

**REPORT
to the
CHICAGO PLAN COMMISSION
LINDA SEARL, CHAIRMAN
from
ARNOLD L. RANDALL, COMMISSIONER
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
and
PATRICIA A. SCUDIERO, ADMINISTRATOR
DEPARTMENT OF ZONING**

May 15, 2008

**FOR APPROVAL: PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO
INSTITUTIONAL/TRANSPORTATION PLANNED
DEVELOPMENT NO. 677; LAKE MICHIGAN AND
CHICAGO LAKEFRONT PROTECTION
APPLICATION NO. 547**

**APPLICANTS: CHICAGO CHILDREN'S MUSEUM AND CHICAGO
PARK DISTRICT**

**LOCATION: 337 EAST RANDOLPH STREET, SOUTHEAST
CORNER OF RANDOLPH AND COLUMBUS
DRIVE; CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, Title 17 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, the Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Zoning hereby submit this report and recommendation on a proposed amendment to Institutional/Transportation Planned Development No. 677 for your review and recommendation to the City Council. The Department of Planning and Development also submits for your review and approval proposed Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Application No. 547, pursuant to Title 16 of the Chicago Municipal Code. The application for this amendment to the Chicago Zoning Ordinance was introduced into the City Council on April 9, 2008. The Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance application was submitted to the Department of Planning and Development on April 8, 2008. Proper legal notice of the public hearing was published in the Chicago Sun-Times on April 26, 2008. The Applicants were separately notified of this public hearing.

The applicants, the Chicago Children's Museum and the Chicago Park District, propose to amend Institutional/Transportation Planned Development No. 677 to

designate a new Subarea D. Within such Subarea D, the applicants intend to construct a new children's museum, reconstruct an existing Chicago Park District field house, and construct certain related accessory uses. The site currently houses an existing Chicago Park District field house, Daley Bicentennial Plaza and underground parking. Institutional/Planned Development No. 677 also includes Millennium Park, portions of Grant Park and below grade parking structures.

SITE AREA AND DESCRIPTION

Institutional/Transportation Planned Development No. 677 spans the area generally bounded by Michigan Avenue on the west, Upper Randolph Street on the north, Lake Shore Drive on the east, and Van Buren along its southern edge, excluding only the Art Institute between Michigan and Columbus, which is in its own planned development. The entire planned development is approximately 72.71 acres at grade and also contains 44.97 acres below grade which houses several parking garages including: the Millennium Park Garage, the Grant Park North Garage, the East Monroe Street Garage and the Grant Park South Garage. The garages are governed by a separate lease agreement between the garage owners and the City of Chicago. The current planned development has only three sub areas. Subarea A encompasses Millennium Park, Subarea B encompasses the rest of the surface area not included in Millennium Park, and Subarea C includes all of the underground parking garages.

As indicated, the applicants propose to create a new Subarea D for the museum and field house within the existing planned development. The new Subarea would be created out of the surface area of Subarea B at the northeast corner of Grant Park south of Upper Randolph Street and east of Columbus Drive as well as a portion of Subarea C, which currently houses 400 underground parking spaces. The proposed new subarea is approximately 1.8 acres (78,325 square feet) located on the southeast corner of Columbus Drive and Randolph Street just north of the current Daley Bicentennial Park ice rink. The property is currently owned by the Chicago Park District and the City of Chicago. The site is currently occupied by an existing Park District field house and parking spaces, both below grade at Upper Randolph Street.

The proposed site is surrounded by park uses on three sides—Millennium Park to the west and Grant Park to the south and to the east. On the site's northern border across Randolph Street are several large-scale commercial and residential buildings including the Blue Cross Blue Shield Building, the 340 on the Park residential building, and the Buckingham Plaza residential building.

The site is located within the Public Use Zone of the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection District. The site is not located in a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

There are no buildings on the proposed site that are Chicago Landmarks and no buildings on the site that have been rated as potentially significant in the broader context of the city, state, or country ("red") or as potentially significant in the context of the surrounding community ("orange") by the Chicago Historic Resources Survey.

The area in Grant Park of the proposed site—the present-day Daley Bicentennial Plaza and Fieldhouse—was not part of the historical development of Grant Park. Beginning in 1921, the site was a vast surface parking lot for the park district, with a portion of the IC railroad yards running along the western edge of the site. While this area was included in the 1920s plans of Bennett, Parsons, Frost and Thomas and the South Park Commission, the plans were never executed for this part of the present-day park boundaries north of Monroe. (The surface parking lot built in 1921 was not included in the 1920s plans for the park, so it is likely that this was considered a temporary use.) In 1976, the parking lot was replaced with the present-day multi-level parking structure and Daley Bicentennial Plaza and Fieldhouse.

Grant Park was identified in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (1996) as part of a potential landmark district, to include the park itself as well as the streetwall of buildings on Michigan Avenue along the west side of the park. The buildings on the west side of Michigan Avenue as well as the original portions of the Art Institute and gardens between Michigan Avenue and the IC tracks were later designated as part of the Historic Michigan Boulevard District, a designated Chicago Landmark District (2002). The block that encompasses Buckingham Fountain and the surrounding gardens was also designated as a Chicago Landmark (2000). Several individual structures and statues within Grant Park are individually identified in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (i.e., 'orange'- or 'red' rated). The Daley Bicentennial Plaza and Fieldhouse (built in 1976) were not identified as historic resources by the Chicago Historic Resources (which was limited to pre-1940 properties).

Grant Park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. The period of significance for the park under the National Register nomination is 1892-1942. The East Monroe Street Garage and Daley Bicentennial Plaza, built in 1976, are specifically identified in the National Register nomination as non-contributing features.

While Grant Park itself is a historic resource and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Monroe Street Garage, Daley Bicentennial Plaza and the fieldhouse are non-contributing features to the historic significance of the park. In fact, this portion of the present-day park is not part of the historic portions of the park.

The site is directly served by several CTA bus lines: the #4 (Cottage Grove), the #60 (Blue Island/26th), and the #20 (Madison) as well as numerous other bus lines that run on Michigan Avenue just two blocks to the west. Millennium Station,

which houses Metra's Electric and South Shore Lines, is also located two blocks to the west at Randolph and Michigan. Access to the CTA's rapid transit system is located three blocks to the west at the Randolph Station served by the Brown Line, Red Line, Green Line, Purple Line, and Pink Line.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicants propose to replace the existing Chicago Park District field house and 400 parking spaces within the Monroe Street garage (both currently below grade) and to construct a museum and new Park District field house in its place. The new museum and field house will also be below grade. The proposed project will also replace the existing concrete paths that connect Upper Randolph Street to the current field house entry and ice rink below with a series of gradually sloping, switchback paths. The new paths will be contoured to fit into the grade of the current site, which slopes down from Upper Randolph Street and will serve as both access to the museum and new field house as well as access to the ice rink and the rest of Grant Park. Unlike the current paths, the new pathway system will be ADA-accessible at a slope of 1:20.

As the paths continue through the terrace levels, vertical glass walls will be visible which will allow light to penetrate the museum and field house space as well as allow visitors to look out onto the terraces and provide various views of Grant Park, Millennium Park and the skyline beyond. These elements will be visible from Grant Park and will have green roofs at the same level as, or lower than, Upper Randolph Street. The project will have a vegetative green roof of approximately 62% (approximately 48,285 sq ft.) not including hardscaping or paved areas, and will be LEED certified. The structural elements of the museum and field house below grade will be made of concrete. Also on Upper Randolph Street, a set of elevators enclosed in glass will provide access to the field house, museum and parking garage. This all glass entry will be located on the public right-of-way just outside of Grant Park, will be approximately 800 square feet in size and will not exceed 20' in height. A small amount of floor area ratio (.02 FAR) has been allocated to accommodate this elevator entrance.

Three public terraces will activate the outdoor space along the pathway system. The main terrace, about 16' below Randolph Street, will serve as the main entrance to the museum. Another terrace, at 32' below Randolph Street, will allow for outdoor programs or events for the Children's Museum and will also be open to the public. Access to this terrace will occur both via the sloping pathway system and a series of stairs descending downward into the terrace. The third terrace, located on the eastern end of the project at about 24' below Randolph Street, will also have stairs descending into it and will largely be landscaped.

Vehicle access to the field house and museum will occur on various levels of the site. Private vehicles will be able to drop passengers off on Upper Randolph Street via drop-off lanes. Buses and taxis will also drop off passengers on Mid

Randolph Street. Service access via two loading docks will occur on lower Randolph Street. Parking for up to 200 cars will be provided off-site in Subarea C, which contains the parking system for Grant Park.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the proposal with regards to the Policies and Purposes of the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance and has concluded that the proposed project specifically furthers the following policies and purposes:

Policy 1. Complete the publicly owned and locally controlled park system along the entire Chicago lakefront.

The proposed site will remain publicly owned and controlled through the Park District.

Policy 2. Maintain and enhance the predominantly landscaped, spacious and continuous character of the lakeshore parks. New public plazas will be created.

The proposed project will replace and enhance the landscaping in this section of the park, through a series of green roofs and public terraces, adding more green space than exists on the site currently. The project will comply with the Chicago Landscape ordinance as well as Park District standards for landscaping within the park. By adding more green space and improving access to the park, the project will contribute to the continuous character of the lakeshore parks.

Policy 4. Preserve the cultural, historical, and recreational heritage of the lakeshore parks.

The proposed project will continue the tradition of balancing active and passive uses within our lakeshore park system. By adding the new attraction of the museum as well as replacing an outdated and underutilized field house facility with a brand new one, the project also increases cultural and recreational opportunities for the public. The project further complies with established plans for the area. The most recent Central Area Plan adopted by the Plan Commission in 2003 calls for new active and passive uses within the parks and recommends implementing the Grant Park Master Plan. That plan specifically calls for redistributing attractions along the lakefront, improving circulation and creating all season venues.

Policy 5. Maintain and improve the formal character and open water vista of Grant Park with no new above-ground structures permitted.

The proposed project continues the formal tradition of Grant Park with its extensive landscaping and pathway system that improves access not only to the newly proposed amenities, but also to the rest of Grant Park. By locating the museum and the field house below grade within Grant Park proper and locating the only above ground structure on the Randolph Street right of way, the project remains consistent with this policy.

- Policy 6. Increase the diversity of recreational opportunities while emphasizing lake-oriented leisure time activities.

The proposed project will contribute to the diversity of recreational opportunities in Grant Park by providing more green space than the current site provides and by creating several publicly accessible terraces and pathways. The terraces and pathway system provide not only access to the museum and field house but also to the rest of Grant Park. The pathways create an interesting walking experience even for those not visiting the museum or field house and the stairs entering the terraces provide spaces for the public to sit and relax and take in the views of the park and the City.

- Policy 8. Increase personal safety.

The proposed project will increase personal safety by making the site ADA-accessible via its gently sloping pathway system. The existing field house and plaza are not currently compliant with ADA standards.

- Policy 10. Ensure a harmonious relationship between the lakeshore parks and community edge, but in no instance will further private development be permitted east of Lake Shore Drive.

The proposed project does not include any development east of Lake Shore Drive and by contemplating bus and taxi drop offs below grade on Mid Randolph Street, ensures that the relationship with the community to the north across Randolph will remain harmonious.

- Policy 11. Improve access to the lakeshore parks and reduce through vehicular traffic on secondary park roads.

The project improves access to Grant Park by creating a pathway system that meets the requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA,) which the current site does not.

Policy 13. Ensure that all port, water supply, and public facilities are designed to enhance lakefront character.

The proposed project will enhance lakefront character by increasing green space and creating additional recreational opportunities for the public to enjoy.

Policy 14. Coordinate all public and private development within the water, park, and community zones.

The project will remain publicly owned and will be coordinated through the planned development, which requires Plan Commission and City Council review. Approval is also required through the Chicago Park District and any plans it has for the park system.

With respect to the Policies 3, 7, 9 and 12, not enumerated here, the Department of Planning and Development finds that the proposed project will not have a detrimental affect on water quality, ecological balance, shoreline erosion or Lake Shore Drive because no new construction is proposed east of Lake Shore Drive, along the shoreline or in any way directly adjacent to Lake Michigan.

The following purposes are advanced by the project:

Purpose 1. To promote and protect the health, safety, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of the people and to conserve our natural resources.

The project will promote health, safety and welfare by providing more open space and recreational opportunities for the public. The project will also meet LEED-certified national standards, which are designed to conserve natural resources.

Purpose 5. To insure that the Lakefront Parks and the Lake itself are devoted only to public purposes and to insure the integrity of and expand the quantity and quality of the Lakefront Parks.

The proposed project will provide public benefits in the form of a new field house facility, improved ADA-compliant access to Grant Park, and enhance the quality of the park by creating more green space and new recreational opportunities for the public.

Purpose 7. To promote and provide for pedestrian access to the lake and Lakefront Parks from and through areas adjacent thereto at regular intervals of one-fourth mile and additional places wherever possible, and to protect and enhance vistas at these locations and wherever else possible.

The improved pathway system through the proposed site will meet ADA requirements and allow for a broader spectrum of the public to visit the park than can do so today. By placing most of the facilities substantially below grade, existing vistas will be preserved.

Purpose 8. To promote and provide for improved public transportation access to the Lakefront.

The proposed site is accessible via several CTA bus routes and access to both Metra and CTA trains exists within two to three blocks west of the site.

With respect to Purposes 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, or 13, not enumerated here, the Department of Planning and Development has determined that the proposed project will not have a detrimental affect on water quality, the Lake Michigan shoreline or any wildlife habitats therein. In addition, no new roadways are proposed as part of this project, and this proposal has no effect in any way on the purposes related to the administration of the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance.

The Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Zoning have reviewed the proposal with regards to the Standards and Guidelines for Planned Developments in the Chicago Zoning Ordinance. Both Departments have concluded that the project meets the criteria and objectives set forth in Section 17-13-0900 of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance and its adoption would not have any adverse impact on the public's health, safety, or welfare:

1. The proposed development is compatible with the character of the surrounding area in terms of use, density and building scale. The zoning for this site is controlled under an existing planned development and is in compliance with the use, density, scale under the original planned development. Floor Area Ratio for the amended planned development conforms with the requirements under the Chicago Zoning Ordinance. The use is appropriate given that the site is surrounded on three sides by both active and passive park uses both in Millennium Park to the west and in other areas of Grant Park. Further, the proposed museum and new field house activate an underutilized portion of the park and replace an obsolete public field house currently on the site today. The density and scale are appropriate as the new structures will be built below grade at Upper Randolph and will be built essentially within the footprint of the existing below grade field house and parking spaces on the site today.
2. The proposed development is in keeping with approved plans for the area. The Central Area Plan identified creating new active and passive open spaces as a priority. In Chapter 4, which addresses Waterfronts and Open Spaces, the Plan laid out principles for the Lakefront

including identifying Grant Park and Burnham Park as “magnet parks” that attract people from throughout the metropolitan region. As part of its key recommendations, the Plan noted that most of the annual visitor traffic focused on the Petrillo Band Shell, the Museum Campus and Soldier Field. It suggested adopting the recommendations of the Grant Park Master Plan, which called for redistributing attractions along the lakefront, improving circulation and creating all-season venues. This proposal achieves the vision set out in these plans by creating new, all-season recreational opportunities for the public and improving access to the park.

3. The proposed development would conform to the parkway and landscape requirements of the City Code, as well as the open space requirements in the code.
4. The proposed amendment to the Planned Development has been reviewed by the Chicago Department of Transportation's Project Review Committee and all requested changes have been made. The Department of Planning and Development has circulated copies of this application to other City departments and agencies and no comments have been received which have not been addressed in the revised application.
5. The project would comply with the requirements for access in case of fire and other emergencies.

Based on the foregoing, it is the recommendation of the Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Zoning that the revised application for Institutional/Transportation Planned Development No. 677 be approved and that the recommendation to the City Council Committee on Zoning be: “As Revised, Passage Recommended.”

Further, based on the findings in this report, it is also the recommendation of the Department of Planning and Development that the Chicago Plan Commission approve Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Application No. 547, as revised, as being in conformance with the provisions of the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance subject to the terms of the corresponding Planned Development.

Arnold L. Randall, Commissioner
Department of Planning and Development

Patricia A. Scudiero, Administrator
Department of Zoning