

# CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

**Approved 06.03.25**

## **PLAN COMMISSION/ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**April 2, 2025, 7:00 P.M.**

### **1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum**

Chairperson Laimins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call found Chairperson Laimins, Vice Chairperson Kasprak, and Commissioners Banasiak, Billingsley, Terrazas, present. Commissioners Slattery and Henkin were excused. With five members present, a quorum was established.

Staff in attendance included City Planner John Sterrett.

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairperson Laimins led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **3. Chairperson's Comments**

Chairperson Laimins informed audience members that the meeting was being video and audio recorded.

### **4. Public Comment**

None.

### **5. Approval of the Draft February 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Billingsley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Banasiak, to approve the draft February 4, 2025 meeting minutes. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried.

### **6. Public Hearing of Case PC 25-08 – Comprehensive Plan Amendment – 525 N Neltor Boulevard – Educare West DuPage**

Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to open the public hearing. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried.

Mr. Sterrett was duly sworn in. Mr. Sterrett stated that Educare West DuPage, who recently purchased the property at 525 North Neltor Boulevard, consisting of two parcels totaling 4.3 acres, is requesting approval of an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The amendment would change the future land use designation of the western parcel of the property from Multi-Family Residential to Corridor Commercial on the Future Land Use Map. The subject parcel is roughly 2.68 acres, with 330 feet of frontage along Neltor Boulevard. The adjacent property to the south contains a commercial use located in the B-2 General Business District.

The subject parcel is currently zoned R-2 Single-Family Residential and was most recently used as a church. Educare West DuPage has an interest in converting the existing building to a daycare facility for its operations. The property's zoning, R-2, does not permit this type of use.

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The B-2 General Business District, however, does permit this use. Staff is of the opinion that B-2 zoning would be appropriate for this parcel because of its exposure on one of the City's three major commercial corridors. As previously mentioned, the property to the south is already located in the B-2 District and is occupied by a commercial enterprise. The City's Future Land Use Plan, however, contemplates Multi-Family Residential for the parcel. Educare is therefore seeking an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to amend the Future Land Use Map to indicate the parcel as Corridor Commercial. The change in the future land use designation would apply only to the western parcel of the property and the eastern parcel would still be considered for future multi-family.

The development along Neltnor Boulevard has been predominantly commercial. Although no recent zoning map amendments have occurred in the general area, commercial development has occurred both north and south of the subject property. The property's location along a major commercial corridor is suitable for a non-residential use serving the public interest, such as the proposed daycare facility.

Justin McGrath and Marcie Sweeney of Educare were duly sworn in and answered general questions about the proposal and gave background to what Educare's intent for the property is.

The following members from the public were sworn and provided testimony:

Cathy Blozis – Spoke in opposition  
Renee St. Laurent – Spoke in opposition  
Arthur Schattke – Spoke in opposition  
Candice Cyrier– Spoke in opposition  
Wayne Beth – Spoke in opposition  
Karen Cruz – Spoke in opposition  
Richard Knight– Spoke in opposition

With all members of the public having had the opportunity to speak, and with all Plan Commissioners having the opportunity to question staff, Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to close the public hearing. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried, and the public hearing was closed.

## **7. Review and Recommendation of Case PC 25-08 – Comprehensive Plan Amendment – 525 N Neltnor Boulevard – Educare West DuPage**

The Plan Commission deliberated the request. Commissioner Terrazas made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kasprak, to recommend approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment. With a roll call vote of all ayes the motion carried.

## **8. Public Hearing of Case PC 25-07 – Zoning Map Amendment – 525 N Neltnor Boulevard – Educare West DuPage**

Commissioner Billingsley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Banasiak, to open the public hearing. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried.

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Mr. Sterrett was duly sworn in. Mr. Sterrett stated that Educare West DuPage, a non-profit specializing in caring for and educating children from birth to 5 years old, purchased the property and has plans to use the existing structure as a daycare facility. Minimal site improvements are needed to accommodate the proposed use. The property is located in the R-2 Single-Family Residential District, which does not permit daycare facilities. This type of use is, however, permitted by right in the B-2 General Business District. Thus, Educare is seeking a Zoning Map Amendment to place the parcel with the existing structure (the western parcel) in the B-2 General Business District.

Educare is also seeking to place the eastern parcel in the R-6 Multiple-Family Residential District. While Educare has no plans to develop the eastern parcel, they are seeking to rezone it to market it for potential developers of the site. No plans have been submitted to the City indicating how the site could potentially be laid out with multi-family residential units. The Future Land Use Map contained in the City's Comprehensive Plan contemplates the entire property for Multi-Family Residential. Educare is seeking a separate Comprehensive Plan amendment to amend the western parcel to Corridor Commercial. See Case PC 25-08 for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

The subject property consists of two parcels and is roughly 4.3 acres with frontage on Neltnor Boulevard (Illinois Route 59), Grove Avenue, and Ridgeland Avenue. The western parcel is approximately 2.68 acres and is improved with a 2-story brick building previously used as a place of worship and has an accessory structure in the rear. The property has 65 parking stalls with the majority located in a parking lot behind the building. There are two full access points on the property with one on Neltnor Boulevard and the other on Grove Avenue. The eastern parcel is roughly 1.62 acres and is vacant.

Justin McGrath and Marcie Sweeney of Educare were duly sworn in and answered general questions about the proposal and gave background to what Educare's intent for the property is.

The following members from the public were sworn and provided testimony:

Cathy Blozis – Spoke in opposition  
Richard Knight – Spoke in opposition  
Renee St. Laurant – Spoke in opposition  
David Sabathne – Spoke in support  
Wayne Beth – Spoke in opposition

With all members of the public having had the opportunity to speak, and with all Plan Commissioners having the opportunity to question staff, Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to close the public hearing. With a roll call vote of all ayes the motion carried.

## **9. Review and Recommendation of Case PC 25-07 – Zoning Map Amendment – 525 N Neltnor Boulevard – Educare West DuPage**

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The Plan Commission deliberated the request. Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Billingsley, to recommend approval of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment of the western parcel from R-2 Single-Family Residential to B-2 General Business, and incorporated the following Findings of Fact with the recommendation:

*1. The existing uses and zoning of the property in question.*

**The subject property is located in the R-2 Single-Family Residential District and was most recently used as a place of worship, which is permitted in this district. The property has since been sold to Educare and the use of a place of worship has ceased.**

*2. The existing uses and zoning of other lots in the vicinity.*

**The property to the south is located in the B-2 General Business District and is used as a VFW Hall. Other properties in the area are a mix of various single-family residential zonings, both incorporated and unincorporated.**

*3. Suitability of the property in question for uses already permitted under the existing regulations.*

**The current district of R-2 Single Family Residential limits the amount of development that may occur on the property and its frontage along a major commercial corridor would not be desirable for single-family homes.**

*4. Suitability of the property in question for the proposed use.*

**The property's location along a major commercial corridor is ideal for a non-residential use serving the public interest, such as the proposed daycare facility.**

*5. The trend of development in the vicinity of the property in question, including any recent zoning activity.*

**The development along Neltnor Boulevard has been predominantly commercial. Although no recent zoning map amendments have occurred in the general area, commercial development has occurred both north and south of the subject property.**

*6. The effect the proposed rezoning would have on implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.*

**The rezoning of the property will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan once a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment is approved to designate this portion of the property as Corridor Commercial on the City's Future Land Use Map.**

*7. Impact on surrounding properties.*

**The proposed rezoning of the property to B-2 General Business will not affect the surrounding properties and will be consistent with commercial development along Neltnor Boulevard.**

*8. Impact on health, safety, or welfare of the community.*

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**The rezoning of the property to B-2 General Business will allow for commercial uses along Neltnor Boulevard, which is a major commercial corridor in the City.**

With a roll call vote of all ayes the motion carried.

Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to recommend approval of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment of the eastern parcel from R-2 Single-Family Residential to R-6 Multiple-Family Residence, and incorporated the following Findings of Fact with the recommendation:

*1. The existing uses and zoning of the property in question.*

**The subject property is located in the R-2 Single-Family Residential District and was most recently used as a place of worship, which is permitted in this district. The property has since been sold to Educare and the use of a place of worship has ceased.**

*2. The existing uses and zoning of other lots in the vicinity.*

**The property to the south is located in the B-2 General Business District and is used as a VFW Hall. Other properties in the area are a mix of various single-family residential zonings, both incorporated and unincorporated.**

*3. Suitability of the property in question for uses already permitted under the existing regulations.*

**The current district of R-2 Single Family Residential limits the amount of development that may occur on the property.**

*4. Suitability of the property in question for the proposed use.*

**The Plan Commission believes at this time the rezoning of the eastern parcel would impact the neighborhood.**

*5. The trend of development in the vicinity of the property in question, including any recent zoning activity.*

**The development along Neltnor Boulevard has been predominantly commercial. Although no recent zoning map amendments have occurred in the general area, commercial development has occurred both north and south of the subject property.**

*6. The effect the proposed rezoning would have on implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.*

**The rezoning of the eastern portion of the property is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as multi-family residential.**

*7. Impact on surrounding properties.*

**The Plan Commission believes at this time the rezoning of the eastern parcel would impact the neighborhood.**



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*8. Impact on health, safety, or welfare of the community.*

**The Plan Commission believes at this time the rezoning of the eastern parcel would impact the neighborhood.**

With a rollcall vote of all nays, the motion failed.

## **10. Public Hearing of Case PC 25-09 – Special Use Permit – 800 W Washington Street – Frain Industries**

Commissioner Banasiak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kasprak, to open the public hearing. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried.

Mr. Sterrett was duly sworn in. Mr. Sterrett stated that Frain Industries, a processing and packaging equipment supplier, is proposing to store roofing materials on pallets outside the building in the paved area where the trailer parking formerly occurred. The storage area would be limited to an area of 50' X 160' feet, occupying approximately 20 trailer stalls, which are not needed by Frain. The roofing materials will be stored outside temporarily until they are brought inside to be unpackaged, sorted, and then repackaged and then loaded onto a truck for delivery. No other machinery or equipment is proposed to be stored outside, only the roofing materials. The storage will be contained on a hard surface, as required by the Zoning Code. The petitioner will be adding 8-foot tall privacy fencing on the west and north property lines. The building will screen the storage on the east side and the storage area is not visible from the south because of extensive tree coverage.

The subject property is roughly 38 acres with frontage on Town Road and West Washington Street in the M Manufacturing District. The property contains a 345,000 square foot industrial building that was previously used by General Mills until its closure. The petitioner, Frain Industries, purchased the property from General Mills and has been using it for warehousing of products. The property has a large, fenced-in paved area on the west side of the building that was previously used for trailer parking associated with General Mills.

Dale Hammersmith of Frain Industries was duly sworn in and spoke about the project.

With all members of the public having had the opportunity to speak, and with all Plan Commissioners having the opportunity to question staff, Commissioner Banasiak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to close the public hearing. With a roll call vote of all ayes the motion carried.

## **11. Review and Recommendation of Case PC 25-09 – Special Use Permit – 800 W Washington Street – Frain Industries**

The Plan Commission deliberated the request. Commissioner Banasiak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Terrazas, to recommend approval of the proposed Special Use Permit, and incorporated the following Findings of Fact with the recommendation:

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(A) Is necessary for the public convenience at the location or, the case of existing nonconforming uses, a special use permit will make the use more compatible with its surroundings. \*\*\**This standard should be interpreted as indicating whether or not the proposed use is good for the public at that particular physical location, and not whether or not the use itself is needed there*\*\*\*

The proposed use is only permitted in the Manufacturing District and the property currently has a large area that is already fenced in, paved, and set back approximately 600 feet from edge of the right-of-way, convenient for outside storage. Staff is of the opinion the petitioner has satisfied this finding.

(B) Is so designed, located and proposed to be operated that the public health, safety and welfare will be protected:

The area where the outside storage is minimal and will be properly located on an existing paved surface. Additional privacy fencing will be installed to screen the property from north and west. The building serves as screening to the east and existing extensive tree coverage is located on the south. Staff is of the opinion the petitioner has satisfied this finding.

(C) Will not cause substantial injury to the value of other property in the neighborhood in which it is located:

The proposed ancillary use of outside storage on the property is similar to other industrial properties along the West Washington Street corridor. The storage will be screened from public view and the area the storage will be permitted in will be small in size compared to the rest of the property. Staff is of the opinion the petitioner has satisfied this finding.

(D) The proposed special use is designated by this code as a listed special use in the zoning district in which the property in question is located:

The proposed use of an employment agency with temporary staff reporting to the agency is listed as a special use in the M Manufacturing District, per Section 11.2-4 (L) of the West Chicago Zoning Code. Staff is of the opinion the petitioner has satisfied this finding.

With a roll call vote of all ayes, the motion carried.

## 12. Petition Updates/Staff Report

Mr. Sterrett provided a brief update on upcoming projects and previously approved projects.

## 13. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Kasprak made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Billingsley to adjourn the meeting. With a voice vote of all ayes, the motion carried and the Plan Commission, at 8:44 p.m., adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Sterrett, City Planner