

May 21, 2026

Mr. Ryan Murphy
City Planner
City of Darien
1702 Plainfield Road
Darien, IL 60561

Re: 8825 Robert Road, Darien, Illinois 60561 (PIN 10-05-207-015)

Dear Mr. Murphy:

I wanted to take this opportunity to provide additional clarification regarding the Petition from the Society of Mount Carmel for a Special Use for a “rectory.” While the applicant is technically applying for a Special Use for a “rectory,” in practical terms, this application concerns the continued use of the property as a single-family residence. The house will be used for the sole purpose as a residence for approximately three or four elderly priests and brothers. Based on this fact, the applicant will agree to the following conditions as part of the proposed Special Use:

- The home will not be used for ministerial purposes and will not be open to the public for ministerial activities. This would include any counseling, treatment center, church administrative office, or event space.
- The home will be used exclusively for residential purposes.
- In response to concerns regarding parking, the applicant agrees to any reasonable parking restrictions related to public street parking that the Village may impose as part of the Special Use approval. The home contains a four-car garage, which will provide ample indoor parking for the priests residing at the property.

In addition, several neighbors at the Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing expressed concerns regarding the possibility of another religious organization continuing the Special Use if the applicant decides to sell the property. In response to these concerns, the applicant agrees to the following additional condition as part of any Special Use approval:

- Any Special Use approved for the property commonly known as 8825 Robert Road shall terminate and shall not run with the land in perpetuity upon the sale or transfer of the property by the applicant to a new owner.

With respect to the required “Findings” for a Special Use”, we believe the applicant has met all required conditions, and there is nothing to indicate that the applicant’s proposed use of the property would negatively impact adjacent properties or the surrounding neighborhood. As outlined in the ordinance:

“No special use shall be recommended to the City Council by the Plan Commission, nor approved by the City Council, unless findings of fact have been made on the following factors relating to the special use being sought.”

- 1) That the Special Use is deemed necessary for the public convenience at the location specified.

The subject property is a single-family residence containing four-bedroom suites, and two other bedrooms. After an extensive search, the Carmelites purchased this single-family home because it had four-bedroom suites, including one on the first floor for the use by a 85-year-old retired priest. This home provides an appropriate and comfortable residence for approximately three or four retired priests who will be residing on this residence.

- 2) That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to, or endanger, the public health, safety, or general welfare.

The applicant will use the property exclusively as a single-family residence with no ministerial use. This residential use will blend seamlessly with the surrounding single-family homes within the neighborhood. No modifications are proposed that would negatively impact on neighboring properties. In fact, the applicant has expended substantial funds on the property by installing a new roof and exterior siding.

As outlined above, no ministerial uses will be operated out of this property, and that would include any counseling, treatment, office, or gathering space for the Carmelites.

- 3) That the special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.

As noted above, the applicant has already improved the existing residence, and the property will continue to be maintained as a luxury single-family home within an established residential

neighborhood. The applicant does not intend to utilize the existing pool, and the property will continue to be professionally landscaped and maintained. No alterations are proposed that would negatively impact adjacent properties.

- 4) That the establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

The residential occupancy of the home by approximately three or four retired or elderly priest will have no impact on the existing single-family residential character of the neighborhood. Nothing proposed by the applicant would negatively affect the character of the neighborhood or the established pattern of residential development in the area.

- 5) That the exterior architectural design, landscape treatment, and functional plan of any proposed structure will not vary substantially from the existing neighborhood character so as to cause a depreciation in surrounding property values.

The applicant intends to maintain the existing façade, landscaping, and plantings on the property. As previously noted, the applicant has already improved the property by installing new siding and a new roof. No exterior changes are proposed that would alter the appearance of the residence or its compatibility with surrounding homes.


- 6) That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.


Existing utilities currently serve the property, and the applicant is not proposing any changes to those utilities or facilities.


- 7) That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress designed to minimize traffic congestion on public streets.

The applicant is not proposing any modifications to the existing driveway or access configuration. The existing four-car garage provides sufficient indoor parking for the priests who will be residing at the property, thereby minimizing any impact on street parking or traffic congestion.

Based on the foregoing analysis, we believe that the proposed Special Use by the Petitioner is compatible with the existing (R-2) single family zoning of this property and that there is no legal basis to deny the applicant's petition. As outlined above, this single-family residence will continue

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to be used exclusively for residential purposes. There is nothing to indicate that the use of this home for the residence of several elderly priests will have any negative impacts on any adjacent property or the neighborhood.

The Society of Mount Carmel has been a major religious presence in the City of Darien for generations and is committed to being a good neighbor to this single-family neighborhood.

In light of these considerations, the Carmelites have agreed to several conditions in connection with the proposed Special Use, which we believe adequately address the specific concerns expressed by neighboring property owners. In addition, the Carmelites remain willing to work cooperatively with the city to address any additional concerns related to the proposed Special Use application.

As always, we look forward to continuing to serve as good neighbors and to remaining a valued part of this community for generations to come.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael S. Garrigan, Esq, AICP