

**AGENDA**  
**PARK FOREST PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**Park Forest Village Hall**  
**Board Room**

**7:00 P.M.**

**TUESDAY**  
**October 8, 2024**

1. Planning and Zoning Commission Call to Order
2. Review of Minutes
  - a. April 9, 2024 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
3. Petitions
  - a. Public Hearing to consider a Text Amendment to Article III (Uses) of the Unified Development Ordinance, to amend Chicken Coop from Section III-4.C Use Standards for Accessory Structures
4. Audience to Visitors
5. New Business
  - a. 2024 Sexual Harassment Training
6. Old Business
7. Communications
  - a. Member Communications
  - b. Trustee Comments
  - c. Staff Communications
8. Adjournment

Any individual with a disability requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a public meeting should contact the Village Manager's Office at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Village Manager's Office can be reached via telephone at 708-283-5605 or via email at [athurston@vopf.com](mailto:athurston@vopf.com). Every effort will be made to allow for meeting participation.



# PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning & Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Brown, AICP  
Assistant Director of Economic Development and Planning

DATE: September 25, 2024

RE: NEW BUSINESS – Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting of October 8, 2024, Public Hearing to consider a Text Amendment to Article III (Uses) of the Unified Development Ordinance, to amend Chicken Coop from Section III-4.C Use Standards for Accessory Structures

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Michelle Obama School Staff notified Village Staff that it intends to begin programming agriculture training into their syllabus starting in spring 2025. The programming is planned to include chicken coops to help educate students. In early 2024, staff at Michelle Obama notified Village Staff to ask if this would be allowed under the current Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Under the current UDO, this use is not allowed, however, this regulation conflicts with other Village sustainability and climate action policies. Namely, the 2012 Sustainability Plan Local Food Systems Chapter states a goal of ‘4. Expand food-related educational opportunities’ and more recently from the Climate Action Resilience Plan (2019) Strategy O1C to ‘increase urban agriculture/community gardening practices.’ On the behalf of the Michelle Obama School Staff, Village Staff present the Text Amendment to better align Village Policy and Village regulation.

## Public Hearing Requirements

As required by the UDO, notice of this public hearing was published in the *Daily Southtown Newspaper* on September 22, 2024. No other notice is required for text amendments. Any additional comments received prior to the Public Hearing will be reported at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

This request is being considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to Article VIII-3.E. of the UDO (Zoning Text and Map Amendments), which provides that the Planning and Zoning Commission shall hold public hearings on all requests for text amendments and shall make its recommendations to the Board of Trustees. A text amendment may be granted by the Board only after the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Village Board have evaluated the application and made specific written findings based on the Standards for Zoning Amendments established by Article VIII-3.E.3.

The required standards for zoning amendments are noted below, and a worksheet has been attached to assist the Planning and Zoning Commission in drafting its findings related to the requested amendment. Note that these standards are written to apply to both text and map amendments, and the standard for a recommendation for approval is “based on a balance of the standards”. This is a lower standard than that established for a recommendation for approval of a variation, which is “based on each of the standards”.

- a) The proposed amendment will not endanger the health, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the public.
- b) The proposed amendment is compatible with the existing uses, character, and zoning of adjacent properties and other property within the immediate vicinity of the proposed amendment.
- c) The proposed amendment provides a relative gain to the public, as compared to any hardship imposed upon an individual property owner.

- d) The proposed amendment makes it more feasible to develop property relative to the present zoning classification of the property.
- e) The proposed amendment addresses the community need for a specific use.
- f) The proposed amendment corrects an error, adds clarification, or reflects a change in policy.
- g) The proposed amendment rectifies existing nonconformities and, if so, the extent of such nonconformities.
- h) The proposed variation is consistent with the intent of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, this Unified Development Ordinance, and the other land use policies of the Village.

**Background**

Village Staff conducted a thorough review of various resources, including the Illinois Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and the University of Illinois Extension Office. Additionally, staff examined over a dozen ordinances from municipalities across the country. The goal was to better understand how local land use regulations could be crafted to support educational institutions, particularly elementary and secondary schools, within the Village of Park Forest.

Three potential approaches to updating the chicken coop regulations were considered:

**1. Zoning Administrator Review:**

This option would allow chicken coops in all residential districts where they are permitted, as well as on properties where the principal use is an elementary or secondary school. Applications would be reviewed and approved by the Building Department and Zoning Administrator on a case-by-case basis. This approach offers flexibility but ensures each application adheres to the established standards for chicken coops.

**2. Special Use Permit Process:**

This approach would require schools to obtain a Special Use Permit for chicken coops, following a public hearing, Planning and Zoning Commission review, and Board approval. While this method provides transparency and community involvement, it may be overly burdensome for a relatively simple and likely widely supported use.

**3. Redefine Chicken Coop Regulations for Schools:**

The third option would involve a complete redefinition of how schools are permitted to have chicken coops. This option offers a clear, rigid standard but would require significant research and might be less adaptable to future needs.

**Proposed Text Amendment to Environment Commission for Feedback**

The proposed text amendment will amend one part of the UDO: Section III-4.C.3 (Chicken Coops). The Environment Commission was provided the following proposed revisions for review during their official September meeting. This strikethrough text as shown below will be removed from the UDO and underlined text will be added to the UDO.

- 3. Chicken Coop. Chickens may be kept in chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures in accordance with the following standards.
  - a. Permit. Prior to erecting a chicken coop, chicken run, or similar structure, an applicant must obtain a chicken coop permit from the Zoning Administrator and provide notice to all adjacent property owners. Such permits must be renewed annually.
  - b. Height. The maximum height of a chicken coop shall be eight feet.
  - c. Size. The chicken coop and run, combined, must total a minimum of four square feet per hen, with a minimum of one square foot per hen allocated to the coop, and a minimum of three square feet per hen allocated to the run.

- d. Location.
    - (1) Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures are allowed in the rear yard of any single-family use or in the R-1, R-2, or R-4 District and in the rear yard of any Elementary or Secondary School.
    - (2) Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures are allowed in the rear yard of any urban agriculture use in the C-3 or M Districts.
  - e. Setback. Chicken coops shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from any lot line and a minimum of 10 feet from the principal structure on the lot.
  - f. Number – First Year. No more than four hens are permitted per zoning lot during the first application year (12 calendar months) in all zoning districts. Roosters are not permitted. There is no limit on the number of chicks, age six months or younger, that may be kept. This requirement does not apply to Elementary or Secondary School uses in permitted residential districts. The Zoning Administrator will determine the maximum amount of hens based on the chicken coop site plan and operational plan provided to the Village with the Chicken Coop application.
  - g. Number – Subsequent Years. After one year (12 calendar months) of owning four hens, an applicant in the R-1, R-2, C-3, and M zoning districts may submit an application to increase the number of hens to no more than eight hens. The Zoning Administrator shall approve this application if no substantiated complaints have been received by the Village regarding the applicant’s hens in the previous 12-month period. Applicants in the R-4 zoning district may not have more than four hens at any time. This requirement does not apply to Elementary or Secondary School uses in permitted residential districts. The Zoning Administrator will determine the maximum amount of hens based on the chicken coop site plan and operational plan provided to the Village with the Chicken Coop application.
  - h. Perimeter fence. The rear yard of any property where hens are kept must be fenced with a minimum four-foot high fence.
  - i. Maintenance. Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures shall be maintained in a manner that provides adequate lighting and ventilation, and protects chickens from cold weather, precipitation, rodents, predators, and trespassers. Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures must be maintained in a sanitary condition and shall be cleaned of droppings, uneaten feed, feathers, and other waste so as not to become a nuisance.
  - j. Sales. There shall be no retail sales of any products on-site.
  - k. Slaughter. On-site slaughtering of chickens is prohibited.
- (§ III-4.C.3 Chicken Coop, revised 9-21-20, Ord#2146)

**Environment Commission Recommendation**

The Environment Commission strongly recommends rewording section f of the Chicken Coop section to clearly separate the "no rooster" provision from the exemption status of schools. As the proposed amendment reads, there is potential for misinterpretation, which could lead to confusion about whether schools are exempt from the rooster policy. To avoid ambiguity, the Environment Commission suggests clarifying that while schools may be exempt from certain restrictions, they should still adhere to the "no rooster" rule.

Additionally, we recommend proceeding with the Zoning Administrator Review option (option 1). This approach is the simplest and most straightforward, ensuring that the process remains efficient while still allowing for case-by-case evaluation. It provides flexibility without adding unnecessary complexity, which aligns with the needs of both the community and the schools involved.

Lastly, we would also recommend increasing the minimum fence height requirement to more than 4 feet, particularly to prevent unauthorized individuals from approaching the coop and run. A higher fence would offer better security and protection for both the chickens and the property.

### Proposed Text Amendment

The following proposed text amendment includes changes based on recommendations from the Environment Commission. The underlined text will be added to the UDO and the strikethrough text will be removed from the UDO. The following is the proposed text amendment:

3. Chicken Coop. Chickens may be kept in chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures in accordance with the following standards.
  - a. Permit. Prior to erecting a chicken coop, chicken run, or similar structure, an applicant must obtain a chicken coop permit from the Zoning Administrator and provide notice to all adjacent property owners. Such permits must be renewed annually.
  - b. Height. The maximum height of a chicken coop shall be eight feet.
  - c. Size. The chicken coop and run, combined, must total a minimum of four square feet per hen, with a minimum of one square foot per hen allocated to the coop, and a minimum of three square feet per hen allocated to the run.
  - d. Location.
    - (1) Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures are allowed in the rear yard of any single-family use or in the R-1, R-2, or R-4 District and in the rear yard of any Elementary or Secondary School.
    - (2) Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures are allowed in the rear yard of any urban agriculture use in the C-3 or M Districts.
  - e. Setback. Chicken coops shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from any lot line and a minimum of 10 feet from the principal structure on the lot.
  - f. Number – First Year. No more than four hens are permitted per zoning lot during the first application year (12 calendar months) in all zoning districts. ~~Roosters are not permitted.~~ There is no limit on the number of chicks, age six months or younger, that may be kept. This requirement does not apply to Elementary or Secondary School uses in permitted residential districts. The Zoning Administrator will determine the maximum amount of hens based on the chicken coop site plan and operational plan provided to the Village with the Chicken Coop application. Roosters are not permitted in any zoning district or under any land use.
  - g. Number – Subsequent Years. After one year (12 calendar months) of owning four hens, an applicant in the R-1, R-2, C-3, and M zoning districts may submit an application to increase the number of hens to no more than eight hens. The Zoning Administrator shall approve this application if no substantiated complaints have been received by the Village regarding the applicant's hens in the previous 12-month period. Applicants in the R-4 zoning district may not have more than four hens at any time. This requirement does not apply to Elementary or Secondary School uses in permitted residential districts. The Zoning Administrator will determine the maximum amount of hens based on the chicken coop site plan and operational plan provided to the Village with the Chicken Coop application.
  - h. Perimeter fence. The rear yard of any property where hens are kept must be fenced with a minimum four-foot high fence. The Zoning Administrator may require higher minimum fences for Elementary or Secondary Schools based off of the submitted Chicken Coop Application, site plan, and operational plan.
  - i. Maintenance. Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures shall be maintained in a manner that provides adequate lighting and ventilation, and protects chickens from cold weather, precipitation, rodents, predators, and trespassers. Chicken coops, chicken runs, and similar structures must be maintained in a sanitary condition and shall be cleaned of droppings, uneaten feed, feathers, and other waste so as not to become a nuisance.
  - j. Sales. There shall be no retail sales of any products on-site.
  - k. Slaughter. On-site slaughtering of chickens is prohibited.

(§ III-4.C.3 Chicken Coop, revised 9-21-20, Ord#2146)

**Final Staff Recommendation**

Based on the research and analysis conducted, staff believes the most optimal path forward is to amend the Chicken Coop Application to include an "Elementary and Secondary Schools" as permitted locations for chicken coops. Under this amendment, any educational institution submitting an application for a chicken coop would be required to follow the standard chicken coop regulations. The Zoning Administrator would have the authority to determine the maximum number of chickens allowed, based on the educational institution's site plan, operational plan, and application. The proposed Text Amendment above includes these changes.

**Planning and Zoning Commission Action**

After conducting the public hearing, the Planning and Zoning Commission is asked to consider this request for a Text Amendment to Article III-4.C (Chicken Coop), and make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees on this request.



**Park Forest  
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes  
Park Forest Board Room  
Tuesday, April 9, 2024**

**Present:** Chair Vernita Wickliffe Lewis; Vice Chair Marguerite Hutchins; Commissioners: Samuel Brooks, Cynthia Burton-Prete, Denise Poston, Doug Price; Trustee Liaison John Moore

**Staff:** Andrew Brown, Assistant Director of Economic Development and Planning, Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Liaison; Sandra Zoellner, Director of Economic Development and Planning; Jerry Martin, Director of Community Development

**Absent:** None.

**Visitors:** None.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.

**Review of Minutes for March 12, 2024:**

A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Hutchins and seconded by Brooks. All in favor. The minutes were approved.

**Petitions:** None.

**Audience to Visitors:** None.

**New Business:** None.

**Old Business:**

**a. Short Term Rental Workshop**

Brown reviewed the feedback received from the Commissioners during the previous meeting, specifically regarding the consideration of short-term rentals. He presented his findings on the short-term rental ordinances in Matteson and Calumet City. Matteson prohibits short-term rentals, while Calumet City permits them with a \$500 annual fee and a \$1,000 per day fine for code violations.

To gather further information, Brown requested information from the Police and Building Departments concerning complaints related to short-term rentals, such as those offered through Airbnb. The Police Department reported one incident several years prior and noted that their complaint tracking system does not differentiate between long-term and short-term rental complaints. The Building Department indicated that approximately five percent of their inquiries pertain to short-term rentals, primarily from potential operators seeking clarification on their

legality within Park Forest. Brown then introduced Director Zoellner and Director Martin to the Commissioners.

Brown yielded the floor to Chair Wickliffe Lewis.

Chair Wickliffe Lewis inquired about the directors' perspectives on permitting short-term rentals in Park Forest. Director Zoellner stated that her department has not received any complaints regarding short-term rentals and that the topic was first raised during the EDAG meeting. Director Zoellner reserved expressing a definitive opinion on the matter. Director Martin reported that the Building Department is typically notified of short-term rental activity by the Police Department. In such cases, the owner is contacted and informed that short-term rentals are not permitted in Park Forest. Violators are issued a minimum fine of \$100, which is generally paid promptly. Director Martin added that there have been no recent complaints regarding short-term rentals.

Chair Wickliffe Lewis recommended informing the public about any short-term rental policies once they are drafted.

Commissioner Price emphasized that the primary objective of any regulations should be to facilitate the success of landlords in maintaining compliant properties and generating profit, rather than focusing on revenue generation for the Village. Price cautioned against creating ordinances that could lead to tension with landlords.

Trustee Moore shared insights from a workshop he attended, highlighting the advantages of implementing ordinances with clear and stringent rules rather than imposing an outright ban. He argued that this approach would prevent the emergence of an unregulated short-term rental market and ensure that operators comply with regulations and pay taxes.

Brown stressed the need to enforce crime-free housing standards for all rental properties, including short-term rentals. He also noted the Building Department's requirement for occupancy inspections with each new tenant in long-term rentals. He raised the question of how to effectively ensure code compliance for short-term rentals without overburdening the Building Department while prioritizing the safety of occupants.

Director Martin acknowledged the challenge and indicated that determining the appropriate inspection frequency for short-term rentals requires further consideration.

Chair Wickliffe Lewis suggested conducting inspections every six months instead of after each guest departure. She also inquired whether individuals operating short-term rentals would be required to register as businesses in Park Forest. Director Martin clarified that business licenses are not required for long-term rentals.

### **Communications:**

- a. **Member Communications:** Burton-Prete stated that she and Brown are on the STAMPS task force. She also stated that Cook County Department of Transportation wants to put a

bike path adjacent Sauk Trail. Brooks commented that it seemed kind of dangerous. Burton-Prete stated that they will have a meeting on May 9th with the stakeholders of Richton Park regarding the bike path.

Price inquired about the tree clearing at the tracks on Western Avenue. Brown stated that he would have to follow up on it. Brown had asked the Department of Public Works (DPW) about it, and they were aware of it because it was close to one of their wells.

Brooks asked if work will begin on Forest Boulevard this year. Brown said that the Village was awarded funds through an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) grant, but they are still seeking additional grant funds because the project will cost more than what was awarded. The Village received \$3 million from IDOT.

Poston asked what will happen with the building that Walgreens was located in. Brown stated that they have not heard about any new businesses moving into that location.

- b. **Trustee Comments:** Trustee Moore continued the recognition ceremony started at the previous Commission Meeting and congratulated Price for over 25 years of service to the Park Forest Planning and Zoning Commission. He also informed the Commissioners that the Board had approved the special use permit for Robbins LLC.
- c. **Staff Communications:** Brown stated that Michelle Obama School has expressed interest in having chicken coops for educational purposes. Currently, chicken coops are not permitted at schools; they are only allowed at single-family homes. Brown wanted to inform the Commissioners of this request.

Regarding the Cook County Economic Interest email that the Commissioners received, Brown requests that they complete it and return it to him by May 1st so he can forward it to Angela.

On the topic of the Marshall Field lot development, the developers had expected to receive IHDA funds earlier but did not receive them. The developer is now looking to start construction in June. The building plans have already been approved by the Building Department.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Price and seconded by Hutchins. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.