



Zoning Board of Appeals
Gregory Koeppen
Chair

500 W. Winchester Road, Suite 101
Libertyville, Illinois 60048
Phone 847-377-2600
Email: pbdzoning@lakecountyil.gov

February 18, 2025

TO: Gregory Koeppen, Chair
Lake County Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Thomas Chefalo, Principal Planner/Project Manager
Lake County Department of Planning, Building and Development

CASE NO: VAR-001047-2025

REQUESTED ACTION: Variance from the requirements of the Lake County, Illinois Code of Ordinances (LCC) to: Increase the maximum allowed Floor Area Factor from 0.30 to 0.54 to allow for the construction of a self-storage facility.

HEARING DATE: February 25, 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

OWNER: 18550 Grand Ave LLC, record owner

OF PARCELS: Three

SIZE: 5.47 Acres, per Lake County Maps Online

LOCATION: 18600, 18550, and 18520 W. Grand Ave Gurnee, IL

PINs: 0707311018, 0707311019 and 0707311020

EXISTING ZONING: General Commercial (GC)

EXISTING LAND USE: Parking lot adjacent to self-storage facility

PROPOSED LAND USE: Self-storage facility (indoor)

SURROUNDING ZONING / LAND USE

NORTH: R-3/ Single-family homes
WEST: R-6/ Multi-family apartments
SOUTH: Village of Gurnee/ Commercial
EAST: Village of Gurnee/ Commercial.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

LAKE COUNTY: Retail/Commercial
MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN 1 ½ MILES: Village of Gurnee: None designated, Village of Grayslake: None designated, Village of Lindenhurst, Third Lake and Old Mill Creek: Not available

DETAILS OF REQUEST

ACCESS: Access from IL Rte. 132 has been approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation and from Oakwood Dr. by the Warren Township Highway Commissioner.
CONFORMING LOT: The subject property is a conforming zoning lot in the GC district.
WETLAND / FLOODPLAIN: The property does not contain any floodplain; however, it does contain mapped wetlands that is contiguous to the stormwater detention basin.
SEWER AND WATER: The property is serviced by Lake County Public Works for sewer and water.

LAKE COUNTY AND EXTERNAL AGENCY COMMENTS

McHenry – Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District – Ryan Bieber

- The McHenry-Lake County SWCD finds that impact to natural resources from the proposed use is minimal for the purposes of the NRI report.

Lake County Public Works – Ying Miao

- The Lake County Department of Public Works (LCPW) has no objection to the variance request.

Lake County Building and Engineering Division

Joel Krause – Engineering

- Environmental Engineering has no objections to this variance request.

Ieva Donev – Building

- Building has no objections to this variance request.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- The property is a conforming zoning lot in the General Commercial (GC) zoning district.
- The maximum floor area factor for a conforming lot in the GC zoning district is 0.30, per Table 151.125(5): Non-Residential District Density and Dimensional Standards of the CC.
- Section 151.271 of the LCC defines floor area factor as “*An intensity measurement expressed as the total floor area per net site area.*”. Floor area is defined as “*The sum of the gross area for each of a building’s stories under roof measured from the exterior limits or faces of the structure.*”
- An existing self-storage building on the subject property’s eastern side was previously approved by Conditional Use Permit.

RECOMMENDATION FOR VARIANCE

In Staff’s opinion, the variance request does not fully meet all the approval criteria for variations specified in LCC Section 151.056(C)(4). As such, staff is compelled to recommend denial of the variance for the following reasons:

1. Exceptional conditions peculiar to the applicant’s property:

Comment: The subject property is a conforming lot in the GC zoning district. Approximately 0.73 acres of the property is covered by a utility easement. The Lake County Public Works Department required the applicant to dedicate 0.26 acres as utility easement during the redevelopment of the site. The land dedicated to utility easement significantly reduces the net site area therefore reducing the total floor area allowed on the site. There are no other significant site constraints on the property.

2. Practical difficulties or particular hardship in carrying out the strict letter of the regulation:

Comment: The existing self-storage building contains 68,495 sq. ft. of floor area. The building was previously occupied by an auto dealership. Based on the net buildable site area of 4.75 acres, the floor area factor of the site currently is 0.33. which exceeds the 0.30

maximum floor area factor for the GC zoning district. Although the vacant western third of the property would remain undevelopable without a variance to allow for an increase in the maximum floor area factor, the property owners have already established a self-storage facility on the zoning lot.

3. Harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning regulations:

Comment: The floor area factor was established to control the intensity of building mass on development sites. The site is constrained by a utility easement which reduces the permitted maximum floor area factor allowed on the site. However, because the utility easement is vacant and will be bordered by landscaping to the maximum extent practical, the utility easement effectively reduces the visual impact of building mass on the site. In addition, the proposed structure is in keeping with the character and massing of the commercial properties located along Grand Ave.

RECOMMENDED CONDITION

In the event the Board grants the proposed variance, staff recommends the following condition:

1. The location of the proposed structure shall be consistent with the site plan accompanying ZBA application #001047-2025.