



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SPECIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, January 10, 2024 – 6:00 PM
Village Hall – 1st Floor Community Room, 400 Park Ave., River Forest, IL

AGENDA

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81896218774>

Meeting ID: 818 9621 8774

Public comments and any responses will be shared with the Commission. You may submit your public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: Matt Walsh at mwalsh@vrf.us.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Minutes – October 4, 2023
4. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Proposed Text Amendment for Child Daycare Centers as a Special Use in C-3 Central Commercial Zoning District
5. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Revised Draft Commercial Zoning District Amendments
6. Development Updates
7. Continued Discussion Regarding Business Community Retention/Support Strategies and Communication
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
October 4, 2023**

A meeting of the Village of River Forest Economic Development Commission was held on Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Cuyler Brown, Commissioners Robert Graham, Tim Brangle, and Chiplunkar, Katie Lowes, and Walter Wahlfedlt.

Absent: Commissioner Carr Preston.

Also Present: Village Administrator Matt Walsh and Assistant Village Administrator Jessica Spencer.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Brown and SECONDED by Commissioner Graham to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2023 meeting (as amended). MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

4. DEVELOPMENT UPDATES Chairman Brown does not want to take the focus off the retail development. He wants to ensure that there is uniformity of signs, advertising, and messaging in current and future projects, for a professional look.

A. Madison Street Development Site Promotion Discussion –

Administrator Walsh provided an update on the Madison St project, including the almost completed installation of the fences. He confirmed that the fence installation has been discussed and the selection included the opinion of the nearby residents. There were questions about future landscaping options, Administrator Walsh stated that there are plans for landscaping and signage in the coming weeks. Discussion ensued regarding the direction of how best to market the site – via developers or seeking brokers first. The committee decided to develop an RFP seeking brokers to market this and other vacant Village sites.

- B. Other Development Discussion – Administrator Walsh provided an update on Lake and Lathrop property, including the status of the clean-up that is occurring on site and the ongoing foreclosure process. He reported that there has been no further meeting or update regarding the North Avenue Streetscape since the last meeting of this committee. Chairman Brown asked who is responsible for the Lake and Lathrop property? Administrator Walsh clarified that the receiver is responsible for securing the site. Discussion ensued regarding the potential next steps for this property and the ongoing legal disputes.

5. CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING BUSINESS COMMUNITY RETENTION/ SUPPORT STRATEGIES AND COMMUNICATION

Chairman Brown expressed that there have not been much participation with local businesses or the local Chamber of Commerce. Brown said that he wants to have someone from the Chamber present at future meetings to be sure that the businesses in the Village are represented, and Administrator Walsh agreed.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Wahlfeldt and SECONDED by Commissioner Graham to adjourn the October 4, 2023, meeting of the Economic Development Commission at 6:58 p.m. MOTION PASSED by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted:

Matt Walsh, Village Administrator

Date: _____

Cuyler Brown, Chairman Economic Development Commission



Village of River Forest
Village Administrator's Office
400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 10, 2024

To: Matt Walsh, Village Administrator

From: Jessica Spencer, Assistant Village Administrator

Subj: Special Use Request and Text Amendment – Mosaic Montessori

Issue: Mosaic Montessori Academy is a school dedicated to educating children between the ages of two (2) and six (6) years of age. They are interested in expanding the classroom for ages 18 months to two (2) years to service additional families. The property they seek to lease is not in a district that allows such a use and therefore they are seeking a special use variation.

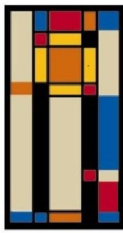
Background: In late October, representatives for Mosaic Montessori (“Mosaic”) reached out to staff to inquire about 7777 Lake Street, known as the Strand Building. The intention of the owners of the Montessori school is to open a day care center that would focus on children between the ages of 18 months and 2 years old. The day care center would be subject to Illinois Department of Child and Family Services for regulation and licensing, and the group is hopeful to have the school ready to open its doors in Fall 2024.

The property resides in the C3 zoning district, which is designated for “specialty retail store, office, service uses, and multi-family to create a central retail focus”. In the current version of the Zoning Code, the use of “childcare center” is prohibited in a C3 district. Mosaic currently resides at 7970 Lake Street, a PRI district. PRI, meaning “Public, Recreational, and Institutional” contains the universities, schools, and houses of worship, in addition to the Municipal properties and Cook County Forest Preserve. There is no space for expansion at their current location. The Village’s zoning map is attached for reference.

On Monday, November 13, the owners as well as real estate agents representing Mosaic and 7777 Lake Street spoke during Public Comment of the Village Board meeting, requesting a special use of the property. The Board directed staff to communicate with the Economic Development Committee as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals to determine if such a special use would be considered.

Staff is seeking feedback from the Commission on whether this use should be allowed in a C-3 district. The feedback will be shared with the Village Board. If the proposed change were approved, special use applications would be allowed throughout the C-3 district and not limited

to the site in question. Special use applications are reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Village Board.



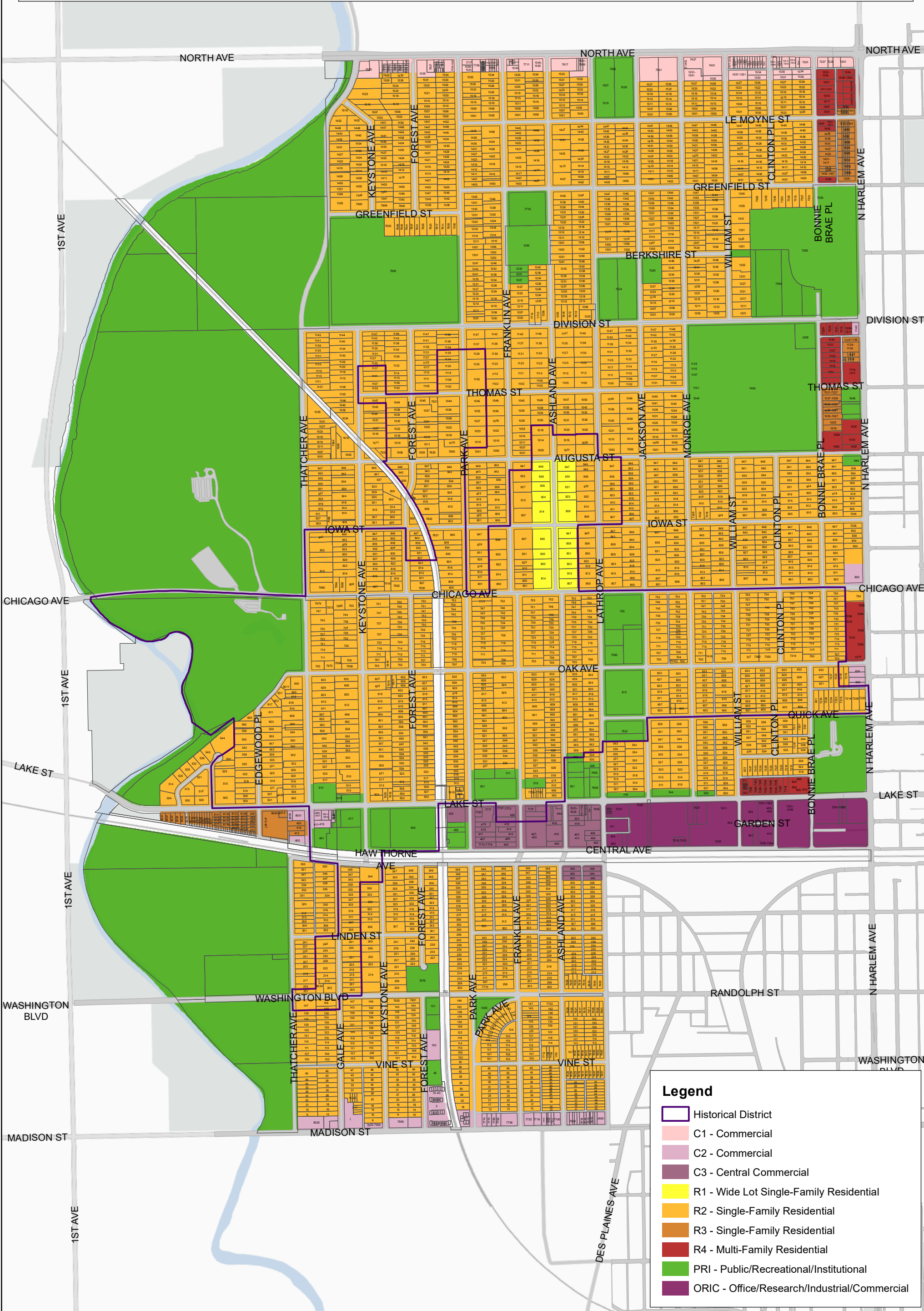
INCORPORATED 1880
**RIVER
FOREST**
*Proud Heritage
Bright Future*

River Forest Zoning Map

January 31, 2023



0 550 1,100 Feet



Legend

- Historical District
- C1 - Commercial
- C2 - Commercial
- C3 - Central Commercial
- R1 - Wide Lot Single-Family Residential
- R2 - Single-Family Residential
- R3 - Single-Family Residential
- R4 - Multi-Family Residential
- PRI - Public/Recreational/Institutional
- ORIC - Office/Research/Industrial/Commercial



Village of River Forest
Village Administrator's Office
400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 10, 2024

To: Economic Development Commission

From: Matt Walsh, Village Administrator

Subj: Draft Commercial Zoning District Amendments

Background: In May, the EDC referred proposed zoning changes to the Village Board for C1 (North Avenue) & C2 (Madison Street) districts. Prior to presenting to the Village Board, Houseal Lavigne reviewed C3 and ORIC regulations and made additional recommendations. The attached memo details the recommendations.

The Village Board discussed the draft amendments at the November 13 Village Board meeting. The Board directed the Zoning Board of Appeals to review the draft, but also asked for additional feedback from the EDC regarding the changes as it applies to C3 & ORIC commercial districts.

A Zoning Board of Appeals public hearing will be scheduled in January 2024 regarding these proposed text amendments.



MEMORANDUM

CHICAGO

188 W Randolph Street Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60601
312-372-1008

LOS ANGELES

360 E 2nd Street Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012
213-259-1008

SEATTLE

999 3rd Ave Suite 700
Seattle, WA 98104
206-828-1008

Date: November 10, 2023

SENT VIA EMAIL

To: Village of River Forest
Matt Walsh, Village Administrator

From: Houseal Lavigne
John Houseal, FAICP, Partner | Cofounder
Jackie Berg, AICP, Practice Lead

Re: **Draft Commercial Zoning District Amendments
C1, C2, C3, ORIC Overview**

This memorandum and its attachments present proposed zoning amendments for the four River Forest commercial districts – C1, C2, C3, and ORIC. The proposed amendments combine the standards for the commercial districts, currently contained in four separate chapters of Title 10 of the River Forest Code of Ordinance (Chapters 12, 13, 14, and 15), into one new chapter 12, to enhance clarity and ease of use of the ordinance. Additionally, some amendments are also proposed for the Land Use Chart in Chapter 21, for uses relating to the commercial districts.

Amendments for the C1 and C2 Districts were discussed with the Economic Development Commission (EDC) over several meetings earlier this year, including attendance and participation by several residents, primarily from the area near Madison Street. In addition, a neighborhood/resident workshop was held for Madison Street neighborhood residents and North Avenue neighborhood residents, and several area developers, architects, and planners were interviewed. The EDC was directed to examine zoning along North Avenue and Madison Street, and therefore did not review or discuss the C3 - Central Commercial District or the ORIC – Office/Research/Industrial/Commercial District. Reconnaissance, development concepts and visualizations, and examination of existing development characteristics was also undertaken.

In general, the EDC's recommendations included:

- Increasing building height to accommodate an additional story
- Increasing allowed residential densities
- Decreasing parking requirements for residential uses

The proposed commercial district amendments reflect direction given by the EDC for the C1 and C2 Districts, and the same approach was applied to amendments in the C3 and ORIC Districts.

Summary of Proposed Changes

The following is a summary of the proposed changes to the Village's commercial districts as compared to current requirements. The complete draft chapter is attached for review and discussion purposes only.

Allowed Residential Uses

River Forest establishes allowed uses per district in the land use chart in Chapter 21.

District	Current Residential Use Allowance	Proposed Residential Use Allowance
Multiple-family dwellings		
C1	Not allowed	Allowed via PD
C2	Allowed via PD	
C3		
ORIC	Not allowed	
Multiple-family dwellings above first floor of permitted commercial or office uses		
C1	Not allowed	Allowed via PD
C2	Allowed via PD	
C3		
ORIC		

Building Height

River Forest regulates the maximum height of buildings as the vertical distance measured from the nearest public sidewalk to the highest point of the building or structure or to the highest point of any object attached to the building or structure, whichever is higher. Attached objects include, but are not limited to, antennas of any kind.

District	Current Height Maximum	Proposed Height Maximum
C1	50 feet	65 feet
C2	30 feet	50 feet
C3	50 feet	65 feet
ORIC		

Residential Density

River Forest regulates residential density via minimum lot area per dwelling unit requirements.

District	Current Lot Area per Dwelling Unit Minimum	Proposed Lot Area per Dwelling Unit Minimum
C1	2,800 square feet	1,000 square feet
C2		
C3		
ORIC	n/a – only allowed via PD	

Residential Parking

River Forest requires a specified number of off-street parking spaces be provided per residential dwelling.

District	Current Residential Parking Minimum	Proposed Residential Parking Minimum
C1	1-2 Bedroom Dwellings: 2 spaces / unit 3+ Bedroom Dwellings: 2.5 spaces / unit 1 guest space / 5 units	1.5 spaces / unit
C2		
C3		
ORIC		

FAR

River Forest currently regulates the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of development. FAR is the measurement of a building's total floor area in relation to the size of the lot/parcel that the building is located on.

The maximum FAR standard is proposed to be eliminated and allowed building bulk and mass is proposed to be regulated only through building height, lot coverage, and parking requirements.

Other

1. Off-street parking requirements have been consolidated into a table and revised to better align with the land use chart in Chapter 21. The minimum amount of parking proposed to be required is substantially like current requirements.
2. New off-street loading requirements are proposed to replace the current standards. The current standards are very prescriptive and not reflective of modern loading requirements. The proposed standards provide more flexibility to the developer but ensure no negative impact to neighboring property or traffic.
3. There is currently a minimum average gross dwelling unit area for the R4 district of 1,800 square feet. There is not a similar requirement for dwellings in the commercial districts. The EDC has suggested that the R4 standard be reduced to 1,000 square feet. Additional discussion is needed to determine whether the lowered standard should apply to residential development in the C1, C2, C3, and ORIC.

Chapter 12. Commercial Districts

10-12-1: General Provisions	1
10-12-2: Bulk and Dimensional Standards	1
10-12-3: Allowed Uses	2
10-12-4: Off-Street Parking.....	2
10-12-5: Off-Street Loading.....	3

10-12-1: General Provisions

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of this Chapter is to establish standards for the development and use of land in the Village's commercial districts.
- B. **Applicability.** The standards of this Chapter shall apply to all new development and substantial redevelopment in the Village's commercial districts.

10-12-2: Bulk and Dimensional Standards

Table 10-12-2 establishes the bulk and dimensional standards for the development or the use of a lot in a commercial zoning district.

Table 10-12-2: Bulk and Dimensional Standards				
Standard	C-1	C-2	C-3	ORIC
<i>Lot Standards (Minimum)</i>				
Lot Area (sqft)	3,275	3,275	3,275	10,000
Lot Area / DU (sqft)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Lot Width (ft)	25	25	25	25
<i>Yard Setbacks (Minimum)</i>				
Front (ft)	0	0	0	0 [3]
Exterior Side (ft)	0 [1]	0 [1]	0 [1]	0 [3]
Interior Side (ft)	0 [2]	0 [2]	0 [2]	0 [3]
Rear (ft)	20	20	20	0 [3]
<i>Building Standards (Maximum)</i>				
Building Height (ft)	65	50	65	65
Lot Coverage (%)	100	100	100	100
<i>Notes</i>				
[1] If the rear lot line of a corner lot abuts a rear lot line in the R1 or R2 district, the exterior side yard shall be at least equal to the depth of the yard of the adjoining R1 or R2 lot's building.				
[2] If the rear lot line abuts a lot or lots in the R1, R2, and/or R3 districts without an alley or other public way intervening, the rear yard setback shall 20 feet.				
[3] If the yard abuts a lot or lots in the R1, R2, R3, and/or R4 districts the setback shall conform to the regulations of the respective residential district.				

10-12-3: Allowed Uses

No parcel or building shall be utilized for any use except for those indicated on the land use chart in Chapter 21 of this Zoning Title and after the applicable approval process.

10-12-4: Off-Street Parking

Table 10-12-4 establishes the minimum requirement for off-street parking in the Village's commercial districts. The following rules apply when calculating the required minimum off-street parking requirement.

- A. **Fractions.** When measurements of the number of required spaces result in a fractional number, the number shall be rounded up to the next higher whole number.
- B. **Area Measurements.** Unless otherwise expressly stated, all area-based (square feet) parking standards must be computed on the basis of gross floor area.
- C. **Capacity-Based Standards.** To compute parking requirements based on maximum capacity the maximum fire-rated capacity of the facility as determined by the Fire Department shall be used.

Land Uses Category	Minimum Required Off-Street Parking
<i>RESIDENTIAL</i>	1.5 / dwelling unit
<i>RETAIL TRADE</i>	1 / 300 square feet
<i>ACCOMMODATIONS AND FOOD SERVICES</i>	n/a
<i>Coffee shops</i>	1 / 200 square feet
<i>Convenience food marts</i>	1 / 200 square feet
<i>Dinner theaters</i>	0.25 / person at maximum capacity
<i>Fast food establishment</i>	1 / 100 square feet
<i>Hotels</i>	1 / guest room
<i>Restaurant - drive-through</i>	1 / 100 square feet
<i>Restaurants operating outside the hours of 7:00 A.M. to 1:00 A.M.</i>	1 / 100 square feet
<i>Restaurants, sit down, greater than 5,000 square feet</i>	1 / 100 square feet
<i>Restaurants, sit down, less than 5,000 square feet</i>	1 / 100 square feet
<i>Specialty food stores</i>	1 / 200 square feet
<i>FINANCIAL, INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE SERVICES</i>	1 / 300 square feet
<i>INDUSTRIAL</i>	1 / 1,000 square feet
<i>ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION</i>	1 / 300 square feet
<i>INSTITUTIONAL</i>	1 / 300 square feet

10-12-5: Off-Street Loading

- A. **General Loading Requirements.** On the same premises with every building erected and occupied for any nonresidential use involving the receipt or distribution of vehicles, materials, or merchandise, there shall be provided and maintained adequate space for standing, turning, loading, and unloading services in a manner that does not interfere with required parking, pedestrian walkways, and with the public use of streets and alleys.
- B. **Location.**
1. All required loading berths shall be located on the same zoning lot as the use served.
 2. No loading berth for vehicles over two (2) tons capacity shall be located closer than fifty (50) feet to any property in a Residential District unless completely enclosed by building walls.
 3. No loading berth shall be located within twenty-five (25) feet of the nearest point of intersection of any two (2) streets.
 4. All loading docks where the public access road to such docks has a right-of-way width of less than eighty (80) feet shall be located at least sixty-five (65) feet behind the property line.
 5. No loading dock shall be located in any front yard or exterior side yard.
- C. **Access.**
1. Each loading berth shall be designed with appropriate means of vehicular access to a street or easement in a manner which will least interfere with traffic movements.
 2. Each loading berth shall be provided with sufficient maneuvering space to accommodate the largest vehicle likely to serve the lot.
 3. Loading berth access design shall allow vehicles to access and exit the loading space without having to make any backing movement on or onto the public street.

Chapter 21. Land Use Chart

LAND USES	DISTRICTS							
	R1 And R2 Low Density Residential	R3 Medium Density Residential	R4 High Density Residential	C1 Commercial	C2 Commercial	C3 Central Commercial	ORIC Office/ Research/ Industrial/ Commercial	PRI Public/ Private Recreational Institutional
RESIDENTIAL								
Dormitories	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	S
Group homes	S	S	N	N	N	N	N	N
Halfway houses	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Home occupations	P	P	P	N	P	P	N	N
Multiple-family dwellings	N	N	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	N
Multiple-family dwellings above first floor of permitted commercial or office uses	N	N	N	PD	PD	PD	PD	N
Nursing homes and skilled care facilities	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Rooming and boarding houses	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Short term rental	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Single-family dwelling - attached	N	PD	PD	N	N	N	N	N
Single-family dwelling - detached	P	P	P	N	N	N	N	N
Transitional housing	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N