

1 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**  
2 **PLAN AND DESIGN COMMISSION**  
3 **OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**  
4

5  
6 **MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, July 21, 2026  
7

8 **MEETING LOCATION:** Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL  
9

10 **CALL TO ORDER**

11 At 7 p.m., Chairperson Kerch called the meeting to order. Staff was asked to call the roll.  
12

13 **ROLL CALL**

14 Commissioners Present: Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, &  
15 Nanus (Vice Chair)  
16

17 Councilmember Absent: Ross  
18

19 Student Council Present: Piolet  
20

21 Staff declared that a quorum was present.  
22

23 Guests Present: Matthew Toepper, Vice President & Architect/FGM Architects  
24 Anthony Ochs, Attorney/Patzik, Frank & Samotny Ltd.  
25 Larry Mason, Attorney/Goldberg Segalla  
26

27 Staff Present: Fontane, Burhop, & Mistretta  
28

29 Others Present: Marcus Martinez, Corporation Counsel/Elrod Friedman LLP  
30 Gale Cerabona/Recorder  
31

32 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

33 *Regular Meeting of the Plan and Design Commission – June 16, 2026*  
34

35 Commissioner Fettner moved to approve the June 16, 2026, PDC regular meeting minutes. Commissioner  
36 Mantis seconded the motion.  
37

38 On a voice vote

39 Voting Yea Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, & Nanus

40 Voting Nay: None

41 Abstain: Moore  
42

43 Chairperson Kerch declared that the motion passed 6-0.  
44

45 **SCHEDULED BUSINESS**

46 Chair Kerch rearranged the order of cases slightly and noted the Petitioner for the following case on tonight's  
47 agenda withdrew the Application. Senior Planner Burhop confirmed same:  
48

5. Public Hearing #PUD-2026-00086 for a Special Use Permit in the Nature of a Preliminary and Final Planned Development; Design Review; variations and modifications from City Codes; and to amend the Planned Development approval O29-98 for property commonly known as “Town of Fort Sheridan” including the Town of Fort Sheridan Master Redevelopment Plan (0 Patten Road.; a vacant parcel with PIN 1611301063 adjacent to the property 3535 Patten Road)

Chair Kerch noted the following Applicant requested a continuance:

4. Public Hearing #PUD-2026-00083 & PUD-2026-00084 for a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone from RM1A to RO, a Special Use Permit in the Nature of a Concurrent Preliminary and Final Planned Development, and Design Review, with Modifications and Variations from City Code, for multi-story Multiple Family Developments (1696-1704 McGovern St. and 793 Laurel Avenue)

Commissioner Henry moved to continue this case to the September 15, 2026, PDC meeting. Commissioner Nanus seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

|             |                                                                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Voting Yea  | Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, & Nanus |
| Voting Nay: | None                                                                             |

Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously, there would be no new notice, and the meeting would take place at City Hall in Highland Park at 7 p.m.

Chair Kerch asked that the next two Public Meetings be opened together:

1. Public Meeting #DES-2026-00099 for Design Review with Variations & Fence-Code Variations (2150 St. Johns Avenue; the vacant parcel south of the Highland Park High School)

2. Public Meeting #DES-2026-00100 for Design Review with Variations & Fence-Code Variations (1040 Park Avenue W, also known as Wolters Field)

Planner Mistretta reviewed #1 above:

- Recommendation
- Site Location
  - RM1
  - owner is District 113
- Project Summary
  - replace existing 6’ chain-link fence; detail was illustrated
- Commission Consideration
- Approval Process & Recommendation

Commissioner Moore asked if the current fence is also 6’. Planner Mistretta responded yes; though, there is no record of the fence being approved. Senior Planner Burhop expounded.

Planner Mistretta reviewed #2 above:

- Recommendation
- Site Location

- R5
- owner is District 113
- Land Use: Outdoor Lights
- Project Summary
  - replacement of existing 7' chain-link fence; detail was displayed
- Commission Consideration
- Approval Process & Recommendation

Some PDC comments are.....

- Chair Kerch asked, and Planner Mistretta noted this fence exists at 7'.
- Commissioner Mantis asked about the fence on two sides. Planner Mistretta said there's a fence on the east side where nothing is proposed. Senior Planner Burhop added this only approves west and south, subject to the site plan.
- Commissioner Ihnchak asked, and Planner Mistretta stated there is a security concern.

Petitioner, Matthew Toepper, Vice President & Architect with FGM Architects, noted this is intended to match what's there. The extra height will keep balls inside.

More PDC comments are.....

- Commissioner Mantis asked if a vinyl coated chain-link fence has been explored, as it would look better. Mr. Toepper advised they will clean up the trees and are proposing like-for-like. He doesn't think the District would be opposed to a vinyl-coated fence.
- Commissioner Henry asked, and Mr. Toepper noted which areas are 4', 6', and 7'.

Chairperson Kerch asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak on either item above. There was no one.

Final PDC comments are.....

- Commissioner Henry stated District 113 and the Board of Education may not be the owner but rather Township High School 113. He noted this is an appeal. Corporation Counsel Martinez stated this wouldn't matter. Ownership should be corrected on the record. Senior Planner Burhop stated, per code, the PDC votes on height relief (like the ZBA). He noted any corrections on Board of Appeals will be made. Planner Mistretta said he is going by the County Assessor's information. Senior Planner Burhop would like Applicant to clarify.

Mr. Toepper said he has always referred to schools as Board of Education of Township District 113. Senior Planner Burhop recommends that this be a stipulation in the motion. Corporation Counsel Martinez stated it is not unusual for the Applicant to not put the correct owner name. After approval, the legal name can be corrected before legal documents are issued.

- Commissioner Nanus is troubled by putting a chain-link fence on Vine Avenue, as the public sees it.
- Commissioner Fettner concurred, as it will be there for a long time; could be upgraded.
- Commissioner Ihnchak asked about the cost of an ornamental fence vs. chain-link. Mr. Toepper said changing everything to ornamental would be a 35% increase, where vinyl-coated would be a 9% increase of current costs. He understands the concern on Vine Avenue.
- Chair Kerch stated he is not in favor of forcing a public body to spend more money. What's proposed will still be better, safer. Mr. Toepper explained sloping, opening in fencing, etc. He noted black vinyl would be up high.

- Commissioner Mantis prefers black vinyl where it is visible.
- Commissioner Henry asked if the portion on Vine Avenue could be black-coated with the remainder as proposed. Mr. Toepper believes that would be acceptable.
- Commissioner Henry said it may be an unreasonable expense.

Corporation Counsel Martinez said, regarding motions if the consensus is the same, the items can be taken together.

Mr. Toepper shared the hope is to have this done before school begins.

Senior Planner Burhop stated the Petitioner can amend the Application and include in the approval order.

Commissioner Moore moved to approve fencing at Wolters Field, #DES-2026-00100, as noted in approval order. Commissioner Henry seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea                      Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, & Nanus

Voting Nay:                      None

Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moore moved to approve fencing with a black-coated fence along Vine Avenue, #DES-2026-00099, as amended. Commissioner Ihnchak seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea                      Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, & Nanus

Voting Nay:                      None

Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Meeting #SUB-2026-00016 for a Plat of Re-Subdivision with Variations (790 Laurel Avenue, 794 Laurel Avenue, 798 Laurel Avenue, 802 Laurel Avenue, 806 Laurel Avenue, 810 Laurel Avenue, 814-834 Laurel Avenue, 812-832 Laurel Avenue, 836 Laurel Avenue, and 844 Laurel Avenue)

Commissioner Fettner advised he is recusing himself from this case at 7:43 p.m.

Senior Planner Burhop reviewed the proposal:

- Recommendation
  - approved by City Council and the PDC
- Background (Laurel Park Phase II)
- Recommendation

Petitioner, Anthony Ochs, Attorney with Patzik, Frank & Samotny Ltd., advised the executed Plat is submitted with Highland Park for completion.

1 Chair Kerch asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. There was no one.

2  
3 Commissioner Nanus moved to approve. Commissioner Mantis seconded the motion.

4  
5 On a roll call vote

6 Voting Yea Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, & Nanus

7 Voting Nay: None

8  
9 Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously.

10  
11 Commissioner Fettner returned to the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

12  
13 6. Public Hearing #SUB-2026-00010 to amend a Special Use Permit and Special Exception approved on  
14 September 14, 2009, by Ordinance No. 054-09, for a project to allow relocation of a driveway and related  
15 changes, and Design Review, with Variances (1301 Clavey Road and 1377 Deer Creek Parkway)

16  
17 Senior Planner Burhop reviewed the proposal:

- 18 • Recommendation
  - 19 ○ Land Use: House of Worship – Makom Solel Lakeside
- 20 • Project Summary
  - 21 ○ driveway will be removed from Clavey Road and relocated
  - 22 ○ impervious surface is being removed
  - 23 ○ installing new landscaping
  - 24 ○ amending plans from prior Special Use
- 25 • Aerial view was shown
- 26 • Background & Design Review
- 27 • Comments (code requirements)
- 28 • Recommendation

29  
30 Commissioner Henry asked if fire access should comply with what the Fire Staff wants. Director Fontane said  
31 the code requires this. Corporation Counsel Martinez stated, by the time any Conditions get to City Council,  
32 they could be a moot point.

33  
34 Chair Kerch swore in Larry Mason, Attorney with Goldberg Segalla on behalf of Makom Solel Lakeside, who  
35 provided background. This congregation began in 1950 and merged in 2019. The Special Use Permit was  
36 amended in 2009. They also worked with Park District Staff. Green space is now being added. They were  
37 there before Deer Creek Parkway. Traffic is a concern. Safety and security is paramount and affects  
38 thousands of people. They appreciate thoughtful collaboration with City Staff, Fire Staff, etc. He noted the  
39 drawing is not exact. The contractor, Total Paving, is being used. This is Phase I of a two-part process. They  
40 are under armed-security protection. This solves problems for the police.

41  
42 Chair Kerch asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. There was no one.

43  
44 Commissioner Moore moved to adopt the Findings of Fact. Commissioner Ihnchak seconded the motion.

45  
46 On a roll call vote

1 Voting Yea Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, &  
2 Nanus

3 Voting Nay: None

4  
5 Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously.

6 .  
7 7. Public Hearing #ZTA-2026-00003 for a Zoning Code Text Amendment to revise, strike, or create  
8 definitions, land uses, land-use permissions, and regulations related to Data Centers, Data Processing  
9 Centers, and similar uses

10  
11 Senior Planner Burhop reviewed the proposal:

- 12 • Recommendation
- 13 • Background
- 14 • Zoning Code (history)
- 15 • Zoning Code (changes)

16  
17 A brief discussion took place on energy, usage, that this subject is controversial, etc.

18  
19 Chair Kerch asked if anyone in the audience wishes to speak. There was no one.

20  
21 Commissioner Moore moved to adopt the draft Findings of Fact to prohibit the land use Data Center.  
22 Commissioner Fettner seconded the motion.

23  
24 On a roll call vote

25 Voting Yea Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, &  
26 Nanus

27 Voting Nay: None

28  
29 Director Fontane declared that the motion passed unanimously.

30  
31 **OTHER BUSINESS**

32 1. Information Item: Administrative Design Review Update

33 Senior Planner Burhop advised that ComEd at 1785 Old Skokie Road was administratively approved for  
34 lighting.

35  
36 2. Next Regular Meeting – August 18, 2026

37 The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2026.

38  
39 3. Case Briefing

40 Director Fontane advised the Amendments for 1700 Old Deerfield Road were approved by City Council.

41  
42 **BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC**

43 There was no Business from the Public.

44  
45 **ADJOURNMENT**

46 Commissioner Henry moved to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. Commissioner Nanus seconded the motion.

1 On a voice vote

2 Voting Yea Chairperson Kerch; Commissioners Fettner, Henry, Ihnchak, Mantis, Moore, &  
3 Nanus

4 Voting Nay: None

5  
6 Chairperson Kerch declared that the motion passed unanimously.

7  
8 Respectfully Submitted,

9  
10  
11 Gale Cerabona  
12 Recorder

13  
14 **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON JUNE 16, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.**  
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