

CITY OF OAK FOREST

Planning and Zoning Commission

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, April 1st, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers, City Hall



15440 S. Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452
(708) 687-4050

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

New Business

1. ZC# 26-08 15537 Lamon Avenue – Garage Height Variation Request: **PUBLIC HEARING** – The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage height variation that will allow a garage height of 25 ft where only 15ft are allowed in the C3 – Central Businesses District
2. ZC# 26-09 15537 Lamon Avenue – Garage Size Variation Request: **PUBLIC HEARING** – The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage height size that will allow a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet where only a 800 square foot garage is allowed in the C3 – Central Businesses District
3. ZC# 26-11 Good Shepherd Non-Profit Garden Special Use Permit: **PUBLIC HEARING** – The applicant requests review and consideration of a special use permit to allow a non-profit community garden at 5251 W. 147th Street before funding is secured and construction starts on a day care facility in the C1-Local Commercial District
4. ZC# 26-07 Plat of Condominium Approval – Text Amendment: **PUBLIC HEARING** – The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code: Article III Applications Contents and Procedures to allow for Plat of Condominium to be approved administratively.
5. ZC# 26-10 Garage and Shed Size Requirements – Text Amendment: **PUBLIC HEARING** – The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Code: Section 8-101 Accessory Structures and Uses.
6. Preliminary Discussion of Development at 147th and Ridgeland: **PUBLIC MEETING**
7. Preliminary Discussion of Minimum Lot Size Per Acre Requirements: **PUBLIC MEETING**

Approval of Minutes

1. March 18th 2026

Citizen Participation

Adjournment



CITY OF OAK FOREST
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
Staff Report

April 1, 2026

TITLE: 15537 LAMON AVENUE – GARAGE HEIGHT VARIATION

CASE NUMBER: ZC# 26-08

REQUESTS: VARIATION APPROVAL
The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage height variation that will allow a garage height of 25 ft where only 15 ft are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District

LOCATION: 15537 Lamon Avenue

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Jesse Keltner

MEETING DATE: April 1, 2026

NOTICE PUBLISHED: March 13, 2026
Daily Southtown

STAFF: Hunter Heyman, Community Planner

I. REQUEST

The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage height variation that will allow a garage height of 25 ft where only 15 ft are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall make a recommendation that City Council approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. Upon receipt of this recommendation, Council shall then make a final determination.

II. BACKGROUND

The applicant is the owner of a single-family home located in the C3 – Central Business District. The applicant is looking to construct a new detached garage on the property to provide additional storage for items that cannot fit in the house, as well as a recreational space for activities such as table tennis. The applicant has had previous public meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission to receive feedback on the proposed garage and has adjusted the plans to lower the height to 21 ft and ensure the garage design matches the existing home.

III. CONTEXT

Exhibit 1: Aerial

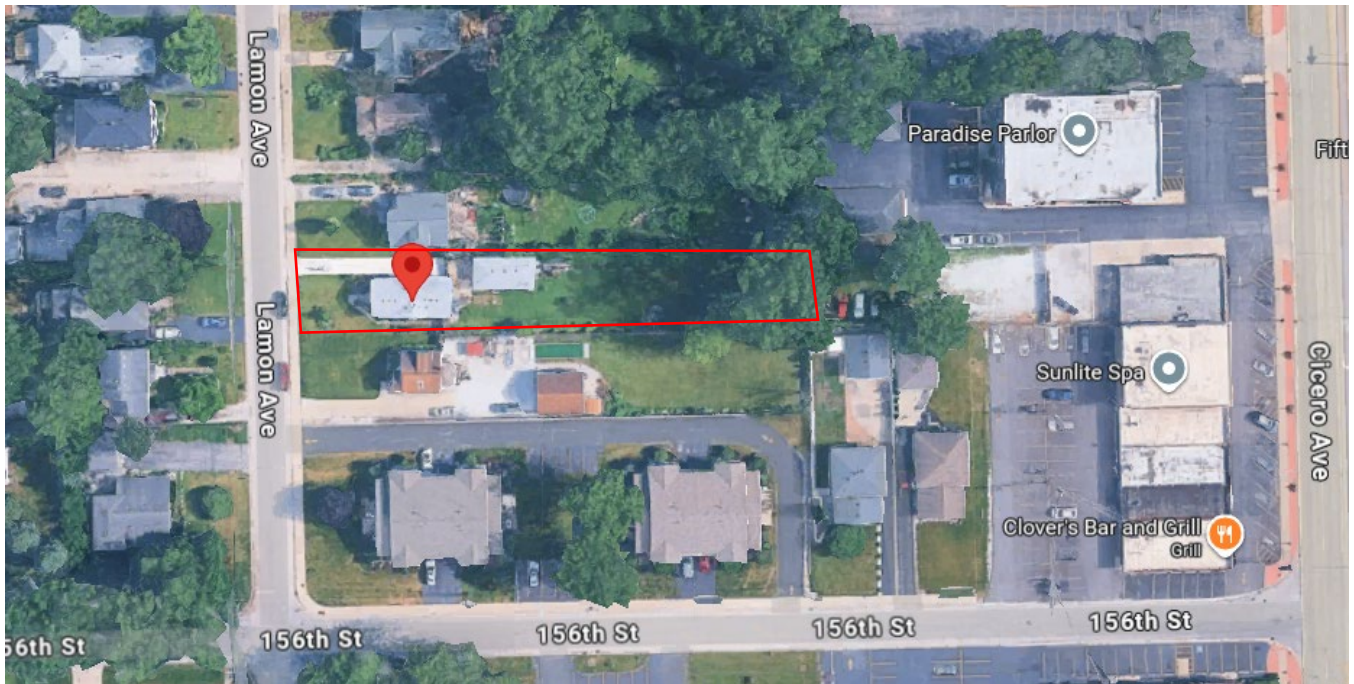


Exhibit 2: Zoning Map

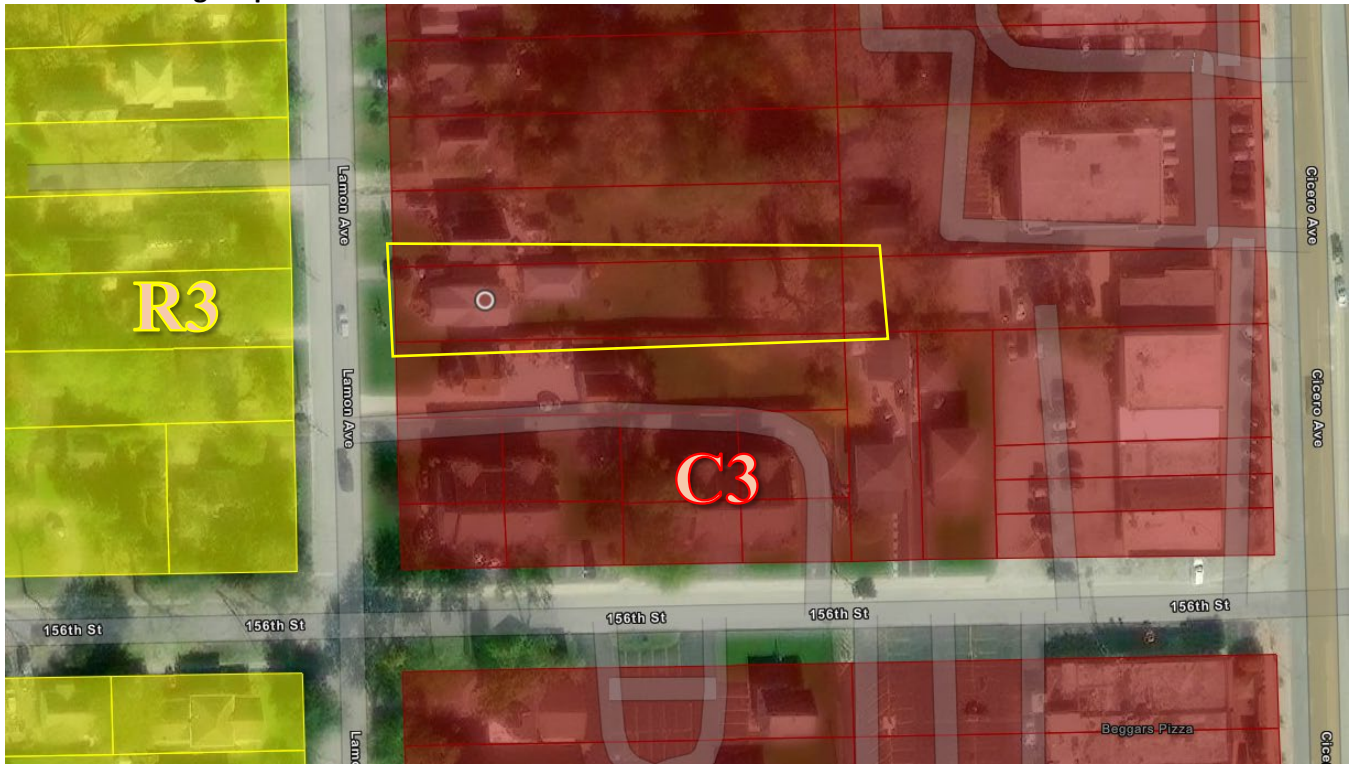
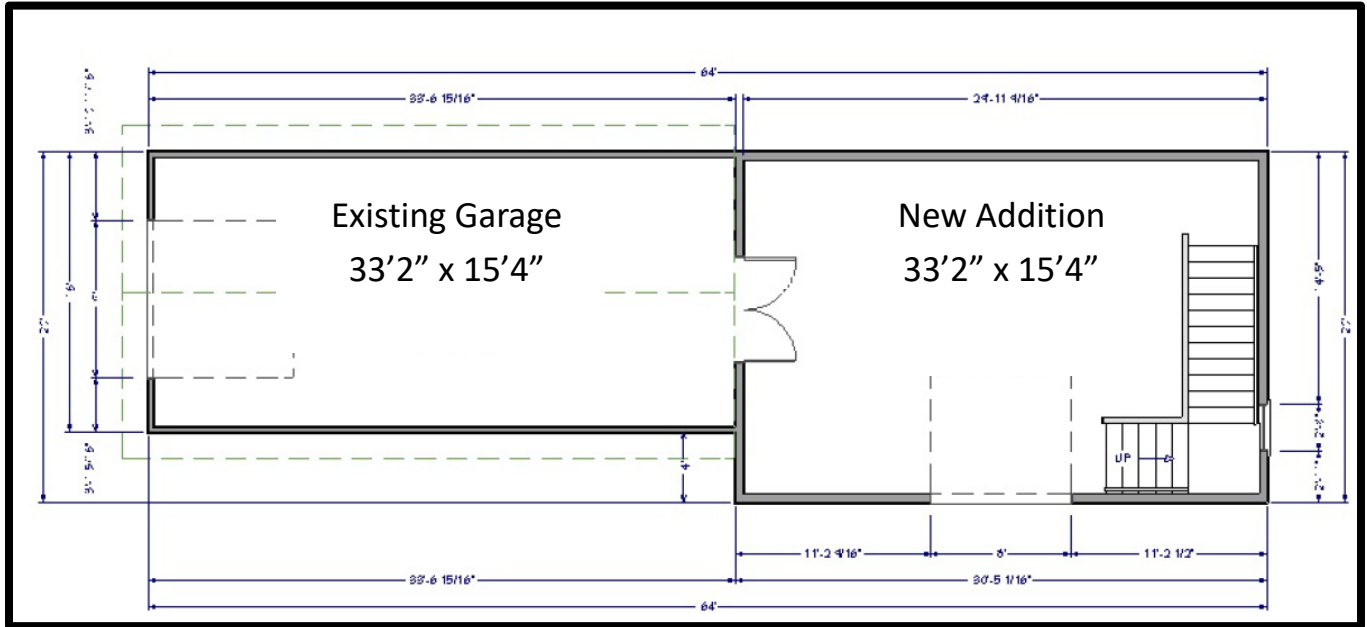


Exhibit 3: Rendering





IV. Analysis

The current Zoning Code limits garages to a maximum height of 15 feet. The applicant requests a garage height of 25 feet in the C3 – Central Business District. The property is a single-family home on a lot that is larger than other nearby residential lots. The C3 district contains a mix of commercial businesses and larger structures, and the proposed garage would not be out of scale with the surrounding built environment.

While the lot size and C3 context provide some justification for a larger accessory structure, the requested height of 25 feet significantly exceeds the 15-foot maximum. A garage at this height approaches the scale of the primary dwelling and is not directly tied to a unique physical condition of the lot itself. The desire for additional height to accommodate recreational use is a personal preference rather than a hardship arising from the lot's physical characteristics.

The applicant has worked with the Commission through preliminary discussions and has made adjustments to the design, including lowering the proposed height to 21 feet and ensuring the garage matches the design of the home. This updated design, put the garage more in line with the zoning code and an allowable variation.

V. Conclusion

STANDARDS FOR VARIATIONS	
<i>General Standard</i>	<p><i>No variation shall be granted pursuant to this Section unless the applicant shall establish that carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Code would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty. Such a showing shall require proof that the variation being sought satisfies each of the standards set forth in this Subsection F.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The applicant has not established that carrying out the strict letter of the code would create a particular hardship or practical difficulty. The desire for additional garage</p>

	<p>height to accommodate recreational use is a personal preference and does not constitute a hardship related to the physical characteristics of the lot.</p>
<p><i>Unique Physical Condition</i></p>	<p><i>The subject property is exceptional as compared to other lots subject to the same provision by reason of a unique physical condition, including presence of an existing use, structure or sign, whether conforming or nonconforming; irregular or substandard shape or size; exceptional topographical features; or other extraordinary physical conditions peculiar to and inherent in the subject property that amount to more than a mere inconvenience to the owner and that relate to or arise out of the lot rather than the personal situation of the current owner of the lot.</i></p> <p>Not Met. While the lot is larger than some nearby residential lots and is located in the C3 district among larger commercial structures, these conditions do not create a unique physical hardship that necessitates a garage height of 25 feet. The height limitation applies equally to all properties, and the lot’s size alone does not justify exceeding the maximum by 10 feet.</p>
<p><i>Not Self-Created.</i></p>	<p><i>The aforesaid unique physical condition is not the result of any action or inaction of the owner or his predecessors in title and existed at the time of the enactment of the provisions from which a variation is sought or was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Code, for which no compensation was paid.</i></p> <p>Met. The lot size and zoning classification are not the result of any action by the applicant.</p>
<p><i>Denied Substantial Rights</i></p>	<p><i>The carrying out of the strict letter of the provision from which a variation is sought would deprive the owner of the subject property of substantial rights commonly enjoyed by owners of other lots subject to the same provision.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The 15-foot height limit applies uniformly to all accessory structures. The applicant is not being deprived of substantial rights enjoyed by other property owners, as no other properties in the vicinity have been granted a similar height variation for a residential garage.</p>
<p><i>Not Merely Special Privilege</i></p>	<p><i>The alleged hardship or difficulty is not merely the inability of the owner or occupant to enjoy some special privilege or additional right not available to owners or occupants of other lots subject to the same provision, nor merely an inability to make more money from the sale of the subject property; provided, however, that where the standards herein set out exist, the existence of an economic hardship shall not be a prerequisite to the grant of an authorized variation.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The requested height increase is primarily to accommodate personal recreational use, which constitutes a special privilege not available to other property owners under the same provision.</p>
<p><i>Code Plan and Purposes</i></p>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development of the subject property that would not be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code and the provision from which a variation is sought were enacted or the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p>

	<p>Met. The variation request does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p><i>Essential Character of the Area</i></p>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development on the subject property that: (a) Would be materially detrimental to the public welfare or materially injurious to the enjoyment, use, development value of property or improvements permitted in the vicinity; (b) Would materially impair an adequate supply of light and air to the properties and improvements in the vicinity; (c) Would substantially increase congestion in the public streets due to traffic or parking; (d) Would unduly increase the danger of flood or fire; (e) Would unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area; or (f) Would endanger the public health and safety.</i></p> <p>Met. The requested garage height variation would not result in a materially detrimental impact to the public welfare or the essential character of the area given the C3 zoning context and surrounding commercial structures.</p>
<p><i>No Other Remedy</i></p>	<p><i>There is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The applicant could construct a compliant 15-foot garage and still achieve reasonable use of the property for storage purposes. The additional height for recreational use is not necessary for reasonable use of the property.</p>
<p>TOTAL MET: 3 of 8 standards</p>	

VI. PZC MOTION

Motion to affirm PZC Resolution 26-08 recommending approval for a variation request to allow a garage height of 25 ft where only 15 ft are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District at 15537 Lamon Avenue

VII. Applicants’ response to Standards

STANDARDS

1. Met. The large lot size creates a real hardship. The size of the house on the lot is very small and limited storage. The garage size and height will not bother any neighbors.
2. Met. The unique physical characteristics of the lot are larger than other properties in Oak Forest.
3. Met. Due to the lot size being very narrow but long, it is impossible to utilize all of the lot.
4. Met. Without the variance the property is being treated unfairly because it is zoned commercial and surrounded by very tall condos on the east side and south side. Other commercial zoned properties are able to build large buildings with plenty of storage space
5. Met. A larger garage would not be a special privilege
6. Met. Does not conflict with the city’s long term development plan.
7. Met. Use would be storage of vehicle and items which is already an accepted use and would not alter the essential character of the area
8. Met. The property owner can’t reasonably add storage space to their property unless the zoning board grants the requested exception

CITY OF OAK FOREST

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-08

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A VARIATION TO ALLOW A GARAGE HEIGHT OF 25 FEET WHERE ONLY 15 FEET ARE ALLOWED IN THE C3 – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AT 15537 LAMON AVENUE

((Garage Height Variation – ZC# 26-08))

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, April 1st, 2026

CITY OF OAK FOREST
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-08

BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, Illinois, THAT:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A VARIATION TO ALLOW A GARAGE HEIGHT OF 25 FEET WHERE ONLY 15 FEET ARE ALLOWED IN THE C3 – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AT 15537 LAMON AVENUE

(Garage Height Variation – ZC# 26-08)

shall be, and is hereby, adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, Jesse Keltner (“Applicant”) filed an application for a variation to allow a garage height of 25 feet where only 15 feet are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District at 15537 Lamon Avenue; and

WHEREAS, a public notice was duly published in the Daily Southtown on March 13, 2026 and a public hearing was convened before the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) on April 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the PZC has considered all of the evidence presented to it, including without limitation, those demonstrative exhibits attached and incorporated in to this resolution by this reference as **Exhibit A**;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, based on the foregoing recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference, that:

Section 1. FINDINGS.

Based on the evidence presented at the public hearing, and the Findings of Fact attached hereto as **Exhibit B**, the PZC hereby finds that the Applicant’s request does satisfy the standards for the requested Zoning Relief as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance of Oak Forest.

Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.

Based on the findings of fact set forth in Section 1 of this resolution, the PZC hereby recommends approval of the Applicant’s requested Zoning Relief, with the following conditions:

A. No Authorization of Work. The Ordinance approving the Zoning Relief (“Ordinance”) does not authorize commencement of any work on the Property. Except as otherwise specifically provided in writing in advance by the City, no work of any kind shall be commenced on the Property pursuant to the approvals granted unless and until all conditions of the Ordinance precedent to such work have been fulfilled and after all permits, approvals, and other authorizations for such work have been properly applied for, paid for, and granted in accordance with applicable law, including, without limitation, approval of final engineering plans and issuance of required permits.

B. Compliance with Laws. The development, maintenance and operation of the Property must comply with all applicable State, County and City statutes, ordinances, codes, rules, and regulations.

C. Compliance with Plans. The development, maintenance, and operation of the Property will be in substantial compliance with those documents and plans submitted in the application,

except for minor changes and site work approved by the Community Development Director in accordance with all applicable City rules, regulations, and ordinances.

ADOPTED

This 1st Day of April, 2026

APPROVED By Chairman

This 1st Day of April, 2026

MIKE ZIAK, CHAIRMAN

Commissioners	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Rick Larson				
Jeffery Ater				
Bryan LaRoche				
Robert McGrath				
Mike Forbes				
Glen Runge				
Donald Guisinger				
Mike Ziak				

EXHIBIT A
Findings of Fact

STANDARDS FOR VARIATIONS	
<i>General Standard.</i>	<p><i>No variation shall be granted pursuant to this Section unless the applicant shall establish that carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Code would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty. Such a showing shall require proof that the variation being sought satisfies each of the standards set forth in this Subsection F.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The applicant has not established that carrying out the strict letter of the code would create a particular hardship or practical difficulty. The desire for additional garage height to accommodate recreational use is a personal preference and does not constitute a hardship related to the physical characteristics of the lot.</p>
<i>Unique Physical Condition.</i>	<p><i>The subject property is exceptional as compared to other lots subject to the same provision by reason of a unique physical condition, including presence of an existing use, structure or sign, whether conforming or nonconforming; irregular or substandard shape or size; exceptional topographical features; or other extraordinary physical conditions peculiar to and inherent in the subject property that amount to more than a mere inconvenience to the owner and that relate to or arise out of the lot rather than the personal situation of the current owner of the lot.</i></p> <p>Not Met. While the lot is larger than some nearby residential lots and is located in the C3 district among larger commercial structures, these conditions do not create a unique physical hardship that necessitates a garage height of 25 feet. The height limitation applies equally to all properties, and the lot's size alone does not justify exceeding the maximum by 10 feet.</p>
<i>Not Self-Created.</i>	<p><i>The aforesaid unique physical condition is not the result of any action or inaction of the owner or his predecessors in title and existed at the time of the enactment of the provisions from which a variation is sought or was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Code, for which no compensation was paid.</i></p> <p>Met. The lot size and zoning classification are not the result of any action by the applicant.</p>
<i>Denied Substantial Rights.</i>	<p><i>The carrying out of the strict letter of the provision from which a variation is sought would deprive the owner of the subject property of substantial rights commonly enjoyed by owners of other lots subject to the same provision.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The 15-foot height limit applies uniformly to all accessory structures. The applicant is not being deprived of substantial rights enjoyed by other property owners, as no other properties in the vicinity have been granted a similar height variation for a residential garage.</p>
<i>Not Merely Special Privilege.</i>	<p><i>The alleged hardship or difficulty is not merely the inability of the owner or occupant to enjoy some special privilege or additional right not available to owners or occupants of other lots subject to the same provision, nor merely an inability to make more money from the sale of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The requested height increase is primarily to accommodate personal recreational use, which constitutes a special privilege not available to other property owners under the same provision.</p>
<i>Code Plan and Purposes.</i>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development of the subject property that would not be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code and the provision from which a variation is sought were enacted or the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p> <p>Met. The variation request does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>

<p><i>Essential Character of the Area.</i></p>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development on the subject property that: (a) Would be materially detrimental to the public welfare or materially injurious to the enjoyment, use, development value of property or improvements permitted in the vicinity; (b) Would materially impair an adequate supply of light and air to the properties and improvements in the vicinity; (c) Would substantially increase congestion in the public streets due to traffic or parking; (d) Would unduly increase the danger of flood or fire; (e) Would unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area; or (f) Would endanger the public health and safety.</i></p> <p>Met. The requested garage height variation would not result in a materially detrimental impact to the public welfare or the essential character of the area given the C3 zoning context and surrounding commercial structures.</p>
<p><i>No Other Remedy.</i></p>	<p><i>There is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Not Met. The applicant could construct a compliant 15-foot garage and still achieve reasonable use of the property for storage purposes. The additional height for recreational use is not necessary for reasonable use of the property.</p>
<p>TOTAL MET: 3 of 8 standards</p>	

EXHIBIT B
Applicant's Standards

STANDARDS

1. Met. The large lot size creates a real hardship. The size of the house on the lot is very small and limited storage. The garage size will not bother any neighbors.
2. Met. The unique physical characteristics of the lot are larger than other properties in Oak Forest.
3. Met. Due to the lot size being very narrow but long, it is impossible to utilize all of the lot.
4. Met. Without the variance the property is being treated unfairly because it is zoned commercial and surrounded by very tall condos on the east side and south side. Other commercial zoned properties are able to build large buildings with plenty of storage space
5. Met. A larger garage would not be a special privilege
6. Met. Does not conflict with the city's long term development plan.
7. Met. Use would be storage of vehicle and items which is already an accepted use and would not alter the essential character of the area
8. Met. The property owner can't reasonably add storage space to their property unless the zoning board grants the requested exception



CITY OF OAK FOREST
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
Staff Report

April 1, 2026

TITLE: 15537 LAMON AVENUE – GARAGE SIZE VARIATION

CASE NUMBER: ZC# 26-09

REQUESTS: VARIATION APPROVAL
The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage size variation that will allow a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet where only 800 square feet are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District

LOCATION: 15537 Lamon Avenue

APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Jesse Keltner

MEETING DATE: April 1, 2026

NOTICE PUBLISHED: March 13, 2026
Daily Southtown

STAFF: Hunter Heyman, Community Planner

I. REQUEST

The applicant requests review and consideration of a garage size variation that will allow a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet where only 800 square feet are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall make a recommendation that City Council approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. Upon receipt of this recommendation, Council shall then make a final determination.

II. BACKGROUND

The applicant is the owner of a single-family home located in the C3 – Central Business District. The applicant is looking to construct a new detached garage on the property to provide additional storage for items that cannot fit in the house, as well as a recreational space for activities such as table tennis. The applicant has had previous public meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission to receive feedback on the proposed garage and has adjusted the plans accordingly, including ensuring the garage design matches the existing home.

III. CONTEXT

Exhibit 1: Aerial

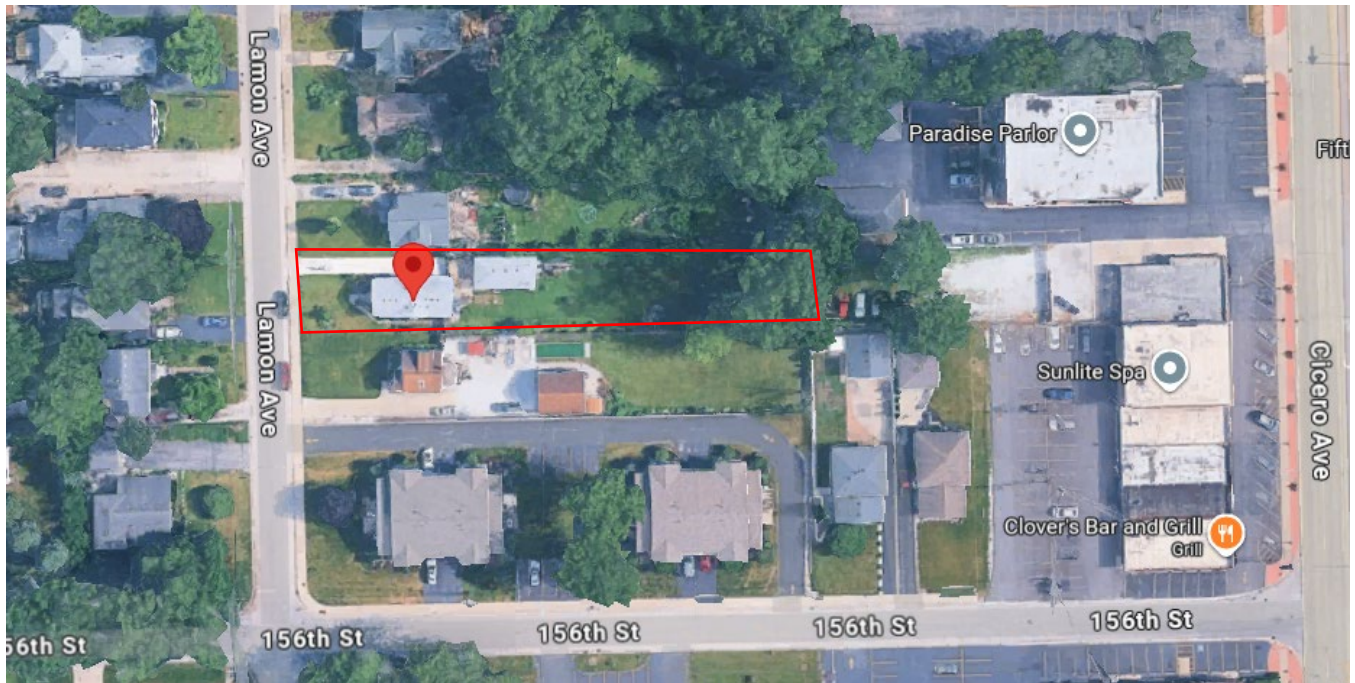


Exhibit 2: Zoning Map

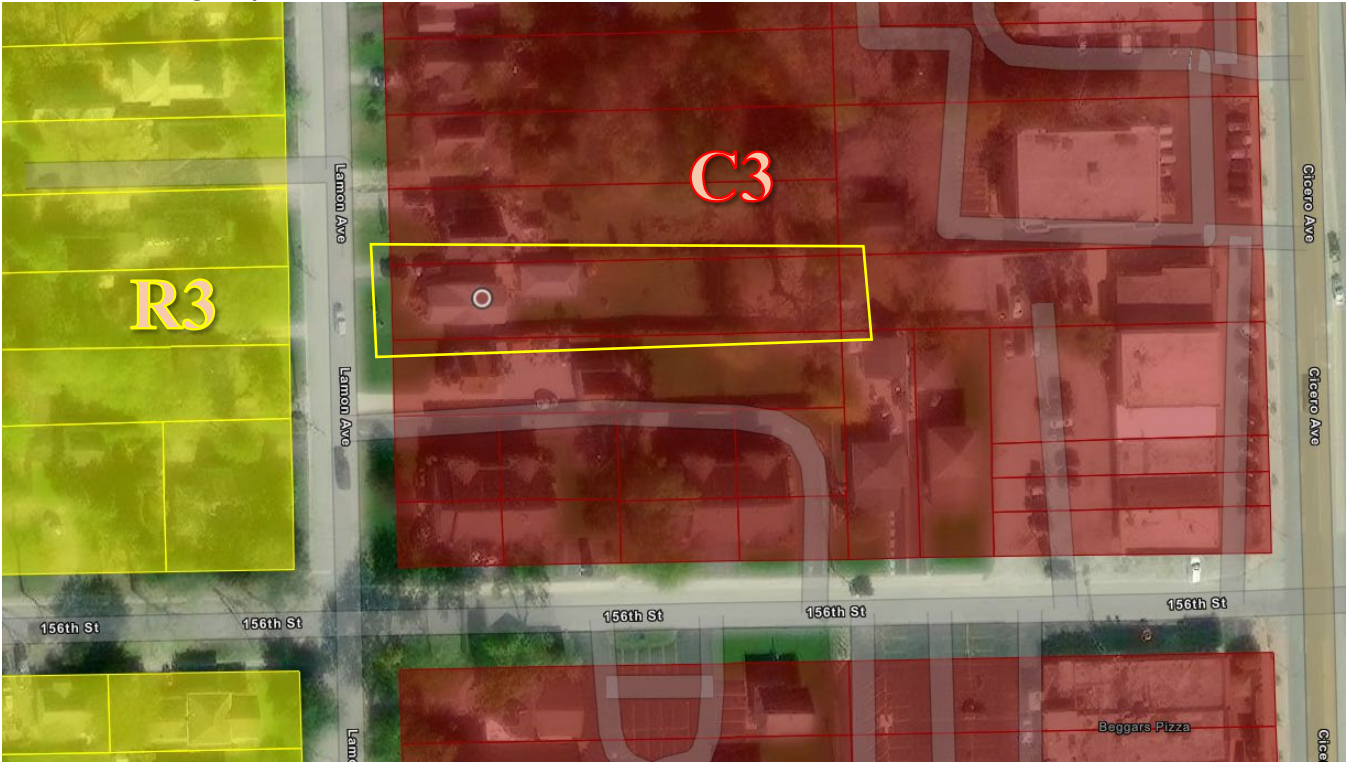
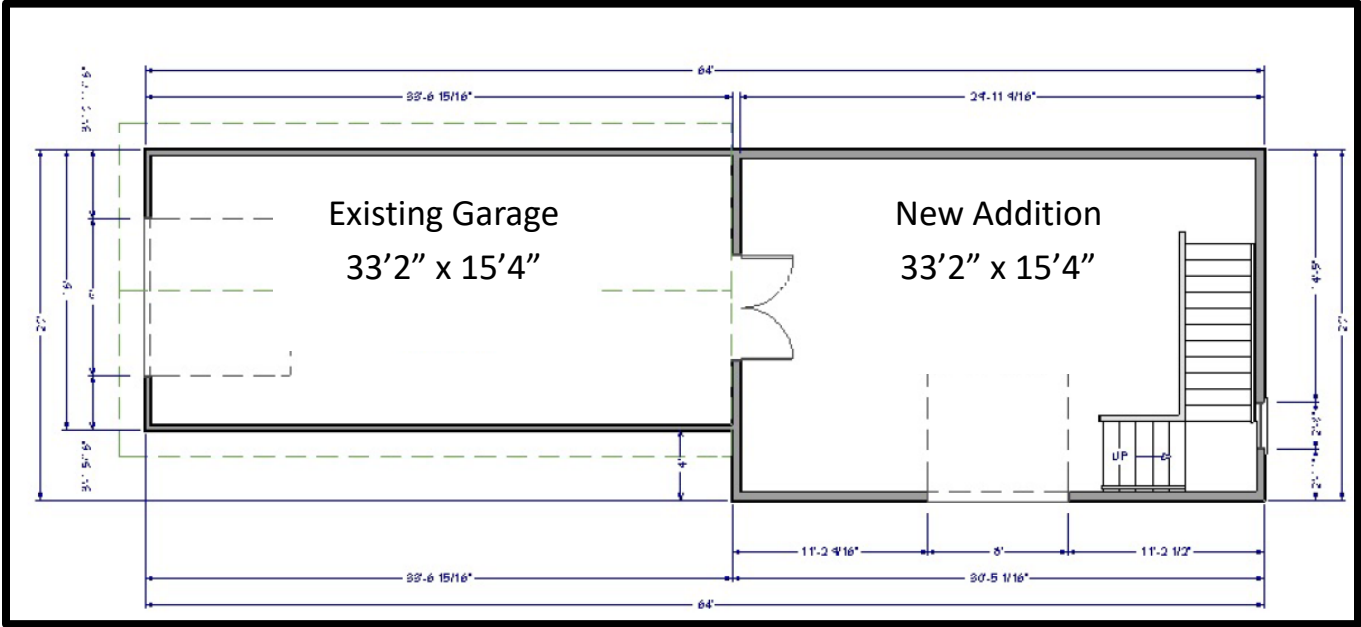


Exhibit 3: Rendering





IV. Analysis

The current Zoning Code limits accessory structures to a maximum size of 800 square feet. The applicant requests a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet in the C3 – Central Business District. The property is a single-family home on a lot that is larger than other nearby residential lots in the area. The larger lot size means the applicant cannot make use of the property in the same way that neighbors with smaller lots can utilize their properties for accessory storage and recreation, as the standard 800 square foot limitation was established with typical lot sizes in mind.

The lot’s larger-than-typical size within the C3 district creates a situation where the standard accessory structure limitation does not allow the applicant to make proportional use of the property. Other properties in the community have garages that exceed the standard allowance, and the proposed garage size is proportional to the lot. The C3 district contains a mix of commercial businesses and larger structures, and the proposed garage would not be out of scale with the surrounding built environment.

The applicant has worked with the Commission through preliminary discussions and has made adjustments to the design, ensuring the garage matches the architectural style of the home. The proposed garage will serve practical storage needs and provide recreational space, consistent with the residential character of the property.

V. Conclusion

STANDARDS FOR VARIATIONS	
<i>General Standard</i>	<p><i>No variation shall be granted pursuant to this Section unless the applicant shall establish that carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Code would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty. Such a showing shall require proof that the variation being sought satisfies each of the standards set forth in this Subsection F.</i></p> <p>Met. Carrying out the strict letter of the code would create a practical difficulty for the applicant. The property’s larger lot size in the C3 district means the 800 square foot accessory structure limitation prevents the applicant from making proportional use of the lot for storage and recreation, creating a hardship tied to the physical characteristics of the property.</p>
<i>Unique Physical Condition</i>	<p><i>The subject property is exceptional as compared to other lots subject to the same provision by reason of a unique physical condition, including presence of an existing use, structure or sign, whether conforming or nonconforming; irregular or substandard shape or size; exceptional topographical features; or other extraordinary physical conditions peculiar to and inherent in the subject property that amount to more than a mere inconvenience to the owner and that relate to or arise out of the lot rather than the personal situation of the current owner of the lot.</i></p> <p>Met. The subject property is larger than typical residential lots in the area. This larger lot size is a unique physical condition inherent to the property that creates a disparity in how the accessory structure size limitation affects this property compared to smaller lots. The 800 square foot limit prevents the applicant from making proportional use of the lot in the same way owners of smaller lots can.</p>

<p><i>Not Self-Created.</i></p>	<p><i>The aforesaid unique physical condition is not the result of any action or inaction of the owner or his predecessors in title and existed at the time of the enactment of the provisions from which a variation is sought or was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Code, for which no compensation was paid.</i></p> <p>Met. The lot size and zoning classification are not the result of any action by the applicant.</p>
<p><i>Denied Substantial Rights</i></p>	<p><i>The carrying out of the strict letter of the provision from which a variation is sought would deprive the owner of the subject property of substantial rights commonly enjoyed by owners of other lots subject to the same provision.</i></p> <p>Met. The strict application of the 800 square foot limitation would deprive the applicant of the ability to make proportional use of the larger lot for accessory storage and recreation. Owners of smaller lots can utilize a greater proportion of their lot area with an 800 square foot garage, while this applicant cannot achieve the same proportional use.</p>
<p><i>Not Merely Special Privilege</i></p>	<p><i>The alleged hardship or difficulty is not merely the inability of the owner or occupant to enjoy some special privilege or additional right not available to owners or occupants of other lots subject to the same provision, nor merely an inability to make more money from the sale of the subject property; provided, however, that where the standards herein set out exist, the existence of an economic hardship shall not be a prerequisite to the grant of an authorized variation.</i></p> <p>Met. The requested size increase is not merely a special privilege but rather allows the applicant to make use of the larger lot in a manner proportional to what owners of smaller lots already enjoy. The proposed garage serves practical storage and recreational needs consistent with residential use.</p>
<p><i>Code Plan and Purposes</i></p>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development of the subject property that would not be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code and the provision from which a variation is sought were enacted or the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p> <p>Met. The variation request does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p><i>Essential Character of the Area</i></p>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development on the subject property that: (a) Would be materially detrimental to the public welfare or materially injurious to the enjoyment, use, development value of property or improvements permitted in the vicinity; (b) Would materially impair an adequate supply of light and air to the properties and improvements in the vicinity; (c) Would substantially increase congestion in the public streets due to traffic or parking; (d) Would unduly increase the danger of flood or fire; (e) Would unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area; or (f) Would endanger the public health and safety.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed garage size variation would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the enjoyment of surrounding properties. The C3 district contains a mix of commercial businesses and larger structures, and the proposed garage is proportional to the lot size and would not be out of character with the area.</p>

<p><i>No Other Remedy</i></p>	<p><i>There is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Met. There is no means other than the requested variation by which the applicant can make proportional use of the larger lot for accessory storage and recreation. A code-compliant 800 square foot garage would not allow the applicant to reasonably utilize the property's larger lot area in the same manner as owners of smaller lots.</p>
<p>TOTAL MET: 8 of 8 standards</p>	

VI. PZC MOTION

Motion to affirm PZC Resolution 26-09 recommending approval for a variation request to allow a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet where only 800 square feet are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District at 15537 Lamon Avenue

CITY OF OAK FOREST

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-09

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING A VARIATION TO ALLOW A GARAGE SIZE OF 1,625.82 SQUARE FEET
WHERE ONLY 800 SQUARE FEET ARE ALLOWED IN THE C3 – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AT 15537
LAMON AVENUE**

((Garage Size Variation – ZC# 26-09))

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, April 1st, 2026

CITY OF OAK FOREST
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-09

BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, Illinois, THAT:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A VARIATION TO ALLOW A GARAGE SIZE OF 1,625.82 SQUARE FEET WHERE ONLY 800 SQUARE FEET ARE ALLOWED IN THE C3 – CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AT 15537 LAMON AVENUE

(Garage Size Variation – ZC# 26-09)

shall be, and is hereby, adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, Jesse Keltner (“Applicant”) filed an application for a variation to allow a garage size of 1,625.82 square feet where only 800 square feet are allowed in the C3 – Central Business District at 15537 Lamon Avenue; and

WHEREAS, a public notice was duly published in the Daily Southtown on March 13, 2026 and a public hearing was convened before the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) on April 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the PZC has considered all of the evidence presented to it, including without limitation, those demonstrative exhibits attached and incorporated in to this resolution by this reference as **Exhibit A**;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, based on the foregoing recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference, that:

Section 1. FINDINGS.

Based on the evidence presented at the public hearing, and the Findings of Fact attached hereto as **Exhibit A** the PZC hereby finds that the Applicant’s request does satisfy the standards for the requested Zoning Relief as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance of Oak Forest.

Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.

A. No Authorization of Work. The Ordinance approving the Zoning Relief (“Ordinance”) does not authorize commencement of any work on the Property. Except as otherwise specifically provided in writing in advance by the City, no work of any kind shall be commenced on the Property pursuant to the approvals granted unless and until all conditions of the Ordinance precedent to such work have been fulfilled and after all permits, approvals, and other authorizations for such work have been properly applied for, paid for, and granted in accordance with applicable law, including, without limitation, approval of final engineering plans and issuance of required permits.

B. Compliance with Laws. The development, maintenance and operation of the Property must comply with all applicable State, County and City statutes, ordinances, codes, rules, and regulations.

C. Compliance with Plans. The development, maintenance, and operation of the Property will be in substantial compliance with those documents and plans submitted in the application, except for minor changes and site work approved by the Community Development Director in accordance with all applicable City rules, regulations, and ordinances.

D. Limitation of Approval. The variation is limited to the property.

ADOPTED

This 1st Day of April, 2026

APPROVED By Chairman

This 1st Day of April, 2026

MIKE ZIAK, CHAIRMAN

Commissioners	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Rick Larson				
Jeffery Ater				
Bryan LaRoche				
Robert McGrath				
Mike Forbes				
Glen Runge				
Donald Guisinger				
Mike Ziak				

EXHIBIT A
Findings of Fact

STANDARDS FOR VARIATIONS	
<i>General Standard.</i>	<p><i>No variation shall be granted pursuant to this Section unless the applicant shall establish that carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Code would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty. Such a showing shall require proof that the variation being sought satisfies each of the standards set forth in this Subsection F.</i></p> <p>Met. Carrying out the strict letter of the code would create a practical difficulty for the applicant. The property's larger lot size in the C3 district means the 800 square foot accessory structure limitation prevents the applicant from making proportional use of the lot for storage and recreation, creating a hardship tied to the physical characteristics of the property.</p>
<i>Unique Physical Condition.</i>	<p><i>The subject property is exceptional as compared to other lots subject to the same provision by reason of a unique physical condition, including presence of an existing use, structure or sign, whether conforming or nonconforming; irregular or substandard shape or size; exceptional topographical features; or other extraordinary physical conditions peculiar to and inherent in the subject property that amount to more than a mere inconvenience to the owner and that relate to or arise out of the lot rather than the personal situation of the current owner of the lot.</i></p> <p>Met. The subject property is larger than typical residential lots in the area. This larger lot size is a unique physical condition inherent to the property that creates a disparity in how the accessory structure size limitation affects this property compared to smaller lots. The 800 square foot limit prevents the applicant from making proportional use of the lot in the same way owners of smaller lots can.</p>
<i>Not Self-Created.</i>	<p><i>The aforesaid unique physical condition is not the result of any action or inaction of the owner or his predecessors in title and existed at the time of the enactment of the provisions from which a variation is sought or was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Code, for which no compensation was paid.</i></p> <p>Met. The lot size and zoning classification are not the result of any action by the applicant.</p>
<i>Denied Substantial Rights.</i>	<p><i>The carrying out of the strict letter of the provision from which a variation is sought would deprive the owner of the subject property of substantial rights commonly enjoyed by owners of other lots subject to the same provision.</i></p> <p>Met. The strict application of the 800 square foot limitation would deprive the applicant of the ability to make proportional use of the larger lot for accessory storage and recreation. Owners of smaller lots can utilize a greater proportion of their lot area with an 800 square foot garage, while this applicant cannot achieve the same proportional use.</p>
<i>Not Merely Special Privilege.</i>	<p><i>The alleged hardship or difficulty is not merely the inability of the owner or occupant to enjoy some special privilege or additional right not available to owners or occupants of other lots subject to the same provision, nor merely an inability to make more money from the sale of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Met. The requested size increase is not merely a special privilege but rather allows the applicant to make use of the larger lot in a manner proportional to what owners of smaller lots already enjoy. The proposed garage serves practical storage and recreational needs consistent with residential use.</p>
<i>Code Plan and Purposes.</i>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development of the subject property that would not be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code and the provision from which a variation is sought were enacted or the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p> <p>Met. The variation request does not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<i>Essential Character of the Area.</i>	<p><i>The variation would not result in a use or development on the subject property that: (a) Would be materially detrimental to the public welfare or materially</i></p>

	<p><i>injurious to the enjoyment, use, development value of property or improvements permitted in the vicinity; (b) Would materially impair an adequate supply of light and air to the properties and improvements in the vicinity; (c) Would substantially increase congestion in the public streets due to traffic or parking; (d) Would unduly increase the danger of flood or fire; (e) Would unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area; or (f) Would endanger the public health and safety.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed garage size variation would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the enjoyment of surrounding properties. The C3 district contains a mix of commercial businesses and larger structures, and the proposed garage is proportional to the lot size and would not be out of character with the area.</p>
<p><i>No Other Remedy.</i></p>	<p><i>There is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property.</i></p> <p>Met. There is no means other than the requested variation by which the applicant can make proportional use of the larger lot for accessory storage and recreation. A code-compliant 800 square foot garage would not allow the applicant to reasonably utilize the property's larger lot area in the same manner as owners of smaller lots.</p>
<p>TOTAL MET: 8 of 8 standards</p>	



Title: 5251 W. 147th Street – Good Shepherd Non-Profit
Community Garden Special Use Permit

Case Number: ZC# 26-11

Requests: **SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST**
The applicant requests review and recommendation of approval of a special use permit to allow a non-profit community garden at 5251 W. 147th Street before funding is secured and construction starts on a day care facility in the C1–Local Commercial District.

Location: 5251 W. 147th Street

Application Information

Applicant: Good Shepherd Center For Exceptional Children

Meeting Date: April 1, 2026

Notice Published: March 4, 2026
Daily Southtown

Staff: Hunter Heyman, Community Planner

I. REQUEST

The applicant requests review and recommendation of approval of a special use permit to allow a non-profit community garden at 5251 W. 147th Street before funding is secured and construction starts on a day care facility in the C1–Local Commercial District.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall make a recommendation that City Council approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. Upon receipt of this recommendation, Council shall then make a final determination.

II. BACKGROUND

Good Shepherd Center For Exceptional Children is an existing Oak Forest business that currently operates a daycare at 155th Street and Cicero Avenue. The applicant acquired the property at 5251 W. 147th Street, which previously contained a structure that was demolished by the applicant, leaving the site as a vacant lot.

The applicant is seeking state financing to construct a new daycare facility on the property for individuals with special needs, and is working with elected officials in anticipation of an upcoming grant cycle. The fundraising process is expected to take one to two years or more, with an estimated construction cost of approximately \$14 million.

In the interim, the applicant proposes to use a portion of the property as an inclusive community garden and outdoor classroom to support young adults with disabilities, families, and the broader community. The garden program is being developed in partnership with the University of Illinois Extension. Free plots will be made available to local non-profits, and the program plans to offer field trips for students from schools serving children with disabilities and individuals on the autism spectrum.

The applicant described the program as modeled after a special growers program in Merrillville, Indiana, where similar community garden initiatives have provided vocational training and community engagement for young adults with disabilities. Local restaurants have reportedly expressed interest in purchasing fresh herbs grown at the garden.

The initial plan includes five garden plots for non-profit groups using 4-by-4 raised boxes for sensory gardens near the road and 4-by-6 raised boxes for fruits and vegetables toward the rear of the property. Ten family plots are also planned, with room to expand. A sign will be placed facing 147th Street for road visibility. A water source is available on site.

III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Zoning	C1 – Local Commercial District
Current Use	Vacant Lot
Future Land Use	Commercial
Existing Site Features	None – the site is a vacant lot from which a structure was previously demolished by the applicant.

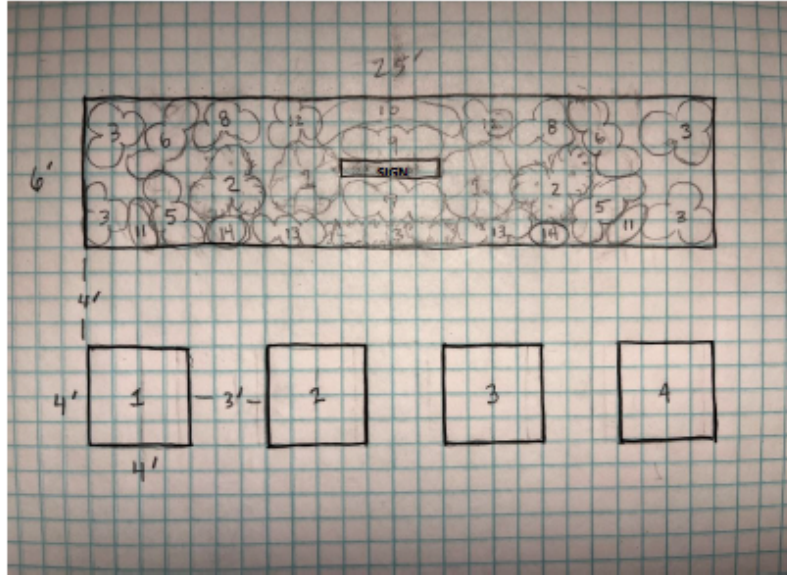
IV. CONTEXT

Exhibit 1: Aerial



Exhibit 2: Site Plan

Native Plant Entry Garden



Plant List

Code	Common Name	Latin Name	Quantity
1	Kalm's St. John's Wort	<i>Hypericum kalmianum</i>	2
2	Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	6
3	Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	12
4	Purple Love Grass	<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>	5
5	Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	6
6	Stiff Goldenrod	<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>	6
7	Slender Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	7
8	Wild Bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	6
9	Anise Hyssop	<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	3
10	Field Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria neglecta</i>	10
11	Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	2
12	Prairie Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	6
13	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	6
14	Black Eyed-Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	2

Notes:

- 25' by 6' Native Entry Garden/Pollinator Buffer
- Sign located in the center of entry garden
- Plant border of low growing Zinnia in Entry Garden
- 4' by 4' Pollinator Beds - Adopt-a-Plot (4)
- 4' path between entry garden & pollinator plots
- 3' path between pollinator plot beds
- Pollinator Adopt-a-Plot Plant Packages include:
 - Gardening for Hummingbirds
 - Gardening for Butterflies
 - Gardening for Native Bees

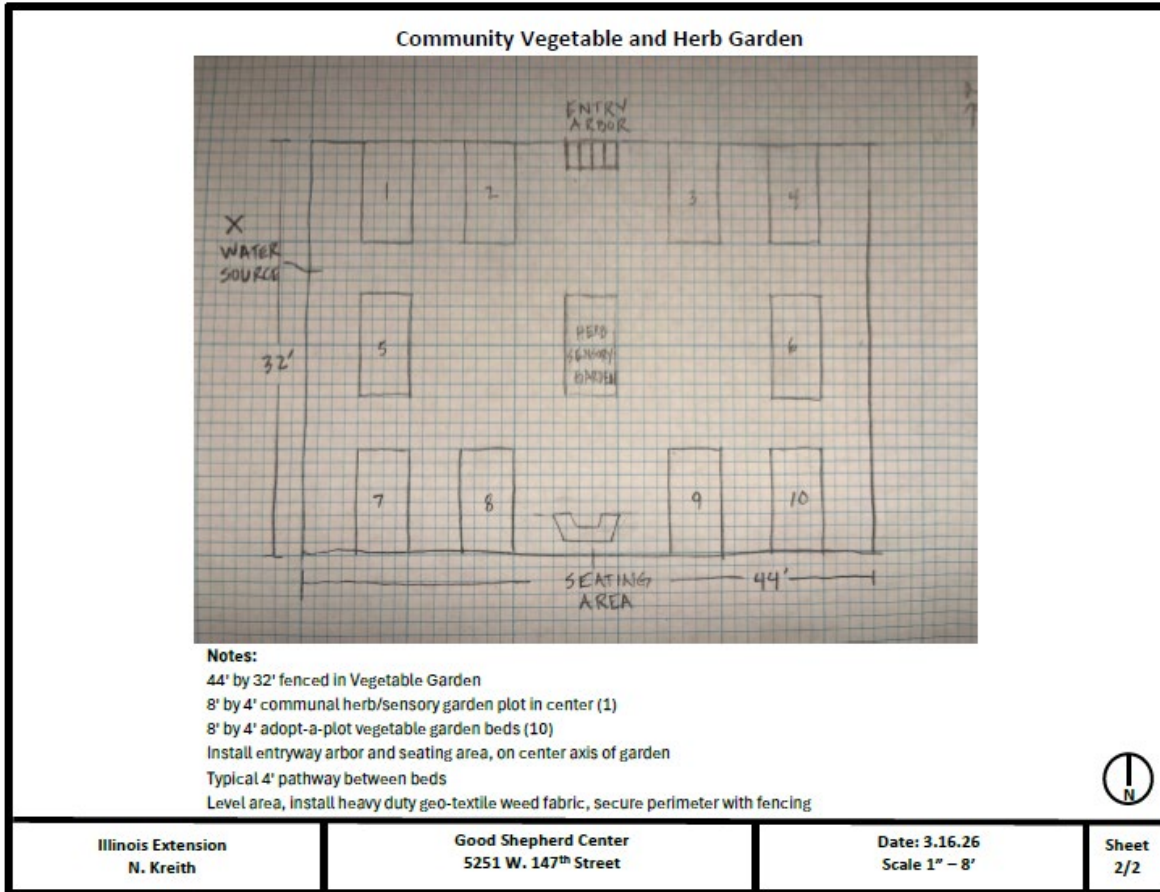


Illinois Extension
N. Kreith

Good Shepherd Center
5251 W. 147th Street

Date: 3.16.26
Scale 1" – 4'

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V. ANALYSIS

The applicant is proposing to use a portion of a vacant lot at 5251 W. 147th Street as a non-profit community garden on an interim basis while long-term financing is secured for the construction of a daycare facility for individuals with special needs. The property is located in the C1–Local Commercial District, and the community garden use requires a special use permit.

The proposed garden represents a constructive and community-focused use of a property that would otherwise remain vacant and underutilized during the multi-year fundraising period. The program includes sensory gardens and accessible raised boxes suitable for individuals with disabilities, vocational and educational programming for young adults, and collaboration with the University of Illinois Extension. The inclusive design and non-profit orientation of the program are consistent with the mission of the applicant organization.

The site is located along 147th Street, a commercial corridor. The garden use will be low-intensity and will not generate significant traffic, noise, or other impacts associated with more active commercial uses. The improvements proposed—raised garden beds, a sign facing 147th Street, and use of an existing on-site water source—are modest in scale and will improve the appearance of what is currently a vacant lot.

Staff recommends approval of the special use permit, subject to a condition that if construction of the day care facility has not commenced within two years of approval, the applicant shall be required to pave the parking

area on the site in accordance with applicable Code standards. This condition ensures that the site remains in conformance with applicable commercial district requirements if the long-term development plans are delayed or do not proceed.

VI. CONCLUSION

STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL USE PERMITS No special permit shall be recommended or granted pursuant to the below unless the applicant establishes that they are met.	
<i>Code and Plan Purposes</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code was enacted and for which the regulations of the district in question were established and with the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed interim community garden use is consistent with the intent of the C1 District and aligns with the Comprehensive Plan’s designation of the site as Commercial. The long-term vision for the property is a daycare facility, which is also a permitted special use in the C1 District. The interim garden use supports community enrichment and public benefit in a manner that is consistent with City goals.</p>
<i>No Undue Adverse Impact</i>	<p><i>The proposed use, drainage and development will not have a substantial or undue adverse effect upon adjacent property, the character of the area or the public health, safety and general welfare.</i></p> <p>Met. The community garden will occupy a currently vacant and underutilized lot. The use is passive in nature, generates limited noise, traffic, or environmental concerns beyond what is typical for a landscaped lot. The garden will improve the visual quality of the site and is not expected to produce any adverse impact on adjacent properties.</p>
<i>No Interference with Surrounding Development</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be constructed, arranged and operated so as not to dominate the immediate vicinity or to interfere with the use and development of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable district regulations.</i></p> <p>Met. The garden is a low-intensity use that will be arranged within the boundaries of the subject parcel. Raised garden boxes, a signage panel, and a water source are the primary site elements. This arrangement will not dominate the vicinity or interfere with surrounding uses along 147th Street.</p>
<i>Adequate Public Facilities</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services such as streets, public utilities, drainage structures, police and fire protection, refuse disposal, parks, libraries, and schools, or the applicant will provide adequately for such services.</i></p> <p>Met. The site has access to public utilities, including a water source already on site to serve the garden. The surrounding public infrastructure is adequate to support this low-intensity use.</p>

<p><i>No Traffic Congestion</i></p>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will not cause undue traffic congestion nor draw significant amounts of traffic through residential streets.</i> Met. A community garden is expected to generate minimal vehicle trips. Visitors would arrive at the site along 147th Street, a commercial corridor, and would not create traffic congestion or divert traffic through residential neighborhoods.</p>
<p><i>No Destruction of Significant Features</i></p>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will not result in the destruction, loss or damage of natural, scenic or historic feature of significant importance.</i> Met. The site is a vacant lot with no known natural, scenic, or historic features of significance. The proposed garden will introduce green space and sensory plantings, representing an improvement to the site’s current condition.</p>
<p><i>Compliance with Standards</i></p>	<p><i>The proposed use and development complies with all additional standards imposed on it by the particular provision of this Code authorizing such use.</i> Met. The applicant is requesting approval with a condition that if construction of the day care facility has not commenced within two years of approval, the applicant will be required to pave the parking area on the site in compliance with applicable Code standards. The proposal is otherwise consistent with applicable Code requirements.</p>
<p>TOTAL MET: 7 of 7 standards</p>	

VII. PZC MOTION

Motion to affirm PZC Resolution 26-11 recommending approval of the request, subject to the condition that if construction of the day care facility has not commenced within two years of the date of approval, the applicant shall pave the parking area on the site in accordance with applicable Code standards.

CITY OF OAK FOREST

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-11

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY GARDEN
AT 5251 W. 147TH STREET IN THE C1-LOCAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

(Good Shepherd Non-Profit Community Garden Special Use Permit – ZC# 26-11)

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, April 1st, 2026

CITY OF OAK FOREST
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-11

BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, Illinois, THAT:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY GARDEN AT 5251 W. 147TH STREET IN THE C1-LOCAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

(Good Shepherd Non-Profit Community Garden Special Use Permit – ZC# 26-11)

shall be, and is hereby, adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, Good Shepherd Center For Exceptional Children (“Applicant”) filed an application for a special use permit to allow a non-profit community garden at 5251 W. 147th Street in the C1-Local Commercial District

WHEREAS, a public notice was duly published in the Daily Southtown on March 4, 2026 and a public hearing was convened before the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) on April 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the PZC has considered all of the evidence presented to it, including without limitation, those demonstrative exhibits attached and incorporated in to this resolution by this reference as **Exhibit A**;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, based on the foregoing recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference, that:

Section 1. FINDINGS.

Based on the evidence presented at the public hearing, and the Findings of Fact attached hereto as **Exhibit B**, the PZC hereby finds that the Applicant’s request does satisfy the standards for the requested Zoning Relief as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance of Oak Forest.

Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.

Based on the findings of fact set forth in Section 1 of this resolution, the PZC hereby recommends approval of the Applicant’s requested Zoning Relief, with the following conditions:

- A. No Authorization of Work. The Ordinance approving the Zoning Relief (“Ordinance”) does not authorize commencement of any work on the Property. Except as otherwise specifically provided in writing in advance by the City, no work of any kind shall be commenced on the Property pursuant to the approvals granted unless and until all conditions of the Ordinance precedent to such work have been fulfilled and after all permits, approvals, and other authorizations for such work have been properly applied for, paid for, and granted in accordance with applicable law, including, without limitation, approval of final engineering plans and issuance of required permits.
- B. Compliance with Laws. The development, maintenance and operation of the Property must comply with all applicable State, County and City statutes, ordinances, codes, rules, and regulations.

- C. Compliance with Plans. The development, maintenance, and operation of the Property will be in substantial compliance with those documents and plans submitted in the application, except for minor changes and site work approved by the Community Development Director in accordance with all applicable City rules, regulations, and ordinances.
- D. Limitation of Approval. The special use permit is limited to the property.
- E. Other.
 - 1. The applicant must have the parking lot meet city requirements within two years of the issuance of the Special Use Permit or start construction on a permanent structure. Else, they must comeback for a re-issuance of a special use permit.

ADOPTED

This 1st Day of April, 2026

APPROVED By Chairman

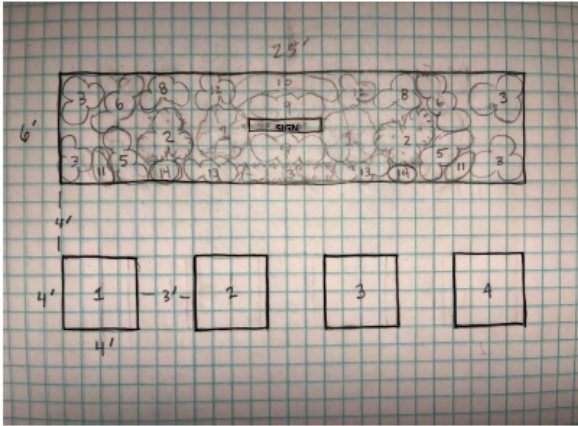
This 1st Day of April, 2026

MIKE ZIAK, CHAIRMAN

Commissioners	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Rick Larson				
Jeffery Ater				
Bryan LaRoche				
Robert McGrath				
Mike Forbes				
Glen Runge				
Donald Guisinger				
Mike Ziak				

EXHIBIT A Proposed Plans

Native Plant Entry Garden



Plant List

Code	Common Name	Latin Name	Quantity
1	Kalm's St. John's Wort	<i>Hypericum kalmianum</i>	2
2	Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	6
3	Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	12
4	Purple Love Grass	<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>	5
5	Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	6
6	Stiff Goldenrod	<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>	6
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13	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	6
14	Black Eyed-Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	2

Notes:

- 25' by 6' Native Entry Garden/Pollinator Buffer
- Sign located in the center of entry garden
- Plant border of low growing Zinnia in Entry Garden
- 4' by 4' Pollinator Beds - Adopt-a-Plot (4)
- 4' path between entry garden & pollinator plots
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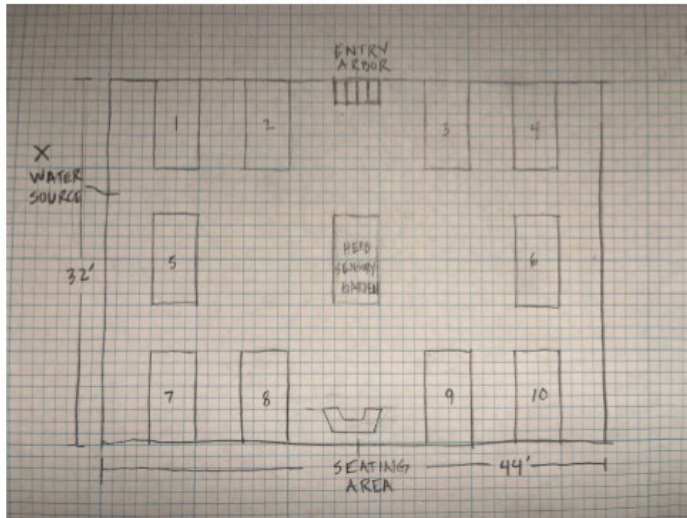
Illinois Extension
N. Kreith

Good Shepherd Center
5251 W. 147th Street

Date: 3.16.26
Scale 1" = 4'

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Community Vegetable and Herb Garden



Notes:

- 44' by 32' fenced in Vegetable Garden
- 8' by 4' communal herb/sensory garden plot in center (1)
- 8' by 4' adopt-a-plot vegetable garden beds (10)
- Install entryway arbor and seating area, on center axis of garden
- Typical 4' pathway between beds
- Level area, install heavy duty geo-textile weed fabric, secure perimeter with fencing



Illinois Extension
N. Kreith

Good Shepherd Center
5251 W. 147th Street

Date: 3.16.26
Scale 1" = 8'

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EXHIBIT B
Findings of Fact

STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL USE PERMITS	
<i>Code and Plan Purposes</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be in harmony with the general and specific purposes for which this Code was enacted and for which the regulations of the district in question were established and with the general purpose and intent of the Official Comprehensive Plan.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed interim community garden use is consistent with the intent of the C1 District and aligns with the Comprehensive Plan’s designation of the site as Commercial. The long-term vision for the property is a daycare facility, which is also a permitted special use in the C1 District. The interim garden use supports community enrichment and public benefit in a manner that is consistent with City goals.</p>
<i>No Undue Adverse Impact</i>	<p><i>The proposed use, drainage and development will not have a substantial or undue adverse effect upon adjacent property, the character of the area or the public health, safety and general welfare.</i></p> <p>Met. The community garden will occupy a currently vacant and underutilized lot. The use is passive in nature, generates limited noise, traffic, or environmental concerns beyond what is typical for a landscaped lot. The garden will improve the visual quality of the site and is not expected to produce any adverse impact on adjacent properties.</p>
<i>No Interference with Surrounding Development</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be constructed, arranged and operated so as not to dominate the immediate vicinity or to interfere with the use and development of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable district regulations.</i></p> <p>Met. The garden is a low-intensity use that will be arranged within the boundaries of the subject parcel. Raised garden boxes, a signage panel, and a water source are the primary site elements. This arrangement will not dominate the vicinity or interfere with surrounding uses along 147th Street.</p>
<i>Adequate Public Facilities</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services such as streets, public utilities, drainage structures, police and fire protection, refuse disposal, parks, libraries, and schools, or the applicant will provide adequately for such services.</i></p> <p>Met. The site has access to public utilities, including a water source already on site to serve the garden. The surrounding public infrastructure is adequate to support this low-intensity use.</p>
<i>No Traffic Congestion</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will not cause undue traffic congestion nor draw significant amounts of traffic through residential streets.</i></p> <p>Met. A community garden is expected to generate minimal vehicle trips. Visitors would arrive at the site along 147th Street, a commercial corridor, and would not create traffic congestion or divert traffic through residential neighborhoods.</p>
<i>No Destruction of Significant Features</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development will not result in the destruction, loss or damage of natural, scenic or historic feature of significant importance.</i></p> <p>Met. The site is a vacant lot with no known natural, scenic, or historic features of significance. The proposed garden will introduce green space and sensory plantings, representing an improvement to the site’s current condition.</p>
<i>Compliance with Standards</i>	<p><i>The proposed use and development complies with all additional standards imposed on it by the particular provision of this Code authorizing such use.</i></p> <p>Met. The applicant is requesting approval with a condition that if construction of the day care facility has not commenced within two years of approval, the applicant will be required to pave the parking area on the site in compliance with applicable Code standards. The proposal is otherwise consistent with applicable Code requirements.</p>
TOTAL MET: 7 of 7 standards	



Title: Plat of Condominium Approval Text Amendment

Case Number: ZC #26-07

Request: TEXT AMENDMENT
The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provisions of the City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code: Article III Applications Contents and Procedures to allow for Plat of Condominium to be approved administratively.

Application Information:

Applicant: City of Oak Forest

Meeting Date: April 1st, 2026

Notice Published: March 5, 2026
Daily Southtown

Staff: Hunter Heyman, Community Planner

I. REQUEST

The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provisions of the City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code: Article III Applications Contents and Procedures to allow for Plat of Condominium to be approved administratively.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall recommend that City Council approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. Upon receipt of this recommendation, Council shall then make a final determination.

II. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

See Exhibit B in the Accompanying Resolution 26-07.

III. ANALYSIS

Currently, the City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code requires that all Plats of Condominium go through the full Planning and Zoning Commission review process. However, many Plat of Condominium applications are routine in nature and do not involve any street or utility extensions, construction of public improvements, or variations from the Code. Requiring a full public hearing for these straightforward applications creates unnecessary delays for applicants and adds to the Commission’s workload without a corresponding benefit to the public interest.

The proposed text amendment adds Section 3-306: Plats of Condominium to the Subdivision Code. This new section would allow the City Administrator or their designee to approve a Plat of Condominium administratively, provided the condominium does not contemplate or require any street or utility extensions, construction of public improvements, or any variations from the Code. This approach streamlines the approval process for routine plat of condominium applications while preserving the full Commission review for any application that involves more complex development considerations.

CONCLUSION

STANDARDS FOR TEXT AMENDMENT	
<i>Code Consistency.</i>	<p><i>The consistency of the proposed amendment with the purposes of this code.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes of the Subdivision Code. The Code is intended to provide for the orderly development of land within the City, and allowing routine Plats of Condominium to be approved administratively advances this purpose by removing unnecessary procedural barriers while maintaining oversight for more complex applications.</p>
<i>Community Need.</i>	<p><i>The community need for the proposed amendment and for the uses and development it would allow.</i></p> <p>Met. The text amendment addresses a community need by streamlining the approval process for routine Plats of Condominium. Administrative approval for straightforward</p>

	applications ensures that projects are not unnecessarily delayed, benefiting both applicants and the City by allowing staff and Commission resources to be focused on more complex development matters.
TOTAL MET: 2 of 2 standards	

IV. PZC MOTION

Motion to affirm PZC Resolution 26-07 recommending approval of a text amendment to update Article III Applications Contents and Procedures of the City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code to allow for Plat of Condominium to be approved administratively.

CITY OF OAK FOREST

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-07

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A TEXT AMENDMENT TO UPDATE THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS OF THE CITY OF OAK FOREST SUBDIVISION CODE: ARTICLE III APPLICATIONS CONTENTS AND PROCEDURES TO ALLOW FOR PLAT OF CONDOMINIUM TO BE APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY

(Plat of Condominium Approval Text Amendment – ZC# 26-07)

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, April 1st, 2026

CITY OF OAK FOREST
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-07

BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, Illinois, THAT:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A TEXT AMENDMENT TO UPDATE THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS OF THE CITY OF OAK FOREST SUBDIVISION CODE: ARTICLE III APPLICATIONS CONTENTS AND PROCEDURES TO ALLOW FOR PLAT OF CONDOMINIUM TO BE APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY

(Plat of Condominium Approval Text Amendment – ZC# 26-07)

shall be, and is hereby, adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, City of Oak Forest (“Applicant”) filed an application for a text amendment to City of Oak Forest Subdivision Code: Article III Applications Contents and Procedures to allow for Plat of Condominium to be approved administratively

WHEREAS, the Applicant’s proposed amendments are fully set forth in **Exhibit B**, which is attached and by this reference incorporated in to this resolution; and

WHEREAS, a public notice was duly published in the Daily Southtown on March 5, 2026 and a public hearing was convened before the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) on April 1st, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the PZC has considered all of the evidence presented to it, including without limitation, those demonstrative exhibits attached and incorporated in to this resolution by this reference as **Exhibit A**;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, based on the foregoing recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference, that:

Section 1. FINDINGS.

Based on the evidence presented at the public hearing, the PZC hereby finds that the public good demands or requires the Applicant’s proposed amendments set forth in **Exhibit B**.

Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.

Based on the findings of fact set forth in **Exhibit A** of this resolution, the PZC herby recommends the adoption of the Applicant’s proposed amendments set forth in **Exhibit B**.

ADOPTED

This 1st Day of April, 2026

APPROVED By Chairman

This 1st Day of April, 2026

MIKE ZIAK, CHAIRMAN

Commissioners	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Rick Larson				
Jeffery Ater				
Bryan LaRoche				
Robert McGrath				
Mike Forbes				
Glen Runge				
Donald Guisinger				
Mike Ziak				

EXHIBIT A
Findings of Fact

STANDARDS FOR TEXT AMENDMENT	
<i>Code Consistency.</i>	<i>The consistency of the proposed amendment with the purposes of this code.</i> Met. The proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes of the Subdivision Code. The Code is intended to provide for the orderly development of land within the City, and allowing routine Plats of Condominium to be approved administratively advances this purpose by removing unnecessary procedural barriers while maintaining oversight for more complex applications.
<i>Community Need.</i>	<i>The community need for the proposed amendment and for the uses and development it would allow.</i> Met. The text amendment addresses a community need by streamlining the approval process for routine Plats of Condominium. Administrative approval for straightforward applications ensures that projects are not unnecessarily delayed, benefiting both applicants and the City by allowing staff and Commission resources to be focused on more complex development matters.
TOTAL MET: 2 of 2 standards	

EXHIBIT B
Redlined Text Amendment



**CITY OF OAK FOREST
SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE**

*Adopted April 16, 2014
Last Amended September 13, 2016*

CITY OF OAK FOREST SUBDIVISION & DEVELOPMENT CODE

changes in the drainage of surface in accordance with the Illinois Plat Act, 765 ILCS 205/1 et seq., and any Standards and Specifications Manual.

- D. **Other Notations: Dedications and Restrictions** The final plat shall also include statements, in a form approved by the City Administrator, concerning the dedication of land or granting of easements, as shown on the plat, and any restrictions related thereto.
- E. **Approved Tentative Plat** Applications for final plat approval, except minor Subdivision applications, shall be accompanied by a copy of the approved tentative Subdivision plat for the property.
- F. **Approved Final Engineering Plans** Applications for final plat approval, except minor Subdivision applications, shall be accompanied by a copy of the approved final engineering plans associated with the Subdivision.

SECTION 3-104: MINOR SUBDIVISION APPLICATION

Applications for minor Subdivisions, as defined in this Code, shall include all information required for final subdivision plats, as specified in Section 3-103 of this Code, except that a copy of the approved tentative plat shall not be required. Nothing in this Code shall be interpreted to relieve an applicant for approval of a minor Subdivision from the obligation to enter into agreements with applicable school and park districts, or other government agencies, in conformance with Subsection 4-101 G of this Code.

SECTION 3-105: OTHER SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS

The City Administrator shall have available appropriate forms for other Subdivision applications, as authorized by this Code. Such other applications shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Applications to consolidate two or more existing lots of record into a single lot;
2. Applications to vacate recorded Subdivisions or public rights-of-way;
3. Applications to create a condominium association **or a Plat of Condominium**; and
4. Applications for modification of real estate tax identification numbers.

SECTION 3-106: DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Applications for Development review and approval, which do not involve Subdivisions, shall include:

1. Payment of all applicable fees and escrow deposits, as required in Section 2-106 of this Code;
2. All information required for Site Plan Approval, as specified in Subparagraph 11-504 of the Zoning Code, as amended, regardless of whether all or any portion of the property is located within the corporate limits of the City; and

CITY OF OAK FOREST SUBDIVISION & DEVELOPMENT CODE

recommendation on the application, the City Council, at a public meeting, shall by resolution approve or deny the final plat, and all related agreements and approvals related thereto, including all applicable agreements with the School and Park Districts. In the event the final plat is denied by the City Council, the City Administrator shall notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for such denial. The failure of the City Council to act within the time period specified in this Subsection shall be deemed a decision to approve the Minor Subdivision final plat.

- G. Recordation of Approved Plat** Following approval by the City Council of such minor subdivision application, the related final plat shall be registered or recorded in accordance with Section 3-204 of this Code.

SECTION 3-302: VACATION OF RECORDED PLATS

In cases where an application is made to vacate any recorded plat of subdivision, or part thereof, prior to the sale of any lot in the subdivision, the City Council may, by ordinance duly adopted, order the vacation of all or part of said subdivision. The City Council may, in its sole and absolute discretion, refer such applications to the Plan Commission for a recommendation prior to action. When lots have been sold, the plat may only be vacated if all of the owners of lots in said plat join in said application. The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs and fees associated with such plat vacation.

SECTION 3-303: PLATS OF CONSOLIDATION

In cases where an application is made to consolidate existing lots of record, the City Council may, by resolution duly adopted, order the consolidation of said lots. The City Council may, in its sole and absolute discretion, refer such applications to the Plan Commission for a recommendation prior to action. The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs and fees associated with such plats of consolidation.

SECTION 3-304: TAX DIVISIONS

In cases where an application is made to divide a property for the purpose of creating tax divisions, the City Council may, by resolution duly adopted, authorize such divisions. The City Council may, in its sole and absolute discretion, refer such applications to the Plan Commission for a recommendation prior to action. The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs and fees associated with such tax divisions.

SECTION 3-305: PLATS OF DEDICATION

In cases where an application is made to dedicate easements or rights-of-way to the City of Oak Forest, and such application does not involve a Subdivision, the City Council may, by resolution duly adopted, authorize such dedication. The City Council may, in its sole and absolute discretion, refer such applications to the Plan Commission for a recommendation prior to action. Unless specifically waived by the City Council in approving such resolution, the applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs and fees associated with such plats of dedication.

SECTION 3-306: PLATS OF CONDOMINIUM

In cases where an application is made to create a Plat of Condominium provided that such

CITY OF OAK FOREST SUBDIVISION & DEVELOPMENT CODE

condominium does not contemplate or require any street or utility extensions, or contemplate or require the construction of any other public improvements, and does not contemplate or require any variations of this Code. Then the City Administrator or their designee may approve the plat of condominium or application to make a condominium association.



Title: Garage and Shed Size Requirements – Text Amendment

Case Number: ZC #26-10

Request: TEXT AMENDMENT
The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Code: Section 8-101 Accessory Structures and Uses

Application Information:

Applicant: City of Oak Forest

Meeting Date: April 1st, 2026

Notice Published: March 13th, 2026
Daily Southtown

Staff: Hunter Heyman, Community Planner

I. REQUEST

The applicant requests review and consideration to update the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Code: Section 8-101 Accessory Structures and Uses.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall recommend that City Council approve, approve with conditions, or deny the request. Upon receipt of this recommendation, Council shall then make a final determination.

II. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

See Exhibit B in the Accompanying Resolution 26-10.

III. ANALYSIS

Section 8-101 of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Code governs accessory structures and uses, including garages and sheds on residential properties. The current code establishes maximum allowable square footage for garages and sheds based on lot size, with fixed allowances assigned to each tier of the table. As currently written, the allowances are as follows:

Lot Size	Garage Square Foot Allowance	Second Garage Allowed	Sheds
Less than or equal to 7,500 SF	528	No	120
7,501-9,999 SF	660	No	168
10,000 – 21,7779 SF	800	15,000-21,7999 SF allows a second garage. 1 attached and 1 detached	192
Greater than 21,780 SF	1000	2 garages either attached or detached	1% of Lot Size

The proposed amendment would replace the current fixed-size garage allowance table for lots greater than 10,000 sq. ft. with a percentage-based formula: garage square footage would be permitted up to 10% of the total lot size.

This approach provides a consistent and proportional allowance that scales naturally with the property and eliminates the need for tiered thresholds. Additionally, the height limit for garages would be updated to match the height of the main structure on the property, providing a clear and reasonable benchmark in place of any fixed height cap.

For sheds, the amendment would similarly replace the existing tiered structure for lots greater than 10,000 sq. ft. with a percentage-based formula of 2% of the total lot size, with a maximum cap of 400 sq. ft. This ensures that

shed allowances remain proportional and reasonable while preventing oversized accessory structures on even the largest residential lots.

Lots of 10,000 sq. ft. or less are not affected by this amendment and will continue to be subject to the existing fixed-size allowances in the table. The change is targeted at properties where the current code is most disproportionate and where residents have had the least flexibility to utilize their larger lots.

CONCLUSION

STANDARDS FOR TEXT AMENDMENT	
<i>Code Consistency.</i>	<p><i>The consistency of the proposed amendment with the purposes of this code.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes of the Zoning Code. Section 8-101 governs accessory structures, and this amendment updates the size allowances to be proportional and consistently applicable across larger lot sizes. The change removes arbitrary fixed thresholds and replaces them with a percentage-based formula, which is more logically aligned with the code’s broader intent of regulating land use in a clear and rational manner.</p>
<i>Community Need.</i>	<p><i>The community need for the proposed amendment and for the uses and development it would allow.</i></p> <p>Met. There is a demonstrated community need for this amendment. The current code’s fixed-size allowances do not proportionally reflect the available land area on larger residential lots, limiting property owners’ ability to utilize their property. The percentage-based approach gives residents on larger lots greater flexibility to build garages and sheds commensurate with their land, while the 400 sq. ft. cap on sheds ensures that accessory structures remain subordinate to the principal use.</p>
TOTAL MET: 2 of 2 standards	

IV. PZC MOTION

Motion to affirm PZC Resolution 26-10 recommending approval of the update to the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Code: Section 8-101 Accessory Structures and Uses, to update garage and shed size requirements.

CITY OF OAK FOREST

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-10

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A TEXT AMENDMENT TO UPDATE THE FOLLOWING PROVISION OF THE CITY OF OAK FOREST ZONING CODE: SECTION 8-101 ACCESSORY STRUCTURES AND USES, TO UPDATE GARAGE AND SHED SIZE REQUIREMENTS

(Garage and Shed Size Requirements Text Amendment – ZC# 26-10)

Passed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, April 1st, 2026

CITY OF OAK FOREST
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PZC RESOLUTION NO. 26-10

BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, Illinois, THAT:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A TEXT AMENDMENT TO UPDATE THE FOLLOWING PROVISION OF THE CITY OF OAK FOREST ZONING CODE: SECTION 8-101 ACCESSORY STRUCTURES AND USES, TO UPDATE GARAGE AND SHED SIZE REQUIREMENTS

(Garage and Shed Size Requirements Text Amendment – ZC# 26-10)

shall be, and is hereby, adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, City of Oak Forest (“Applicant”) filed an application for a text amendment to City of Oak Forest Zoning Code: Section 8-101 Accessory Structures and Uses, to update garage and shed size requirements

WHEREAS, the Applicant’s proposed amendments are fully set forth in **Exhibit B**, which is attached and by this reference incorporated in to this resolution; and

WHEREAS, a public notice was duly published in the Daily Southtown on March 13, 2026 and a public hearing was convened before the Planning and Zoning Commission (“PZC”) on April 1st, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the PZC has considered all of the evidence presented to it, including without limitation, those demonstrative exhibits attached and incorporated in to this resolution by this reference as **Exhibit A**;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Oak Forest, Cook County, based on the foregoing recitals which are hereby incorporated by reference, that:

Section 1. FINDINGS.

Based on the evidence presented at the public hearing, the PZC hereby finds that the public good demands or requires the Applicant’s proposed text amendment set forth in **Exhibit B**.

Section 2. RECOMMENDATION.

Based on the findings of fact set forth in **Exhibit A** of this resolution, the PZC hereby recommends the adoption of the Applicant’s proposed text amendment set forth in **Exhibit B**.

ADOPTED

This 1st Day of April, 2026

APPROVED By Chairman

This 1st Day of April, 2026

MIKE ZIAK, CHAIRMAN

Commissioners	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Rick Larson				
Jeffery Ater				
Bryan LaRoche				
Robert McGrath				
Mike Forbes				
Glen Runge				
Donald Guisinger				
Mike Ziak				

EXHIBIT A
Findings of Fact

STANDARDS FOR TEXT AMENDMENT	
<i>Code Consistency.</i>	<p><i>The consistency of the proposed amendment with the purposes of this code.</i></p> <p>Met. The proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes of the Zoning Code. Section 8-101 governs accessory structures, and this amendment updates the size allowances to be proportional and consistently applicable across larger lot sizes. The change removes arbitrary fixed thresholds and replaces them with a percentage-based formula, which is more logically aligned with the code’s broader intent of regulating land use in a clear and rational manner.</p>
<i>Community Need.</i>	<p><i>The community need for the proposed amendment and for the uses and development it would allow.</i></p> <p>Met. There is a demonstrated community need for this amendment. The current code’s fixed-size allowances do not proportionally reflect the available land area on larger residential lots, limiting property owners’ ability to utilize their property. The percentage-based approach gives residents on larger lots greater flexibility to build garages and sheds commensurate with their land, while the 400 sq. ft. cap on sheds ensures that accessory structures remain subordinate to the principal use.</p>
TOTAL MET: 2 of 2 standards	

EXHIBIT B
Redlined Text Amendment



**CITY OF OAK FOREST
ZONING CODE**

*Adopted March 11, 2014
Last Amended February 10, 2026*

4. Storage. Except as otherwise expressly permitted by this Code, outdoor storage shall not be allowed as an accessory use; where so permitted. Accessory structure storage structures shall comply with the structural guidelines of the City Building Code.
- (a) Detached Garages. Detached garages are required to be connected to the street by a driveway. Driveways are subject to the requirements of 8-104 B3. Detached garages shall comply with the following floor area square footage limitations. ~~Any second detached garage being constructed on a lot will require the approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission: ———~~
- (i) Not more than 528 square feet on a lot less than or equal to 7,500 square feet;
 - (ii) Not more than 660 square feet on a lot between 7,501 – 9,999 square feet;
 - ~~(iii) Not more than ten (10) percent of the total lot size on a lot greater than 10,000 square feet. between 10,000 — 21,779 square feet;~~
 - ~~(iv) Not more than 1,000 square feet on a lot greater than 21,780 square feet.~~
 - (v) No more than one (1) garage attached or detached on a lot less than 14,999 square feet.
 - (vi) No more than two (2) garages on a lot, one (1) must be attached and one (1) must be detached on a lot between 15,000 square feet and 21,779 sf.
 - (vii) No more than two (2) garages on a lot, either attached or detached on a lot greater than 21,780 sf.
 - ~~(viii) Not to exceed (15) feet in height from the ground to the peak of the roof.~~
- (b) Sheds. One shed per zoning lot maximum, and sheds shall comply with the following floor area square footage and height limitations:
- (i) Not more than 120 square feet on a lot less than 7,500 square feet or less;
 - (ii) Not more than 168 square feet on a lot between 7,501- 9,999 square feet;
 - ~~(iii) Not more than 192 square feet on a lot between 10,000 — 21,779 square feet;~~
 - (iv) Not more than ~~one (1)~~ two (2) percent of the total lot size on a lot greater than ~~21,780~~ 10,000 square feet ~~with a max square footage of 400 square feet; and~~
 - (v) Not to exceed (14) feet in height from the ground to the peak of the roof.
 - (vi) May be built not less than two (2) foot from a lot line of an adjoining lot.

**CITY OF OAK FOREST
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 18, 2026**

The Planning & Zoning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairman Ziak.

Pledge of allegiance.

PRESENT:

- Chairman Ziak
- Commissioner Ater
- Commissioner Forbes
- Commissioner Guisinger
- Commissioner LaRoche
- Commissioner Larson
- Commissioner McGrath
- Commissioner Runge
- Staff Member Paul Ruane
- Staff Member Hunter Heyman

ABSENT:

1. Preliminary Discussion on a Garage Size and Height Variation Request at 15537 Lamon Avenue **PUBLIC MEETING**

Community Planner Hunter Heyman provided a follow-up presentation on the applicant's revised design for a two-level garage addition at 15537 Lamon Avenue, which was initially discussed at the March 4th meeting. The applicant adjusted the design based on prior commission feedback by adding windows and doors to improve the appearance.

Revised Proposal

The existing garage is approximately 516 square feet. The proposed addition is 560 square feet per level, bringing the total garage square footage including both floors to approximately 1,637 square feet. The first floor would be used for vehicle parking and a game room with a 10-foot ceiling, and the second floor would be used for storage with an 8-foot ceiling. The total proposed height is approximately 25 feet. Under the current zoning code, the lot allows a maximum garage size of 800 square feet with a height limit of 15 feet.

Summary of Discussion

The applicant explained that the lot has significant room in the backyard but that he has a well-established garden with mature evergreen trees and bushes planted over the

past five years and would prefer to build up rather than extend the footprint further back. He stated that both adjacent neighbors have no objections to the project and that the area is surrounded by taller commercial buildings and condominiums. The applicant noted that he plans to use the same contractor who completed the house exterior to match the hardy plank siding and windows on the addition.

Commissioner LaRoche expressed general support for allowing property owners with large lots to build larger garages, noting his own experience obtaining a variance. However, he felt the proposed height of 25 feet was too tall and suggested a lower roofline with attic-style storage. Commissioner Forbes recommended the applicant consider a hip roof design with reduced upper floor height and calculated that with two seven-foot floor heights, a floor deck, and a 4/12 roof pitch on an 18-foot wide structure, the total height would come to approximately 18 feet with two usable floors at reduced ceiling heights. Commissioner Forbes also suggested the applicant consider extending the garage slightly deeper with a roll-up overhead door in the back for storage rather than building a full second story. He noted that any structure over 800 square feet would require a full 42-inch foundation on footings regardless of whether it is one or two stories, and confirmed the applicant has adequate lot coverage to accommodate the project.

Commissioner Guisinger reiterated concerns from the previous meeting regarding the height and stated that the garage should remain accessory to the primary structure. He noted that a nearly 1,700 square foot garage behind a 900 square foot house does not aesthetically work and raised concerns about setting a precedent for the city. He expressed worry that approving a 25-foot garage variance could create a standard that other property owners would seek to follow. Commissioner Forbes suggested the applicant consider adding onto the house instead of the garage. He also noted that habitable space requires a minimum ceiling height of 6 foot 8 inches, and that anything below that threshold is classified as storage and not habitable space.

Commissioner LaRoche asked about the roof pitch requirements and suggested options for making the design work at a lower height. He recommended the applicant explore extending the garage deeper with a storage area accessible through a roll-up overhead door in the back rather than building a full second story.

Commissioner Larson asked about the distance from the proposed addition to the rear lot line and whether the applicant could extend the garage farther back instead of going up. He also questioned why six windows would be needed on a storage floor.

Chairman Ziak summarized the commission's consensus that the primary concern is the height and roofline of the second story. He suggested the applicant explore modifying the roofline with knee walls to reduce the visual impact, particularly on the north side facing the adjacent neighbor. Chairman Ziak expressed reservations that the variance would be approved as proposed if brought for a formal hearing and noted uncertainty about how City Council would view the request.

Staff clarified that the variance request involves three components: the height exceeding the 15-foot maximum, the size exceeding the 800 square foot allowance, and the accessory structure being larger than the primary structure. Staff noted that the property is in a C3 district and is one of the few residential properties in a commercial zone, which contributes to its uniqueness for variance consideration. Staff indicated the applicant could either revise the design and apply for a variance or wait for the proposed code amendments being discussed under the next agenda item.

2. Discussion for an Update to the Garage and Shed Size Requirements **PUBLIC MEETING**

Community Planner Hunter Heyman presented proposed redline changes to the garage and shed size requirements, following up on direction from the previous meeting. He noted that the city has received interest from multiple applicants for larger garages and that the existing 50% maximum lot coverage ratio already prevents garages from taking over an entire lot.

Proposed Changes

For lots greater than 10,000 square feet, garage size could be up to 10% of the lot size. Garages must still be smaller than the primary structure per the existing definition of accessory structure. Maximum garage height would be the height of the primary structure rather than the current 15-foot maximum. Shed allowance would increase to 2% of lot size with a maximum of 400 square feet. Second garages that meet all requirements would be approved administratively through the building department rather than requiring Planning and Zoning Commission approval.

Summary of Discussion

Commissioner Forbes supported capping sheds at 400 square feet, noting that a standard garage is 20 by 24 feet or 480 square feet and anything larger than 400 square feet should be classified as a garage. He also supported the 10% allowance on larger lots. Staff confirmed that existing code provisions classify structures as garages if they have electricity or can store a vehicle, preventing sheds from being used as unpermitted garages.

Staff raised whether a maximum square footage cap should be set for garages in addition to the percentage-based allowance. The current maximum on the largest allowed lots is 1,000 square feet, and staff noted that the 10% calculation could result in garages up to 2,000 square feet on the largest lots. Staff noted that the requirement for garages to be smaller than the primary structure provides an additional safeguard against oversized garages on large lots.

Commissioner Guisinger requested that the existing language requiring accessory structures to be smaller than the primary structure in both size and height be referenced in the staff report when this item comes for a public hearing.

The commission discussed whether second detached garages should continue to require Planning and Zoning approval if they meet all code requirements. The commission agreed that if the proposed requirements are met, second garages could be approved administratively through the building department. The current code allows a second garage on lots larger than 15,000 square feet and two detached garages on lots greater than 21,000 square feet. The commission agreed to keep these thresholds as proposed.

Staff confirmed the draft amendment will be brought for a public hearing at the April 1st meeting.

3. Discussion for an Allowance of a Non-Profit Garden at 5251 147th Street **PUBLIC MEETING**

Community Planner Hunter Heyman presented a request from Good Shepherd Center for Exceptional Children to establish a community garden called the Special Growers Community Garden at 5251 147th Street. The site previously contained a structure that was demolished by the applicant and is currently a vacant lot. Good Shepherd Center is an existing Oak Forest business that currently operates a daycare at 155th and Cicero Avenue.

The applicant is seeking state financing to build a daycare facility for individuals with special needs on the property and is working with elected officials on an upcoming grant cycle. The fundraising process is expected to take one to two years or more, with an estimated construction cost of approximately \$14 million. In the interim, the applicant proposes to use a portion of the property as an inclusive community garden and outdoor classroom to support young adults with disabilities, families, and the broader community.

The garden program is being developed in partnership with the University of Illinois Extension. Free plots will be available for local non-profits, and the program plans to offer field trips for students from schools including those serving children with disabilities and individuals on the autism spectrum. The applicant described the program as being modeled after a special growers program in Merrillville, Tennessee, where similar community garden initiatives have provided vocational training and community engagement for young adults with disabilities. The applicant noted that local restaurants have already expressed interest in purchasing fresh herbs from the garden.

The initial plan includes five garden plots for non-profit groups using 4-by-4 raised boxes for sensory gardens near the road and 4-by-6 raised boxes for fruits and vegetables toward the rear of the property. Ten family plots are planned, with room to expand. A sign will be placed facing 147th Street, rotated 90 degrees from the site plan for road visibility. A water source is available on site.

Summary of Discussion

Commissioner Forbes raised concerns about parking, noting that the city would not normally allow a business to operate with an unpaved parking lot. The applicant explained that visitors would park on the existing fill area between the two garden sections and that signage would direct parking. Commissioner Forbes suggested that the applicant provide a plot of survey showing the proposed layout of gardens, parking, and circulation for the formal application.

Commissioner LaRoche suggested that a condition of approval could require the lot to be paved if the garden use extended beyond a couple of growing seasons without construction of the permanent facility. Staff noted this could be included as a condition of the special use permit, requiring the applicant to either pave the lot or return to amend their special use permit after a defined period.

Chairman Ziak asked about security for the garden plots given the site's somewhat isolated location. The applicant explained they plan to work with the University of Illinois Extension on volunteer scheduling, engage neighbors by offering garden plots, and maintain regular activity on the site to deter vandalism. The applicant described plans for a schedule coordinating visits from non-profit groups, students on field trips, and families tending their gardens.

Staff noted that there is broader community interest in community gardening, including interest expressed at a community engagement meeting held earlier that day, and that some residents are interested in reviving the city's Green Steps commission.

The applicant will come before the commission for a special use permit at the April 1st meeting. Staff will work with the applicant to prepare a formal site plan and address the commission's feedback.

4. Discussion for an Update to the Subdivision Code to Allow Minor Subdivisions Through Administrative Approval **PUBLIC MEETING**

Community Planner Hunter Heyman explained that the text amendment for plats of condominium was intended to come for a public hearing at this meeting, but the Daily Southtown's notice department sent out the legal notice late, preventing the item from being heard as a public hearing. Staff presented the redline version of the proposed text amendment for the commission to review.

The proposed amendment would add a section to the subdivision code allowing administrative approval of plats of condominium when the condominium does not require street or utility extensions, does not require public improvements, and does not require any variations. In such cases, the city administrator or their designee could approve the plat of condominium or application to create a condominium association.

Chairman Ziak noted the commission has discussed this item sufficiently and is comfortable with the proposed language. Staff recommended updating the title of the formal agenda item to reference plats of condominium specifically for consistency.

This item will come for a public hearing at the April 1st meeting.

Chairman Ziak asked for a motion for approval of March 4th, 2026 minutes. Commissioner Guisinger made a motion to approve. Commissioner Larson seconded.

Roll call.

AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Commissioner Ater			
Commissioner Forbes			
Commissioner Guisinger			
Commissioner LaRoche			
Commissioner Larson			
		Commissioner McGrath	
Commissioner Runge			
Chairman Ziak			

Motion carried 7-0, 1 abstain, 1 absent. The motion was approved.

Staff noted that the city has received interest regarding the minimum lot size per unit requirement in residential districts. Despite the allowance for duplexes in the zoning code, the minimum lot size per unit standard has presented challenges for an applicant looking to build a duplex. Staff asked whether the commission would be amenable to reviewing this requirement as a potential text amendment given that the minimum lot size for the lot, the 50% lot area requirement, and subdivision approval requirements already provide safeguards.

Chairman Ziak asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Forbes made a motion, Commissioner Runge seconded.

All in attendance answered aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Hunter Heyman, Community Planner.

CHAIRMAN ZIAK