



Village of Oak Park

STAFF REPORT

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

MEETING DATE: December 4, 2024

FROM: Project Review Team

PREPARED BY: Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

P R O J E C T T I T L E

CALENDAR NUMBER: 17-24-Z

The Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) will conduct a public hearing on an application filed by the Applicants, Anthony Wells and Michael Burkes seeking a variance from Section 4.3 (Table 4-1: Residential Districts Dimensional Standards) of the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance to construct a fourth dwelling unit in the basement of an existing three-family dwelling unit building. The subject lot is 30 feet by 124 feet totaling 3720 square feet of land which is 1950 square feet less than the required 6,400 square feet required to allow the Applicants to construct a fourth dwelling unit at the premises commonly known as 110 S. Austin Blvd., Oak Park, Illinois, Property Index Number 16-17-107-030-0000 (“Subject Property”), in the R-7 Multiple-Family Zoning District.

A P P L I C A N T I N F O R M A T I O N

APPLICANT/OWNER: Anthony Wells and Michael Burkes
Hartford Wells Investment LLC.
110 S. Austin Blvd.
Oak Park, IL 60304

P R O P E R T Y I N F O R M A T I O N

EXISTING ZONING: R-7 Multiple-Family Zoning District
EXISTING LAND USE: Three-Family Dwelling Unit
PROPERTY SIZE: 30' x 124' (3,720 SF)
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Residential Mixed

SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

NORTH: R-7 Multiple-Family Zoning District (2 to 6 Unit Apartment Building)
SOUTH: R-7 Multiple-Family Zoning District (2 to 6 Unit Apartment Building)
EAST: Austin Blvd. followed by the City of Chicago (Columbus Park)
WEST: Public Alley followed by R-4 Single-Family Zoning District (Single-Family Dwelling Unit)

Analysis

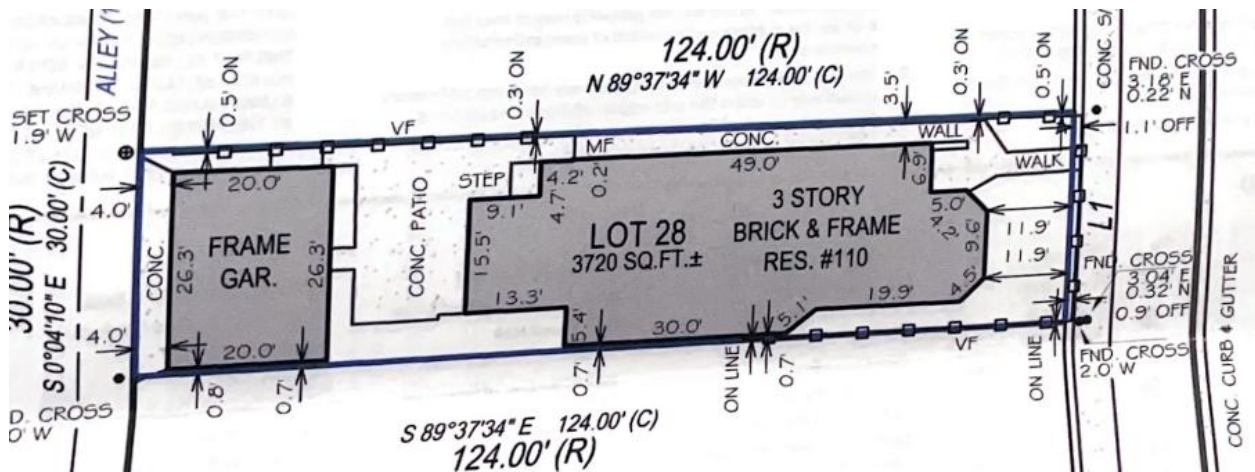
Submittals

This report is based on the following documents, which were filed with the Zoning Administrator – Development Customer Services:

1. Application for Variance;
2. Project Summary;
3. Responses to the standards for receiving a variance as conveyed in Section 14.3(E) pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance;
4. Zoning Map/Area Map;
5. Existing/Proposed Site Plans;
6. Elevations;
7. Adjacent Properties Photos;
8. Proforma Statement;
9. Income and Expense Report;
10. Plat of Survey; and
11. Affidavit.

Description

The Subject Property is within the R-7 Multiple-Family Zoning District located on the west side of Austin Boulevard south of Madison Street and north of Adams Street. The lot is 30' x 124', totaling 3,720 square feet. The lot is improved with a three-story, brick building with three-units plus a basement. The Applicant seeks to add an additional dwelling unit in the basement to create a four-unit building. The basement unit would be a two-bedroom unit. The property has a three-car garage. The property does not have a fourth parking stall on-site. The Zoning Ordinance does not require that a fourth parking stall be provided. However, the property has an accessible parking stall on Austin Blvd.



C o m p l i a n c e w i t h t h e Z o n i n g O r d i n a n c e

DENSITY (Minimum Lot Area): Article 4: Residential Districts; Section 4.3 Dimensional Standards—Table 4-1 Residential Districts Dimensional Standards requires 5,000 square feet of land for two-family dwelling units. The minimum lot area for multiple-family dwellings is 5,000 square feet + 700 square feet for each dwelling unit after the first two (2) dwelling units. The Subject Property has 3,720 square feet of lot area and is improved with a three (3) dwelling unit building. Thus, only one (1) dwelling unit is allowed based on the square footage of the lot. The Applicant is proposing to legalize an additional dwelling unit in the basement for a total of four (4) dwelling units on the lot. Four (4) dwelling units requires a 6,400 square foot lot. The proposal is 2,680 square feet short of the required lot size to support four (4) dwelling units.

Variance Approval Standards

1. The Zoning Board of Appeals decision must make findings to support each of the following:
 - a. The strict application of the terms of this Ordinance will result in undue hardship unless the specific relief requested is granted.
 - b. The particular physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property impose a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out.
 - c. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances inherent to the subject property and not from the personal situation of the owner and has not been created by any person presently having a proprietary interest in the property in question.
2. The Zoning Board of Appeals, in making its findings, may inquire into the following evidentiary issues, as well as any others deemed appropriate:
 - a. The granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare in the neighborhood in which the property is located.
 - b. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, substantially increase congestion in the public streets, increase the danger of fire, endanger the public safety, or impair property values within the neighborhood.
 - c. The proposed variation is consistent with the spirit and intent of this Ordinance and the adopted land use policies.

The Applicant has responded to the above standards in their application.

C o m p a t i b i l i t y w i t h t h e N e i g h b o r h o o d

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the area as a mixed residential area. Mixed residential areas include a balanced mix of single-family detached housing, townhouses, and multi-family structures. These areas often provide a transition between commercial areas and single-family areas. Housing redevelopment in mixed residential areas can include a range of housing types which provides a balanced choice of housing near many

of Oak Park's commercial districts.

The land uses surrounding the proposal are as follows: to the west across a public alley is a single-family residential area; to the north is a 2 to 6-unit building; to the south is a 2 to 6-unit building; and to the east is Austin Boulevard followed by a multi-family residential area in the City of Chicago. A four-unit residential building would be compatible with the surrounding land uses in the neighborhood. A four-unit building would fit well within the existing residential land uses as there are two-family and multiple family residential uses all along Austin Boulevard.

G e n e r a l I n f o r m a t i o n

Project Review Team

The Village Project Review Team reviewed the proposal. The Team consists of representatives from various departments and divisions within the Village government. The Team is in support of allowing the additional dwelling unit in the basement. As stated above, the property has three on-site parking spaces and a dedicated accessible parking stall on Austin Blvd. The exterior of the building would not be modified or enlarged. There is public transportation near the property. For the foregoing reasons, Staff is in support of the variance request.

In addition, as you are aware, the Village Board has asked Staff to review opportunities to add density to residential districts and explore zoning changes to accommodate at-scale housing. Staff's efforts would focus on housing types, characterized by a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units, compatible in scale and form, with detached single-family homes that are located in a walkable neighborhood. Allowing the variance to add a basement unit in an existing structure is an acceptable way of achieving more density in residential districts and maintaining compatible scale and form.

End of Report.

- c. Applicant
 Zoning Board of Appeals members
 Rasheda Jackson, Zoning Board of Appeals, Attorney
 Craig Failor, Village Planner
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