



Village of Westmont COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

31 West Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559

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Village of Westmont Planning & Zoning Commission June 25, 2025 - Approved Minutes

The Village of Westmont Planning and Zoning Commission held a special meeting on Wednesday, **June 25, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.**, at the Westmont Village Hall located at 31 W. Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

1. Call to Order

Chair Doug Carmichael called the meeting to order at **6:00 PM**.

2. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Chair Doug Carmichael, Secretary Jill Peterson, Commissioners Conor Donoghue, Michael Lynn, Thomas Sharp, John F. Simpson IV

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Craig Thomas

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT TO TRANSACT BUSINESS

Staff: Scott Williams (Senior Planner), Joseph Hennerfiend (Community Development Director), John Zemenak (Village Attorney)

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Swearing-in of testifying attendees

5. Reminder to silence all electronic devices

6. Reminder to sign-in for any public testimony

7. Approval of the Minutes of the June 11, 2025 regular meeting.

MOTION by **Simpson** to approve the regular meeting minutes from June 11, 2025.

Seconded by **Sharp**.

VOTING:

Ayes: 5 - Carmichael, Peterson, Lynn, Sharp, Simpson

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 - Donoghue

Absent: 1 - Thomas

Motion Passed

8. Review of Public Hearing Procedures

9. Old Business

PUBLIC HEARING PZC 001-2025

Requests from the Village of Westmont regarding Zoning Ordinance text amendments as follows:

- 1) Zoning Ordinance text amendments to repeal Appendix A – Zoning, of the Westmont Code of



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Ordinances and to establish new Chapter 95 – Zoning, of the Westmont Code of Ordinance, with comprehensive updates to the entire Zoning Ordinance, including amendments to the zoning districts, development standards, planning processes, and other zoning regulations.

Article IX: Parking

Scott Williams, Senior Planner, gave a brief overview of the Article's drafted language.

Secretary Peterson questioned if when the minimum parking requirement results in a fraction, whether the number is rounded up or down. Williams answered that when the fraction results in 0.5 or more, the requirement is rounded up. If it is less than 0.5, it gets rounded down.

Commissioner Lynn asked if it makes sense to change the warehousing parking requirement to be derived from the floor area instead of the number of employees. Williams replied that many neighboring communities regulate it based on the floor area, noting that it is hard to verify the number of employees.

Joseph Hennerfeind, Community Development Director, explained that the parking requirement is dependent on the user of the building, which can vary widely from tenant to tenant, and that staff is looking to refine the numbers to be simpler to calculate.

Commissioner Sharp clarified how the parking requirement changes when the use changes. Staff further explained scenarios when the existing parking is scrutinized.

Peterson recommended increasing the minimum parking requirement for health and fitness services, which Sharp agreed with.

Chair Carmichael expressed that a veterinarian should not have a higher parking requirement than a service or retail use.

Commissioner Donoghue asked if parking in other businesses' parking spaces was allowed. Peterson replied that in multi-tenant centers, they can park anywhere in the parking lot.

Hennerfeind asked how the parking requirement is determined for a new multi-tenant center when the future tenants are not known. Williams replied that he believes it is a flat rate determined by the center's floor area.

Carmichael questioned the parking requirement for video gaming cafes. Hennerfeind replied that new video gaming cafes are not allowed. Williams added that accessory video gaming in restaurants uses the restaurant parking requirement.

Commissioner Simpson asked why craft alcoholic beverage distributors have a parking requirement for both the seating area and per employees. Williams said it is likely a carry-over from the existing language.

Simpson recommended splitting the parking requirement for health and fitness services into gymnasiums and studio classes, with studio classes having a higher minimum.

Hennerfeind explained the trend of removing parking minimums and letting the market decide how much



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parking to provide, which the Village of Westmont is ill-prepared for.

Sharp asked for the parking requirement for medical offices.

Sharp found that one parking space per seven students is too low for colleges and business training services.

Sharp questioned how the parking requirement for hotels changes if it has a conference center. Hennerfeind replied that the hotel would need to provide spaces for the guest rooms and the conference center.

Sharp pointed out that “other retail, outdoor” is missing a parking requirement.

Referencing public comment, Sharp advocated for removing the “per seat” calculation for religious uses. Williams replied that the other option would be to regulate based on maximum occupancy, which Sharp said would likely result in an excessive requirement.

Carmichael asked why financial services have different parking requirements. Williams explained that it is due to carry-over from existing language and from what similar communities require.

Donoghue clarified that the parking requirements will be for the proposed smaller parking stall sizes. Williams answered yes, and that the parking stall size is being lowered because of the many waiver requests that are made and approved by the Village Board.

Simpson questioned if hotels should have a lower parking requirement for guest rooms, but explicitly say that they need to provide parking for employees, banquet facilities, and other accessory uses.

Lynn asked how often the requirements are reviewed. Hennerfeind answered that text amendment can be requested at any time, but staff usually waits until a trend shows that an amendment is warranted.

Simpson recommended having the parking requirement determined by the floor area dedicated to serving the use and not including spaces like storage areas and requiring parking for all seating areas, not just interior seating.

Hennerfeind expressed that parking minimums are designed to ensure enough parking is provided to serve the users, but not so much that the requirement is excessive. Donoghue added that it is up to the business owner to ensure they open a business in a space with enough parking.

Sharp said that building codes exempt spaces like stairwells and facility rooms for occupancy counts.

Referencing Sec. 9.04(A)(D), Sharp asked why existing multi-tenant centers are required to provide extra parking if the building is expanded, especially if a center may already provide excess parking. Williams answered that the section is carry-over, and can be cleaned up.

Sharp referenced a public comment recommending “collaborative parking”, asking how it is different from “shared parking” in Sec. 9.04(D). John Zemenak, Village Attorney, replied that he is not aware of a difference between the two terms.

Sharp asked staff to clarify the difference between multi-tenant center parking (Sec. 9.04(A)(2)) and



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shared parking (Sec. 9.04(C)).

Simpson asked if the parking requirement is reduced if rideshare services are provided. Williams explained the difference between shared parking agreements and shared-car parking.

Williams said that off-site parking in Sec. 9.05 would be allowed for nonresidential districts instead of nonresidential uses.

Sharp expressed that it may be appropriate to reduce the aisle width for 90° parking spaces when it is a one-way drive aisle.

Simpson said that tandem parking should be allowed for employees of a business, but not for patrons. Zemenak added that it could be hard to enforce, but could work. Sharp disagreed allowing employees to tandem park, but it would make sense for fleet vehicles. Peterson expressed that tandem parking is common in the Downtown. Williams said that tandem parking for employees could be allowed in the Downtown districts, which Simpson supported.

Simpson asked if car-share parking reduces the parking requirement for those taking rideshare services. Williams clarified that car-share parking is when a car is provided on-site, like Zipcar, but it is not applicable to rideshare.

Sharp found the minimum stacking requirements for car washes and drug stores to be too low. Williams explained that this is a new regulation to the Village, and that staff and the consultant looked at other communities to see what the best minimum is.

Article X: Tree Preservation and Landscaping

Williams explained that most of the language comes from the existing Chapter 80 of the Municipal Code, as it fits better in the zoning ordinance. He explained that many of the provisions from Chapter 80 were amended within the last few years.

Sharp confirmed that the tree measurement is based on the caliper size, not the diameter at breast height (DBH). Sharp asked how it is determined that a property can accommodate replacement trees. Williams responded that it is determined by the Village Forester and dependent on the size of the tree being removed.

Sharp asked for the applicability of landscaping regulations in 10.07(C-D) be clarified as it relates to multi-unit residential developments.

Lynn asked if there were restrictions on a property owner cutting down a tree on their property. Hennerfeind explained regulations on removing heritage trees, which is outside of the zoning ordinance.

Sharp voiced concerns on regulating tree pruning in accordance with ANSI A300. Williams replied that the regulation is applicable to properties with approved landscaping plans, not single-family detached homes.

Article XI: Signs

Williams explained that there were not many changes to signage regulations, as a significant text



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amendment updated the regulations a few years prior.

Sharp raised concerns with the prohibition on lighting around window borders and architectural elements. Williams replied that the prohibition is to avoid directing light towards large sign elements, and gave an example of an ice cream shop having a large ice cream cone with lights directed at it. Sharp requested it be clarified to meet what the Village is attempting to prohibit. Simpson added that it should be clarified that this regulation is applicable to commercial properties.

Carmichael asked if an inflatable rat would be considered a sign. Zemenak replied that if it has lettering on it, directs attention to the business, and is permanently outside, it would likely be a sign.

Sharp found a grammar mistake in Sec. 11.03(E).

Staff explained that many of the regulations were amended to be content-neutral.

Sharp recommended allowing grand opening signs to be up before the business opens. Hennerfeind replied that a new business can request a temporary banner before they open, but the grand opening signage regulations were designed specifically for after a business begins operating.

Peterson asked for clarification on how the maximum sign area is determined for businesses that are allowed wall signs on the front and back of the building. Williams explained that using only the front facade is an existing regulation.

Carmichael and Lynn asked why not use both frontages to determine the maximum sign area. Hennerfeind replied that it is to avoid having large signs directed to a residential district, and that the previous sign text amendment allowed for more signage than neighboring communities.

Williams explained that the temporary sign fee would likely be removed in the revisions presented at a future meeting.

Staff clarified how sign measurements are taken. Sharp said that “smallest rectangle” should be replaced with “smallest polygon” in Sec. 11.11(A)(2).

Article XII: General Development Regulations

Williams explained that the outdoor lighting regulations are applicable to commercial properties so an undue burden is not placed on residents. Hennerfeind further explained the changes in outdoor lighting regulations, adding that these regulations will be applicable to new commercial development, not existing.

Zemenak asked if there were outdoor lighting regulations on detached, semi-detached, and two-unit houses. Williams replied there are not. Zemenak recommended adding a lumen limit, which he has seen be an issue in other communities who do not have a limit. Simpson asked if it is better regulated as a nuisance. Hennerfeind voiced concerns about code enforcement processes related to outdoor lighting limits on residential properties.

Carmichael referenced a public comment on Sec. 12.01(F)(1) that recommended intermittent lighting not be exempt from the regulations of the subsection. Simpson asked for the clarification of the scope of the regulation. Williams explained that for new developments, all lighting except for intermittent lighting would



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need to be shielded. Sharp found that it is a good lighting design to have it shielded.

Lynn and Simpson asked when an existing development would need to comply with the outdoor lighting regulations. Williams replied that if it was a new lightpost in a new area, it would need to meet the requirements, but not when a fixture is switched out. Hennerfeind recommended stating what the trigger is in the section.

Lynn questioned light spillage over property lines along Ogden Avenue. Zemenak responded that the standard has been to have zero footcandles at the property line, and that businesses can request a variance to the limit. Williams added that light trespass at lot lines is limited by the abutting zoning district.

Zemenak asked when measuring footcandles at the lot line, if it takes into account street lighting or ambient lighting. Williams believed it is regulated in Article XVI Measurements.

Zemenak asked if lighting overhanging the right-of-way in the downtown exceeding the light trespass limit is a concern. Hennerfeind replied yes, and that measurement tools would need to be acquired.

Simpson asked what types of businesses could have issues with outdoor lighting regulations. Williams replied that banks have specific standards.

Lynn indicated that the lighting standards seem too restrictive. Donoghue found that there will be complaints either way, but said that there should be standards. Zemenak added that the standards are more relaxed than what the zoning ordinance currently allows.

Simpson found the regulations well-intended, but would be difficult to comply with.

Sharp expressed support for the options for lighting plans in Sec. 12.01(H).

Sharp asked where the 10 foot sight vision triangle for driveways is similar to other communities and if a fence would be allowed there. Williams replied the consultant likely found this to be consistent with other communities and that solid fences would not be allowed in the triangle.

Lynn referenced a project of his in the Village where a solid fence was installed to be outside of a sight vision triangle at the intersection of an alley and a street, noting that the end result looked nice.

Article XIII: Nonconformities

Williams and Zemenak explained that most of the changes were clarifications, as there was a text amendment in 2023 that amended many of the regulations.

Lynn asked if this article's regulations would trigger the need for a fire sprinkler system in a residential home that does not have one. Williams responded that the fire sprinkler system requirement is in the fire or building codes, not the zoning ordinance.

Simpson asked if the decision of whether a nonconforming use can be expanded or not can be appealed. Williams said that appeals to administrative decisions are allowed.

Lynn asked if nonconforming setbacks can be maintained for second floor additions. Williams replied that



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there is an allowance for that scenario in Article II Residential Districts. Zemenak added that an addition can be made as long as the nonconforming setback is not increased.

Article XIV: Review and Approval Procedures

Williams gave an overview of the changes to the review and approval procedures.

Lynn asked if civil drawings are required for site plans. Williams said he believes so, but it is not a zoning requirement.

Simpson recommended showing when a pre-application meeting is needed in a table. Williams replied that staff can look into the best way to display that information.

Lynn asked staff to clarify the ability to expand nonconforming setbacks vertically. Hennerfeind replied that the intent is to allow it for street yards because the effect is not as intense as a nonconforming interior side yard setback.

Sharp asked how commissioners can receive their packets sooner. Williams explained that the publishing of meeting materials depends on the public noticing requirements.

Simpson voiced concerns about having the public hearing notice requirements be the applicant's responsibility. Williams responded that the language is vague to give staff the flexibility to do the notice on applicants' behalf for residents, but to require projects with large staff and legal teams to do their own notice.

Hennerfeind explained the business-friendly features of administrative approvals.

Lynn asked a question about the permitting process. Williams explained that zoning does not control permitting requirements, but added that zoning applications are rejected if they are incomplete.

Article XV: Administration and Enforcement

Sharp asked if withholding permits or other forms of authorization on other land owned by an owner with a violation on a separate property is common. Zemenak explained that it is discretionary, but can curb repeat offenders. Zemenak also explained that the Village has similar processes for withholding non-zoning approvals.

Article XVI: Measurements

Williams explained that this is a new article to the zoning ordinance, and largely consolidates measurement regulations into one article instead of being scattered across the zoning ordinance.

Peterson questioned the contextual setbacks, asking if nonconforming properties are included. Williams replied yes.

Lynn and Sharp asked if a home can use the district's minimum front setback or take advantage of the contextual setbacks. Williams replied yes.

Simpson asked what the goal of the contextual setbacks is. Williams replied that this provision applies to



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residential properties.

Peterson asked how contextual setbacks will affect homes in the R-3 district. Williams replied that currently, a property can reduce the minimum front yard setback to as low as 25 feet, depending on the location of the home on adjacent properties. Lynn asked if the 25 foot limit is being dropped. Williams replied yes.

Lynn explained that contextual setbacks create a visual harmony to a neighborhood from the street.

Lynn asked if most of the R-3 zoned properties near the downtown use the 35 foot minimum front yard setback or do they use the contextual setbacks. Williams said that it is more common for those homes to be 25 feet or closer.

Lynn asked how homes that have a front yard setback larger than the minimum required play into the calculation, noting that homes setback far from the front property line would skew the result. Staff replied that in those scenarios, it can be added that the number used is the minimum required setback instead.

Sharp asked if the commission is comfortable with homes getting closer to the street over time. Peterson did not like allowing contextual setbacks, but she liked the variety of front setbacks currently in the Village. Williams explained that the contextual setbacks allow for more variety, as requiring homes to use the minimum setback creates a more uniform look over time.

Zemenak explained that contextual setbacks would reduce the number of variance requests, when the petitioner would point to their neighbor's setback.

Sharp said contextual setbacks should be limited on how much they can reduce the setback. Lynn said that 25 feet could be an appropriate limit. The commission generally supported a limit on the contextual setbacks.

Lynn revisited vertical additions to properties with nonconforming interior side yard setbacks in estate-like districts. Hennerfeind replied that the zoning ordinance would not allow that by-right, but the owner could request a variance.

Sharp said in Sec. 16.13(B), that the section should apply to screen walls or parapets.

Article XVII: Definitions

Peterson asked why "bedrooms" was no longer defined. Staff replied that other codes that have regulations on bedrooms are better suited to define the term.

Sharp questioned if "diameter at breast height" was supposed to be defined.

Sharp asked if donation drop boxes were to have a maximum area, if it would be in the definition or in the accessory use article. Williams said it would be in the accessory use article.

Zemenak asked where the definition for "family community residence" and "group community residence" is. Williams replied that it is likely defined in the principal use article.

Zemenak voiced issues with the definition of trailers.



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Lynn found that the definition of “building height” references the incorrect section, and asked for clarification on where the measurement is taken from.

Simpson asked if the revised definition for “fleet vehicles” will be presented at the next meeting. Williams replied yes.

Sharp recommended clarifying the regulations applicable to boats, as a definition may address his concerns.

Simpson expressed issues with the definition of a “trailer”.

Sharp asked if removing the definition for “open air and tent sales” means that these businesses will not be allowed. Williams explained that other sections of the municipal code regulate these temporary uses.

Public Comment:

Carmichael reopened the public comment. No members of the public were present to provide comments.

MOTION 1

Motion by **Simpson** to *continue the public hearing to a special meeting on July 23, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.*

Seconded by **Sharp**.

VOTING:

Ayes: 6 - Carmichael, Peterson, Donoghue, Lynn, Sharp, Simpson,
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 - Thomas

Motion Passed

10. New Business

None.

11. Open Forum

Nobody spoke during the Open Forum.

12. Miscellaneous Items

- a. Next regular PZC on July 9, 2025 at 6:00 pm.
- b. APA-IL Plan Commissioner Training
Carmichael informed the commission that the American Planners’ Association Illinois Chapter is hosting a training for plan commissioners at their state conference in Chicago this October, and encouraged them to attend. Williams added that it is a half day session, and more information is coming.
- c. Zemenak expressed his appreciation for the commissioners’ hard work throughout the update process.



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13. Adjourn

Motion by **Sharp** to adjourn the meeting.
Second by **Simpson**.

The Motion Passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.