

Approved

**Village of Gurnee
Planning and Zoning Board Minutes
July 16, 2025**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Board Members Present: Chairman James Sula, R. Todd Campbell, Roneida Martin, Dane Morgan, David Nordentoft, and Liliana Ware

Planning and Zoning Members Absent: Edwin Paff

Other Officials Present: David Ziegler, Community Development Director; Shannon Coleman, Associate Planner, and Gretchen Neddenriep, Acting Village Attorney

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment (Non-Public Hearing Agenda Items)

(Per Gurnee Municipal Code Section 2-90, Public Comment at the beginning of the agenda is for agenda items only that are not subject to a public hearing. A total of 30 minutes is allotted. Individuals are allowed to speak once during this Public Comment for no longer than 3 minutes. See rule posted at gurnee.il.us or in the Council Chambers for additional information.)

Mr. Sula opened the floor to the public.

Liz Nelson, of Joining Forces for Affordable Housing, in Gurnee, spoke on behalf of the organization regarding its request that the potential rezoning of 10 parcels of land at the corner of O'Plaine Road and Belvidere Road be to zoning that would accommodate mixed use, rather than only commercial, to allow for affordable housing for service workers, seniors, and other members of the community at this major intersection. They ask this, so as to meet not only the Village's economic needs, but its housing needs as well.

Mr. Sula thanked Ms. Nelson, then closed the floor to the public.

4. Approval of the PZB's June 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Sula asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the minutes. As there was not, he then suggested a motion to approve them as submitted would be in order.

Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Nordentoft, motioned to approve the minutes as submitted.

Approved

Voice vote:

All “ayes,” no “nays, and none abstaining

Motion carried: 6-0-0

5. Final Subdivision Plat: Ashley’s – 4.24± acres located at 6050 - 6060 Gurnee Mills Circle East

The owner of the former Toys R Us property is requesting subdivision of the property. The proposed subdivision will create 3 lots, 2 of which will be the footprints of the 2 structures on the property, Texas Roadhouse and Ashley Furniture. The third lot will be all of the parking lot, drive aisles, and landscaping buffers for the site. (File #25-0018)

Mr. Ziegler introduced this item by stating the owner of the former Toys R Us property is requesting subdivision of the property. The proposed subdivision will create three lots, two of which will be the footprints of the two structures on the property, Texas Roadhouse and Ashley Furniture. The third lot will be all of the parking lot, drive aisles, and landscaping buffers for the site.

Mr. Sula confirmed with Mr. Ziegler that similar projects have been approved in the past.

Mr. Sula then asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board.

Mr. Morgan confirmed with Mr. Ziegler that, should there be any repairs made to the parking lots, there will be funding and accountability (through a business owners’ association) in place to ensure all responsible parties would see that such repairs would be made, and—if they were not—the Village would have the right to make the repairs and lien the responsible parties.

As there were no more questions or comments from the Board, Mr. Sula suggested that a motion, in the form of a recommendation to the Village Board, be made.

Ms. Morgan, seconded by Mr. Campbell, motioned to forward a recommendation to approve the request for a subdivision of the property located at 6050 - 6060 Gurnee Mills Circle East as submitted.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Martin, Morgan, Nordentoft, Ware, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried: 6-0-0

Approved

6. Public Hearing: Gurnee Park District – 6.795± acres located at 35244, 35200, & 35172 North Hunt Club Road

Zoning Map Amendment to rezone three parcels of land totaling 6.795± acres from an unincorporated Lake County zoning designation of AG, Agricultural, and E, Estate, to the Village of Gurnee's zoning designation of P, Public Land District. The subject parcels are located west of Hunt Club Road, south of Foxworth Lane, and north of Orchard Valley Drive at properties known as: 35244, 35200, & 35172 N Hunt Club Road. (File #25-0022)

Ms. Coleman introduced this item by describing the Zoning Map Amendment requested to rezone three parcels of land totaling 6.795± acres from an unincorporated Lake County zoning designation of AG, Agricultural, and E, Estate, to the Village of Gurnee's zoning designation of P, Public Land District. The subject parcels are located west of Hunt Club Road, south of Foxworth Lane, and north of Orchard Valley Drive at properties known as: 35244, 35200, & 35172 N Hunt Club Road. She then stated that a representative from the Gurnee Park District was in attendance to speak.

As this was a Public Hearing, Mr. Sula requested that anyone wishing to speak on this matter be sworn in. Ms. Neddenriep conducted the swearing-in.

Richard Blake, Gurnee Park District's Trades and Construction Supervisor, explained that there really won't be any changes, they are just asking for access to the Village's water system, as the well water system they now use is very outdated.

Mr. Sula stressed that this is an issue of public safety, and Mr. Blake agreed.

Mr. Sula then opened the floor to the public. As there was no one wishing to speak on this matter, he then closed the floor to the public.

As there were no more questions or comments from the Board, Mr. Sula suggested that a motion, in the form of a recommendation to the Village Board, would be in order.

Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Nordentoft, motioned to recommend the approval of a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone three parcels of land totaling 6.795± acres, at 35244, 35200, & 35172 N Hunt Club Road, from an unincorporated Lake County zoning designation of AG, Agricultural, and E, Estate, to the Village of Gurnee's zoning designation of P, Public Land District.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Martin, Morgan, Nordentoft, Ware, and Sula

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Approved

Motion carried: 6-0-0

7. Informal Review: Zoning Map Amendment (NEC of O'Plaine Rd & Belvidere Rd)

Belvidere Real Estate LLC is seeking informal feedback on a plan to rezone 10 parcels of land at the corner of O'Plaine Road and Belvidere Road, totaling 1.01± acres from R-2 Single Family Residential to C-2 Community Commercial District to accommodate a proposed convenience store and a one-story retail building. (File #25-0028)

Mr. Ziegler introduced this item by stating that Belvidere Real Estate LLC is seeking informal feedback on a plan to rezone 10 parcels of land at the corner of O'Plaine Road and Belvidere Road, totaling 1.01± acres from R-2 Single Family Residential to C-2 Community Commercial District to accommodate a proposed convenience store and a one-story retail building.

Mr. Ziegler then gave an overview of the parcels, the potential applicants' plans, and noted points to be discussed, such as:

- Appropriateness of a C-2 Zoning District
- Potential for relaxation of 30-foot buffers to the residential areas
- Potential of using the 16-foot alleyway between residential and commercial areas as part of that buffer
- Potential of vacating the easement to the alleyway
- Potential of vacating buffers to Route 120 and O'Plaine Road
- Challenges of commercial access points (Route 120 has limited access rights, and O'Plaine Road is under jurisdiction of Lake County D.O.T.

Mr. Sula then advised that no formal action would be taken on this matter this evening, and that the discussion was to be more of a question-and-answer sort of session.

Mr. Sula then turned the floor over to the potential applicants.

Mr. Rafat Abushamt introduced himself and his brother Mr. Abushamt as they welcomed questions from the Board.

Mr. Sula asked who would like to begin.

Mr. Nordentoft noted that commercial development would be appropriate at this location, but stressed the challenges. Among his primary concerns are those over the relaxation of buffers, particularly between commercial and residential areas.

Mr. Morgan, Mr. Campbell, and Ms. Martin also expressed concern over the relaxation of buffers. They also expressed, as did Mr. Nordentoft, the lack of any real detail to the plans presented to them in the materials they were given.

Approved

Ms. Ware concurred with her fellow Board members, and asked about the proposed retail structure (which would be one story) and proposed gas station (which is proposed as an eight-pump station).

Mr. Ziegler noted that the potential applicants have been working with Village staff, and that they have explored options regarding the site, and potential access points. The potential applicants have also been in contact with I.D.O.T., regarding what access points they may be granted in the development of this project.

Mr. Nordentoft asked how this land was considered in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ziegler responded that it is residential, but that the current consensus is that it not be used as such.

Mr. Morgan expressed his discomfort in granting any rezoning without definite plans in place, stressing the broadness of the requested zoning in what it allows.

Mr. Sula offered that he lives in that area, and that the sidewalk connectivity is very good. While he does agree with the concern over relaxing buffers, he is interested in the idea of a walkable area in which to shop for convenience items and such, noting that there has been a small retail presence there in the past. He stressed that if commercial zoning was to be allowed, he would want any developments to be handled as P.U.D.

Ending the discussion, Mr. Sula stressed to the potential applicants the importance of solid plans that demonstrate how the many obstacles in developing this site would be addressed.

8. Discussion Item: Text Amendment - Detached Garages 600+ square feet

There is currently a moratorium on new construction of detached garages over 600 square feet. Living quarters are not permitted within garages, therefore discussion is needed to ascertain approvable bulk and dimensions that will facilitate vehicles, but deter living quarters, and consequently create policy that will facilitate permit approval. (File #25-0027)

Mr. Ziegler introduced this item with a brief history...

In May of 2024, the Gurnee Village Board executed a moratorium on residential garage structures over 600 square feet. Living quarters within garages are not permitted, therefore discussion is needed to ascertain approvable bulk and dimensions that will facilitate vehicles, but deter living quarters, and consequently create policy that will facilitate permit approval. The moratorium will expire in November of 2025, so staff is targeting resolution to the matter by that time.

Mr. Ziegler then offered that this is a staff-initiated project, and encouraged feedback from the Board.

Approved

Mr. Nordentoft stressed the consideration of the height of potential garages, floor area ratio, and the percentage of yard being taken by the structure. Mr. Ziegler countered that consideration of floor area ratio was dismissed from code back in 2015, and that staff would rather not reintroduce it if there is another way to address the issue.

Mr. Morgan asked about impervious service ratio; Mr. Ziegler explained that it is somewhat dependent on the zoning classification, but—unlike height, setbacks—it’s not usually an issue that comes up.

Mr. Campbell asked if attic area could be prohibited, so as to prevent use as a living space. Mr. Ziegler explained that it’s a bit hard to do that, as most garage have rafters and such. He added that the issue of stairs—particularly permanent stairs—is more of a concern.

Mr. Morgan inquired about the amount of square footage in accessory structures on a property, and Mr. Ziegler stated that it must be less than that of the house, but that it could be capped at 75%, rather than 100%. Mr. Morgan then asked about limits to the number of accessory structures, and Mr. Ziegler responded that, besides a limit of one garage, there is no limit to the number of structures, but that one could be put in place. When asked by Mr. Ziegler what would be his recommended number, Mr. Morgan answered “three.”

Ms. Martin expressed concerned over what goes on within garages and other accessory structures. Mr. Ziegler stressed the difficulty in regulating that, but explained that prohibiting things such as plumbing in such structures discourages activities of concern.

Mr. Sula clarified with Mr. Ziegler that, regarding accessory structures, the allowable amount of square footage they could cover would be a percentage of the square footage of the primary structure’s—say, a two-story home’s—footprint rather than its total square footage.

As discussion ended, Mr. Sula advised to stay tuned for further developments on this matter.

9. Next Meeting Date: August 6, 2025

Mr. Ziegler stated that there are no Public Hearings scheduled, but there may be other items to be placed on the agenda.

10. Public Comment

(Per Gurnee Municipal Code Section 2-90, Public Comment at the end of the agenda is for agenda items or items that are within the Village’s responsibility. A total of 60 minutes is allotted. Individuals are allowed to speak once during this Public Comment for no longer than 3 minutes. See rule posted at gurnee.il.us or in the Council Chambers for additional information.)

Mr. Sula opened the floor to the public. As there was no one in the audience wishing to speak, Mr. Sula then closed the floor to the public.

Approved

11. Adjournment

Mr. Nordentoft motioned, seconded by Mr. Campbell, to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote:

All “ayes,” no “nays, and none abstaining

Motion carried: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Metzger
Recording Secretary