



City of Highland Park  
1707 St. Johns Avenue  
Highland Park, Illinois 60035  
847.432.0800  
cityhpil.com

November 3, 2016

Dr. Michael Bregy  
North Shore School District #112  
Via Email: mbregy@nssd112.org

Subject: Next Steps Regarding City Staff Review of the NSSD 112 Conceptual Plan re: Edgewood Middle School

Dear Michael:

This is a follow-up to our meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 pertaining to North Shore School District 112's proposed reorganization plan specifically as it relates to Edgewood Middle School. The Mayor and I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and President Cohen previously, and most recently, our staff had the opportunity to review the proposed plans for Edgewood Middle School. Thanks to you and John Fuhrer for meeting with me and staff; the other City staff in attendance at the meeting was Police Chief Paul Shafer, Fire Chief Dan Pease, Community Development Director Joel Fontane and Director of Public Works Ramesh Kanapareddy. The purpose of this communication is to summarize the City's informal and *preliminary* input related specifically to community development, public safety, and infrastructure regarding the proposed modifications for Edgewood Middle School.

Based on your comments at our meeting, City staff understands that the District is planning to close Ravinia, Green Bay, Elm Place & Lincoln Schools at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. The number of students that would attend Edgewood Middle School would increase to 800 students. Included herein are components of the District's proposed changes in and around Edgewood and the City's preliminary feedback. Please note that this feedback is presented from the City's perspective with regard to public safety, traffic management, zoning and infrastructure requirements. We are not in any way opining on the District's educational, fiscal or labor needs and plans.

To that end, the City strongly recommends that the District update its independent traffic study, issue comprehensive communications, host neighborhood meetings to share proposed plans and invite feedback, as well as prepare a landscape plan to mitigate the impact of any proposed roadway modifications on the property from the neighbors. All of these processes should be conducted in advance of proceeding through the City's formal planning process.

#### Building & Design

1. A school is a permitted land use in the R5 district within which Edgewood Middle School is located. The proposed changes trigger a Design Review consideration before the City's Plan and

Design Commission. The District may also want to consider applying for a subdivision to consolidate all parcels into one lot which could ease future development.

2. It is understood that no exterior building modifications are proposed.
3. A security vestibule does not currently exist within the school. We recommend that one be built and that improvements to the District's security plan and any enhancements to security be reviewed with the Highland Park Police and Fire Departments.
4. The District should provide a current property survey that identifies setbacks related to the school and the proposed new ring road from adjacent property lines. The R5 District has a 40-foot required front yard. It's unclear whether the school building currently meets this requirement.
5. It appears that the existing school property has off-street parking within the required front yard. This is prohibited by current code. If this, or any other, non-conforming aspect is being expanded, then relief may be required. We will be able to make a final determination after reviewing a complete Design Review application.

#### Traffic Impact

6. The District's 2015 Traffic Study should be updated to reflect the proposed two-lane, one-way ring/loop road around the school with access off Edgewood Road. The Traffic Study should identify if this is the optimal ingress/egress option to mitigate traffic and safety issues and impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. It is understood that the 2015 Study was prepared with recommendations to accommodate up to 1000 students.
7. Review and consider improvements to the intersection at Green Bay and Edgewood. As discussed, the City is scheduled to improve the subject intersection in 2019/2020 and could coordinate with the District at that time to provide economies of scale of both projects.
8. Review the timing of the traffic signal at Green Bay and Edgewood, and review the signals north and south for enhanced traffic flow. The traffic report should identify the level of service, existing and proposed, at this intersection for both morning and afternoon peak hours (school release time).
9. Traffic aides should be used to help manage traffic flow to and from the school during peak periods. The Police Department can assist and provide training to the traffic aides, although the City cannot employ these individuals.
10. The bus queue lane should be reconstructed to accommodate additional buses.
11. It is understood that staggered start times would be problematic to implement due to the number of buses that are necessary to transport students. It is recommended that the District explore incentives to increase bus ridership to the national average thereby improving traffic congestion.
12. Improve pedestrian connectivity north of the school.

#### Emergency Access

13. The school is currently accessible by one roadway; a secondary access point is recommended. An emergency access drive could be considered with a breakaway bar to reinforce the access for public safety vehicles only. The drive could be constructed of grasscrete or similar construction to further reinforce use of the road for emergency purposes.

14. The Fire Lane would be reviewed and should be capable of withstanding a 75,000 pound load. Stacking drive lanes cannot be in the fire lane. This should be considered as part of an updated traffic study.
15. The District's Architect should furnish all appropriate maximum occupancy loads for the building.

#### Landscape

16. Prepare a tree inventory plan, in accordance with City's Tree Preservation Ordinance, that identifies the amount and type of landscaping that would be removed from the property to accommodate the looped roadway.
17. Draft a landscape plan that provides for equal to or greater landscape buffer from the school to the residential neighborhood to the north and east of the school. The internal circulation road is considered a drive aisle within the property and thus a "Vehicular Use Area." As such it needs to be have a landscape buffer of at least five feet in depth from abutting residential property lines and a screening fence.
18. Consider lights from vehicles impacting the abutting homes if the landscaping around the perimeter is not sufficiently addressed.

#### Engineering Considerations

19. Stormwater management plans will need to be submitted for review. Any on-site stormwater management facilities may require additional buffering and screening.
20. The District's engineer should review if the sanitary sewer (8" main) and water main (12" main) can accommodate the increased student population. A report needs to be submitted to ensure existing public infrastructure can handle the increased demand.
21. A net impervious surface area of 16,000 sq ft would require detention. With approximately 39,000 sq ft of roadway construction and with no existing storm water management systems on site, the engineering plan should account for detention.

#### Review Process

It is understood that the District is striving to have the roadway bid by March and contracted before the end of the school year. The City staff's preliminary review is that the plan cannot be accomplished, as the significant work effort detailed herein is needed prior to proceeding through the City's approval process. Following the revised traffic study, neighborhood meetings, and application submission, the City staff, City Plan & Design Commission, City Transportation Commission and City Council would need to review and approve any planned construction. This process, at a minimum, would take approximately six months prior to the bid and contracting process.

Attached is the Design Review Application that would need to be submitted. The Plan & Design Commission has final decision-making authority for design review applications. Depending on a final determination regarding zoning compliance, City Council approval may not be needed for the design review elements of this proposal. A subdivision does require City Council approval.

Please note that a final determination cannot be made about the zoning relief required until an accurate and complete application is submitted.

Public outreach is a critical part of the process. Design Review applications require notification to abutting property owners, however, the District may choose to provide notice to a broader area of the neighborhood. We recommend notifying all property owners within 400' of Edgewood Middle School, although applicants have chosen to provide community information to property owners within 800' of the subject site for broader outreach. You may also want to consider reaching the abutting neighborhood, which includes residents on Green Bay, Thackeray, Chaucer, Dryden, Carlisle and Saxony. From our experience, casting a wide net results in an improved process and a more widely accepted project. If desired, we can provide a map identifying properties within 800' of the school and provide you with the associated address information. Of great importance, it is recommended that the District organize neighborhood meetings early in the process to explain the project and the efforts the District is making to minimize the impact on the neighborhood. The neighborhood meetings are recommended in advance of the City's commission formal review process thus providing you an opportunity to share your preliminary plans with the public and consider their feedback prior to your formal application with the City.

We encourage you to please share this letter with your School Board and staff. If you have any questions following review of this preliminary feedback, please feel free to contact me at 847-926-1000 or gneukirch@cityhpil.com. Thank you again for sharing your conceptual plan with us.

Sincerely,



Ghida S. Neukirch  
City Manager

cc: City Council  
Joel Fontane, Director of Community Development  
Ramesh Kanapareddy, Director of Public Works  
Chief Dan Pease, Fire Department  
Chief Paul Shafer, Police Department

Attached: Design Review Application  
Application Checklist for Design Review  
Subdivision Application  
2016 Commission Deadlines



