



**CRYSTAL LAKE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016  
HELD AT THE CRYSTAL LAKE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hayden at 7:30 p.m. On roll call, members Batastini, Esposito, Goss, Jouron, Skluzacek, and Hayden were present. Mr. Greenman was absent.

Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Community Development, and Dave Pardys, Special Counsel, were present from Staff.

Mr. Hayden asked those in attendance to rise to say the Pledge of Allegiance. He led those in attendance in the Pledge.

Mr. Hayden stated that this meeting was being televised now as well as recorded for future playback on the City's cable station.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 6, 2016 PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING**

Mr. Skluzacek moved to approve the minutes from the January 6, 2016 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting as presented. Mr. Batastini seconded the motion. On roll call, members Batastini, Goss, Skluzacek, and Hayden voted aye. Members Esposito and Jouron abstained. Motion passed.

**2015-63 CRYSTAL LAKE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL – 1200 McHenry Ave.** – PUBLIC HEARING  
Special Use Permits A. (Section 2-400) for a high school for existing South High School, and B. (Section 4-600D) for accessory structures over 900 square feet; and Variations for: A. Section 3-200 A/B from the maximum height requirement of 15 feet for an accessory structure to permit 21' 9" for the proposed west bleachers and 42' 3" for the proposed east bleachers, and B. Section 4-200D4 from the required parking standard of 1,087 parking spaces to allow 1,046 parking spaces via on-site and off-site parking arrangements.

Mr. Hayden stated that the sign had been posted. He said the surrounding property owners were notified and the Certificate of Publication was in the file. Mr. Hayden waived the reading of the legal notice without objection.

Lisa Waggoner, attorney, Scott Shepard, Principal, Joe Cole, Vice Principal, Jim Woods, architect, Steve Welter, landscape architect, and Jeremy Davis, Deputy Superintendent, were present to represent the petition. Ms. Waggoner said they are presenting an application for approval for two Special Use Permits and Variations for the proposed improvements to the Crystal Lake South High School property. Many of the Commissioners were present at the meeting on April 15, 2015 and much of the presentation will be duplicated. She added that Dr. Thomas, Superintendent for School District 155, had a conflict with this meeting and apologized for not attending. Ms. Waggoner said the application is for variations for both the east and west bleachers but particularly the east bleachers which also have a fence on top. The fence is

similar to what would be on a roof to screen the mechanical units. One of the Special Use Permits is to accept the South High School campus 'as is' and the other is for the accessory structures. This site is improved with many structures and is zoned R-2 Single Family Residential. Ms. Waggoner said the bleachers on the west side of the football field are currently 9 rows tall. The maximum height for accessory structures is 15 feet tall and principal structures are allowed to be taller. She added that the principal structures are exempt from the City's Building Code and are constructed to the fire safety codes. Ms. Waggoner described the surrounding uses and zoning districts.

Mr. Shepard gave his background in education and he has been at Crystal Lake South for about 2 1/2 years. He thanked the members for hearing this request. Mr. Shepard described his duties which cover all aspects of the school. There are currently 1,700 students at the facility and there are other people in charge of various aspects of the student life that report to him. He said that students are the primary user of this facility but they do work with other groups who rent out the facilities for their events. This happens on a regular basis. Originally the expansion of the bleachers was to address safety concerns. Also there was no handicap accessible seating and there was not enough space to handle the crowds. He added that the athletic field could not be located in another area of property since they are land-locked. If something would be moved it would affect another activity. Ms. Waggoner said the practical difficulty is the layout of facility. Their only option is for the bleachers to go up in height and not out in width. Mr. Shepard said the school provides new options for activities and it is a struggle to provide space for those activities. If the additional bleachers on the east side of the football field could not be built, that would create a hardship. The District also needs to have a safe place for students and fans to sit and watch the game or attend other activities. Previously at graduation they would have limited tickets available to students due to the bleacher size and safety concerns.

Mr. Woods reviewed his credentials and was associated with the design of Prairie Ridge High School. He showed a Power Point presentation which included an aerial photo of the site prior to the original bleacher addition. There was not enough seating, narrow aisles, a lack of required railings, and other code issues. Mr. Woods reviewed the original seating capacity and height of the original bleachers on the east and west sides of the football field as well as their heights of each. The new proposed east bleachers will seat approximately 2,300 people and would be 32 feet tall while the west bleachers will seat approximately 950 people and would be 21 feet tall. The distance from property line for the west bleachers was originally 77 feet and the proposed bleachers would be 91 feet. Mr. Hayden asked if a portion of the east bleachers will not be useable. Mr. Woods said he will explain that when he shows the plan.

Mr. Woods showed the plat of survey for the property and described the uses including the parking areas, tennis courts, bus parking, baseball diamonds, etc. The west bleachers have a much smaller footprint and east side bleachers have been reconfigured. The picnic shelter will be removed and the end sections of bleachers will not go all the way to top as the center sections do. Mr. Woods said the existing fence along the west property line is slated to be removed and a landscape buffer be added. Mr. Goss asked if the bleachers will be elevated or start at ground level. Mr. Woods stated they will be elevated.

Mr. Woods showed the west bleacher elevation which shows them to be approximately 139 feet from the back of bleachers to nearest rear of a home. He said there will be handicap seating on both sets of bleachers.

They are proposing a 6-foot fence with privacy slats at the top of the bleachers. Mr. Woods showed the drainage swale running north/south which leads to an 8-inch pipe to remove the water. He showed an enlarged portion of the engineering plans.

Mr. Woods said the press box is used to house members of the press – student and regular media, other coaches, and the top of the press box is used for filming the game. That area is accessed by a hatch and ladder inside the press box. The railing will have slats no more than 4 inches apart. The additional parking shown on the plan is not currently lined spaces but can be used. Also, the parking lot at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton has spaces available and the District is working on a written agreement. Mr. Woods said the press box also houses the sound system. The speakers are usually mounted on the press box and directed towards the field. There were six speakers being used and two will be eliminated. They will work with the sound system designer and staff on this.

Mr. Welter reviewed his credentials. He is also a LEED accredited landscape architect. He described the landscape plan and said the City has specific requirements. They are proposing 33 trees total, which is almost double what is required. They are not showing any shrubs. Mr. Welter said the proposed buffer is 30 feet wide and is almost a continuous tree line. Their plan shows 8-foot tall evergreens and 3-inch caliper trees. Also they will be planting a variety of material not just one or two different species. He said they are also proposing native plantings in the swale area that can handle the various soil situations. The staff report suggests additional screening on the north and south. The long jump and pole vault areas are located there. Mr. Welter said there are grasses that are mowable for the swale area so it looks like a manicured turf grass area.

Mr. Cole reviewed his educational credentials. He has been with the District for 29 years and 15 years at South as Vice Principal. He oversees the field area and maintenance of it as well as the cleanup of the area and security for the field and press box. He said the Crystal Lake Police are at their events for added security. He added that parking at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton has been going on for a few years. They have a verbal agreement for certain games, graduation, etc. to be sure they don't have any events for that time as well. As people arrive on high activity dates they are directed to that parking lot. There is a plan in place so people can be drop off and then directed to park at the other parking lot. He said the traffic signal at McHenry Avenue and Dartmoor is designed for pedestrian crossing. Mr. Cole added that some students currently park at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton during the school day and he doesn't recall having any problems with the street crossings and no crossing guard provided. A formal written agreement is currently being reviewed by the Dioceses of Rockford.

Mark Stonikas, 1131 Amberwood Dr., believes that the year round landscape goes across only half of his property. He would like to see more evergreens added to the north to provide more year-round screening. He feels the existing school fence should remain since it provides additional security to both the field and the adjacent homes. Also, with proposed swale cuts of one to two foot in depth to the existing grade, the wider the area, the more maintainable it will be. Mr. Stonikas said that it would be easier to maintain if the swale were between the existing homeowners' fence line and the school's side of the existing fence. He said the bushes that are along the school's fence were trimmed only one time in the 25 years that he has lived in the

home. Nothing has been done recently to maintain the bushes and he hopes the proposed landscaping will be maintained and replaced if it dies. Also native grasses do collect papers and garbage and he would hope to see a mowable grass cover.

Paul Schwake, 1153 Amberwood, which is located at the south end of the bleachers. He does not want the existing fence removed. It is 7 to 8 feet tall with barbed wire on top. They rely on this fence being there; otherwise, people will cut through the yards and hop the fence to get in. Mr. Schwake said he would also prefer the landscaping to be placed inside of the existing fence. Mr. Hayden asked if there have been people cutting through the yards. Mr. Schwake said they can't climb over the existing fence, which is nice.

Ron Levo, 1102 Amberwood, lives across the street. Mr. Levo believes that removing the existing fence will allow access to the field since not everyone has a fence. His concern is with the parking on both sides on Amberwood which makes it hard for cars and emergency vehicles to get through. One year the police closed off parking on one side of the street. He would like to have the City consider temporary "NO PARKING" on one side of the street during events.

There was no one else in the public who wished to comment on this petition. The public portion was closed at this time.

Mr. Hayden recapped what was discussed. Ms. Waggoner said they have been working with staff so the grass can be maintained/mowed instead of having to burn the area after several years. The fence is being removed to allow for a better screen closer to their properties. She said they can work with engineering to be sure the storm water is taken care of and allow for their own security fence. They can work with staff to keep the fence and add more trees and evergreens on the north and south sides. Ms. Waggoner said they do maintain the entire 59 acres and is not sure why the hedge row was not maintained in the past. She added that people are regularly using the off-site parking now.

Mr. Batastini thanked everyone for coming to get this issue taken care of. He asked how the seating numbers were arrived at. Mr. Woods said the standard is 18 inches per seat but the difference is the number of aisles and their widths. More space is taken up by circulation due to building codes changes. That translates into a much greater square foot per seat. Mr. Hayden asked about the number of seats on the bleachers. Mr. Woods said it's not an issue of seat size. Mr. Hayden is concerned that if the numbers are that off with the calculations, that means the parking is off as well. Mr. Woods said there won't be an exact number on the capacity for seating until the shop drawings are completed.

Mr. Batastini thanked the district for flip flopping the bleachers. He has no issues with widening the west bleachers. One issue is the landscape buffer. It's solid but he is concerned with the proposed slats in the fence. If kids want to make noise to support the team, they will be kicking the fence and the slats. That is going to be loud. Mr. Esposito suggested they use the same material that is used to screen the tennis courts. Mr. Batastini agreed. He also agrees that the existing fence be kept and to extend the landscape to the south. He would prefer that the pits for the long jump and pole vault not be moved. Mr. Hayden said he is not sure where they are located now according to the plan. Mr. Goss said both are to be moved. Mr. Woods said they

were moved already as part of previous project. Mr. Batastini said he is ok with extending the evergreens to the north and keep the pits there. Mr. Batastini said it is important to maintain their security fence. He asked what typically happens with parking at a football game. Mr. Shepard said every space is typically taken and there is also parking in the neighborhood. Mr. Batastini asked if there are many people who park at the church. Mr. Shepard said the kids know about that parking but he doesn't know firsthand if that lot is used. Mr. Batastini asked if there are parking restrictions on Amberwood and Dartmoor. Ms. Rentzsch said there are restrictions in the area during the day when school is in session. She added that the Traffic Safety Committee could check into it. Mr. Batastini doesn't feel that moving the buses would be a good idea due to expense and possible vandalism. He asked about parking on the grass. Mr. Shepard said they had used the fields in the past but it is a liability issue and some of the fields are now irrigated. Mr. Batastini said he doesn't have a problem with cars parking in the neighborhood as long as it is on one side of the street. If they park on both sides it's hard to get up and down the street.

Mr. Batastini asked how many speakers were connected to the original sound system. Mr. Cole believes it was six and they were smaller units. Mr. Batastini asked if the speakers could be put on the west side and use a wireless system. Ms. Waggoner said the sound vendor the district had previously uses seems to have disappeared and they can't contact them. They are currently in the process of finding a new sound vendor. They will work with staff on the sound system. They don't want to be required to have all on the west side if there is a better way to do it. Mr. Batastini said sound is very directional. Mr. Woods said eliminating speakers may not take care of the problem.

Mr. Jouron said at the last meeting there were complaints regarding the metal stands creaking and crackling with the change of temperature and sun. Mr. Woods said the bleachers meet the codes. Mr. Jouron likes adding landscaping to the south. Ms. Waggoner said it does shield the bleachers themselves and by adding more to the south will shield the ramp as well. She said they will work with staff on the landscaping as well as keeping it out of the swale.

Mr. Esposito said the parking is what it is. People will do what they are going to do and park where they want. He suggested putting in a foot path in through the park. There are a lot of people who walk to the games and many walk through the park. It is hard to go around it. Mr. Esposito also likes the grasses to be mowed so you won't be swatting mosquitoes. He likes that the stands were moved and the west bleachers height lowered. He asked if there will be storage under the west bleachers. Mr. Shepard said no. Mr. Esposito feels the existing fence needs to be kept. That helps to keep unwanted people out.

Mr. Skluzacek said he likes the revised plan. It is needed and he has no concerns with the height proposed. The biggest problem is the parking. It's a long walk between the football field and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and people need to be careful when crossing the streets. He also agrees that the existing fence needs to remain. Mr. Skluzacek said that if the buses are moved, the drivers will need to park their cars somewhere which will take up needed parking spaces.

Mr. Goss asked how wide the drive aisle is. Mr. Cole said two lanes. Mr. Goss said if people park along the exit drive aisle, it could be harder to get people out. He asked who patrols the church parking lot during the

week. Mr. Shepard said no one. Mr. Goss said there are students who park in the strip center. Mr. Shepard said the businesses and church usually patrol their lots and contact the school if there is a problem. Mr. Goss agreed that the fence should stay. He would like the swale to be made gentler and more easily mowed. He asked about the drainage of the field. Mr. Davis said it drains underground to the south. Mr. Goss would like the landscaping from the 10 yard line to the 10 yard line. He asked if there will be walking in front of the bleachers. Mr. Woods said there will be a walkway behind the bleachers. Mr. Goss suggested that it be paved. He asked if the ticket area will be moved. Mr. Woods said no and that the main gate will remain in the same location. Mr. Goss asked if the PE classes will be using the bleachers on the east side. Mr. Shepard said yes potentially. Mr. Goss is also concerned with the sound system too.

Mr. Goss stated that in the beginning of the presentation it was stated that the property is land locked. He had personal written letters to the District at the time the surrounding properties were being developed to take the land instead of monetary compensation. He was assured that the land would not be needed and that the school would not have more than 1400 students.

Mr. Hayden asked if there was a noise ordinance and if it applied to the school. Ms. Rentzsch said there is an ordinance but it does not apply to this venue but excessive noise for extended periods of time is reported to the Police. Mr. Hayden asked why they were talking about the speakers at all since the Police can't do anything about it. Ms. Rentzsch said the Police will check out a complaint to be sure there isn't an excessive situation and will still talk to the owner that is creating the excessive noise, in this case, above and beyond a typical football game. Mr. Hayden said he understands they are looking out for the neighbors but the high school was there. He said this is a stadium and other events are held there as well as school events. This will create a parking problem and moving the buses is a significant cost. Mr. Hayden asked where people are during a track event for the pole vault and long jump. Mr. Shepard will move to the area of the event. Mr. Esposito said there aren't many people who watch those two events. Mr. Hayden said there will need to be space for people.

Mr. Hayden asked if additional washrooms will be needed. Mr. Shepard said they are not planning to add more or move the location. Mr. Batastini asked about port-a-potties. Mr. Shepard said they are located next to the washroom building.

Mr. Hayden said enrollment is declining. Mr. Shepard said yes. Mr. Hayden said at some point in time the District will possibly need to close schools and consolidate the high schools. Mr. Shepard said he could not speculate but anything is possible. Mr. Hayden said they need to look ahead as to what type of parking problem there may be.

Mr. Hayden and the members reviewed the Findings of Fact. All members believe that most of them are met. Mr. Jouron doesn't believe that this request will not be detrimental to the value of other properties. Mr. Hayden said the property values were set since the school was there prior to the homes. Mr. Hayden said there is a parking issue there. The parking on the surrounding streets is limited on school days and believes that there needs to be a restriction for parking on one side of the street during school events. The remaining items are met.

Mr. Hayden reviewed the Standards for Variations. Ms. Waggoner said extracurricular activities are as important as the education of the student. Mr. Goss said he has a problem with the property being considered land locked. The district had an opportunity to expand their facilities and they chose not to. They are stuck with what they have because of the choice that was made. Mr. Esposito said it is hard to put the kids on the spot. Mr. Batastini understands what Mr. Goss is saying.

Mr. Hayden said the character of the property will not change. He is concerned with the parking.

Ms. Waggoner thanked the Commissioners for their consideration and they will do their best to work with staff and the property owners. She reviewed the conditions listed in the staff report. The plans will be modified as needed to reflect the conditions of approval. The site plan has been resolved and corrected. She is requesting that they work with staff, the neighbors and a sound vendor on the sound system modifications. Ms. Waggoner said a chain link fence will be provided with slats add for the privacy of the neighbors. She said they would prefer not to relocate the buses due to the expense and they are working on the agreement with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. A copy of the agreement will be provided for the City's review and approval. They will work will staff to be sure the fence can remain, the stormwater works, and the landscaping works to assure privacy and still allow for maintenance. She added that they will also work with the stormwater engineer so the grasses uses can be mowed and keep trash to a minimum.

Mr. Hayden asked about the Special Use Permit. Mr. Pardys said the approval is tied to the site plan.

Mr. Hayden prefers that the City reserve the right to require crossing guards if needed. Mr. Esposito feels the school will take care of that if they find it necessary. Let the school handle the kids. Mr. Goss asked if the Traffic Safety Committee can look at the parking stalls on exit aisles; if this will be a hazard or not. Ms. Rentzsch said yes.

Mr. Batastini moved to approve the Special Use Permit (Section 2-400) for the existing South High School at 1200 S. McHenry Avenue. Mr. Jouron seconded the motion. On roll call, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Batastini moved to approve the Special Use Permit from B. (Section 4-600D) for accessory structures over 900 square feet for Crystal Lake South High School at 1200 S. McHenry Avenue with the following conditions:

1. Approved plans, reflecting staff and advisory board recommendations, as approved by the City Council:
  - A. Application (Community High School District 155, date signed 12/1/15)
  - B. Plat of Survey (Marchese and Sons, dated 11/7/2014)
  - C. Architectural Site Plan (FGM Architects, dated 11/30/15)
  - D. Bleacher Elevations (FGM Architects, dated 11/30/15)
  - E. Landscape Plan (FGM Architects, dated 11/30/15)

F. Site Improvement Plans (Spaceco, dated 12/19/14, revised 11/23/15)

2. Site Plan

A. The plat of survey at the northwest corner of the site indicates Concord Drive traverses the School District's property. This right-of-way was dedicated with Four Colonies Unit 11 and should be corrected on the survey.

3. Sounds Standards

A. ~~The speaker system for the football field must be maintained in a position so that the speakers are mounted in an easterly direction.~~ **Work with staff and south consultant to determine the location of the speakers for minimum impact on the neighbors.**

4. Bleachers

A. The plans do not provide specific details on the screening fence on the west-side bleachers. The west-side bleachers screening fence may be chain-link with neutral colored privacy slat inserts **or wind screen similar to what is used on the tennis courts.** The final details of all proposed fencing must be submitted for review and approval by staff.

5. Parking Plan

A. ~~For large scale events where more attendees are expected than can be accommodated with the provided parking, bus relocation must be provided to allow for additional on-site parking for event attendees.~~

B. ~~Crossing attendees must be provided to aid pedestrians crossing from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to the High School property.~~ The petitioner enter into and keep in force a license agreement with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to ensure that not less than 269 parking during low demand times for the church. The license agreement shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Attorney.

6. Landscape Plan

A. Indicate the location of the existing chain link fence west of the football field and its relation to the proposed landscape screen. Keep the existing fence in place and locate the proposed landscaping as close to the fence as practical on the east side, allowing for more room for stormwater conveyance to the west.

B. Extend a landscape screening material for the single family homes to the north and south to completely screen the west-side bleachers, **as discussed at the PZC meeting.**

C. The landscape screening material must be planted as soon as practical to establish the plants early and maintained as long as the bleachers are present. Provide a maintenance plan for the landscape screen to the City.

D. Substitute the proposed grasses shown in the area along the rear yards of the single family homes for a more maintainable vegetated cover.

7. Future Accessory Structures

A. No additional accessory structures shall be constructed or installed without the petitioner having



first applied for and obtained approval of an amendment to the special use permit.

8. The petitioner shall address all of the review comments and requirements of the Fire Rescue, Police, Public Works and Community Development Departments and the City's stormwater consultant, CBBL.

**9. The City's Traffic Safety Committee is to review "NO PARKING" on one side of the neighboring streets (Concord, Amberwood, etc.) during school events for safety reasons.**

Mr. Skluzacek seconded the motion. On roll call, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Batastini moved to approve the Variation for: A. Section 3-200 A/B from the maximum height requirement of 15 feet for an accessory structure to permit 21' 9" for the proposed west bleachers for Crystal Lake South High School at 1200 S. McHenry Avenue with the conditions listed for the above motion.

Mr. Jouron seconded the motion. On roll call, members Batastini, Esposito, Jouron, Skluzacek, and Hayden voted aye. Mr. Goss voted no. Motion passed.

Mr. Batastini moved to approve Variations for: A. Section 3-200 A/B from the maximum height requirement of 15 feet for an accessory structure to permit 42' 3" for the proposed east bleachers including press box for Crystal Lake South High School at 1200 S. McHenry Avenue with the conditions listed for the above motion.

Mr. Jouron seconded the motion. On roll call, members Batastini, Esposito, Jouron, Skluzacek, and Hayden voted aye. Mr. Goss voted no. Motion passed.

Mr. Batastini moved to approve the Variation for: B. Section 4-200D4 from the required parking standard of 1,087 parking spaces to allow the existing 733 parking spaces for Crystal Lake South High School at 1200 S. McHenry Avenue with the conditions listed for the above motion.

Mr. Esposito seconded the motion. On roll call, members Batastini, Esposito, Jouron, and Skluzacek voted aye. Members Goss and Hayden voted no. Motion passed.

Mr. Hayden feels that this is pushing the parking problem onto the neighborhood.

**REPORT FROM PLANNING**

- UDO Amendments – various - referral
- MCC – 8900 Route 14 – Final PUD Amendment, Variation (signs)

Ms. Rentzsch reviewed the items on the agenda for the February 3, 2016 PZC meeting.

**COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Goss asked about the progress of the CVS project. Ms. Rentzsch stated that they closed on the property and demo and site permits have been applied for.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.