



City of Aurora

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Legistar History Report

File Number: 26-0448

File ID: 26-0448

Type: Ordinance

Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 2

**General
Ledger #:**

In Control: Building, Zoning,
and Economic
Development
Committee

File Created: 07/17/2026

File Name: West Aurora School District #129 / Freeman
Elementary School / 134 S Glenwood Pl / Rezone
Property from R-1 to P

Final Action:

Title: An Ordinance amending Chapter 49 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, by modifying the zoning map attached thereto to rezone Property located at 134 S. Glenwood Place from R-1 One-Family Dwelling District to P Park and Recreational District

Notes:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: Exhibit "A" Legal Description - 2026.195, Site Plan -
2026-07-10 - 2026.195, Landscape Plan -
2026-07-10 - 2026.195, Land Use Petition and
Supporting Documents - 2026-06-24 - 2026.195, Plat
of Survey - 2026-06-24 - 2026.195, Maps

Enactment Number:

Planning Case #: AU20/3-26.195 - RZ/CU

Hearing Date:

Drafter: PhillipsK@aurora.il.us

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Planning and Zoning Commission	07/22/2026	Forwarded	Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee	07/29/2026		Pass
Action Text: A motion was made by Mr. Chambers, seconded by Mr. Lee, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee, on the agenda for 7/29/2026. The motion carried.							
Notes: <i>Chairman Pilmer said the next 2 items on the agenda are related; I will read them in together. Item #26-0448, an Ordinance amending Chapter 49 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, by modifying the zoning map attached thereto to rezone the property located at 134 South Glenwood Place from R-1, One-Family Dwelling District to P, Park and Recreational District by West Aurora School District 129, Freeman Elementary School, Ward 5. And agenda item #26-0449, an Ordinance granting a Conditional Use permit for Educational Services 6100 to allow a parking lot expansion at Freeman Elementary School on the property located at 134 South Glenwood Place by West Aurora School District 129, Ward 5. This item is a Public Hearing</i>							

Mrs. Phillips said thank you, Chairman. Yes, the next 2 cases are related. The first item is the Rezoning, and the second item is the Conditional Use. The Petitioner, West Aurora School District #129, is requesting to rezone the property at 134 S. Glenwood Place from R-1, One-Family Dwelling District, to Park and Recreational District to match the existing Freeman Elementary School property. In February 2026, the School District acquired the property just north of the school's existing parking lot. The lot was improved with residential structures, such as a house and a garage, which will be demolished in anticipation of constructing a new parking lot. Before construction can begin, the property will need to be rezoned to match the current zoning of Freeman Elementary, which is zoned Park and Recreation with a Conditional Use for Educational Services. Concurrently with the zoning proposal, the Petitioner is also seeking the Conditional Use. A Site Plan and Landscape Plan were included with the submittal and displayed on your monitor. Freeman Elementary School currently has 39 onsite parking spaces for a staff of 65. The new parking lot will create 25 additional parking spaces. It will have a new entrance from Glenwood Place and will be designed to connect to the existing parking lot with cross-access exiting to Randall Road. A 6-foot-high solid white composite fence, similar to the one that is displayed on your monitor, will be proposed to buffer along...it's intended to match the solid white composite fence of the neighbor's existing fence which will be provided as a buffer along with a row of upright junipers on the north and boxwood inside the fence along the perimeter of the parking lot. Additionally, a Landscape Plan was provided which illustrates the junipers and the boxwoods, and it identifies where they would be located. Again, the Petitioner is here tonight should you have questions. Would you have any questions before I proceed to the Findings of Fact?

Chairman Pilmer said thank you. Any questions of Staff?

Mr. Pickens said yeah, I guess I...this is kind of related to the last case parking-wise. If I did my math right, and this is educational, but if I did my math right, if you have 65 employees and you just assume 1 car per employee, we're still 1 short parking spot in the addition. So, again, going back to what the ordinance would be or what'd be the requirement for this facility by today's standards of your codes and requirements for parking spaces, does this fulfill the requirements of today's standards?

Mrs. Phillips said no, it doesn't. It ideally would be 1 parking space for each employee or personnel.

Mr. Pickens said and that doesn't include any visitors.

Mrs. Phillips said and additional visitor parking. In this case, it does not meet the exact number.

Mr. Pickens said would there be any type of requirement where we would need them to meet that requirement?

Mrs. Phillips said that's a good question. Currently, we don't have any violation or anything requiring them to fulfill a parking need. Maybe Tracey can add to that.

Mr. Pickens said I know in some instances when there is improvements to a building or whatever, you have to bring it up to today's standards, and that's where I guess I'm leaning into...

Mrs. Phillips said it would bring it closer into conformance.

Mr. Pickens said closer is like horseshoes.

Dr. Smith said if I could share a little history. So, historically as a district, when homeowners...

Chairman Pilmer said hang on...I've got to...I think I have to swear you back in so...

Dr. Smith said oh, you've gotta swear me back in...sorry.

Chairman Pilmer said do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Dr. Smith said I do.

Chairman Pilmer said thanks.

Dr. Smith said Angie Smith, West Aurora School District. So, historically, where we have had homeowners who are willing to sell property to the district, we have taken advantage of that, and that's

what happened here. We have never used Eminent Domain to...at least not in any recent history...to take property in order to meeting those standards. So, we've tried to over time...for example, near Hall...I'm sorry, not near Hall. Near Hill we've bought additional property, near West High. Sometimes for parking, sometimes for ball fields. This is the space that was available to us, and all that we could put on the lot and still maintain the setbacks that we needed to do and have the ability come in and go out another way. We would love it if our schools had enough for staff as well as families, but we really haven't wanted to be a bad neighbor and sort of force the issue to get there.

Mr. Pickens said again, but then go back to the requirements, if they're going to do modifications to the existing facility, would they need to bring it up to code?

Mrs. Phillips said I'll defer to Tracey.

Mrs. Vacek said so, we're giving the Conditional Use just to bring it into...I'll say to bring it into conformance with the zoning itself. It is still going to be non-conforming under the code and we're going to leave it as non-conforming because they don't meet their parking requirement. We felt that they are adding parking. We could've made them add additional parking. It would've screwed up their bussing route because their bussing route is on that south side of the parking lot, which is where they could've had more parking. So, at this point, Staff really just felt that it would've been more...it would've caused more harm than good, so we weren't requiring additional parking.

Mr. Pickens said and there's no other real estate within their property?

Mrs. Vacek said there was but I believe...Angie could probably talk about it...it's probably where they have their playgrounds...

Dr. Smith said yeah, the land to the south is all playground. And it's already limited because, you know, Freeman is even older than Hall and over time, that building's been added on to and so what the parking was done for would not really have, you know, been able to support the number of students and staff that are there now.

Mr. Pickens said okay. So, it's a band-aid and it's an improvement, but...

Mrs. Vacek said it is an improvement but as they try to get more land as they continue on, then they would continue on to improve it.

Mr. Pickens said we might have some neighbors that are willing to give up some of their...

Dr. Smith said and that's exactly how we ended up with this property. Literally, the neighbor reached out to us and said, "We're looking to sell. We know you're in..." So, we're always willing to listen to those conversations.

Mr. Pickens said okay. Well, thank you. I think that's all I had. Okay, so this street parking. This is going to improve the street parking...

Dr. Smith said correct.

Mr. Pickens said okay...

Dr. Smith said there's street parking on both sides of Freeman, and they try really hard to have that as controlled as they can. But then, you also throw in there that it's also near Aurora University, so it's a very active neighborhood.

Mr. Pickens said okay, that's all I had. Thanks.

Chairman Pilmer said do you have anything else you want to add on this presentation?

Dr. Smith said no, just that as was shared, we're actually putting in more fence than was there previously. There is a setback there of, I think, 8 feet from the property line. Something along that as well. So, it would be fence and then some landscaping. There's still space between us and the other homeowner.

Chairman Pilmer said any other questions of the Petitioner? Thank you.

Dr. Smith said thank you.

Chairman Pilmer said I know I think we have someone that wants to speak, so I'll have you come forward and I'll swear you in. If you'll raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Mr. DeGaetano said I do.

Chairman Pilmer said thank you.

Mr. DeGaetano said so, I'm Robert DeGaetano. I live at 130 S. Glenwood. I am the neighbor. (To Dr. Smith) Actually, I have emailed you and you've been very helpful. So, I appreciate your help, even though we're on opposite sides of this. We moved in about 20 years ago, and we knew we moved next to a school, and to be honest, I don't mind the kids, the screaming and the yelling. I knew the traffic during pick up and drop off would be, you know, what it is, and it is. So, that's not really my concern today when I come to you. But my concern is that we bought a house in a neighborhood surrounded by other houses. We built a life in our home with backyards and, you know, activities. We have a hot tub. And the neighbors now block that house. But you tear down that house, and next thing you know, you're coming to visit the principal, and there I am in my Speedo. So, that's not a good sight. I don't want to be in my hot tub, you know, seeing people coming and going.

So, I have a list of things I actually want to cover. When you talk about spaces and room, if you look at the map that was out before, there's plenty of green space in front of the school. There's plenty of green space behind the school. We walk our dog in that neighborhood every day. There's not thousands of kids playing. Maybe there's, you know, 20 kids running through a giant park which takes up almost an entire city block. So, there is room behind the school for additional parking. Also, there's room along Randall Road for parking. You know, if you pull in where the sidewalk and the green space between the street and the sidewalk is, you could actually put parking there and still have a sidewalk and teachers and visitors can come forward and park there. So, there are other options. Even in front of the school, there is room for a parking lot on green space. But I feel like the purpose of this meeting is just to rubberstamp it. Because they've already built a fence around...they've already built a construction fence around the property...chain link. They've already cut down trees like it's a done deal. So, I'm wondering, you know, is this a rubberstamp kind of meeting or are we actually going to discuss what the options are? Because Freeman's already going ahead with their plans. District 129 is going ahead with their plans. And like you said, you're still considering whether you can change it from residential to whatever... educational...entertainment.

So, I am pleased that you actually addressed some of my concerns regarding privacy. I would like it to be an 8-foot fence where possible. It is elevated just a little bit, and when I walk through my family room, and I look out the window, I can see straight into the house next door which would then turn into a parking lot. As you can see, I'm in shorts tonight. But when I walk into the house, these shorts come off sometimes. You know. I like to Goldberg when I get home, if you all get the drift. So, there is that element of privacy. Along the side of the house, we do have a screened-in, windowed Florida room, 3 season, which we use quite a bit to watch movies and things like that. I don't feel like we should be looking out into a parking lot, into people coming in and out. So, we are concerned about that as far as privacy goes.

The landscaping buffer; I'm glad to hear that you guys are considering that. Which side of the fence will those trees be on? Will it beautify my side or your side?

Dr. Smith said (off mic, from audience) actually...both...(inaudible).

Chairman Pilmer said I'll clarify. So, both sides of the fence.

Mr. DeGaetano said okay. 'Cause that would be nice. I also wouldn't mind... 'cause I'm gonna ask for a lot, and you can give me a little or as much as I want. I think I asked you about it. I wouldn't mind the little...(off mic, to someone in audience) what's that? A berm. A little berm to build the trees on. But if there's a fence, we'll go ahead with that.

Lights and noise control; so, I have asked, 'are there gonna be lights in this parking lot?'

Chairman Pilmer said yeah, I'll...we'll get all the...I have to get all the questions because we record these so I'm keeping track of your questions and then we'll get them all answered.

Mr. DeGaetano said so, for lights and noise control, I would like...if there are lights to be up...for there to be light shields so that my backyard doesn't look like it's noon 24 hours a day.

Chairman Pilmer said I will tell you there are lights in the parking lot; they're in the plan. But they will

have to conform to City standards. So, the City will watch photoelectric and monitoring so they can't have spillage on to the neighboring property.

Mr. DeGaetano said okay. As far as noise control; yeah, I mean, the fence should help, the trees should help, so that kind of answers that. The other concern I have is stormwater management. You're removing a house; you're removing grass space. We are at the lowest spot in the street. Even with a moderate rain, sometimes that street floods. (To someone in audience) Have you ever been there? On Glenwood, when on a rainy day and you have to drive through a little lake to get there? Yeah, so. Where's all this water gonna go? It's gonna angle out to the street, to the storm drains, and right down to the end of the...or to the middle of the street where it's at the end of my driveway. Which means, it's flooded. The street floods, and now it's gonna come up even higher because there's nowhere for the water to be absorbed. So, I would like to know if there is some kind of drainage in this parking lot that will...that can manage some of that excess water.

The other thing...other concern I have is heat from this, all this new asphalt, you know. It's...it's gonna be hot. Hopefully, if you could use some kind of eco-friendly paint. Not all parking lots have to be tar black. You could go with silver or gray. It really reduces the heat absorption. And I know that's kind of an odd ask, but I thought I'd throw it out there.

Has there been an asbestos test done on this house at 134 South Glenwood? Is it gonna have asbestos? When you destroy this house, is it gonna just all blow into my house? That's a question that I'd like to have answered. And if possible, can you relocate me for the day or 2 that you are doing the tear down so that I'm not outside breathing asbestos in? If that's not too unreasonable. You know...and I've heard you say West Aurora High School or West Aurora District 129 wants to be good neighbors but I've gone to some of the properties that they've purchased to build parking lots, especially over by West High, and I spoke to one of the men and when you come out his door, you...his door...you enter on to his driveway, and then there's a 3-foot patch of grass, and then there's a parking lot. There's another property in the middle of this block where it's one house that sits in the middle, and then there's a parking lot on one side and a parking lot on the other. No privacy. You can see through the backyards to both parking lots with nothing but a chain-link fence, and chain-link fences are ugly. So, when they say they wanna be a good neighbor, I'd hope that they would consider...and I think you're on the right track of considering the aesthetic of the neighborhood.

Because as it currently is, if I'm in my driveway and I kinda look down the street, the parking lots a little bit recessed and it's almost looks like it's continuous grass. And I don't want the appearance of, like, living next to a parking lot with cars 24/7, you know, garbage blowing in my yard. I don't think...I know you say you hope that parents will use the parking lot for drop off. First of all, if there are 65 cars in the street, or employees, there's not gonna be room for parents. Already, they're, like these people said, parking in the driveway, kids are dropping their stuff. No big deal. I kind of expected that when I moved in. The noise, I kind of expected when I moved in of the kids. And I guess with the separation during the winter, if they're gonna plow the parking lot, there will be room for them to put the snow, like, on your side because there'll be a fence, correct?

Dr. Smith said (off mic, from audience) yes...(inaudible)

Mr. DeGaetano said to be honest, the maintenance guy from Freeman used to come down with his snowblower and do my sidewalk, so that's kinda cool. (Off mic, to someone in audience) Did I cover everything? Okay, 'cause we're gonna get in the car and she's gonna say, "You forgot to say this." Alright, thank you.

Chairman Pilmer said thank you. So, why don't I start on...I think...I don't know if you want to add anything on the parking lot lights or not? I mean, it is lit, but I know the City will...

Dr. Smith said sure. As you shared, any place we have lights, we have to be mindful of how much throw they have. The other thing I would mention is this is an elementary school. So, unlike West High, it is not used 24/7. Elementary school starts around 8 and it's done by 3, so there are limited nighttime events. You know, a handful of times a year, you've got a choir concert, you've got things like that, but it is not in any way, shape, or form nearly as busy as West High. On the parent part, every single one of our buildings has a different traffic plan. At Freeman, parents do not go into the parking lot to drop off. They go up and down the streets on either side. So, they...and we keep the traffic moving so the parking lot is for parents only if you're coming, let's say, during the day and I need to get my child because they're sick. But it is not part of our arrival and drop off procedure. That's just for buses. So, there isn't that amount of traffic there. I don't know if you want to go down the list, Don.

Chairman Pilmer said parking lot will be asphalt, I assume?

Dr. Smith said yes.

Chairman Pilmer said but it is curbed. I'm assuming it meets...the City will make sure it meets drainage...

Dr. Smith said yes, and I have our architect here, Cory with Studio GC. But we had to submit as part of this a stormwater plan as well and that was all accepted.

Chairman Pilmer said landscaping, I think you brought up, but on either side of the fence will be landscaping?

Dr. Smith said that's what we were requested of. You know, in terms of berming and things like that, we followed the guidelines that the City provided. That would get a little complicated. I don't...I think we only have a certain number of feet, and you've gotta have a gradual...you know, you can't just pile it all up, so I, you know. In terms of the fence height, again, 6 feet was what we were asked to do, and I would...

Chairman Pilmer said I think that's a requirement so I don't know if City staff can...but I don't think we...the City doesn't allow 8-foot fences so I think that's why it has to be 6 feet.

Mr. DeGaetano said (from audience, off mic) you do allow parking lots to be in residential lots, so we can talk about it.

Mrs. Phillips said 6-foot is the maximum.

Dr. Smith said I would share on the questions about the house and things and the fence that are up. It was our understanding that regardless of what happens with this process, we've got the right to tear down the house even if it was just to make, you know, grass so that's why we moved ahead with that. Asbestos abatement and lead abatement were taken care of. They have to be taken care of before we can get a permit in order to knock down a house. That's all been done. So, when the house is knocked down, that's all been addressed.

Chairman Pilmer said and I don't...there was maybe a request for some type of a berm but that would be part of the landscaping plan as well.

Dr. Smith said yeah, I don't know how you could berm and put trees. It would be very difficult because I think there's only like 8 feet. I think that's everything I had.

Mr. DeGaetano said (from audience, off mic) are they gonna be mature trees or do I have to wait 20 years...(inaudible)...

Chairman Pilmer said so, it's...they're listed in the Landscape Plan what they'll be. The evergreens will have a minimum size of 6 feet.

Dr. Smith said I will say that our experience is when you plant mature trees, they have a much less chance of survival. So, we plant what's required but we don't plant very large trees because they don't tend to do well in transplant.

Mrs. Vacek said I did want to point out, though, that a portion of the fence...and it's the first, I want to say, it's kind of the first portion of the fence is only 3 feet and it has to do with being able to see, making sure that there's a distance that the adjacent property owner can see so that they're not backing out of their driveway and not seeing. So, that is a requirement, so I just wanted to point that out. So, there is a portion of the fence that is 3 but the majority of the fence is 6 feet.

Chairman Pilmer said it's about the first 25-30 feet will be 3 feet high.

Mrs. Vacek said yeah. So, I did want to point that out just so that is clear.

Mr. Chambers said I have a question for Staff, if I may. Is...with the current house that is there now, there's no fence that's there currently, correct?

Mrs. Vacek said right, there's no fence.

Mr. Chambers said so, this will be an upgrade for any resident that was living next to it that actually are obtaining a fence now that wasn't there before to assist with privacy?

Mrs. Vacek said yes.

Mr. Chambers said okay. That's...

Dr. Smith said to clarify, there is a small fence, but it's a fence that's like Xs that's maybe like this tall. It's not what I would call...it's more decorative than anything else.

Mr. Chambers said so, this, once again, would be an upgrade compared to what's there to assist with privacy and also to help with noise as well as deflect any type of heat that may come from any type of asphalt that may be down?

Dr. Smith said yeah.

Mr. Chambers said okay, thank you.

Dr. Smith said I did want to add on the question about could we have built this someplace else. There is over 550 students at Freeman, and it's also a neighborhood park and ball field. So, I understand when you look at the map you can say there's a lot of green space there, just put a parking lot there. But for the number of kids that we have out at recess every day, P.E., ball games, this really was the only place that we could put parking.

Mr. DeGaetano said (from audience, off mic) so, can I say...

Chairman Pilmer said yeah, I'll just have to have you come back up, though, to speak into the microphone.

Mr. DeGaetano said (off mic) actually, I don't know if you were talking about the fence that exists between 134 and the parking lot?

Mr. Chambers said you could just speak into the microphone because this is all recorded. It's all recorded, so can you speak into the mic, please?

Mr. DeGaetano said so, there is a fence between the parking lot and 134. But it's 3 feet high and it's see-through. It's just, you know, a cross-sectional thing. And then, I have a fence in my backyard but it's only a partial fence that I put up because the woman and her daughter were sunbathing, and I couldn't go out there and enjoy my backyard without her going, "Oh, nice time to be outside." You know? So, we did put up a partial privacy fence so that the neighbor and I can share our yards at the same time and not, like, be uncomfortable.

Mr. Chambers said thank you for that clarification.

Chairman Pilmer said any other questions? Thank you. I'm going to close the Public Hearing. I know we do have Findings of Fact as well.

Mrs. Phillips said okay, Chairman, can I move forward with the Findings?

Chairman Pilmer said sure.

Mrs. Phillips said when considering amendment to the zoning map, the Commission shall consider whether the proposed amendment answers the following questions:

1. Is the proposal in accordance with all applicable official physical development policies and other related official plans and policies of the City of Aurora?

Staff believe that the proposal is in accordance with all applicable official physical development policies and other plans and policies of the City of Aurora.

2. Does the proposal represent the logical establishment and/or consistent extension of the requested classification in consideration of the existing land uses, existing zoning classifications, and essential character of the general area of the property in question?

The primary purpose of the rezoning request is to be consistent with the existing land uses, zoning classifications and character of the established school property.

3. *Is the proposal consistent with a desirable trend of development in the general area of the property in question, occurring since the property in question was placed in its present zoning classification, desirability being defined as the trend's consistency with applicable official physical development policies and other related official plans and policies of the City of Aurora?*

The rezoning is consistent with the general area. The area has already been developed and there is not new development occurring in this location. The proposed parking lot is consistent with development policies.

4. *Will the rezoning allow uses which are more suitable than uses permitted under the existing zoning classification?*

The rezoning would allow uses that are more consistent with the school use such as a park or recreational area.

5. *Is the rezoning a consistent extension of the existing land uses, existing zoning classifications, and essential character of the general area?*

The rezoning is for the purpose of expanding the existing land uses. The essential character will remain the same. There will not be any new uses.

Chairman Pilmer said and then, Item 6?

Mrs. Phillips said for the Rezoning, we have just the 5, whereas the Conditional Use, there are 6. That concludes Staff's analysis for the Rezoning. There are additional Findings of Fact under the next item number which I can also present to you at this time.

Chairman Pilmer said yeah, if you would, go ahead and read those.

Mrs. Phillips said sure.

Chairman Pilmer said so, for the Rezoning petition, would Staff have a recommendation?

Mrs. Phillips said for the Rezoning, Staff recommends Approval of An Ordinance amending Chapter 49 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Aurora, by modifying the zoning map attached thereto to rezone Property located at 134 S. Glenwood Place from R-1 One-Family Dwelling District to P Park and Recreational District.

Chairman Pilmer said you've heard Staff's recommendation. Is there a motion?

MOTION TO APPROVE WAS MADE BY: Mr. Chambers

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Lee

AYES: Chairman Pilmer, Mr. Barajas, Mr. Chambers, Ms. Hopkins, Mr. Lee, Mr. Pickens, and Ms. Wajid

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Motion carried.

Chairman Pilmer said motion carries. Staff did read into the record 5 Findings of Fact. Are there any additions or corrections? Is there a motion to accept those Findings of Fact as read into the record?

MOTION TO APPROVE FINDINGS OF FACT WAS MADE BY: Mr. Lee

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Barajas

AYES: Chairman Pilmer, Mr. Barajas, Mr. Chambers, Ms. Hopkins, Mr. Lee, Mr. Pickens, and Ms. Wajid

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Motion carried.

Chairman Pilmer said motion carries.

Aye: 7 Chairperson Pilmer, At Large Chambers, At Large Pickens, At Large
Hopkins, At Large Barajas, At Large Wajid and Lee

Text of Legislative File 26-0448