

REQUEST FOR ACTION REPORT

File Number:	2019-0101
Orig. Department:	Development Services & Planning Committee
File Name:	Orland Square Mall proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Site Plan, Landscape Plan, Elevations, and Special Use Permit with Modifications

BACKGROUND:

Project

Orland Square Mall proposed Multipurpose Activity Space

Petitioner

Roderick Vosper, Simon Property Group

Purpose

The petitioner proposes to construct a privately owned and maintained, but publicly accessible outdoor park in the southeastern parking lot of Orland Square Mall.

Project Attributes

Address: 288 Orland Square Drive

PIN: 27-103-010-070-0000

Size: 11.51 acre project area

Current Zoning: COR Mixed Use Zoning District

Comprehensive Plan designation: Regional Core Planning District/ Regional Mixed Use

Surrounding land use and zoning:

North: Orland Square Mall (COR Zoning District)

South: Orland Square Mall (COR Zoning District) East: Detention pond, commercial retail and services (across Ring Road) (COR Zoning District)

West: Orland Square Mall (COR Zoning District)

East: Orland Square Mall outer ring commercial (COR Zoning District)

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

The existing 1.2 million square foot Orland Square mall was constructed in the mid-1970s at the northeast corner of Lagrange Road and 151st Street. The Village's first planned unit development included both 130 acres of commercial development and 100 acres of multi-family residential development, which was fully developed and still exists today. Orland Square Mall is an established fixture and focal point in the Village, and purportedly includes some of the highest performing stores in the region. It has evolved through the years to include a wide variety of commercial uses.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Simon Property Group proposes to construct an approximately two acre outdoor park in the Orland Square Mall parking lot near the southeast entrance to the indoor mall. The park is designed for families of all ages and is focused around an extensive children's playground area, sitting areas, an interactive water feature, a mounded climbing area, a flat grassy area and a small stage.

This 'family entertainment' concept is an innovative approach many large mall owners are now implementing throughout the nation to revitalize and invigorate aging indoor malls. The recent addition and success of entertainment establishments such as Gizmo's Fun Factory and Sky Zone Trampoline Park directly across Orland Square Drive show that recreational experiences are in demand.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Site Plan

The outdoor park is located near the southeast entrance to the mall in the existing parking lot, which provides the primary connection from the park to the indoor mall. Additionally, sidewalk connections extend from the park to J.C. Penney's, and to the proposed AMC/retail stores in the former Sears building. The proposed playground equipment includes climbing towers, tunnels, swings, spinners, climbing holds, and slides. Other proposed park amenities includes benches, architectural lighting, play and seating mounds, a large grassy area, and a small stage. Site improvements include a pedestrian drop off area and accessible parking spaces near the mall entrance and park. Parking lot improvements include a more controlled circulation pattern with new tree islands. The new Site Plan is based on the original Mall Site Plan, but with incremental improvements to address and simplify vehicular and pedestrian safety and access.

Subdivision

The current project area is a part of the overall lot owned by Simon Properties. No changes are proposed to the existing subdivision. The ALTA Survey for the site notes a general easement over the entire shopping center for ingress/egress, utilities, and parking.

Mobility:

Under current conditions, primary access points for the park include signalized intersections at 151st Street and Regents Road, 151st Street and 94th Avenue, and Lagrange Road and 149th Street. Orland Square Drive, nicknamed the "Ring Road", is the private road that encircles the Mall. Most existing circulation and parking patterns in the area and around the project site are established and will not be changed, with the exception of the Seritage proposal that will also include parking lot improvements.

The park is located in a portion of the mall parking lot that can be characterized as 'open asphalt'. Even on busy days this parking area is typically less than half full. Under the new proposal, the number of curb cuts from the parking lot directly onto the Ring Road is reduced from 14 curb cuts to 3, with a new landscape island and sidewalk that extends continuously along the west side of the Ring Road. Some additional new landscape islands are also added to help further guide circulation patterns and improve parking lot aesthetics. Per Village request,

an additional curbed tree island has replaced the northernmost striped island in the parking lot to discourage cars from cutting across the lot. The angled parking bays are replaced with 90 degree parking bays, allowing two-way drive aisles. Combined with the adjacent Seritage parking lot improvements that abut to the south, improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns in the area will begin to emerge.

Parking

The parking requirement for this type of park is not established by the Land Development Code. However, there will be an existing parking lot with approximately 800 spaces adjacent to the park that is currently underutilized. Overall parking number analysis for the Mall based on Land Development Code requirements are as follows:

- 6,923 existing parking spaces
- 301 displaced parking spaces by Simon Park
- 5,120 Overall mall parking spaces required (Including anticipated Seritage restaurant increase)
- 6,566 parking spaces are still provided.
- 1,446 parking space overall mall surplus

Even if the park was calculated at the indoor recreation standard of one space per 200 square feet, a 2 acre park requires only 436 parking spaces. No parking shortage is anticipated.

A minor change in the circulation pattern of the drop off area has been requested by the petitioner. In order to eliminate a conflict point at one of the drop off areas access points, one of the access points has been eliminated. This request is reflected in a condition of approval and will be resolved prior to the Board meeting.

Note that the entire Orland Square Mall is covered by cross access and sharing of all drives and parking. The Land Development allows shared parking credit of up to 50% for two or more uses on the same or adjacent sites, if it does not create a parking shortage. The wide range of commercial users with varying peak hours allow for the successful utilization of shared parking between the businesses. Additionally, it is anticipated that many park users will arrive in parent or caregiver cars, which are at the Mall for shopping and other various pursuits. The entire lot of the project area will be re-striped due to the change in parking orientation. The pavement condition is subject to Village inspection post-construction to determine needed repairs.

Pedestrian and Bicycle:

Proposed circulation changes will improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation options in the area. Although no new designated bike paths are included, other bicycle options such as on-street travel are viable, and bicycle parking has been provided near the Sear's entrance (currently closed).

Public Transit:

Pace Route 364 (159th Street) and Pace Route 379 (Lagrange Road) provide service to the Mall.

Landscaping

A Preliminary Landscape Plan has been submitted for Plan Commission review. The preliminary plan has been reviewed by the Village landscape consultant, and recommended for acceptance, subject to conditions. A Final Landscape Plan must be submitted for final Village approval in coordination with final engineering. Full compliance with the Landscape Section in the Land Development Code is not required since no building is involved and the project scope does not trigger full Code compliance, provided no non-conformity is expanded. However incremental improvements are required and have been included in the proposal. The amount of landscaping in the project area will be significantly increased and enhanced. The proposal will add 1.8 acres of green space and 100 additional trees to the site, plus many shrubs and perennials around the proposed shaded sitting, fountain and playground areas, building foundation plantings, large grassy areas both flat and mounded, and new tree islands in the parking lot and along the Ring Road sidewalk.

Preliminary Engineering

Consent for the preliminary engineering has been granted by the Village Engineers, allowing the petition to move forward to Plan Commission. Final engineering approval is also required.

Detention/Retention:

Detention to serve the mall is currently located in the pond along 151st Street located southeast of the mall on the other side of the Ring Road. The petitioner has submitted an application for a MWRD Permit which is currently under review. The petitioner has committed to meet storm water requirements per MWRD and Village requirements. The proposed park reduces impervious surfaces and improves drainage and stormwater runoff rates on the site. Additionally, as an incremental improvement, the Landscape Plan includes a bio-retention area is shown in the far south corner of the project area parking lot.

Lighting: A lighting plan has been provided that will be more thoroughly reviewed at the time of final engineering. The existing poles and fixtures on the site will be utilized and upgraded with LED fixtures. Additional fixtures have been added to more evenly distribute the lighting levels. Architectural lighting is proposed around the playground equipment and site furnishings.

Elevations:

There are no new vertical structures associated with this petition, other than a small stage, the play equipment and site furnishings.

Play Equipment

The proposed playground equipment includes climbing towers, tunnels, swings, spinners, climbing holds, and slides. Other proposed park amenities includes benches, architectural lighting, play and seating mounds, a large grassy area.

Fountain

The proposed water feature will include a large paved area where shoots of water emerge from the surface with varying timing and intensity. The water feature will include seating areas.

Stage

The proposed stage is an open metal pergola style structure with a slanted metal roof top, approximately 18' in height. The stage is 450 square feet in size, and is located on a 1,000 square foot concrete pad. The metal roof wraps around the back of the stage to screen it from the parking lot.

Public restrooms: A small sitting room and a utility room will be added to the interior of the existing Mall building, near the southeast Mall entrance. The restrooms will be accessed from inside the mall. Exterior changes to the building may include another door that must match the surrounding building façade color.

Signage

No proposed signs have been included with this petition. Any new signage is subject to review and approval via Sign Permit.

Bulk requirements: Most Land Development Code bulk requirements are not applicable to this project since there is no proposed building:

Lot Coverage: Although a Code modification is required for lot coverage since the redevelopment does not meet Code lot coverage maximums, it has been significantly improved with green space increasing 12% over the existing site condition.

Maximum: 80% with BMPs

Existing: 95.4%

Proposed: 83.3%

Setbacks

Park setback:

Required - 5'

Provided - 10'

Landscape buffer yards

Required - 10'

Provided - As little as 0'

The buffer yards for this project were constructed as a part of the overall mall construction on the periphery of the entire site. They do not entirely meet current Code requirements, but are beyond the scope and area of this project.

Comprehensive Plan

The Village's 2013 Comprehensive Plan supports the Orland Square Mall as a regional mixed use area with infill potential, and recommends improvements and redevelopment of aging commercial areas, including Orland Square Mall. Additionally, the Community & Culture Chapter encourages the development of 'Third Places' that help strengthen the community with gathering places where people meet to socialize. One of the overall visions of the Comprehensive plan is the improvement of quality of life for residents, including accessible green space and recreational opportunities.

ANALYSIS

Overall, the project conforms to the Village's Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Codes and policies for this area, with the exception of the listed modifications. The proposed privately owned and operated, but publicly accessible park, in tandem with the new AMC Theater and the Von Maur Store, as well as other new Mall tenants, represent a significant investment and improvement into the Mall by Simon Properties and other investors, and will give a much needed boost to the entire Mall. The park will particularly enliven the eastern Mall parking lot, and put eyes on an area that often feels desolate. The new park represents a significant investment by the Mall owners into the Mall's future, and privately finances a publicly available park amenity that provides unique recreational opportunities for the community.

As *Forbes* magazine states, "The future of the malls is not about shopping. No longer is it good enough for malls to be passive places to buy stuff, they have to be engaging places to do stuff. Otherwise this particular retail format will be relegated to relic status." Although Orland Square Mall is still a thriving commercial center that is quickly recovering from the loss of some anchor stores, those closings remind us of the need to proactively create and support a roadmap for the future of the Mall. The park will add 1.8 acres of green pervious space and active recreational opportunities on the project site, which is currently mostly asphalt. Aesthetically, the new park will transition a sea of asphalt into a green welcoming experience. Open space amenities improve the quality of life for visitors and residents of Orland Park.

ACTIONS REQUESTED:

Site Plan

The proposed Site Plan includes the addition of the park that includes the playground, fountain, seating areas, and grassy areas with small stage, as well as a drop off area and parking lot improvements. A slight adjustment to the drop off parking lot to improve circulation patterns will be submitted prior to the Board meeting.

Preliminary Landscape Plan

The addition of almost 1.8 acres of additional green pervious space with landscaping will bring the site closer to current Code requirements for lot coverage. Over 100 additional trees will be added to the site. There will be a significant and noticeable increase in green space and plant material on the site.

Elevations

Elevation approvals include the Play equipment, small stage and site furnishings.

Special Use Permit amendment for a planned development with a private park

Special Use Standards: When considering an application for special use permit, the decision making body shall consider the eight special use standards listed in the Code. The petitioner has provided responses to the Special Use Standards. Below are staff observations:

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- 1) The special use will be consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives and standards of the Comprehensive Plan, any adopted overlay plan and these regulations: *The Comprehensive Plan and Codes support both regional commercial uses and support for those uses. The park will provide a significant open space amenity to the Village, which contributes to the quality of life for residents, as identified in the "2030 Vision" in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.*
 - 2) The special use will be consistent with the community character of the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development: *The park will enhance the community character of the parcel and surrounding area.*
 - 3) The design of the proposed use will minimize adverse effects, including visual impacts on adjacent properties: *The park is located over 700' from abutting residential properties, and additional landscaping will help soften impact of park activities and the existing large parking lot.*
 - 4) The proposed use will have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent property: *Staff does not have an expert opinion on this matter.*
 - 5) The applicant has demonstrated that public facilities and services, including but not limited to roadways, park facilities, police and fire protection, hospital and medical services, drainage systems, refuse disposal, water and sewers, and schools will be capable of serving the special use at an adequate level of service: *All services are established and available for expansion.*
 - 6) The applicant has made adequate legal provision to guarantee the provision and development of any open space and other improvements associated with the proposed development: *Parks are not required by Code in commercial areas, and the proposed development will incrementally improve green space on the site.*
 - 7) The development will adversely affect a known archaeological, historical or cultural resource: *There is no known impact.*
 - 8) The proposed use will comply with all additional standards imposed on it by the particular provision of these regulations authorizing such use and by all other applicable requirements of the ordinances of the Village. *The petitioner must comply with all conditions of approval imposed by the Village.*

Special Use Permit modifications:

- 1) Exceed the Code impervious lot coverage maximum of 80% (with BMPs). The existing site lot impervious coverage is 95.4%. With the proposed landscape island improvements, the new lot coverage will be reduced to 83.3% for an improvement of 12% or 1.8 acres in additional green space. Although full Code compliance for lot coverage is not required, incremental improvements over the currently non-conforming condition are required, and the petitioner has met that requirement. The goal of additional pervious surface has to be balanced with the need to maintain as much of the parking field as possible.
 - 2) Reduce landscape buffers and foundation plantings. Landscape buffers were established along the entire mall periphery in the 1970s to meet the current Code of the time, and may not meet all current Codes, which requires a minimum 10' landscape buffer on all sides of the property. Nevertheless, the park offers a significant improvement in landscaping, plus the
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incremental improvements to the parking lot.

3) Reduce parking setbacks and buffers. Parking lot buffers are not practical adjacent to parks.

Incremental improvements beyond Code requirements are required to help offset the new impact of special use permits with Code modifications, and are partially listed below. Because the Mall was constructed in the 1970's the current development is legally non-conforming in many ways including lot coverage, landscaping, and pedestrian accommodations.

- 1) Adds a significant open space amenity with recreational opportunities for the community.
- 2) Increases green pervious lot coverage and landscaping on the site.
- 3) Improves parking lot circulation patterns for safety and functionality.
- 4) Adds pedestrian connections and amenities.

This case is now before Plan Commission for consideration.

BUDGET IMPACT:

REQUESTED ACTION:

I move to accept as findings of fact of this Plan Commission the findings of fact set forth in this staff report, dated March 19, 2019.

And

I move to recommend to the Village Board approval of the Preliminary **Site Plan** titled "Orland Square Mall proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Site Plan", sheet C200, prepared by Rundell Ernstberger Associates dated 02.21.19, revised 03.08.19; and color exhibits titled "Proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Context Plan and as titled "Proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Site Plan", both prepared by Rundell Ernstberger Associates and received 03.07.19, and as shown on plan titled "Orland Square Mall proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Site Layout and Materials Plan", sheet LA101, prepared by Rundell Ernstberger Associates, dated 02.21.19, revised 03.08.19; and as titled "Orland Square Mall proposed Multipurpose Activity Space Playground Equipment Plan", sheet LA104, prepared by Rundell Ernstberger Associates, dated 02.21.19, revised 03.08.19, with the following conditions:

- 1) Per petitioner request, work with staff to make minor changes to the circulation pattern and islands in the drop off area.
 - 2) Meet Village requirements for parking lot pavement improvements, as determined by Village
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inspection post-construction.

- 3) Signs are subject to additional review and approval via the sign permitting process.
- 4) Meet all final engineering and building division requirements and approvals including Lighting Plan.

And

I move to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees approval of the Preliminary **Landscape Plans** as shown on sheets LA 400, 401 - 407 and 501 prepared by Rundell Ernstberger Associates dated 02.21.19; revised 03.08.18, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Meet conditions outlined in the Hey and Associates review letter dated March 11, 2019.
- 2) Submit a Final Landscape Plan to Village for final approvals.

And

I move to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees approval of the **Elevations** as shown on sheets titled "Berliner Play Equipment for Life" color 3D exhibit # USP0332000, dated 11.15.18, and "Berliner Play Equipment for Life" color plan # USP0332001, dated 11.15.18; and as shown on the three color perspectives of the park received 03.11.19.

- 3) Screen all new mechanical equipment either at grade level with landscaping or hidden behind the roofline.
- 4) Meet all final engineering and building division requirements including Lighting Plan review and approval.
- 6) All signs are subject to additional review and approval via the sign permitting process.

And

I move to recommend to the Village Board approval of a **Special Use Amendment** for the Orland Square Mall Planned Development to allow construction and operation of a private park subject to all site plan conditions of approval, with the following modifications:

- 1) Exceed lot coverage.
 - 2) Reduce Landscaping requirements for buffers and foundation plantings.
 - 3) Reduce parking buffers and setbacks.
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All conditions of approval must be met and changes made prior to the Board meeting.
