice vote was taken and the Agenda was approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the August 6, 2025 minutes. The motion was seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

Non-Agenda Public Comment – None

New Business / Public Hearings and Findings of Facts

CALENDAR NUMBER: 14-25-Z (continued from previous meeting)

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) will conduct a public hearing on a special use permit application filed by the Applicant, KidSpace Academy, to operate a Day Care Center, pursuant to Section 8.3 (Table 8-1: Use Matrix) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance, at the property located at 505 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Number 16-06-424-023-0000 (“Subject Property”) in the NC Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District.

The Zoning Board of Appeals attorney swore in those wishing to provide testimony.

Village Planner Bruce summarized the legal notice and project.

Maya Garland, the applicant, spoke about the request. She gave a summary and history of the property as well as an overview of their intended use. She brought up how the property has been vacant for a significant amount of time and how she believes their development would enhance not only the neighborhood, but the community as a whole.

The site plan was shown, and discussion ensued about traffic concerns and findings from the applicant’s traffic analysis. There is a proposal for drop-off zones to decrease congestion during drop-off and pick up times. Employee parking was also discussed. There were concerns raised about there not being enough parking spaces available for employees. The applicant expects there to be enough spaces, but additional vehicles would be parked on the street. Board members asked how

the drop-off zones would operate effectively. The applicant indicated there would be signage for zone control and staff members will assist with the process.

The Board got clarification on the hours of operation, which will be from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

There were no letters submitted in opposition to the project. 2 people signed up for cross examination.

Frank Lipo, resident, expressed he was in support of the project. He raised concerns about safety when it came to vehicles and the children being dropped off. He wanted to know why not all of the children drop-offs would be done in the parking lot itself. The applicant informed him that this was due to mitigation of congestion and that having different zones would divide the number of cars accessing one single space. Frank wanted to know if there would be signage to dissuade parking there during non-drop-off times. The applicant noted that it would remain open to public parking. Frank also expressed concerns about making the alley block off more permanent versus using something temporary such as traffic cones. The applicant mentioned they do not want to use a full barrier or curb because there are no manholes in the parking lot for drainage and they are concerned with flooding. They would prefer to use concrete bollards.

Claudio Martinez, resident, expressed concerns about traffic flow but indicated he was excited to see this building being developed. He also questioned possible removal of a large tree on property that may block the proposed entrance. He is requesting that additional trash cans be placed in the area to mitigate the influx of garage caused by the traffic.

Kate Madelow, resident, expressed her excitement about the project but was concerned with traffic as well. She requested the applicant consider something permanent for alley block off as well as a plan for staff parking. The applicant assured that she believes there will be enough, and in addition to that they are considering a carpool program and incentive for employees who take alternative transportation (bus, bike, walking, train) to work. Kate also brought up concerns about how the traffic and parking will work with the nearby high school parking.

Audience member and resident Pat Heely came up to the podium to state her excitement about the project and wanted to know how she could get in contact with the applicant in the case of issues coming up.

The public hearing was closed.

Further information and additional testimony was closed.

The Board deliberated. Members are overall in support of the project with some concerns about traffic impacts, the bike lanes, etc. A motion was made to recommend the application to the Village Board.

The Village Board recommendation was approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

There was a motion to approve the findings of fact that amended the business open hours from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The findings of fact, as amended, were approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

CALENDAR NUMBER: 16-25-Z

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) will conduct a public hearing on an application filed by the Applicant, Juan Munoz, seeking a variance from Sections 7-7-13(B)(1)(d), 7-7-13(B)(1)(e), and 7-7-15(C)(1) of the Oak Park Sign Code, in order to allow two temporary A-frame signs, increase the allowable distance from the primary entrance from 15 feet to 110 feet for one temporary A-frame sign, and increase the allowable window sign coverage from 25% to 46.15% at 149 Forest Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Number 16-07-120-065-0000 (“Subject Property”), in the DT-1 Downtown Zoning District (Downtown Central Sub-District),

Village Planner Bruce summarized the legal notice and project.

Juan Munoz introduced himself as the applicant on behalf of Kribi Coffee. Requesting a variance to allow for economic activity in that corridor as the only business on Forest Ave. There are three sections as part of the variance request: two A-frame signs, the distance increase from the primary entrance and a increase in window sign coverage on the building’s conference room’s windows needed for privacy.

The discussion began with the first request of A-frame signs. The business’s Primary entrance is on Forest Avenue away from pedestrian area. No other commercial businesses are located there; signage will allow people to find the primary entrance. The second location for signage is on Lake St. consequently directing traffic to the primary entrance.

The increase in the allowable distance will grab people’s attention that there is a business around the corner and will not cause any pedestrian impediments.

Window coverage for the conference room was discussed. It was brought up that staff is not in favor of the signage on the window. Question of applicant does it have to be that much coverage for privacy? The question should be directed to building leasing office for what the necessary coverage is.

Concern in exceeding the 25% coverage will set a precedent by allowing exceeding coverage for this request and will have other businesses looking to do this also.

Motion to approve window coverage, motion seconded and approved by a four (4) to three (3) vote.

Motion to approve placement of signage at a distance of 110 ft. from the primary entrance, motion seconded and approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

Motion to approve two A–Frame signs, motion seconded and approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

Move to approve resolutions with changes, motion seconded and approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

CALENDAR NUMBER: 17-25-Z The Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) will conduct a public hearing on an application filed by the Applicant, Jan Arnold (Park District of Oak Park), seeking a variance from Section 9.3(A)(6) of the Zoning Ordinance, in order to increase the allowable accessory structure coverage from 20% to 60% for additional solar canopy structures at 301 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Numbers 16-17-101-004- 0000, 16-17-101-005-0000, and 16-17-101-006-0000 (“Subject Property”), in the MS Madison Street Zoning District.

Village Planner Bruce summarized the legal notice and project.

Jan Arnold, Executive Director of Park District of Oak Park, applicant for Park District of Oak Park gave an overview of how successful the CRC has become. With the success of the CRC and the number of people utilizing the facility they find more doors are being opened and closed throughout the day, necessitating the request for more solar canopy structures. The Village staff reviewed the project and at Fire Marshall Thompson’s request the height of the structure was changed to allow Ambulance access. The installation of the solar canopies will not negatively affect the surrounding community.

Motion to approve the variance to the ordinance, seconded and approved by seven (7) to zero (0).

Move to approve resolution, motion seconded and approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.

Motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded and approved by a seven (7) to zero (0) vote.