

# VILLAGE OF ORLAND PARK

*14700 S. Ravinia Avenue  
Orland Park, IL 60462  
[www.orlandpark.org](http://www.orlandpark.org)*



## Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, May 6, 2025**

**7:00 PM**

**Village Hall**

## **Plan Commission**

*Nick Parisi, Chairman  
Edward Schussler, Vice Chairman  
Commissioners: John J. Paul, Patrick Zomparelli, Yousef Zaatar,  
Daniel Sanchez and John Nugent*

**CALLED TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Present:** 7 - Chairman Parisi; Member Sanchez; Member Nugent; Member Paul; Member Schussler; Member Zaatar, Member Zomparelli

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES****2025-0378 Minutes for the April 15, 2025 Plan Commission Meeting**

**A motion was made by Member Schussler, seconded by Member Paul, that this matter be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Chairman Parisi, Member Sanchez, Member Nugent, Member Paul, Member Schussler, Member Zaatar and Member Zomparelli

**Nay:** 0

**PUBLIC HEARINGS****OPEN PUBLIC HEARING**

**A motion was made by Chairman Parisi, seconded by Member Paul, that this matter be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Chairman Parisi, Member Sanchez, Member Nugent, Member Paul, Member Schussler, Member Zaatar and Member Zomparelli

**Nay:** 0

**2024-0807 Fernway Park Elementary School Expansion - Special Use Permit for a School**

Village Attorney Anne Skrodzki swore in Petitioner Donald Manhard from Manhard Consulting.

Mr. Manhard stated we are here to present an expansion to Fernway Park Elementary School. This is just an addition at the southwest corner of the school and additional parking lot improvements along with the school.

Chairman Parisi responded you've talked with the staff, and you've seen the recommendations. Any objections?

Mr. Manhard replied no, no objections.

Chairman Parisi stated I know you folks were up before us prior and this seems to be a more contained project. You're not knocking buildings down.

Mr. Manhard responded, right.

Planner Marcus LeVigne respectfully requested the staff report be accepted into the record as written and presented during the meeting and noted one minor correction with the case number (2024-0807) on the printed staff reports. (refer to staff report)

Mr. LeVigne continued the purpose of this petition is to consider a special use permit to allow for the expansion of Fernway Park Elementary School and to consider a modification for a reduction in the amount of required plantings within the landscape corridor between the building and the south edge of the property, O'Brien Drive. The comprehensive plan designates this parcel as Community and Institutional as the property is currently being utilized as a school. The property is surrounded by Orland Hills on the north, south, and west sides of the property and Orland Park is located to the east. All surrounding properties are zoned single-family residential and that's in both Orland Park zoning ordinance and Orland Hills'. Mr. LeVigne discussed the proposed expansion and site plan that includes a new gymnasium and three new classrooms, the proposed landscape plan, proposed public improvements, and proposed plat of dedication. (refer to audio)

Mr. LeVigne stated staff recommends the Plan Commission approve a site plan and building elevations, a landscape plan, a special use permit with conditions, and a modification for a reduction in the required landscape corridor amounts.

[Members of the Public]

Ms. Skrodzki swore in Orland Hills resident, Jeanette Cozzolino, at 8925 Dwight Court.

Ms. Cozzolino stated we're in the corner house, in the cul-de-sac in that northwest corner. The way I see it, it doesn't affect the back, what we would call the back, correct? Most of its south, correct?

Mr. LeVigne responded correct, yes. Everything is to the south and to the east of the property.

Ms. Cozzolino replied, OK. That would still stay more grassland for the kids to play or whatever they use it for?

Mr. LeVigne responded, correct. There's no changes to the west half.

Ms. Cozzolino stated we just want to make sure no buses were coming through. Some of the plans before had the school being pushed back.

Chairman Parisi responded this is the time to ask.

Ms. Cozzolino replied that's not going to happen?

Mr. LeVigne responded correct.

Ms. Cozzolino continued, and you said they were going to put some sewer thing in too underground?

Mr. LeVigne replied that would be on the southeast corner. The underground stormwater under the parking lot.

Ms. Cozzolino stated which is fine. That's all I just get concerned about flooding.

Chairman Parisi added as you should. Thank you.

Ms. Skrodzki swore in Orland Hills resident, Brandy Cafarelli, at 16560 Marilyn Court.

Ms. Cafarelli stated my backyard is currently right about where the current park is. My question is on the drainage, you said the southeast corner, is the current park that's there going to be moved and is that where the drainage is going to be affected?

Mr. LeVigne responded I'll defer for the drainage question.

Ms. Skrodzki swore in Design Civil Engineer Andrew Annulis from Manhard Consulting.

Mr. Annulis stated that corner, we're not going to touch anything. It will stay exactly like it has always been. We're not sending any extra water there.

Ms. Cafarelli asked, so where the current park is it's staying exactly the same?

Mr. Annulis replied exactly the same.

Ms. Cafarelli responded that's all I need to know.

[Commissioners]

Commissioner Zaatar stated (pointing to members of the public), you said Marilyn Court and you said southeast corner. She's not talking about the east corner, right?

Commissioner Schussler added she lives on the northeast corner.

Commissioner Nugent added Marilyn is like 88th Court. She would back up to

existing playground on the north end, correct?

Commissioner Zaatar stated she's northeast.

Mr. Manhard responded if you're looking at the top right corner of the plan, that remains as is. Just for clarification.

Chairman Parisi replied I appreciate that.

Commissioner Zaatar stated I just wanted to make sure they were answering the right question. I do remember a project that came before us for this location. I don't remember these building plans, so maybe a recap of that project. That was the drainage project. Is that separate from this project, I think, and then if I'm right, is that done?

Mr. LeVigne responded that project was to knock down the school and build an entirely new school and that's where all the drainage concerns came from the neighbors a few years back. That project was cancelled.

Commissioner Zaatar asked this project replaces that project?

Mr. LeVigne replied correct.

Commissioner Zaatar asked, and all the same underground storage plans are built into this plan?

Mr. LeVigne responded this is a much smaller scope.

Commissioner Zaatar replied smaller scope, OK. The woman on the left, I didn't hear her name, her concern is also my concern very much. She said she received the letter just today and we've had this issue in the past where people are notified after the meeting. What is the staff doing to get the certification responses from the post office before we have these meetings? I remember last time Orland Hills Public Works was here and had a lot of comments going on.

Mr. LeVigne responded for projects, staff does not send out the letter. I received the affidavit from the petitioner, I believe, 20 days ago.

Commissioner Zaatar asked you have certifications from everyone?

Mr. Annulis replied we did not certify mail, we did certificate of mailing.

Commissioner Zaatar stated people are getting these letters late. Maybe we need to consider moving to certified mail. This is not the first meeting we've had that comment.

Mr. LeVigne responded that's correct.

Commissioner Zaatar continued I don't want to go into it today but that's my response. I get really anxious when I hear someone from the crowd saying I never was told or I just got told this morning.

Mr. LeVigne replied we did switch from certified mail to the certificate of mailing which the petitioner would go to the post office and get a stamp on a piece of paper that states how many letters they dropped off and who they were going to.

Commissioner Zaatar responded I hear you. My comment is I don't think it's working. We might want to go back to certified mail so we can actually have physical proof that people got notified. More importantly on this topic, my question is, was the Orland Hills Engineering Department re-engaged on this project because on the last project they had a lot of concerns?

Mr. LeVigne replied there's no drainage issues going towards Orland Hills with the scope of this work.

Commissioner Zaatar asked were they involved at all?

Mr. LeVigne responded not to my knowledge.

Ms. Cozzolino stated I just opened my mail today at 5:30 when I got home from work and that's when I got the letter. I asked my neighbors, none of them in the cul-de-sac received it. I couldn't even get ahold of the town to find out anything.

Commissioner Zaatar continued my concern is that last time we had a meeting on this project we had a huge room of people that were saying those two cul-de-sacs get flooded and any project on this footprint is going to flood them even more. Orland Hills engineering was here and asked to be involved in any project that comes on this property. From my perspective, we should be engaging Orland Hills water department and engineering team to make sure that they don't have concerns. These people live 50 ft away, right. That's all my comments.

Ms. Cafarelli stated just a comment. I verified that the sign was put up but no one in the three cul-de-sacs that I know of that were here last time knew of the meeting either. I know quite a few who live in Orland Hills, and I understand it's very small do not drive by the school.

Mr. Manhard stated I just want to speak on the drainage of the site. We're following existing conditions and adding the detention basin which is meant to alleviate issues like this but it's also all flowing towards Orland Park not Orland Hills in this case.

Commissioner Paul stated the big difference was last time we were going to, if I'm

not mistaken, to build a new school behind the existing school which would obviously change a lot of things as far as water management. After that school was complete, then the old school was going to be taken down, is that right?

The Manhard team and Mr. LeVigne responded yes.

Commissioner Paul continued what's good about this project is where the addition is going, it's almost all paved right now. There's a playlot there, black-topped, there's some grass patches here and there but by and large it's all impervious now. This project isn't going to really change anything as far as where the water's going to go. Most of the concerns, if I remember correctly from last time, were at the west end of the project behind the school. Nothing is being changed there. This is going to be southeast of the actual building and there's nothing there but blacktop right now and a couple of parking spots and the play area. That's it, so I don't see where this is going to be an issue. I do like the idea of making it more accessible in the front. If there can be an agreement with that thing on the street, I think that could be worked out pretty easily. Other than that, I have no other issues.

Commissioner Zomparelli stated that was about two years ago you guys were here. I remember the water issue on the northwest spot and the resident that had the sewer that runs through, and Orland Hills didn't size it up right. We're not doing anything with that, right?

Mr. LeVigne responded that's not being impacted with this.

Commissioner Zomparelli stated but they still have a flooding problem back there, don't they? Shouldn't we figure that in?

Commissioner Nugent added they addressed it last time.

Commissioner Zomparelli responded I know they did but the whole thing didn't get done. Tell me what you were going to say.

Commissioner Nugent stated I was going to wait until my turn but technically there are six cul-de-sacs. The people on O'Brien were mostly concerned about traffic. Out of the five cul-de-sacs there were representatives from four of the cul-de-sacs and they filled the room but one of the things we learned with engineering, it predates you (pointing to Mr. Puljic), the last improvement that was 5-10 years ago, we had already made it better. Any existing issues there were here already got improved the last time you guys did a modification in the past. Our engineering was able to confirm, even though Orland Hills Public Works was here, is that all the issues that the five cul-de-sacs were complaining about were unrelated to the property and it has to do with their own design. Unfortunately, Orland Hills designed it with a lot of short lots, but I remember this extremely clearly. These cul-de-sacs in with their backs have a poor design. They should have planned it

where all of their drainage is going to what is eventually where the people on Leslie Drive and their cul-de-sac, the water is supposed to be going that way. You have the detention pond where is now Kelly Park and the water is supposed to go to Tinley Creek. It's not doing it. It's not the school's fault and it's not Orland Park's engineering's fault. If anything, Fernway's past projects improve it. For the people that live on Marilyn, Bridget, Sharon, Dwight, and Beacon, the problems in the back have to do with the design from 30 plus years ago. It has nothing to do with Fernway Park School. (refer to audio)

Commissioner Zomparelli stated Leslie Drive is dumping into the retention pond. I remember that clearly. The water from those homes is dumping and they kind of quirked it and the school said they would put a drain back there. Wasn't that the conversation?

Mr. LeVigne responded I don't recall the actual drainage from several years ago, but I do know that previously with that project, we were impacting that area so that's why it was being addressed at that time. With this scope, we're not impacting that area so we're not addressing it.

Commissioner Zomparelli replied we have no reason to be over on that side.

Mr. LeVigne responded exactly.

Commissioner Zomparelli continued but they still have a little bit of an issue, correct?

Ms. Cozzolino stated I don't have little kids but if I did or kids were playing at that school, for sure, that retention pond's still sitting water, the one right behind there. I don't know whose fault it is. It didn't flood until about 10 years ago. I don't know why it sits but it is concerning.

Commissioner Zomparelli responded the engineer said they put too small of a pipe that runs through the neighborhood between the homes.

Commissioner Nugent added she's talking about the detention on Fernway Park School property. You're talking about the drains outside the school property.

Ms. Cozzolino continued, I'm just saying I don't like the sitting water for kids. That's what I mean.

Commissioner Nugent asked the Fernway Park side or your backyard side?

Ms. Cozzolino responded it's in the back of Fernway which would be Orland Park, correct? Whose retention pond is that?

Commissioner Zomparelli replied you're talking about the northwest corner?



Ms. Cozzolino responded yes.

Commissioner Zomparelli stated that's what I'm referring to.

Ms. Cozzolino continued that water never drains.

Commissioner Nugent asked is it retention or detention?

Ms. Cozzolino stated I'm probably using the wrong word.

Commissioner Zomparelli responded no, you're right.

Commissioner Nugent continued is it supposed to eventually go to Tinley Creek? It's all going north, isn't it?

Mr. Annulis responded you're talking about that depressional area in the northwest corner. Yes, right there (pointing to the screen). That was designed well before me, but my understanding is that it's a dry basin that will gradually drain over time and then that drains to Lake Lorin.

Commissioner Zomparelli stated there was supposedly a pipe that was undersized by Orland Hills.

Mr. Annulis replied yes, and there's nothing we can do at this point.

Commissioner Zomparelli added I just want to clarify, but we're not doing anything with this but there's not a whole lot we could do with it.

Commissioner Nugent, pointing to the map, you're saying this ties into here.

Mr. Annulis responded yes, right.

Commissioner Nugent continued that's part of the design because if you enlarge it, Tinley Creek is on the other side of those homes and that's also meant to be drainage as well, but it doesn't tie into Tinley Creek, right?

Mr. Annulis replied no.

Commissioner Zomparelli let me finish up, I wanted the residents to know that we kept it with their best interest at heart. There's not a whole lot we can do because we're not on that side. It's an Orland Hills' undersized pipe. As for the mailing, I don't think it's the petitioner. I think it's the mail. I just got an invite from my office today for an awards ceremony for February 21. It was two months late. I think it wouldn't be a bad idea to consider the way we used to do it. I love the idea of getting away from the registered letters but if people aren't getting it. There was a

nice crowd here last time and they need to know and voice their opinion. That's all. Thank you.

Commissioner Nugent stated I'm speaking for the people on O'Brien who aren't here. All the buses are going to come from 167th to go to O'Brien or are they going to come from 88th to O'Brien? There were probably five families from O'Brien that felt your addition was going to cause traffic hell for them. (refer to audio)

Ms. Skrodzki swore in Margaret Gory from TRIA Architecture located in Burr Ridge, Illinois.

Commissioner Nugent continued, I'm not seeing that and I know it's a traffic study and we're doing an addition and we're doing a remodeling but it's fair to the people of O'Brien. They seem to be concerned how the traffic is now. How do buses go and how do parent drop-offs happen? Are they coming from 88th or 167th?

Ms. Gory stated the traffic will stay the same as it is right now. Buses will come off 88th Avenue in front of the school, the front parking lot and then leave off 88th Avenue. Cars, however, do come in the front parking lot, east side, and the south side off O'Brien. They split the alphabet between different groups of families. Everything is staying exactly the same as it is right now.

Commissioner Nugent stated no buses are going to go down O'Brien?

Ms. Gory responded correct.

Commissioner Nugent continued and the cars from 88th the way it is right now and they're going to go down O'Brien and exit to the west?

Ms. Gory responded correct, since it's a one-way.

Commissioner Nugent stated with the improved front that's going to encourage more traffic in the front rather than O'Brien?

Ms. Gory replied the renovations in the front are just a facelift so we're just adding a new canopy at the front entrance.

Commissioner Nugent responded no, I meant the parking or the drop-off. Is that changing?

Ms. Gory replied nothing is changing up front. It's exactly the same. We're adding one ADA parking stall by the main entrance but the same drop-off and pick-up.

Commissioner Nugent stated with a transition like during COVID with parents wanting to drop off their kids, parents who want to drive their kid can still drive,

they have to drop them off on O'Brien, right? (refer to audio)

Ms. Gory responded they split it from the front of the school and the side of the school off O'Brien. A through G is the front of the school and H through Z is in the back half off O'Brien.

Commissioner Nugent asked twice a day during the school year for eight months?

Ms. Gory replied correct.

Commissioner Nugent stated and it's the same for those people now.

Ms. Gory responded it's exactly the same in the morning and the afternoon as it is right now.

Commissioner Nugent asked over time more people have been dropping off their kids than in the past?

Ms. Gory replied there's no change right now in the number of buses that I can see, same population of kids, same number of families. It could be more, but it depends on who drives.

Commissioner Nugent stated you guys said that the rental complex at 94th Avenue has not been a dramatic increase in enrollment. Since we're drastically changing the school and I don't know if it's you or them, I'm only concerned because if we're talking about issues now we're saying, "Oh, it doesn't happen now because we're not doing this." Are we doing an addition we can afford, and I know this is a school district issue, are we doing an addition that we need? My question is asking that and how it's pertinent to today is going to be where in six years you're coming back with another addition and now we're going to have to readdress drainage, parking, and all that. Is this the addition you can afford or the addition you need?

Ms. Gory responded we need it because the number of classrooms. We're adding three classrooms so that helps alleviate other areas for special services. They have different speech offices, different things that we're renovating and we're getting three classrooms so that we can make sure the population is fulfilled.

Commissioner Nugent asked what you were going to do in the new you're still doing? You're going to bring some kids that don't currently go here with the special services are going to come here?

Ms. Gory replied not special services just within the school, we needed more space for different speech services and things like that and then the growing population, we need three classrooms, and to make sure that different grade levels that need three classrooms will have them.

Commissioner Nugent asked what's the chance this addition is not enough and the district's going to add on again?

Ms. Gory responded no one knows the future.

Commissioner Nugent explained the new school was going to be significantly more and my concern is if they're only doing an addition they can afford and not an addition that they need, they're going to come back and do an addition again, and then now we're going to have the same issues with parking, drainage, and all that. Do you anticipate a need for another addition in the next five to ten years?

Ms. Gory replied we don't know the population, so the answer is we don't know if we need it or not.

Commissioner Nugent stated you have the rental complex, OK. The room was full, and people worried about traffic and drainage. Obviously, you have a lot of land so you could add to it. All right. I'm good on that. Back to engineering. We don't currently have detention under the parking so we're adding detention under the parking so if anything, it's only going to improve drainage here to do what it should do for 2025 standards, correct? (refer to audio)

Petitioners nod their heads yes.

Commissioner Nugent continues so it's not going to make it worse, if anything it may help alleviate any existing issues and make them better.

Petitioners nod their heads yes.

Commissioner Schussler stated I think I can clarify something. I was over there a couple of hours ago and this detention pond that everybody's talking about in the back, there are two catch basins at the bottom of it at the west end. In fact, that light color there is concrete and on either end of that concrete there is a grate and a catch basin underneath. The one that's on the south end, there's a pipe that either empties into it or takes water out of it. I'm guessing because there's two catch basins that are flat at the bottom that that's where the water goes out so that must be something that's putting water in and what I'm talking about is a pipe that runs down here (showing on map) somewhere out right there. Is that to put water into the detention basin or take it out of the detention?

Mr. Annulis responded that pipe that runs south from that concrete thing, that's taking water into the basin. That concrete ledge is called the spillway. It'll collect all the water and then right behind that you can see how there's that yellow kind of radius, and then there's a little dot right above it, that is the outlet control structure. That concrete thing will collect water and go into that manhole which has the restrictor which Orland Hills made that pipe coming out of that structure too small.

It's designed to back up. It was designed too small but that pipe you're talking about that goes south feeds water into that basin.

Commissioner Schussler replied OK, into the basin. My only major concern has to do with a statement in the staff report under Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility. Sidewalks are for safety. When you talk about sidewalks around a school it's a safety issue. I'm talking about the last statement, the last sentence that says, "a sidewalk connection at the northwest corner of O'Brien Drive and 88th Avenue could not be provided due to existing topography, drainage conditions, and the current parking lot layout. Future site improvements should consider adding a sidewalk connection in this area." We have two, three engineers here, what exactly is the issue there? The parking lot is going to be ripped up significantly to put in this underground drainage structure so why can't while that's being done the corner be fixed up so that the sidewalk connects?

Mr. Annulis responded the issue is the existing slope in that sidewalk and in that street, it is too steep. There is no possible way we could make that ADA compliant. We had to bring it north a little bit because that existing portion of the street and that existing portion of the sidewalk is within ADA slope tolerances. There is no way to make that connection south comply with the ADA code without basically ripping up the entire street and redoing the whole roadway.

Commissioner Schussler stated it looked to me like there wasn't that much of a grade difference. It depends upon at what elevation you're going to put the 88th Street new sidewalk.

Mr. Annulis replied I don't have the elevations on me. I think we sent over a grading plan but it was more so about the cross slopes. We were concerned that that orientation we have there is the most ADA compliant.

Commissioner Schussler responded I'm looking at a picture of it and it looked like all you'd have to do is take out that wing wall and raise the sidewalk on the west side a little bit and you'd kind of come up to the right level along 88th. You want to take a look over here.

Mr. Annulis looks at picture with Commissioner Schussler.

Chairman Parisi asked has the petitioner specified that to you? Why are they doing it ADA compliance?

Mr. LeVigne responded yes, that's correct.

Chairman Parisi continued they specified it to you and you're accepting of that explanation.

Mr. LeVigne responded yes. There was a lot of back and forth about even

installing a sidewalk to begin with.

Chairman Parisi stated gentlemen, could you listen for a second because I asked if this was explained to the Development Department, and they were accepting of your explanation.

Mr. LeVigne continued as part of the special use permit, we asked for the addition of the sidewalk and there was a lot of back and forth about installing it. Based on weaving around the existing trees and making sure that it was ADA compliant, this was our middle ground, at least we're getting a sidewalk along the full way. If someone was going west to get to O'Brien Drive, they can always cut through the parking lot, at least for now, without having to build any new retaining walls or switchbacks or anything like that on the corner.

Commissioner Schussler stated I have nothing further.

Commissioner Sanchez stated about 35 years ago I actually went to this school, seems crazy. It sounds like a pretty good project, and I have no further questions.

Chairman Parisi stated I think we had a thorough discussion. A lot of good points were raised, and I think a lot of the concerns of the residents around the school have been adequately addressed. I have nothing more to add. I would entertain a motion.

Regarding Case Number 2024-0807, also known as Fernway Park Elementary School Expansion Special Use Permit, I move to approve the Staff Recommended Action as presented in the Staff Report to the Plan Commission for this case.

**A motion was made by Member Schussler, seconded by Member Paul, that this matter be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Chairman Parisi, Member Sanchez, Member Nugent, Member Paul, Member Schussler, Member Zaatar and Member Zomparelli

**Nay:** 0

#### **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

**A motion was made by Chairman Parisi, seconded by Member Schussler, that this matter be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Chairman Parisi, Member Sanchez, Member Nugent, Member Paul, Member Schussler, Member Zaatar and Member Zomparelli

**Nay:** 0

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**2025-0377 Memo: New Petitions**

**NON-SCHEDULED CITIZENS & VISITORS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

**A motion was made by Chairman Parisi, seconded by Member Zomparelli, that this matter be ADJOURNED. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Chairman Parisi, Member Sanchez, Member Nugent, Member Paul, Member Schussler, Member Zaatar and Member Zomparelli

**Nay:** 0