

PLAN AND ZONING

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COMMISSION

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING  
BEFORE THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD  
PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had before the Village of  
Northfield Plan and Zoning Commission taken at the Northfield  
Village Hall, Board Room, Northfield, Illinois on the 30th day of April,  
2018, at the hour of 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

DAN deLOYS, Acting Chairman  
THOMAS BOLLING  
TRACEY MENDREK  
TODD BERLINGHOF  
CONNIE BERMAN

MEMBERS ABSENT:

BILL VASELOPULOS, Chair  
KATHY ESTABROOKE  
E. LEONARD RUBIN  
STEVEN HIRSCH

ALSO PRESENT:

STEVE GUTIERREZ, Community Development Director

1           ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Good evening, everyone. I'd like to  
2 call to order the meeting of the Plan and Zoning Commission. My name is  
3 Dan deLoys, I'm the Acting Chairman of the Commission. At this time, I'd  
4 like the Commissioners to introduce themselves, starting with Connie.

5           COMMISSIONER BERMAN: Connie Berman.

6           COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: Todd Berlinghof.

7           COMMISSIONER MENDREK: Tracey Mendrek.

8           COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Tom Bolling.

9           ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Thank you very much. The purpose  
10 of tonight's meeting is to conduct a public hearing to consider and discuss  
11 this request for approval of a special use permit located at 4 Happ Road,  
12 Northfield, Illinois. The Petitioner's name is Love Peace Dove, d/b/a Banner  
13 Preschool.

14           The public hearing format will provide an overview of this proposal  
15 and a forum for public comment and input. This Commission is a  
16 recommending body only and will forward our recommendation to the  
17 Village President and the Board of Trustees for their final determination on  
18 whether or not to grant this item before us today. The Board will consider  
19 this item being discussed this evening at the next Board meeting which is  
20 scheduled for Tuesday, May 15th, at 7:00 p.m., right here in this boardroom.

21           The Commission's meetings require that all persons wishing to be  
22 heard and to enter testimony must be sworn in. This includes all petitioners,  
23 individuals with the petitioners, and any interested parties or other property  
24 owners. Following the petitioner's presentation and after the Commission  
25 has had an opportunity to ask questions or discuss amongst themselves,  
26 then all interested parties will be given an opportunity to speak.

27           Prior to speaking, we request that all parties step forward to the  
28 microphone and be sworn in and provide their name, address and interest in  
29 the matter for the record. These proceedings are being recorded, and that  
30 is why we request that you speak only at the podium where the microphone  
31 is located.

32           Our first order of business is to pass the minutes of our last meeting  
33 on April 3rd. Is there a motion?

34           COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: Motion to pass the minutes.

35           COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Second.

36           ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: So, all those in favor?

37           (Chorus of ayes.)

38           ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: All those opposed?

39           (No response.)

40           ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: The motion passes. Before the  
41 Petitioner steps to the mic, Steve, do you have any comments you would  
42 like to make?

43           MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Petitioner, as you've  
44 indicated, is Love Peace Dove doing business as Banner Preschool. The  
45 Petitioner is seeking a special use permit in order to operate a preschool at

1 the Am Yisrael facility at 4 Happ Road. They will be operating in four  
2 classrooms in Am Yisrael's education wing. They hope to reach a maximum  
3 of 60 students within a year or two of their initiating the operation.

4 While the application materials noted future enrollment of, or at least  
5 a target of up to 100 students, subsequently in conversations with the  
6 Petitioner, they have determined that the actual capacity that they would  
7 have, I believe under DCFS standards if I'm not mistaken, is actually 60  
8 students. This will tie in to the fact that they need a parking variation. So,  
9 what I did in my analysis on whether or not there is ample parking, I based  
10 that analysis on an enrollment of 60 students. So, all those numbers in that  
11 table that I provided you are based on that as the start or baseline.

12 Just a bit of history, in 1999, the Village approved a special use and a  
13 parking variation to Am Yisrael for preschool operations in the facility.  
14 According to our more senior staff, over the course of several years, we did  
15 not have any problems with that preschool operations or the parking for that  
16 matter.

17 Regarding the parking variation, the code requires 67 spaces for both  
18 the synagogue and the preschool uses and there are 46 existing spaces, so  
19 they are 11 short under the code requirement. The number of students and  
20 staff in the facility, based on the representations of the Applicant, will peak  
21 during the morning where they'll have up to 11 staff members present and  
22 30 parents possibly parking in the lot during drop-off and pick-ups. On top  
23 of that, there are up to five Am Yisrael staff who are regularly there  
24 throughout the day.

25 That morning drop-off and pick-up will be the peak demand for  
26 parking on the property. The existing 46 parking spaces will meet the peak  
27 demand of 46 parking spaces.

28 Now, Commissioner Bolling called me this morning and asked a very  
29 good question which is, what happens if their enrollment, for whatever  
30 reason, if their capacity grows beyond 60 students? I'm suggesting that  
31 before the number of students in the facility at any given time goes beyond  
32 60, that they would submit evidence to Staff that there is adequate parking  
33 in order to accommodate whatever that increased enrollment would be. At  
34 that time, presumably they'd be operating for sometime and we'd be able to  
35 get a real-time assessment of the actual parking demand. We'd then be  
36 able to accurately assess whether there is enough parking to accommodate  
37 increasing their enrollment. Again, we've suggested that assessment be  
38 made by Staff.

39 That's all we but I can certainly answer any questions. The petitioner  
40 is here to answer any questions and to give you an overview if you'd like.

41 COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: So, Steve, just to clarify, the only  
42 reason that they're in front of us is because of the parking variation?

43 MR. GUTIERREZ: No, the use. The preschool is a special use in  
44 and of itself. The parking variation is definitely something we needed to  
45 address as well. If you do choose to recommend approval of this request,

1 we did provide a motion in the memo. I have revised that motion and put  
2 that in a redline version in front of you that addresses this number of  
3 students at any given time being capped at 60.

4 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Would you guys like to speak, if  
5 you're both going to speak, you both need to be sworn in.

6 MR. GUTIERREZ: If you could go to the podium, I'll swear both of  
7 you in.

8 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Okay.

9 MS. LIPSCOMB: Okay.

10 MR. GUTIERREZ: Please raise your right hand.

11 (Witnesses sworn.)

12 MR. GUTIERREZ: Thank you.

13 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: My name is Nancy Holab-Nevins. You  
14 wanted address, too?

15 MR. GUTIERREZ: Please.

16 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: 1237 Ridgewood Drive, Highland Park. I am  
17 the executive director at Am Yisrael Synagogue, and I want to just give you  
18 a very brief, a little background of the synagogue as it pertains to tonight's  
19 request.

20 We were founded in 1968 and we purchased the two parcels of land  
21 over on Happ Road, at 4 Happ Road right across from New Trier West. We  
22 built our synagogue building on one of the parcels, leaving the other one  
23 vacant so that if down the road we needed to expand we could. The  
24 leadership at that time made the decision to not build a school in order to  
25 keep overhead down and just because they wanted to see how growth was  
26 going to be. We decided that we would rent classroom space for our  
27 Hebrew School which meets about five hours a week.

28 So, for roughly 30 years, we were nomadic. We rented space at  
29 High Crest in Wilmette, at Loyola Academy, and at New Trier West. Then in  
30 1998, New Trier let us know that they were reopening as a freshman  
31 campus and that we would not be able to rent space from them any longer.

32 So, we looked into all the various options and, after a lot of soul  
33 searching, we decided we were going to construct on that parcel of land.  
34 From day one, our intent always was to have a preschool in the building.  
35 We followed all of the code that was required of us. We put four of our 10  
36 classrooms on the ground level and they were larger classrooms. They all  
37 have a built-in bathroom with the cutest little, tiny kid toilets you've ever  
38 seen. We got, of course, little kid furniture and made the rooms very bright  
39 and airy. We really wanted to have a preschool in there.

40 We then entered into a rental agreement with the JCC, Jewish  
41 Community Center, for a preschool to rent space from us. It was a great  
42 relationship. We have no problems as Steve said. Everything was very  
43 smooth, we had no problems with parking. It was great. But after about two  
44 years, the JCC did some internal restructuring and they closed several of  
45 their satellite locations including Am Yisrael.

1 At that point, we wanted another tenant but we couldn't find out  
2 because we didn't know how to go out and get somebody to walk over to  
3 Montessori and knock on the door and say, hi, do you need a new space?  
4 So, we decided not to pursue that. We did consider opening our own  
5 preschool but felt that our resources were very limited, both financially and  
6 experientially. Our primary goal is to serve the Jewish community with  
7 religious services and Jewish education.

8 So, basically, our building for the last 15 years has been largely  
9 empty, our school building. We do hold some adult ed classes there, and  
10 our Hebrew School is there. But Hebrew School is, as I said, only five hours  
11 a week. It's Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings. This really  
12 didn't fit our vision but we didn't know what to do about it, so we just waited.

13 One of my colleagues contacted me a few weeks ago over at Beth  
14 Hillel Congregation where Banner is currently, and said that because of  
15 some of their internal changes, they had a wonderful tenant that they were  
16 going to try to help find a new home, because they weren't able to continue  
17 renting to them, and was I interested. We said yes, of course. So, Alex  
18 came over, we met. I think from the very first moment, we knew this was  
19 going to be a great fit for us.

20 She loved our space. We both feel like we will have a great  
21 partnership together. This helps with our vision of having a preschool, and  
22 we've been very excited about this. We are eager to begin this partnership  
23 in earnest.

24 In reviewing the materials and listening to Steve tonight, I see that  
25 parking is a big concern. So, I do want to shift gears a little bit and just  
26 address that very briefly. Because we've had our Hebrew School for 18  
27 years now, we have been addressing the problem of keeping the cars off of  
28 Happ Road for pick-up and drop-off and making sure we have enough  
29 parking.

30 On Sundays which is our peak time, we have services, we have  
31 programs, we have people dropping kids off, we have parents coming in for  
32 meetings. We have a lot going on there and we have never had a problem  
33 with the parking lot, with spilling out onto Happ Road, largely because my  
34 staff is amazing and we've all put our heads together and come up with a  
35 plan. We have people stationed in the parking lot guiding the parents. We  
36 have educated the parents, and we feel like we have a really good handle  
37 on it.

38 So, in conjunction with that, we're going to work with Banner and  
39 Alex. My staff has offered to be in the parking lot for as long as it takes until  
40 we get the Banner staff trained and those parents indoctrinated into the  
41 safest way to do this, because of course safety is the first concern.

42 I'm going to hand this off to Alex to talk about Banner now, and I  
43 thank you all for your time this evening.

44 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Thank you.

45 MS. LIPSCOMB: Hi, good evening. I am Alexandra Lipscomb,

1 owner and executive director of Banner Preschool. Are you leaving me?

2 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: No. No, I'm not. I'm staying right here.

3 MS. LIPSCOMB: You can.

4 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: No, no, I'm right here by your side.

5 MS. LIPSCOMB: Banner Preschool has been operating for 42 years.

6 We're in its 42nd year. I purchased the school from Adell Kabins, he was  
7 there for 38 years, three years ago. We've maintained the families and the  
8 community and continue to thrive as a preschool in this community. We  
9 serve Wilmette and Glenview families. We have a handful of Northfield  
10 families and a handful of Evanston families, Northern Evanston families.

11 When Beth Hillel approached us a little earlier this year, they had to  
12 let us know that BJE, the Board of Jewish Ed preschool that's also on that  
13 campus, was expanding and that they would be needing Banner's space.  
14 Banner is a secular preschool. We do have definitely a Jewish community;  
15 also, other denominations are enrolled but they're used to being in a Jewish  
16 institution. They're used to the kosher requirements, and so that's going to  
17 be a very seamless transition.

18 In addition to that, the layout of Banner which is just a long hallway  
19 with classrooms, windows, and then a playground, when I walked into Am  
20 Yisrael it's the same setup, so the hallway with the classrooms and the  
21 outdoor courtyard. So, we feel that once the materials we're going to be  
22 bringing over, furniture and all that, the children shouldn't feel any transition  
23 anxiety, or they shouldn't feel anything different. The parents, also the way  
24 the drop-off works is kind of a roundabout cul-de-sac, very similar to the Am  
25 Yisrael. Like Nancy said, her staff is going to train our staff, hang out with  
26 us for about a month until we get it down. We're even going to wear those  
27 yellow --

28 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Vests.

29 MS. LIPSCOMB: Vests to direct traffic. Again, where we are now,  
30 we have to direct traffic anyway, they can't spill out onto Big Tree Lane. So,  
31 we're used to that requirement.

32 The location of Am Yisrael, our parents are very excited because  
33 they all shop at Mariano's and they all work out at Tread. We are at Happ  
34 Inn quite a bit because that's where we have our holiday party. New Trier  
35 being right there, that's where the majority of our families send their children  
36 for high school.

37 Nancy and I have spoken at length about any obstacles that may  
38 arise and we've kind of already worked out those details. There's no  
39 changes that need to be made to the facility. We are just going to be laying  
40 in a new ground, like a new material on the ground and the playground.  
41 We're undecided--rubber or wood chips, big decision. Like she said, they've  
42 established the pick-up, drop-off, parking with Sunday school for 15 years,  
43 and you have more than our number of parents.

44 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Yes.

45 MS. LIPSCOMB: So, we'll have staff outside. We're moving, the

1 transition should be seamless as far as the layout of the space. We're going  
 2 as outlined in the application. If we reach the max of 60 children at one  
 3 time, as we have it right now about 30 of the parents drop off, so they'll  
 4 scoot around the back towards the west side of the parking lot. We'll have  
 5 three staff members out there, take the children from the car to the second  
 6 teacher, and then into the building with the third teacher. Then  
 7 approximately 30, well, so some of those are siblings as well so it may not  
 8 be a full 30 cars. But again about half park and walk the children into the,  
 9 they'll walk them into the east side entrance and be on their way.

10 So, from about 8:50 until 9:05-9:10, it's then an empty parking lot  
 11 except for the staff cars which is probably eight to 10 depending on the day.

12 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: And excuse me.

13 MS. LIPSCOMB: Please.

14 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Steve mentioned my staff coming in, that we  
 15 have up to five staff members. My office is very, we're not morning people  
 16 so we tend to come in later. We tend to come in throughout the day. The  
 17 rabbi and the cantor are both in and out because they have other clergy  
 18 duties outside of the building. Our school director works from home three  
 19 days out of the week.

20 So, we're not even going to take up five spots everyday all day long.  
 21 So, you know, even that is, it's generous. I mean that's the maximum that it  
 22 could be but it's probably not going to be that many. We should be not even  
 23 all there when your kids are dropped off.

24 MS. LIPSCOMB: Right. Yes, drop off, I don't, and then now that I'm,  
 25 yes, pondering, there's car pool situations, like I said, the sibling situations,  
 26 so there shouldn't be the full 60.

27 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Thank you.

28 MS. LIPSCOMB: Yes, you're welcome.

29 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Anybody have questions?

30 COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: No, it's exciting.

31 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Thank you, we're excited.

32 COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Quick question at the second level.

33 MS. LIPSCOMB: Yes?

34 COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Basically on the --

35 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: We use the second floor for our, it's third  
 36 grade through eighth grade, and that's on Wednesdays and Sunday  
 37 mornings.

38 COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Okay, that's what that was.

39 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Yes, and we use that space also for some of  
 40 our adult ed classes as well.

41 COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Right.

42 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: But that's very sporadic.

43 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Do you never have any special  
 44 events, funerals, whatever that might overlap?

45 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Yes.

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: If so, how will you deal with that?

2 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Well we've discussed that actually, and I'll be  
3 very honest with you about this. We decided that because it doesn't happen  
4 frequently, I kind of want to see how the traffic flow is before we make a  
5 decision about a plan. But when we have a funeral in the building, the  
6 funeral home comes and they assign two to three people in the parking lot  
7 to direct traffic as well as my staff being there. So, we have a lot of people  
8 there to figure out what we can do.

9 If we know it's going to be a big funeral, frankly I call New Trier and  
10 ask them if we can do overflow there, and they have been very gracious and  
11 very helpful to us. We take their overflow on Freshmen Go To School Night.  
12 We in fact leave very early on Freshmen Go To School Night because it's  
13 so chaotic over there. But they call me and they let me know when they  
14 have overflow and it's a very friendly relationship.

15 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: I think I parked in your lot once.

16 MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: I think everybody has.

17 ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Anybody else have any questions?  
18 Okay, I'll say this even though there is nobody here, anybody from the  
19 audience? Any questions? No questions. Anybody has a motion?

20 COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: Sure. I'll make a motion to  
21 recommend to the Village Board approval of a special use and associated  
22 zoning code variations to allow the operation of a preschool at 4 Happ Road  
23 in accordance with the Petitioner's application and supporting materials date  
24 stamped April 13, 2018 subject to the following conditions:

25

- 26 1. *The Special Use shall be personal and limited to the Petitioner, Love*  
27 *Peace Dove, LLC, pursuant to Article XVI, Section 4(9) of the*  
28 *Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Northfield. Upon change in or*  
29 *transfer of ownership of the business, the Special Use shall*  
30 *lapse. Change in ownership shall occur when the Petitioners and*  
31 *any corporation, partnership or other business entity in which the*  
32 *Petitioners owns 100% of the stock and/or assets, shall in the*  
33 *aggregate own less than 51% of these entities. The 51%*  
34 *minimum ownership requirements shall apply regardless of*  
35 *whether the business is owned by a corporation, partnership or*  
36 *other business entity. Furthermore, the Special Use shall only be*  
37 *applicable to the subject property.*
- 38 2. *If the preschool enrollment exceeds 60 students, the petitioner shall*  
39 *provide evidence satisfactory to Village staff that there is*  
40 *adequate parking to accommodate the additional enrollment.*
- 41 3. *The hours of operation shall be limited to 8:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday*  
42 *thru Friday.*
- 43 4. *The preschool's pick-up and drop-off queue shall remain on the*  
44 *subject property and not spill onto Happ Road.*
- 45 5. *The representations made in the application and supporting*

- 1 documents are binding upon the Petitioners. There shall be no  
 2 additional uses permitted beyond those specifically enumerated  
 3 herein or permitted by the Village of Northfield's Zoning  
 4 Ordinance.
- 5 6. The Village of Northfield Health, Fire, and Building Officials shall be  
 6 granted access to the subject property at any reasonable time for  
 7 purposes of conducting inspections for compliance with Village  
 8 Codes and Ordinances.
- 9 7. An approval pursuant to any requested review by a Village  
 10 consultant, Village staff member, Village Commission or Village  
 11 Board Committee shall be an approval of only those items  
 12 specified in any motion, resolution, ordinance, or written report.  
 13 Such approval shall not be deemed to be an approval of any  
 14 matter which is within the jurisdiction of any other Village  
 15 consultant, Village staff member, Village Board Committee or  
 16 Village Commission that has not issued a report or given its  
 17 approval. Neither shall such approval be deemed the approval of  
 18 any County, State or Federal Agency. Under no circumstances  
 19 shall the approval be deemed to be an approval of any matter not  
 20 included in this ordinance by virtue of the fact that such a matter  
 21 appeared on a supporting document which is not attached as an  
 22 exhibit to this ordinance or incorporated as an exhibit as part of  
 23 this ordinance.
- 24 8. The petitioner shall comply in all other respects with the ordinances  
 25 of the Village of Northfield and nothing in this special use shall be  
 26 construed as a waiver of any of those requirements.
- 27 9. Violation of any condition of this special use Ordinance shall be  
 28 cause to revoke said permit by the Corporate Authorities upon  
 29 ten (10) days proper notice to the Petitioner. Alternatively, the  
 30 Village Manager shall have the right to assess fines, not to  
 31 exceed \$750.00 per violation, for violation of this special use  
 32 Ordinance. Such assessment of fines may be appealed to the  
 33 Corporate Authorities by filing written notice of appeal within  
 34 three (3) days of the assessment.
- 35 10. Changes in the project may only be made as follows:
- 36 A. Minor Field Changes. Minor changes in locations or sizes  
 37 shown on exhibits may be approved, in writing, by the Director  
 38 of Community Development. Typically, a minor field change  
 39 will not involve a percentage change greater than 3%.  
 40 However, not all changes of less than 3% shall necessarily be  
 41 deemed to be minor. The determination of the Director of  
 42 Community Development as to whether a change is a minor  
 43 field change shall be final.
- 44 B. Village Board Approved Changes. The Village Board may  
 45 approve, without referral to the Plan & Zoning Commission,

1                    *such other changes as it believes are in the best interest of*  
2                    *the Village and which do not involve changes in numbers*  
3                    *found in the text of the Ordinance and which do not have a*  
4                    *substantial, direct impact on adjacent properties. The*  
5                    *determination of the Village Board as to whether a requested*  
6                    *change should be referred to the Plan & Zoning Commission*  
7                    *shall be final.*

8                    *C. Changes Requiring a Public Hearing. Any change involving a*  
9                    *size, quantity or other numerical value found in the text of the*  
10                   *Ordinance or any change having substantial, direct impact on*  
11                   *adjacent properties shall not be made except after a public*  
12                   *hearing before the Plan & Zoning Commission. Additionally,*  
13                   *the Village Board or the Director of Community Development*  
14                   *may refer any requested change to the Plan & Zoning*  
15                   *Commission for public hearing when either believes it would*  
16                   *be in the best interest of the Village to do so.*

17

18

19                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Second?

20                   COMMISSIONER BOLLING: Second.

21                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: All those in favor?

22                                      (Chorus of ayes.)

23                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: All against?

24                                      (No response.)

25                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: The motion passes. Good luck!

26                   MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Thank you very much.

27                   MS. LIPSCOMB: Thank you. Thank you for your time.

28                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: May 15th before the Village Board.

29                   MS. HOLAB-NEVINS: Right.

30                   MS. LIPSCOMB: Okay.

31                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Any other business, Steve?

32                   MR. GUTIERREZ: That's all.

33                   COMMISSIONER BERLINGHOF: Motion to adjourn.

34                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: Motion to adjourn.

35                   COMMISSIONER MENDREK: Second.

36                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: All those in favor?

37                                      (Chorus of ayes.)

38                   ACTING CHAIRMAN DELOYS: We're adjourned.

39                                      (Whereupon, at 7:23 p.m., the above-mentioned hearing was

40                                      concluded.)

41                   APPROVED 6/4/18