

**MINUTES  
CITY OF DARIEN  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
October 19, 2011**

**PRESENT:** Beverly Meyer – Chairperson, Don Hickok, Ron Kiefer, John Lind, Ray Mielkus, Pauline Oberland, Susan Vonder Heide, Michael Griffith – Senior Planner, Elizabeth Lahey-Secretary

**ABSENT:** Gloria Jiskra, Ken Ritzert

Chairperson Meyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall – City Council Chambers, Darien, Illinois and declared a quorum present and swore in the audience members wishing to present public testimony.

**A. PZC 2011-08: Crossroads of Darien PUD – Building G, 8350 Lemont Road, The Goddard School: Petitioner seeks Final PUD approval for Building G and a Minor Amendment to the approved PUD for a daycare center.**

Mr. Michael Griffith, Senior Planner presented the staff report. He reported that the Crossroads of Darien PUD development was approved in 2000. He stated that preliminary approval was granted for the entire development with final approvals granted as each site is built.

Mr. Griffith reported that the development includes Walgreens, retail and other buildings. He stated that this is the last site to be built and proposed as a preschool.

Mr. Griffith reported that staff finds the plan to be consistent with the approved PUD plans and that staff comments were minor. He further reported that the petitioner needs to meet the landscaping requirements.

Chairperson Meyer questioned the lighting.

Mr. Griffith reported that the photometric plan shows compliance but that once the lighting is in place and if there is a glare onto the adjacent properties that the light will need to be adjusted or a shield placed.

Mr. Robert Claes, Attorney for the petitioner stated that the representative from Goddard School and the architect were present.

Mr. James Scargill, The Goddard School, described the proposed use. He stated that the Goddard School is based out of Pennsylvania and has been around for approximately 25 years. Mr. Scargill stated that the daycare center is open during the week from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. not on weekends and that the center can accommodate up to 140 children with 18 staff. Mr. Scargill stated that the Goddard School focuses on child development. Commissioner Hickok questioned if the teachers were certified.

Mr. Scargill stated that their teachers are screened and that all their employees have degrees and experience. He further stated that background checks are also done.

Chairperson Meyer questioned if the interior was specific to different age groups.

Mr. Scargill stated that the majority of their students start with the school and stay He stated that the infant room is in front followed by the different age groups.

Commissioner Lind questioned the drop off and pick up times and how this is accommodated.

Mr. Scargill stated that there is not a specific morning or evening hour where parents drop off or pick up their children. He stated that there is not vehicle queuing and that it occurs over several hours in the morning and evening. Mr. Scargill stated that parents must park their vehicles and escort their children into the building and use a biometric security palm read. He stated that approximately 30% of the children leave after lunch.

Chairperson Meyer questioned if there were cooking facilities.

Mr. Scargill stated that typically parents provide food for their child but that there are facilities to warm up food along with a sink.

Chairperson Meyer questioned if the petitioner had an idea of where the children will come from.

Mr. Scargill stated that they believe they will come within a five mile radius. He stated that they usually see 40-60% at start up.

Commissioner Lind questioned if there is accessibility for low income families.

Mr. Scargill stated that it is up to the franchisees but that it is available at quite a few facilities across the country.

Commissioner Kiefer questioned if the parents sign a contract and if there is any medical staff on site.

Mr. Scargill stated that parents sign a contract and that it is not typical to require a specific medical person on site.

Commissioner Oberland questioned if there are any special needs children.

Mr. Scargill stated that special needs children usually attend a facility specifically to focus on the need.

Chairperson Meyer asked about the playground surface.

Mr. Scargill stated that the play area is grass and rubber surface around the play equipment

Commissioner Vonder Heide questioned if there are any children that are transported from the schools.

Mr. Scargill stated that it is up to the franchisee but that this is not typical.

Mr. Mark Wisz, Interplan, architect for the petitioner presented building elevation drawings to the Committee. Mr. Wisz stated that the drawings have gone through several revisions and that the colored drawing is the most recent.

Mr. Griffith stated that the drawings that were being presented were not the drawings submitted for review and for the PZC's consideration. He stated that the drawings were not consistent with the approved PUD plan and that this was at least the second time that the elevation drawings the petitioner presented that were not consistent with the PUD plan even after receiving staff comments concerning the matter. Mr. Griffith stated that if the petitioner wished to revise the plan that they would need to submit the plan revisions for review.

Mr. Wisz explained the nature of the revisions but stated that the petitioner would proceed with the drawings submitted to the PZC. Mr. Wisz provided the PZC with material boards reflecting the changed building elevations.

Chairperson Meyer questioned the fence surrounding the play area.

Mr. Scargill stated that the fence would be a solid white 6' tall vinyl fence and that the vinyl has worked well for them and helps absorb the sound from the play area.

There was some discussion regarding the color and style of the fence.

Chairperson Meyer suggested that the fence match with the building exterior.

Commissioner Lind stated that he did not see any issues. The PZC agreed to accept the fence as proposed.

Commissioner Kiefer questioned the retaining wall and if the landscape comments could be addressed.

Mr. Jim Schmidt, Rogina & Associates, Joliet, Civil Engineer for the petitioner stated that he discussed the Christopher Burke letter with the petitioner and that they agree to keep the existing drainage and provide a retaining wall as well as modify the parking lot island to meet the Ordinance. He stated that they do not see changing the trash enclosures for planting.

Commissioner Hickok stated that there seemed to be a lot of plantings on the plan.

Mr. Griffith stated that the Zoning Ordinance requires certain landscaping and doesn't require a number. He stated that staff explained to the petitioner that they were not against having landscaping on the outside of the play area but that they did not request relief from the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Claes stated that the petitioner is asking for a waiver from the landscaping requirements to eliminate the required building foundation landscaping. He stated that the plan calls for sidewalks, where not required by Code to provide parent access to the building as well as to meet

the ADA requirements. He further stated that there is not room to provide the landscaping and that the easements restrict the location.

Mr. Griffith stated that the landscaping does not meet the Zoning Ordinance requirements or the approved PUD plan, specific to building foundation landscaping. He stated that the petitioner had been given comments concerning landscaping and that the landscaping could be placed on the outside of the fenced in play area in order to comply with the Ordinance. He further stated that the petitioner indicated that the plans could be changed to comply with the requirements. Mr. Griffith reported that the petitioner specifically stated that they were not seeking variations from the Zoning Ordinance or the approved PUD plan and that the goal was to minimize the deviations from the Zoning Ordinance and the PUD plan to avoid a needless public hearing to both the landscaping and the building elevations.

Mr. Griffith questioned what plan the petitioner was presenting.

Mr. Claes stated that the petitioner was presenting what was in front of the PZC,

Mr. Griffith stated that if the petitioner disagrees with staff comments that they can seek an appeal.

Commissioner Oberland stated it was disrespectful to submit building elevation drawings for PZC approval and then present different drawings which had not been reviewed by staff.

The petitioner, Mr. Michael Petrucelli and his wife Margaret stated that they would like to start their own business hoping to provide a service to the City of Darien. Mr. Petrucelli stated that it was never their intention to minimize the requirements. He stated that they chose Goddard because they are the most professional and skillful in providing a safe and better building for the children and the community. He further stated that they are not a corporation but just a husband and wife business.

Commissioner Lind stated that he is supportive of the proposal but that there was a deadline and that revisions are being submitted. He stated that by law the PZC has to review what is submitted and although nothing he has seen is negative, it is difficult to approve with what was not submitted.

Mr. Griffith stated that the petitioner can always seek relief but it appears that they are not interested.

Mr. Petrucelli stated that he thought that staff had no issues with landscaping outside the fence.

Mr. Griffith stated that staff provided comments but it was not on the submitted plan.

Commissioner Vonder Heide stated that the elevation is different and the comments regarding landscaping is different than what is proposed. She stated that if the plans are different they need to be submitted to staff for review.

Mr. Claes questioned if it was possible to vote reflective of the changes and review by the Municipal Services Committee with deadlines in the contract. He stated that they do not wish to demean staff findings but timing is an issue.

There was some discussion on the building foundation landscaping. The PZC agreed that there was not enough space to provide the landscaping along the north and west sides of the site and that the sidewalk would be a benefit providing safe access to the building.

Mr. Claes stated that there is a constant battle between the back of the curb and the foundation and that it is not an attempt to avoid the landscaping requirements. He stated that they had to make it fit on the lot.

Mr. Griffith stated that it was inappropriate that the plan was submitted subject to staff comments in order to minimize deviations to prevent a public hearing. He stated that the Ordinance requires landscaping. He further stated that this is an issue of location and that the Code requires landscaping around the building and that the petitioner has not done this.

Mr. Scargill stated that the original rendering was created in house versus a licensed architect. He stated that the petitioner is willing to retract and stick with what is originally submitted and keeping with the PUD.

Mr. Griffith stated that the comment was objected and that the petition stated that there were no waivers being requested.

Commissioner Hickok questioned if the Fire Department reviewed the plan.

Mr. Griffith reported that the Fire Department has no issues with the plan.

There was no one in the audience wishing to present public comment.

**Commissioner Hickok made a motion, and it was seconded by Commissioner Kiefer that based upon the submitted petition and the information presented, the request associated with PZC 2011-08 is in conformance with the standards of the Darien City Code and move that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the petition subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Waive the required building foundation landscape strip along the north and west sides of the building/play area.**
- 2. Provide the required landscaping within the parking lot landscape islands.**
- 3. Revise sign to provide a sign base at least 75% of the sign width.**
- 4. Address comments noted in a letter dated October 10, 2011 from Dan Lynch, PE Christopher B. Burke Engineering.**
- 5. Provide a material board.**
- 6. Building elevations to be consistent with the drawings submitted for review and dated August 29, 2011.**

**Upon roll call vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously 7-0. Commissioner Jiskra and Commissioner Ritzert were not present.**

Mr. Griffith announced that this would be forwarded to the Municipal Services Committee on Monday October 24, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Commissioner Kiefer made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hickok to waive the reading of the August 17, 2011 Meeting Minutes.**

**Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously 7-0. Commissioner Jiskra and Commissioner Ritzert were not present.**

**Commissioner Vonder Heide made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hickok to approve the August 17, 2011 Meeting Minutes.**

**Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously 7-0. Commissioner Jiskra and Commissioner Ritzert were not present.**

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS/PLANNER'S REPORT:**

None.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Mr. Griffith announced that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Oberland made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Lind to adjourn. Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

**APPROVED:**

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**Elizabeth Lahey**  
**Secretary**

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**Beverly Meyer**  
**Chairman**