



**RIVER FOREST  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
MEETING AGENDA**

A meeting of the River Forest Zoning Board of Appeals will be held on Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 7:30 P.M. in the Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois.

Physical attendance at this public meeting may be limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic with Zoning Board of Appeals officials, staff and consultants having priority over members of the public. Public comments and any responses will be read into the public meeting record. You may submit your public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: Clifford Radatz at [cradatz@vrf.us](mailto:cradatz@vrf.us). You may listen to the meeting by clicking here <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82234664899> or participating in a telephone conference call as follows, dial-in number: 1-312-626-6799 with meeting id: 822 3466 4899 . If you would like to participate over the phone, please contact Clifford Radatz by telephone at (708) 714-3557 or by email at [cradatz@vrf.us](mailto:cradatz@vrf.us) by 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 9, 2021.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Hearing – Zoning Variation Requests for 934 Park Avenue – Floor Area Ratio.
- III. Public Hearing – Zoning Variation Requests for 1443 Forest Avenue – Side Yard Setback.
- IV. Text Amendment Request – Public Hearing Regarding the Following Proposed Amendments to the Village of River Forest Zoning Ordinance:
  - a. A Text Amendment to Section 10-3 (Definitions) of the Zoning Ordinance to define solar energy systems; and
  - b. A Text Amendment to Section 10-21 (Land Use Chart) of the Zoning Ordinance to designate solar energy systems as a permitted accessory use in all Zoning Districts.
- V. Confirmation of Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting –July 14, 2022
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Adjournment



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 3, 2022

**TO:** Zoning Board of Appeals

**FROM:** Clifford E. Radatz *CR*  
Building Official

**SUBJECT:** Variation Request – 934 Park Avenue – Continuance to July 14, 2022

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Janet and Curtis Helwig, owners of the property at 934 Park Avenue, have submitted an application for a variation to the Floor Area Ratio regulations (Section 10-9-5) of the Zoning Code. The applicants propose to construct a two story addition onto the existing residence.

The applicant has asked that the hearing for this variation be continued to July meeting of the ZBA, as they are unable to attend the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting due to illness.

If the Zoning Board wishes to continue this matter to the July 14, 2022 meeting, the following motion would be appropriate:

*Motion to continue the hearing for the Application for Zoning Variation for 934 Park Avenue to the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals on July 14, 2022.*

If you have any questions regarding this application, please do not hesitate to call me.

**From:** [Steve Ryniewicz](#)  
**To:** [Cliff Radatz](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Studio R - 934 Park - Zoning Variance application  
**Date:** Thursday, June 2, 2022 2:35:56 PM

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Hi Cliff,

Due to illness, the property owner requests that their variance application be postponed from the June meeting and reschedule to the July meeting.  
We appreciate your follow-up and assistance in the process.

All the best,

Steven Ryniewicz, ALA, LEED AP, NCARB  
President



312-446-0133 | 810 S. Highland  
Oak Park, Illinois 60304  
[www.studiorarchitecture.com](http://www.studiorarchitecture.com)

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 2, 2022

**TO:** Zoning Board of Appeals

**FROM:** Clifford E. Radatz *ceR*  
Building Official

**SUBJECT:** Variation Request – 1443 Forest Avenue

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Karuna and Viresh Rawal, owners of the property at 1443 Forest Avenue, have submitted the attached application for variations to the side yard setback regulations (Section 10-9-7) of the Zoning Code. The applicants propose to construct a two story addition onto the existing residence.

Section 10-9-7 of the Zoning Code (10-8-7-C-2-b) allows additions to buildings which do not meet the side yard setback requirement, but the setback of the addition must maintain either a three-foot side yard or a side yard that is the same width as the current side yard, whichever is wider; and the length of the addition is limited to a length of twenty feet.

The applicants are requesting a variation that would allow the north wall of the home, which has a non-conforming side yard setback of 2.76 feet, to be extended at the First Floor level by 5 feet matching the non-conforming setback of 2.76 feet. They are also requesting a variation to extend the north wall at the Second Floor level by 25 feet 2 ½ inches matching the non-conforming setback of 2.76 feet.

If the Zoning Board wishes to recommend the approval of these variations to the Village Board of Trustees, the following motion should be made:

*Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees the approval of the variations to Section 10-9-7 of the Zoning Code at 1443 Forest Avenue.*

If you have any questions regarding this application, please do not hesitate to call me.

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
**RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS**

Public Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) of the Village of River Forest, County of Cook, State of Illinois, on Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. in the First Floor Community Room of the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue, River Forest, Illinois on the following matter:

The ZBA will consider an application for major zoning variations submitted by Karuna and Viresh Rawal, owners of the property at 1443 Forest Avenue, who are proposing to construct a two story addition onto the existing home.

Section 4-8-5 of the Village Code provides the Zoning Board jurisdiction to hold public hearings and offer recommendations to the Village Board concerning variations to Zoning Ordinance.

The applicants are requesting major variations to Section 10-9-7 that would allow the north wall of the home, which has a non-conforming side yard setback of 2.76 feet, to be extended at the First Floor level by 5 feet matching the non-conforming setback of 2.76 feet. They are also requesting a variation to extend the north wall at the Second Floor level by 25 feet 2 ½ inches matching the non-conforming setback of 2.76 feet.

The Zoning Ordinance allows additions to buildings which do not meet the side yard setback requirement, but the setback of the addition must maintain either a three-foot side yard or a side yard that is the same width as the current side yard, whichever is wider; and the length of the addition is limited to a length of twenty feet.

The legal description of the property at 1443 Forest Avenue is as follows:

LOT 1 IN CELANO'S SUBDIVISION, BEING A RESUBDIVISION OF PART OF LOT 6 IN OWNER'S SUBDIVISION OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 1, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 12, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

A copy of the application will be available to the public at Village Hall and on the Village's website at [www.vrf.us/zoningvariation](http://www.vrf.us/zoningvariation) no less than 15 days prior to the public hearing. The Zoning Board of Appeals meeting packet will also be available at [www.vrf.us/meetings](http://www.vrf.us/meetings) no less than 48 hours prior to the public hearing.

All interested persons will be given the opportunity to be heard at the public hearing. **For public comments to be considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals and Village Board of Trustees in their decision, they must be included as part of the public hearing record.** Interested persons can learn more about how to participate in the hearing by visiting [www.vrf.us/zoningvariation](http://www.vrf.us/zoningvariation).

Sincerely,  
Clifford Radatz  
Secretary, Zoning Board of Appeals

## CHECKLIST OF STANDARDS FOR MAJOR VARIATIONS

Name of Commissioner: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Standards:

Met? <sup>1</sup>	Standard
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>1. The physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved will bring a specific hardship upon the owner as distinguished from an inconvenience if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out;</p> <p>Notes: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>2. The aforesaid unique physical condition did not result from any action of any person having an interest in the property, but was created by natural forces or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Zoning Title, for which no compensation was paid;</p> <p>Notes: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>3. The conditions upon which the petition for variation is based may not be applicable generally to other property within the same zoning classification;</p> <p>Notes: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>4. The purpose of the variation is not based predominantly upon a desire for economic gain;</p> <p>Notes: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>5. The granting of the variation shall not be detrimental to the public welfare or unduly injurious to the enjoyment, use, or development value of other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located; or</p> <p>Notes: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

<sup>1</sup> If a standard has not been met, indicate the reasons why in the notes section for that standard.

## CHECKLIST OF STANDARDS FOR MAJOR VARIATIONS

Yes   No	6. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, or substantially increase the danger of fire, or otherwise endanger the public safety or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood;  Notes: _____ _____ _____
Yes   No	7. That the granting of the variation would not unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area;  Notes: _____ _____ _____
Yes   No	8. That there is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property;  Notes: _____ _____ _____

If any of the standards have not been met, what changes could be made to the application so it meets all the standards?

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APPLICATION FOR ZONING VARIATION  
Village of River Forest Zoning Board of Appeals

Address of Subject Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant		Architect / Contractor	
Name:		Name:	
Address:		Address:	
City/State/Zip:		City/State/Zip:	
Phone:	Fax:	Phone:	Fax:
Email:		Email:	

Relationship of Applicant to Property (owner, contract purchaser, legal counsel, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning District of Property:        R1     R2     R3     R4     C1     C2     C3     PRI     ORIC

Please check the type(s) of variation(s) being requested:

Zoning Code

Building Code (fence variations only)

**Application requirements:** Attached you will find an outline of the other application requirements. Please read the attached carefully, the applicant will be responsible for submitting all of the required information.

Also attached for your information are the Zoning Board of Appeals "Rules of Procedure" for their public hearings.

**Application Deadline:** A complete variation application must be submitted no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month in order to be heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals in the following month. The Zoning Board of Appeals meets on the second Thursday of each month.

**SIGNATURES:**

The undersigned hereby represent for the purpose of inducing the Village of River Forest to take the action herein requested, that all statements herein and on all related attachments are true and that all work herein mentioned will be done in accordance with the ordinances of the Village of River Forest and the laws of the State of Illinois.

Owner: *Vincent Bantel* Date: May, 13, 2022

Applicant (if other than Owner): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Fee:** A non-refundable fee of \$750.00 must accompany every application for variation, which includes the cost of recording the variation with the County. Checks should be made out to the Village of River Forest.

## APPLICATION FOR ZONING VARIATION

Address of Subject Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of Requested Variation(s):

<b><u>Applicable Code Section (Title, Chapter, Section)</u></b> <i>Example:</i> 10-8-5, lot coverage	<b><u>Code Requirement(s)</u></b> <i>Example:</i> no more than 30% of a lot	<b><u>Proposed Variation(s)</u></b> <i>Example:</i> 33.8% of the lot (detailed calculations an a separate sheet are required)

THE APPLICANT IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT DETAILED LONG HAND CALCULATIONS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR ALL APPLICABLE ZONING PROVISIONS. APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED COMPLETE WITHOUT THESE CALCULATIONS AND MEASUREMENTS.



## Zoning Appeal

# 1443 Forest Avenue

## Side Yard Setbacks for an Addition

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To summarize in its simplest form, the variance request for 1443 Forest seeks to allow the extension of an existing non-conforming wall. That extension would be just five feet beyond the existing structure and allow for the expansion of the existing garage with new living space added to the second floor above the current one story garage. The expansion is needed to accommodate the addition of an elevator to the home to assist family members currently living in the house as well as providing a handicapped accessible bathroom on the second floor of the home for them.

### DETAILED PROJECT & VARIANCE DESCRIPTION

To delve into more detail, the variance request revolves around the setback requirements for an addition related to existing non-conforming walls. The existing house is a two story brick structure with a one story attached brick garage. The home is currently 2'-9" off the north property line which is within the current side yard setback of 5'-0" and the minimum setback of 3'-0".

The Owner is looking to create an addition over the garage to create additional Living Space for family members with growing mobility issues. To meet their needs, the addition would include an elevator which would provide access from grade (inside the garage), to the first and the second floors. The addition would also include a handicapped accessible bathroom. That addition could be built within the current Zoning, if the addition was limited to the space over the garage. As essential point in doing so per the Zoning code is having the second floor wall set back 3" from the face of the first floor wall to create the minimum setback distance of 3'-0", which has been incorporated into the designs.

But in doing the planning for the addition, it became apparent that the elevator would encroach on the space of the garage enough to render it unusable by two cars. There was similar significant impact on the space left for the second floor living areas with the addition of both the elevator and handicapped bathroom limiting the resulting living space.

As a result, the Owner is looking at adding 5'-0" to the width of the garage to return the garage to two car capacity and make the space above more livable. That addition can be accommodated within the code by setting the new north wall 2'-3" back from the existing wall on the first and second floors. The result would be a second space in the garage that would be limited to a very small car, and almost unusable. It would also result in an exceptionally awkward looking final structure. That awkward look would have the biggest impact on the neighbors who would have to look at the oddly shaped addition once complete. We believe that both impacts are an avoidable hardship that were not a result of anything the Owner did, but by the unique position of the existing house on the lot.



The Owners would like a variance that would allow them to build the addition in line with the existing north wall to create a final, finished appearance that is cohesive and attractive to them and their neighbors. The first layer of that variance is to allow the existing north wall to be extended 5'-0" at the current 2'-9" setback, inside the 3'-0" minimum setback and the 5'-0" side yard setback. The second variance that would be required would be to extend the existing second floor wall 25'-2 1/2" rather than the code limited 20'-0". Again, that wall would be set back to meet the minimum 3'-0" side yard setback, with the additional length matching the first floor.

It is our understanding that the minimum setback and maximum extension of a non-conforming wall is for two primary reasons: (1) to create a good fire separation between properties and (2) to avoid imposing on the neighbors either with mass or shading from the new structure.

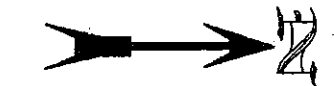
With regard to the fire safety, we believe the new configuration will actually be safer than the existing one. To begin, the extension of the existing first floor wall would be done with a wall construction made up of two layers of masonry with no openings. The resulting wall extension would be extremely flame resistant. At the second floor, the wall would be set back to meet the 3'-0" fire safety requirement. But in addition to meeting that requirement, the wall would be clad in either stucco or cement board, both finishes being non-flammable and thus creating good fire separation between the properties. Finally, the new roof overhang would include a fire rated soffit that is more than twenty feet above the adjacent property. The existing roof overhang is only about nine feet above and is not fire rated. With the use of non-flammable materials that are masonry and cement as well as the addition of a fire rated overhang that is further removed from grade, we feel the new configuration would actually improve the fire safety between the properties.

With regard to the second concern related to bulk, the reality of this particular situation is that only the 5'-0" addition would be required to be set back to the full side yard requirement. That setback would require the wall to be shifted approximately 2'-3" south. So the mass of the addition doesn't change significantly, it's only the difference of a bit more than a ten square feet of floor area. The result doesn't, in our opinion, materially change the impact of the building on the adjacent property. But it's visual impact would be felt and be more imposing because of the oddly configured notch in the building that would be required if the Zoning Code was followed to the letter. Both of those opinions are reinforced by the fact that the Owners of the adjacent property to the north have signed off with their approval for the project.

Overall, we understand the need for precisely the Zoning Ordinance that we are requesting a variance for. Additions have the potential to have a significant impact on neighboring properties, and the default should be to create reasonable restrictions to those additions. That default, however, may not be applicable in all situations, and we believe this to be one of those. With a really minimal addition of 5'-0" to the home beyond that allowed by code, a setback would create a bigger visual impact and hardship on the Owners and neighbors than any benefit from the setback. Again, this is confirmed by the fact that the Owner of the properties to both the north and south of this property, those most directly affected by the potential variance, are in support of this variance and the project that will result from it.

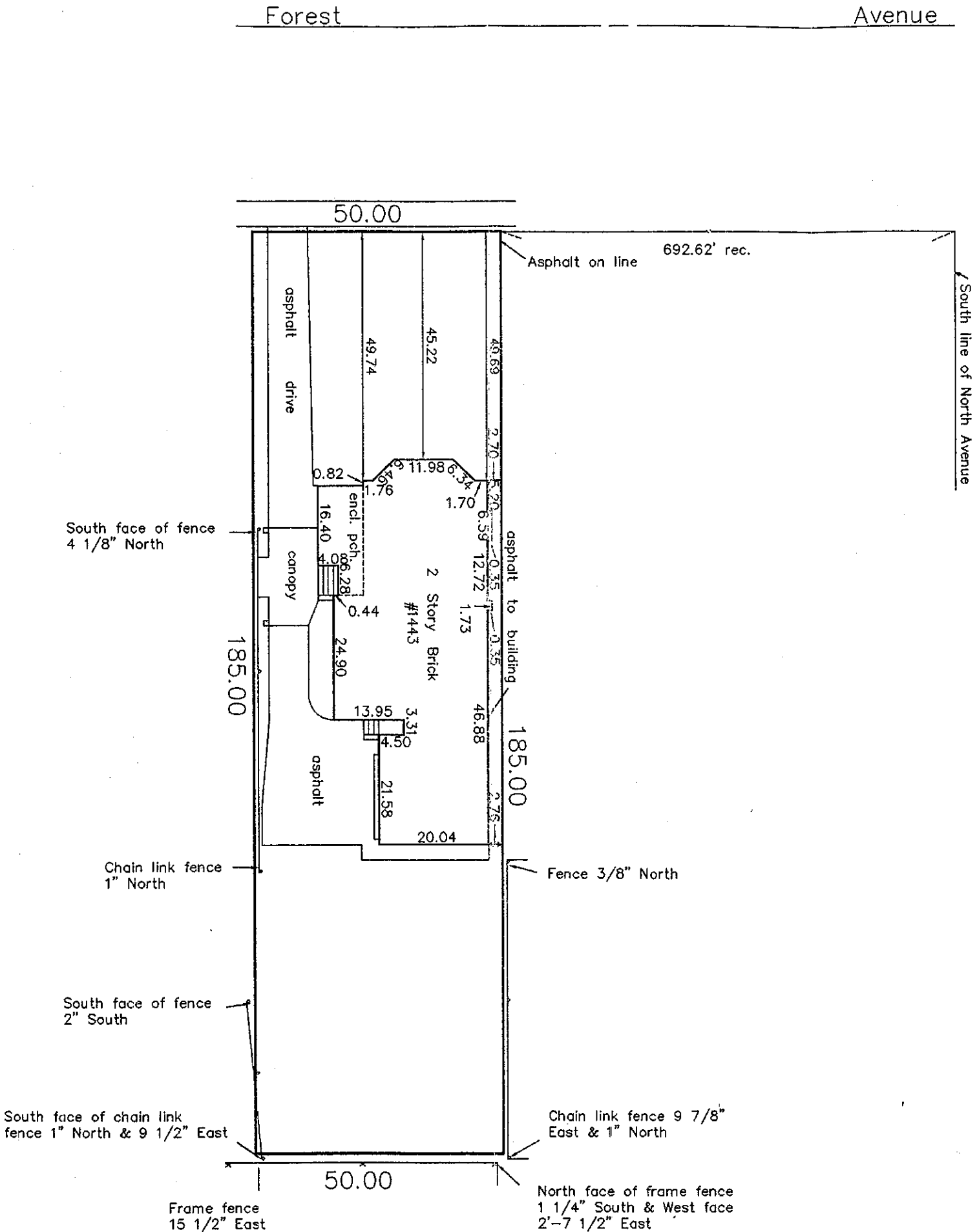
KABAL SURVEYING COMPANY  
Land Surveying Services

2411 Hawthorne Avenue  
Westchester, Illinois 60154  
(708) 562-2652  
Fax (708) 562-7314



Plot of Survey

Lot 1 in Celano's Subdivision, being a Resubdivision of part of Lot 6 in Owner's Subdivision of the Northwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of Section 1, Township 39 North, Range 12, East of the Third Principal Meridian, in Cook County, Illinois.



Please check Legal Description with Deed and report any discrepancy immediately.

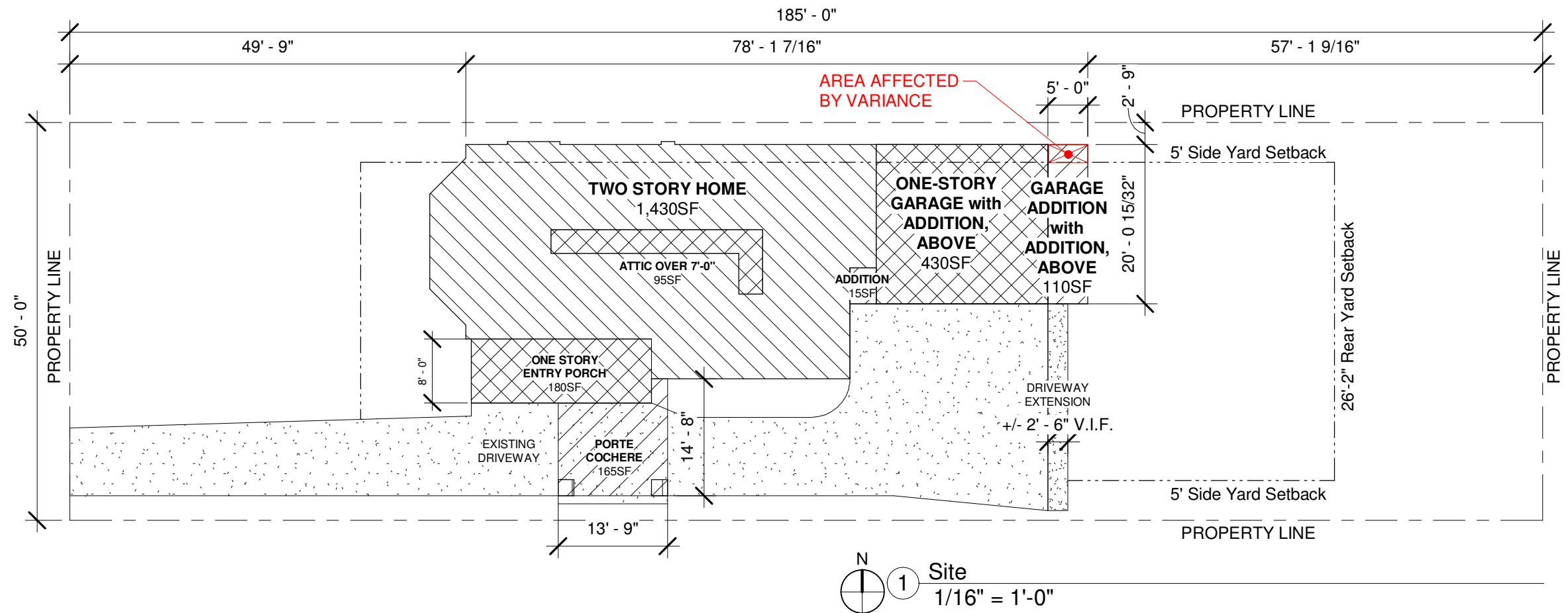
Surveyed December 16, 1999  
Building Located December 16, 1999

Scale: 1 inch = 25 ft.  
Order No. 992072  
Ordered By: Gottlieb, Attorney

STATE OF ILLINOIS }  
COUNTY OF COOK } ss.

I, STEPHEN J. BALEK, an Illinois Professional Land Surveyor, hereby certify that I have surveyed the property described above and the plat hereon drawn is a correct representation of said survey.  
Dimensions are in feet and decimal parts thereof and are corrected to a temperature of 62 degrees Fahrenheit.

*Stephen J. Balek*  
Illinois Professional Land Surveyor No. 1712



ZONING ANALYSIS

R-2 ZONING DISTRICT  
LOT SIZE: 50'x182.6' FOR 9,250 SF

Category	Allowed	Proposed
MAXIMUM HEIGHT	35'-0"	MATCH EXISTING
FLOOR AREA RATIO	MAX 40% (3,700sf)	PROPOSED = 3,600 SF - Existing 1st Floor 1,430sf - Existing 1st Floor 1,430sf - 1st Floor Addition 115sf - 2nd Floor Addition 530sf - Attic 95sf
PRINCIPAL BUILDING LOT COVERAGE	MAX 30% (2,775sf)	PROPOSED = 2,305 SF - Front Porch 180sf - Porte Cochere 165sf - Home 1,430sf - Attached Garage 430sf - Addition 100sf



D E S I G N

1216 Fair Oaks Ave  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
(P) 847 . 951 . 7568

Zoning Appeal

Zoning Review  
1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest

Site Plan

5.24.22

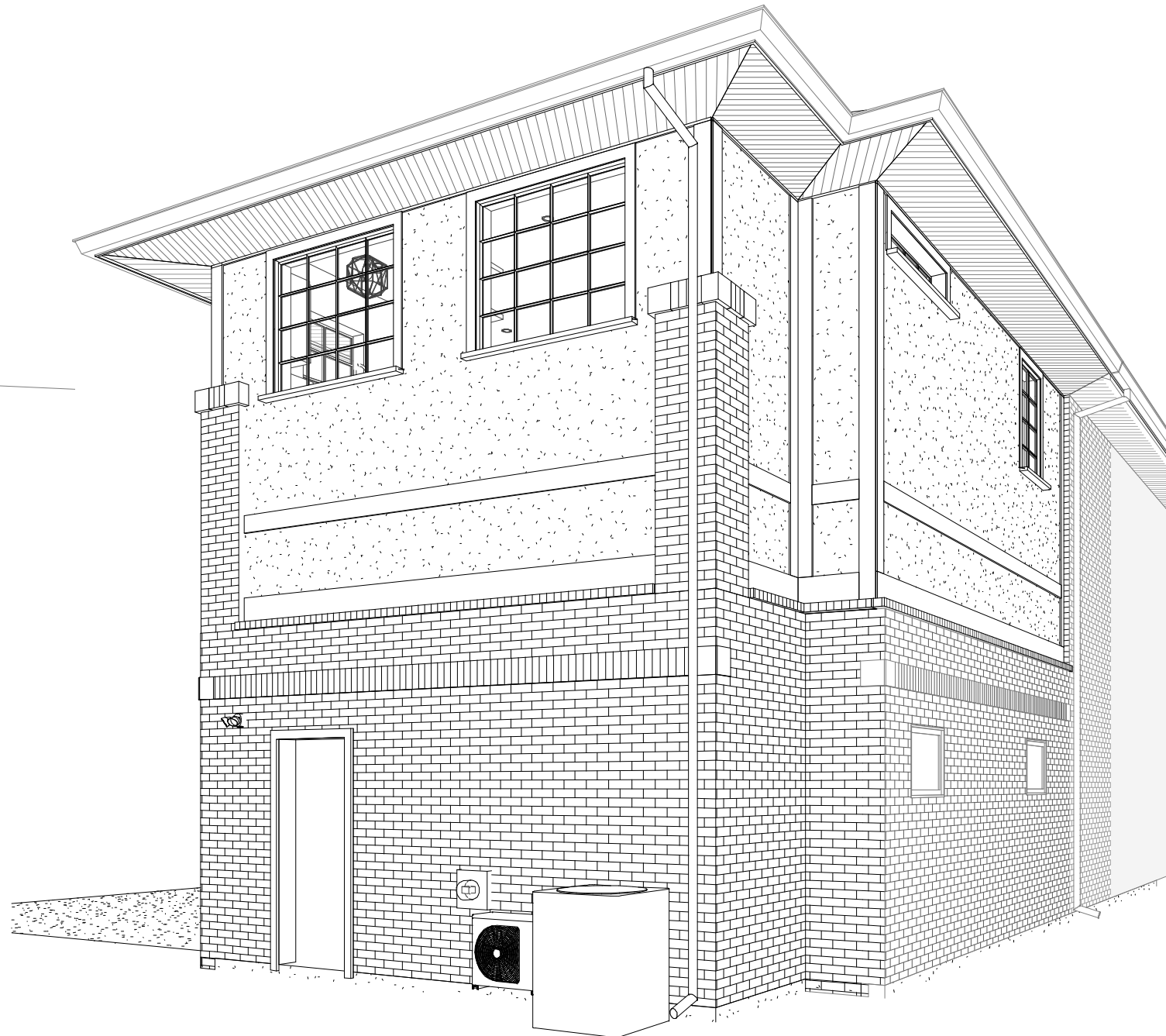
Z000

REV'D	DESCRIPTION	DATE

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2 Appeal View from Southeast with Notch



1 Appeal - View from Northeast with Notch



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Oak Park, IL 60302  
(P) 847 . 951 . 7568

# Zoning Appeal

Rawal Residence  
1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest

Exterior Views

5.5.22

## Z101

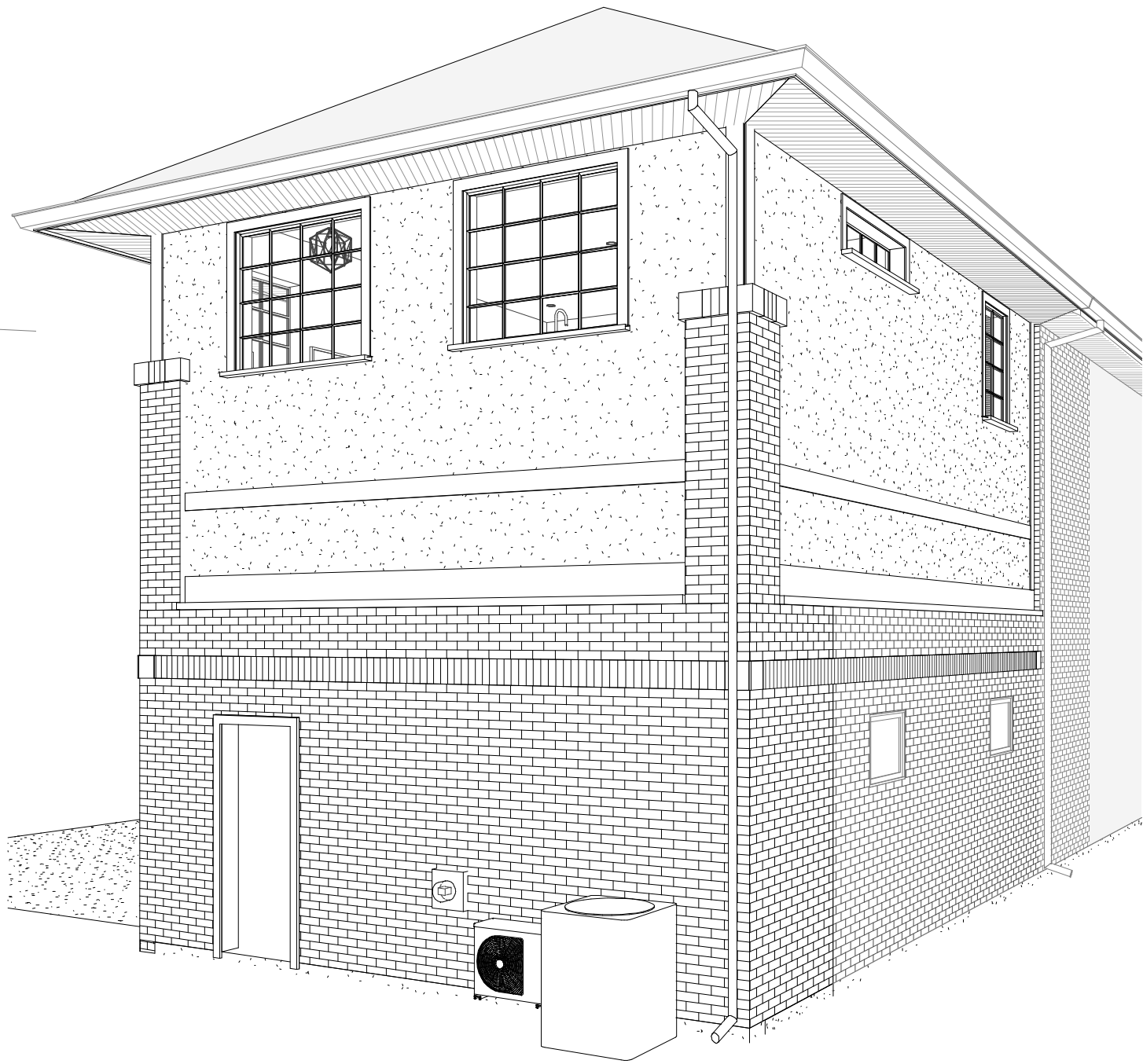
REV'D	DESCRIPTION	DATE

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5/11/2022 2:58:47 PM



1 View from Southeast



2 View from Northeast



D E S I G N

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Oak Park, IL 60302  
(P) 847 . 951 . 7568

# Zoning Appeal

Zoning Review  
1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest

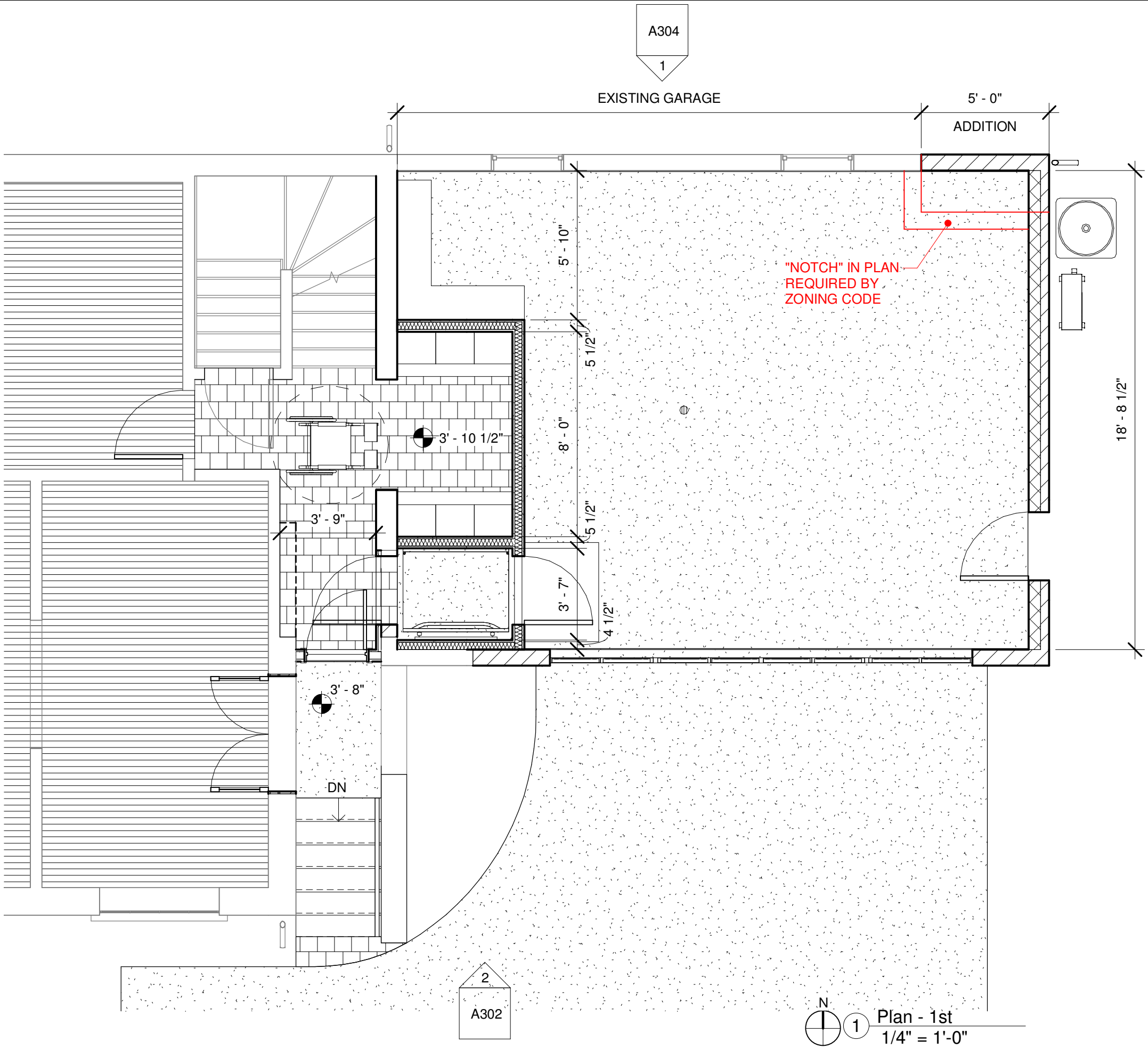
Exterior Views

5.5.22

# Z102

REV'D	DESCRIPTION	DATE

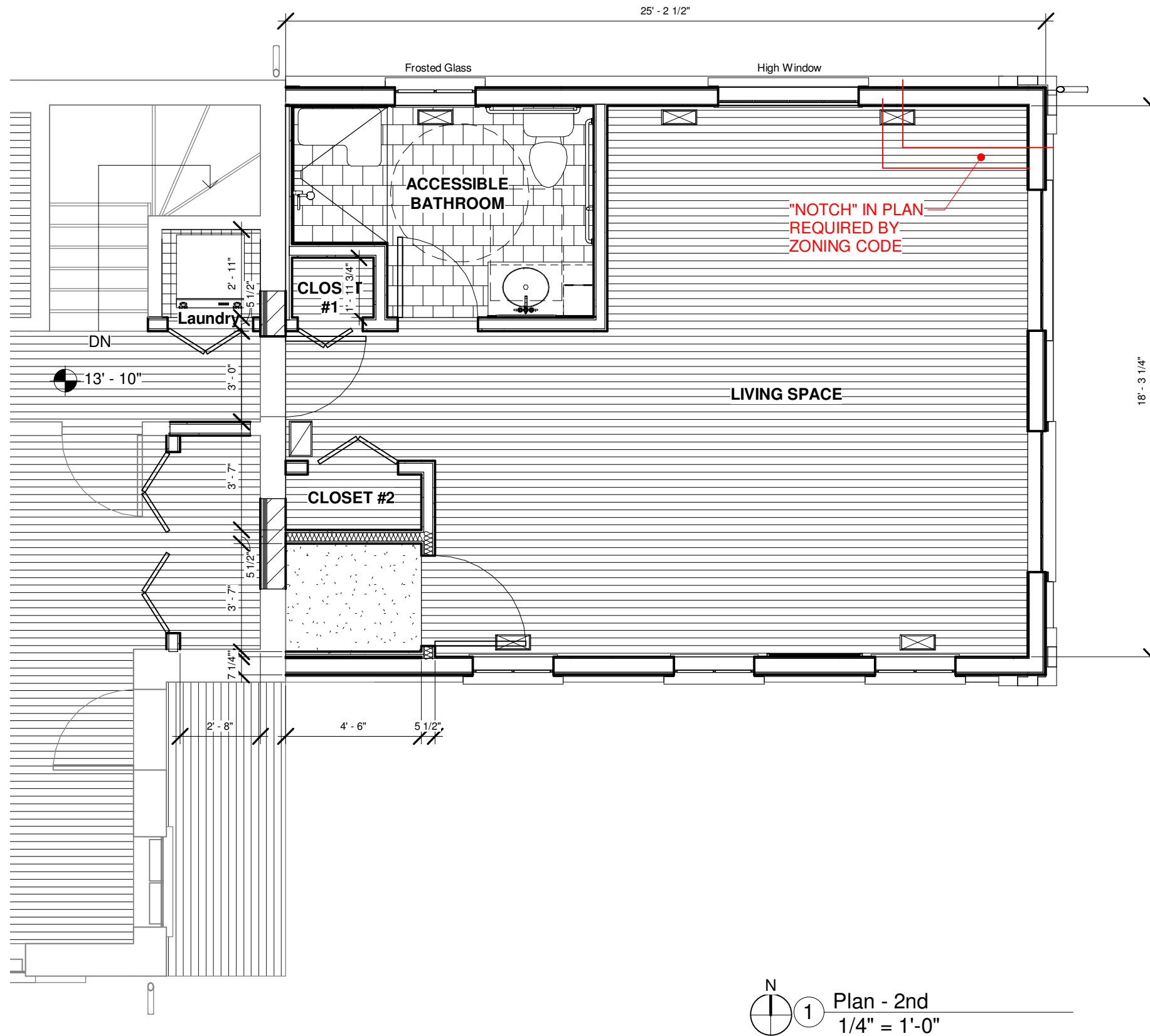
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**Zoning Appeal**  
Zoning Review  
1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest

1st Floor Plan  
5.5.22  
**Z103**

REV'D	DESCRIPTION	DATE
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D E S I G N

1216 Fair Oaks Ave  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
(P) 847 . 951 . 7568

# Zoning Appeal

Zoning Review  
1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest

2nd Floor Plan

5.5.22

# Z104

REV'D	DESCRIPTION	DATE

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5/11/2022 3:21:24 PM



## Zoning Appeal

# 1443 Forest Avenue

## Zoning Standards

A major variation shall be recommended by the Zoning Board of Appeals only if it makes findings, based upon the evidence presented to it, that each of the following standards has been met:

1. The physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property involved with bring a specific hardship upon the owner as distinguished from an inconvenience if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out;

We believe the specific requirements do create a hardship in both severely compromising the utility of the resulting spaces (the new area garage would be limited to less than 16'-6" in depth which is impractical for all but the smallest cars) and also severely compromising the aesthetics of the addition. That aesthetic compromise would most directly affect the neighbors as the northwest corner, which is the area affected, has limited visibility from the primary user spaces of the Owner back yard but significant views from the neighbors to the north and east.

2. The aforesaid unique physical condition did not result from an action of any person having an interest in the property, but was created by natural forces or was the result or was the result of governmental action, other than the adoption of this Zoning Ordinance, for which no compensation was paid;

The situation is the result of an existing condition that was not created by the Owner or any other person of interest in the property or for any compensation. It was the result of the work of the original builder when they located the home.

3. The conditions upon which the petition for variation is based may not be applicable generally to other property within the same zoning classification;

We don't believe it can be applied generally, as it is related to the specific circumstance of this house, specifically: (1) the home's position on the site, (2) the siting of the neighbor's home and driveway, and (3) the specific configuration of the home. This appeal simply tries to recognize the uniqueness of the sum combination of these circumstances to create a hardship in this specific instance.

4. The purpose of the variation is not based predominantly upon a desire for economic gain;

The goal is to provide access and space for family member that has increasing mobility challenges, not any economic gain.



5. The granting of the variation shall not be detrimental to the public welfare or unduly injurious to the enjoyment, use, or development value of other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located;

The Owner has had conversations with the neighbors immediately adjacent to both sides of the work and both support the variance which indicates that the work will not adversely affect the public or detract from other properties. We would actually argue that the variance would benefit the neighbors as the resulting project has a more natural and aesthetically complete and cohesive solution with the variance.

6. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, or substantially increase the danger of fire, or otherwise endanger the public safety or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood;

As is noted in the project description, we don't believe the variance will impair adequate light or air to the adjacent site which is reinforced by the neighbor's support of the project because the difference between the allowable structure and the proposed structural is minimal at barely over 10sf of floor area. In addition, we believe the configuration will actually make the relation to the adjacent property safer, again as summarized in the project description, related to how the new roof overhang will both be higher and further removed from the neighbors while also being fire rated (where the existing eave is not rated).

7. That the granting or the variation would not unduly tax public utilities and facilities in the area;

The variance would only alter the addition by a little over 10 square feet of floor area, which won't have any material effect on utilities.

8. That there is no means other than the requested variation by which the alleged hardship or difficulty can be avoided or remedied to a degree sufficient to permit a reasonable use of the subject property.

There really is no alternative other than completely rebuilding the attached garage. That, however, would increase the costs of the project exponentially and create an even larger hardship for the Owner. Such a move would also be extremely difficult to reconcile with the existing home where a second floor balcony, one of the unique and interesting architectural elements of the home, would be at least partially covered which would be a significant loss to the architecture of the home. It would also likely block a first floor window on the east elevation significantly affecting the views and daylight there as well.

Again, a variance that only alters the footprint of the home by slightly over 10 square feet would seem to be the simplest, most efficient way to address the hardship to the Owner while also providing a final product that is also the best solution for the neighbors.



Zoning Appeal

**1443 Forest Avenue**

Photos



View to back yard with existing garage to left.



View of existing garage from south.

**Architecture - Interiors - Landscape**

1216 Fair Oaks Ave, Oak Park, IL 60302 Ph: 847.951.7568



View from southeast of existing garage and house with neighbor to right.



View showing setback of neighbor's house and entirely concrete driveway between houses.



View between houses from the front.



View between houses from the back.



Detailed view between houses at adjacent garages.

Architecture - Interiors - Landscape

1216 Fair Oaks Ave, Oak Park, IL 60302 Ph: 847.951.7568

**From:** [Mizgala, James W.](#)  
**To:** [Cliff Radatz](#)  
**Cc:** [Dawn Mizgala](#)  
**Subject:** Viresh and Karuna Rawal's Home at 1443 Forest Avenue, River Forest  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 31, 2022 4:12:22 PM

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Dear Village of River Forest Zoning Board Members,

We have been neighbors of Viresh and Karuna Rawal's family for almost 18 years. The purpose of this email is to express our support for their plans to build an addition above their attached garage and their requested zoning variation. We know that the Rawals are caring for Karuna's aging parents, and the addition will allow for the inclusion of an elevator providing her parents access to the house without having to climb stairs. The addition will also include a wheelchair-accessible bathroom and living space for when their health declines further. We applaud their willingness to embrace this important responsibility and believe our community should be facilitating families in such situations. Also, we understand that the addition is designed to blend with the house and will most likely increase property values in our neighborhood. Finally, we think the house will look odd if the variance is not granted.

Because what the Rawals are requesting is both reasonable and laudable, we are fully supportive.

Dawn and James Mizgala  
1503 Forest Avenue  
River Forest

**From:** [Linda Reisberg](#)  
**To:** [Cliff Radatz](#)  
**Subject:** Letter re: Addition to 1443 Forest Ave.  
**Date:** Monday, May 30, 2022 5:24:00 PM

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Dear Mr. Radatz,

I am writing in support of the plans submitted by my neighbors, Viresh and Karuna Rawal.

I reside at 1439 Forest Avenue, River Forest, directly south of Rawal's 1443 Forest Avenue home. I am aware that they have applied for a permit to construct a room above their garage to accommodate Karua's parents, who have lived with them for the past year. The plan is to have them continue to live with them indefinitely. The parents are elderly (her father is 93, and her mother is 84), both use walkers and have considerable difficulty on stairs. Because of this difficulty and also in anticipation of likely further limitations on their mobility, the Rawals want to create a living space for them.

It is my understanding that the plans will include the installation of an elevator in the garage and a room above the garage with a handicap-accessible bathroom. The elevator will make it possible for them to access the house and move between floors without having to use steps. I have been shown the plans for the proposed addition and extension of the garage. I support this construction, which is necessary to accommodate their elderly parents, now permanently living with them.

Additionally, it was explained to me that the new building code requires that the north wall of the 5-foot garage expansion and the room above it will need to be set back by 2 feet compared to the north wall of the rest of their house. I have been told that they have submitted an appeal for a variance to allow them to build the north wall making it continuous with the rest of their home. I support their request for the variance. It does not appear to me that allowing the wall to be continuous will negatively impact the overall appearance of the home or the safety of the neighbors. I am happy to answer any questions that you might have regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Linda Reisberg and Peter Brown

**From:** [CAROL SCHWEIG](#)  
**To:** [Cliff Radatz](#)  
**Subject:** addition on Forest  
**Date:** Monday, May 30, 2022 6:08:14 AM

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Cliff Radatz  
Village of River Forest

Dear Mr. Radatz,

We are writing to inform you that we approve the planned construction of an addition above the garage at 1443 Forest Avenue, where Karuna and Viresh Rawal reside. We also support their request for a variance that would allow the north wall of the garage expansion and the addition above it to be in line with the current north wall of their house.

We live at 1440 Park Avenue, River Forest, directly East of 1443 Forest Avenue. Karuna's parents, who are quite senior and have difficulty walking, are residing with them. The planned addition will allow them to have an elevator, which will enable the parents to get in and out of the house without having to go up or down stairs. We believe it is important our village to be supportive of the needs of elderly and handicapped residents. Approving the permit for this construction is the right thing to do, as it will enable the Rawals to care Karuna's parents rather than be forced to place them in an assisted living facility.

With regard to the variance, the new construction will be more harmonious with the rest of the house. Setting back a 5 foot section by 2 feet will look awkward and not add anything positive.

Sincerely,

Kurtis and Carol Schweig  
1440 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305



**Village of River Forest**  
**Village Administrator's Office**

400 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Tel: 708-366-8500

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**MEMORANDUM**

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Date: June 3, 2022

To: Frank Martin, Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Matt Walsh, Assistant to the Village Administrator

Subj: Proposed Text Amendments – Solar Energy Collection Systems

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**Issue:**

At its April 25, 2022 meeting, the Village Board of Trustees directed the Village Administrator to petition the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding solar energy collection systems. The purpose of the June 9, 2022 public hearing is for the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider the proposed text amendment. This hearing has been advertised on the Village website, a legal notice was posted at Village Hall and in the *Wednesday Journal* in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. It was also announced on social media and in the Village newsletter.

The purpose of the proposed language is to explicitly define and accommodate solar energy collection systems in the Village.

**Petition:**

Pursuant to Section 10-5-5 of the River Forest Zoning Ordinance, the Village Board of Trustees has petitioned the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider text amendments to amend Chapter 7 and Chapter 21 of the Zoning Ordinance to create standards for solar energy collection systems and to define the accessory use allowance in each zoning district. The petition is in response to a Sustainability Commission recommendation. One of the goals of the Sustainability Commission is to obtain the SolSmart Silver Designation for the Village. A requirement for the Silver designation is a zoning clarification letter that declares solar energy systems as an accessory use, however staff is unable to issue such a letter without first amending the Zoning Code.

Currently, the Zoning Code is silent on solar energy systems. Staff has interpreted such systems as appliances to the primary use, which has allowed the Village to issue these types of building permits. The proposed language defines standards for both roof mounted and ground mounted systems, and adds both systems to the land use chart in Chapter 21 of the Zoning Code. Approval of the proposed

language would define roof mounted systems as a permitted accessory use in all zoning districts, subject to standards. Ground mounted systems would be a permitted accessory use in R1 through R3 districts, and a special use in all other districts, subject to standards.

**Attachments:**

1. Planning Consultant Houseal Lavigne Memo, including Draft Language
2. April 25, 2022 Village Board Memo

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** May 27, 2022

SENT VIA EMAIL

**To:** Village of River Forest  
Brian Murphy, Village Administrator

**From:** Houseal Lavigne Associates  
John Houseal, FAICP, Partner  
Jackie Wells, AICP, Project Manager

**Re:** **Solar Energy Collection Systems**  
**Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment**

This memorandum is delivered to the Village of River Forest along with draft zoning ordinance amendment language to accommodate ground mounted and roof mounted solar energy collection systems in the Village. The attached draft zoning ordinance amendment language proposed to update Chapter 7: Regulations of General Applicability with a new Section 10-7-6 with standards for ground mounted solar energy collection systems in subsection A and standards for roof mounted solar energy collections systems in subsection B.

The land use chart, included in Section 10-21-3: Appendix A – Land Use Chart is also proposed to be amended to include “Ground mounted solar energy collection system” and “Roof mounted solar energy collection system” under the “Accessory Uses” section of the chart. Note “2” is proposed to accompany the accessory uses to clarify that the systems are required to comply with the associated standards. The new language proposed to be added to the table is presented in blue in the attached.

## CHAPTER 7

### REGULATIONS OF GENERAL APPLICABILITY

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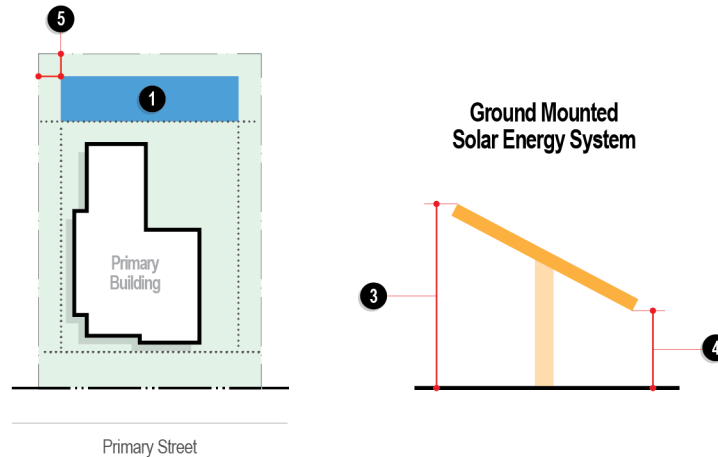
#### 10-7-6: Solar Energy Collection Systems Standards

##### A. Ground Mounted Solar Energy Collection System.

1. Ground mounted solar energy collection systems shall be permitted in the rear yard only.
2. An unlimited quantity of panels is permitted on all zoning lots with the exception of any lot in a RS, or RD district ten thousand (10,000) square feet or less in size, which are limited to a total of one hundred (100) square feet in area of panels.
3. The maximum height of ground mounted solar energy collection systems shall be five (5) feet in height, measured from the grade at the base of the pole to the highest edge of the system.
4. Minimum clearance between the lowest point of the system and the surface on which the system is mounted is twelve (12) inches.
5. All parts of the freestanding system shall be set back ten (10) feet from the side and rear lot lines and shall not be located in a public utility easement.
6. Any necessary battery, battery storage, or generator equipment accessory to the ground mounted solar energy collection system and its standard operation shall be permitted subject to meeting all applicable standards of this ordinance.

##### *Ground Mounted Solar Energy Collection Systems*

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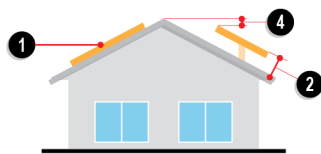
**B. Roof Mounted Solar Energy Collection System.**

1. Roof mounted solar energy collection systems may be located on any roof face of principal or accessory buildings. Systems should be flush mounted when possible.
2. Systems on residential structures shall not extend beyond twelve (12) inches parallel to the roof surface of a pitched roof or flat roof.
3. Systems on nonresidential structures shall not extend beyond thirty-six (36) inches parallel to the roof surface of a pitched roof or flat roof.
4. Systems on all structures shall not extend above the highest peak of a pitched roof. Height is measured from the roof surface on which the system is mounted to the highest edge of the system.
5. All materials used for racking, mounts, mounting clamps, and flashings shall be of a color consistent with the color of the roof surface to minimize visibility.
6. Any necessary battery, battery storage, or generator equipment accessory to the roof mounted solar energy collection system and its standard operation shall be permitted subject to meeting all applicable standards of this ordinance.

***Roof Mounted Solar Energy Collection Systems***

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**Residential Structure**



**Nonresidential Structure**



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## CHAPTER 21

### LAND USE CHART

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#### 10-21-3: APPENDIX A – 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
ACCESSORY USES								
Child daycare center	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	S
Child daycare home	P	P	P	N	P	P	N	N
Commissaries for students and faculty	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
Dormitories	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
Garages, parking facilities, and similar off street parking	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Rectories, parsonages and parish houses	N	N	P	N	P	P	N	P
Small wireless facilities <sup>1</sup>	S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S
Other accessory structures for mechanical equipment, storage of mechanical equipment and vehicles and athletic fields and stands	P	P	P	N	N	N	N	P
Ground mounted solar energy collection system <sup>2</sup>	P	P	S	S	S	S	S	S
Roof mounted solar energy collection system <sup>2</sup>	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P = Permitted use   S = Special use   N = Prohibited use   PD = Planned development required

Note:

1. Small wireless facilities, as defined and regulated by title 5, chapter 16, "Small Wireless Facilities", of this Code, are permitted uses in all rights-of-way within the Village, and are allowed outside of the right-of-way as specified in this table.

2. Ground mounted solar energy collection systems and roof mounted solar energy collection systems shall be subject to the standards established in Section 10-7-6.



**Village of River Forest**  
**Public Works and Development Services**

400 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Tel: 708-366-8500

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: April 19, 2022

To: Catherine Adduci, Village President  
Village Board of Trustees

From: Sara Phyfer, Management Analyst

Subj: Sustainability Commission Recommendation Related to Solar Energy Systems and SolSmart Silver

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One goal of the Sustainability Commission is to obtain the SolSmart Silver designation for the Village. SolSmart is a national organization that helps to reduce bureaucratic barriers to solar access, and in 2019, the Village was awarded the SolSmart Bronze designation. In order to obtain the Silver designation, the Village needs to meet the following criteria:

**Total of 100 Points**

The Village currently has 85 points and can satisfy the additional 15 points with the following:

- 1) PI-8 (20 points): *Provide an online process for solar PV permit submission and approval*  
In April of 2021, the Village launched permitting software which can be accessed at [riverforest.onlma.com](http://riverforest.onlma.com). The permit process is entirely online and includes a permit type specifically for solar energy systems.
- 2) MD-4 (20 points): *Support a community solar program*  
In September of 2022, the Village Board of Trustees passed a [resolution](#) supporting the Community Solar Clearinghouse Solution Program (CS2).

Because these two items were completed after receiving the Bronze designation, the Village is eligible for these points.

**Zoning Clarification**

Pre-requisite credit PZ-4 states: *Post an online document from the Planning/Zoning Department that states accessory use solar PV is allowed by-right in all major zones. (e.g. via a zoning determination letter)*

The Village's Zoning Code, which governs definitions of accessory uses, does not currently contemplate solar energy systems. Staff has been interpreting them as *appliances* to the primary use, which has allowed the Village to issue these types of building permits. Use of the term "accessory use" is a strict requirement for this credit. In order to define these systems as

an accessory use, the Zoning Code must be amended. This is done through the text amendment process, and Staff does not have the authority to bypass this process and declare solar energy systems an accessory use.

At their April 12, 2022 meeting, the Sustainability Commission was presented with the following options to move forward:

- Option 1 is to wait for the Zoning Code overhaul, which will include an update related to solar energy systems, and resubmit once codified. This overhaul is planned for FY23, which begins May 1, 2022.
- Option 2 is to make a recommendation to the Village Board to proceed with a standalone text amendment for solar energy systems. If the Board is amenable, they would remand it to the Zoning Board of Appeals, who would then hold a public hearing and take their recommendation back to the Village Board for final consideration.

At their meeting, the Sustainability Commission made a recommendation to the Village Board to proceed with a standalone text amendment for solar energy systems. The Commission is also interested in reviewing and capping permitting fees for solar energy systems, however a modification to permit fees is not needed for the SolSmart Silver designation and there is no recommendation related to permitting fees at this time.

If the Village Board agrees with this recommendation, the following motion would be appropriate:

*Motion to direct the Village Administrator to propose text amendments related to solar energy systems to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a public hearing and recommendation.*

Attachments:

Example Solar Energy Standards

SolSmart Program Guide