

Park District Purchase of 25 Lake Street

Fact Sheet

October 2011

A Capital Project of the Park District of Oak Park

Project History

The Park District of Oak Park has planned for several years now to relieve overcrowding at the District's 218 Madison facility, which houses the District's gymnastics center, buildings and grounds operations and administrative offices. The gymnastics program serves an average of 1,400 students each season with as many as 100 to 200 students on a waiting list. The buildings and grounds operations are challenged by insufficient space for equipment and supplies.

The Park District's 2011-2015 capital improvement plan includes funding for an expanded gymnastics facility and buildings and grounds operations. This is the same plan that has already resulted in significant park and facility improvements in Andersen, Fox, Carroll, Longfellow, Field, Euclid Square and Maple Parks and the Oak Park Conservatory.

Project Summary

The Park District first considered purchasing 25 Lake Street in February 2011. Aldi had closed its grocery store there more than a year earlier. The property is located just east of Stevenson Park. The District assigned Williams Architects, which was first hired through a competitive process in 2006, to prepare a preliminary study for the property. Soon after that study was completed, the District made an offer to purchase the property.

During contract negotiations with Aldi, the Park District reviewed environmental reports about the property completed by Aldi and conducted its own research of the property's history. The property once was occupied by an auto garage and gas station. When underground gasoline tanks were removed in 1988, some affected soil was left behind.

The Park District's first priority for 25 Lake Street is to address that affected soil, through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's voluntary site remediation program. Under that program the District will replace affected soil and will secure

IEPA approval of the conditions on the property. The project will be similar to work recently completed by the District at Pleasant Home and the Oak Park Conservatory.

As a result of the work that will be needed at the property, the Park District negotiated a \$100,000 reduction of the purchase price for the 25 Lake Street property, to \$880,000. This savings keeps the property well within the District's budget parameters and will cover a substantial portion of the cost of replacing the impacted soil.

Next Steps

The Park District's purchase of 25 Lake Street closed on October 6. Over the next two to three months, the District will determine the best use for the property, whether it be a new gymnastics center or the new home of buildings and grounds operations. That decision will depend on numerous factors, including space requirements, impacts on the 218 Madison facility, and costs, among others. One result is certain: The District will have the expanded gymnastics facilities it needs and a more efficient buildings and grounds operations.

Project Team

The Park District's team for 25 Lake Street includes Williams Architects, which will complete the facility evaluation phase to assist the Park District's Board in deciding how to utilize the property. Park District Project Manager Neil Adams will oversee the work that is done through the IEPA's site remediation program. Park District senior staff leading this project include Gary Balling, Executive Director, Matt Ellmann, Superintendent of Recreation, and Mike Grandy, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds.



For more information visit http://www.oakparkparks.com/NewsandInformation/FuturePlans/futureplans_218madison.htm

In partnership with the community, we provide quality parks and recreation experiences for the residents of Oak Park.

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