



Planning & Zoning Board Work Session Minutes

September 29, 2025 at 12:00 PM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

David Bornstein, Jason Johnson, Charles Steinberg, Michael Dick, Vashon Sarkisian

Absent

Alex Stringfellow, Bill Segal

Staff Present

Director of Planning & Zoning Allison McGillis, Asst. Director of Planning & Zoning/Zoning Official John Harbilas, Planner II Nicholas Lewis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren, Administrative Coordinator Mary Bush

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Discussion Item (s)

a. Upcoming Agenda Items

Mrs. McGillis began discussion. She noted that at the Board's last regular meeting, there had been an application for a lakefront property on Lake Berry Drive that was tabled. She explained that the applicant was not ready to present it at the next meeting, so it was being tabled again until the November 4, 2025, meeting. She then went on to discuss the upcoming meeting agenda items, which included a new lakefront home on Isle of Sicily, a conditional use for the Winter Park Racquet Club, and a conditional use for the Orlando Health Jewett Orthopedic Institute.

Mrs. McGillis provided an overview of the revised proposal for the Winter Park Racquet Club project, which had previously been tabled pending updates to parking, architectural style, and landscaping. She noted that the applicant responded to the Board's prior concerns by removing all front parking and replacing it with a circular paver driveway featuring a single entrance and exit—one on Via Tuscany and one on Tom Gurney Drive. A handicap parking space will now be paved and connected to the rear sidewalk. The building itself remains unchanged in size and placement, maintaining its setback from the property line. Landscaping improvements were made to enhance the front area, and the new landscape plan now aligns with the updated site plan. Additionally, the building's façade was softened with shorter windows and design changes that better integrate with the neighborhood's residential character.

She then went on to note that the drainage for the site will continue to flow into the

existing pond at the rear of the property, which will be expanded to handle additional runoff. The pond remains necessary due to the lot's slope, making it the natural low point. Discussions confirmed that no new formal parking spaces are being added; instead, vehicles may use the driveway informally during events. Two trees will still be removed, with plans for double replacement plantings between the southern neighbor and the driveway to maintain screening. The revised staff recommendation maintains conditions related to lighting, operating hours, and membership limits, though the previous condition requiring an eight-foot hedge is no longer needed.

Concerns were raised about outdoor storage and maintenance on the property's southern side. Mrs. McGillis indicated that the applicant's updated plans include a new enclosed storage garage to contain equipment previously kept outside, minimizing visual clutter for neighboring properties. This structure will be fenced with a six-foot barrier. The Board also discussed ensuring transparency and community engagement, noting that nearby residents had not yet seen the updated plans. It was noted that the revised materials would be distributed with the upcoming meeting packet to inform residents before the next hearing. The Board emphasized continued communication with neighbors before the next meeting to ensure all parties are aware of the updated plans.

Mrs. McGillis then shifted the discussion to the proposed relocation of the Orlando Health Jewett Orthopedic Institute from its current Orange Avenue location to a new site off Gay Road near Winter Park Village. The project would replace a previously approved but unbuilt office project from four years ago. The new plan includes a medical office building positioned in the northeast corner of the lot, surrounded by extensive parking to meet the high parking demands, typical of medical facilities. The site borders residential condominiums to the west and south, leading to ongoing concerns about privacy and buffering. Previously, a six-foot wall and connecting sidewalk were agreed upon to mitigate impacts, but new complications have arisen due to overlapping city sewer and Duke Energy utility easements along the western property line. Both entities have restrictions on above-ground structures, which may preclude a wall. City staff and Orlando Health have been negotiating with Duke to reach a compromise, possibly substituting a fence and enhanced landscaping in place of the wall, though Duke has so far resisted. The applicant has expressed willingness to fund whichever solution is acceptable, including taking responsibility for maintenance or replacement if utilities need to access the easement area.

Design and architectural issues were also discussed. The proposed tilt-wall concrete structure, intended to reflect a contemporary style similar to another Orlando Health building on Fairbanks Avenue, was criticized for being overly stark and gray. It was recommended that the applicant soften the building's appearance by adding warmer materials and tones, incorporating design elements such as a defined base, middle, and top, and using materials like wood-look aluminum paneling to add visual warmth.

Revisions to the architectural elevations are expected before the formal hearing. In addition, Orlando Health plans to request variances for signage on facades that do not face a right-of-way, including an east-facing wall sign and a large window graphic featuring the company's logo. While there was expressed concern over the size and visibility of these signs, there was general support pending the architectural revisions.

Landscaping plans were reviewed in detail, with a request for the inclusion of additional canopy trees and more continuous vegetative screening, especially along the southern and eastern building facades, to mitigate the building's visual impact on nearby residences and public view corridors. Suggestions were made to replace proposed crepe myrtles with evergreen or flowering species that provide year-round coverage. Parking was also discussed, confirming that the proposal meets but does not exceed city requirements, leaving no room to reduce spaces without a variance. Given the site constraints and high patient volume expected, reducing parking was not considered feasible. Traffic and multimodal impact fees for the project will contribute to nearby traffic-calming and public works improvements, particularly on Executive Drive and adjacent residential streets.

Discussion on this item concluded with the understanding that Orlando Health would be advised to revise the building design to add warmth and meet design guidelines, explore alternative buffering measures if a wall proves infeasible, and refine landscape and signage details. Final conditions may be added once responses from Duke Energy and updated design submissions are received.

Mrs. McGillis then continued discussion on two forthcoming ordinances that the city must address in response to state and local development requirements. First, she explained that a new state statute mandates all municipalities to adopt an ordinance regarding certified recovery residences by January of next year. Even if the city's zoning code does not currently allow such facilities in every district, it must establish a formal process to allow applicants to request reasonable accommodations through a conditional use review. This ordinance would not grant automatic approval for recovery residences but would ensure that each request receives a fair compatibility review in accordance with state law. While Mrs. McGillis noted that it is unlikely the city will receive many such applications, the ordinance must still be adopted to comply with state requirements.

The second ordinance Mrs. McGillis spoke about will involve updates to the city's renovation rules. Currently, if building renovations exceed 50 percent of the property's assessed value, the project must meet all current land development standards, even if no new square footage is added. This has discouraged property owners from improving existing structures because it can trigger costly upgrades to stormwater systems and setbacks. Staff plans to propose amendments that would relax these requirements by allowing existing nonconforming setbacks to remain when no expansion occurs and by

providing a “fee-in-lieu” option for stormwater compliance, similar to what is already permitted in the downtown district. These fees would be collected in a city fund to support regional stormwater improvements. Additionally, properties undergoing renovations without increasing building size and maintaining the same or similar intensity of use would be grandfathered in under current conditions. Mrs. McGillis indicated that these updates, similar to the Orange Avenue Overlay’s Sub-area A provisions, are being refined and are expected to be brought forward for review within the next two months.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Bush, Recording Secretary

From: Allison McGillis amcgillis@cityofwinterpark.org
Subject: RE: Winter Park Racquet Club Application
Date: Sep 8, 2025 at 10:12:07 AM
To: Michael Dick mtdwpfl@gmail.com

Thank you, Michael.

I will not forward this email to the Board prior to the meeting since it would be a violation of the Sunshine Law, however, you can express these thoughts at the next meeting or pass out copies to the Board at the meeting.

I will send your email to the applicant though, which will be helpful as they are amending their application.



Under Florida law, email addresses and written correspondence with the city become public record and must be made available to the public and media upon request (unless otherwise exempt). If you do not want your email address to be public record, please contact our office by phone.

From: Michael Dick <mtdwpfl@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 1:09 PM
To: Allison McGillis <amcgillis@cityofwinterpark.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Winter Park Racquet Club Application

Good afternoon Allison,

I'm going out of the country for a few weeks and thought this additional input might be helpful in the event WPRC seeks additional guidance from Staff prior to presenting a revised application for review at the October 7 P&Z meeting.

Is Overflow Parking on Via Tuscany a Problem?

1. Every neighborhood in Winter Park, regardless of the homes' property values, experiences some level of overflow parking on its streets during the year. Gatherings held

in neighborhood homes can often result in attendee vehicles overflowing from parking lots and driveways onto the streets. Birthdays, holidays, sports events, family reunions, gender reveals, bar-bat mitzvahs, wakes, weddings, Celebrations of Life/memorials, etc. normally result in overflow parking from parking lots and driveways onto neighborhood streets.

2. During the Sept. 1 P&Z meeting, I tried to qualify the frequency and intensity of the overflow parking onto Via Tuscany and, as I recall, Staff couldn't provide any numbers and the applicant offered that it occurred maybe 4 times a year but nonetheless, deemed it a problem.

3. Of the 12 neighbors offering testimony during the meeting, I recall a few acknowledged that on street parking occurred but none declared it a problem.

4. Neighbor Mick Night suggested that those owners who chose to live on Via Tuscany in the Racquet Club vicinity were "on notice" that occasional parking, lighting and noisy events were to be expected.

5. One neighbor sagely suggested that if WPRC management felt more parking space were necessary due to overflow event parking onto Via Tuscany, perhaps the number of attendees at special events should be reduced or capped to defer the frequency of on street parking.

6. Another neighbor offered written input stating that on street parking was not safe or created a safety hazard. If on street parking were a safety issue, the City probably wouldn't allow it or, as a minimum, designate No Parking zones where safety was in question. After all, aside from ingress and egress for vehicles, most streets are designed to allow for vehicle parking.

7. Theoretically, if the membership has been capped for a while, there should not be the need for additional parking spaces.

40 New Parking Spaces Requested

1. Despite the above, the applicant has a right to request more on-site parking spaces and I support allowing additional parking spaces, albeit not as proposed.

2. I suggest eliminating the proposed 14 parking spaces in front of the new building while keeping the proposed new building setback. This would still offer a net of 26 new spaces behind the building while preserving the two trees slated for removal. Despite the City arborist's opinion and having inspected the trees on two occasions, I feel they still have at least several more years of life. Although I never say never, I cannot see where I would approve any revised application that continues to include parking spaces between the building and the street.

3. The 8'+ existing and proposed extension of the podocarpus hedge along the front sidewalk has been presented as a benefit; a positive solution to the objectionable view of the front loaded parking. In actuality, the existence of this oversized hedge is inconsistent with the vast majority of front landscaped homes along Via Tuscany that welcome pedestrian views of the homes. I consider the length and height of this podo hedge as a

negative vs. positive feature and it wouldn't be necessary if the front parking spaces were eliminated along with the proposed home's appearance being enhanced.

Proposed Replacement Building

1. Several neighbors offered testimony during the meeting that they weren't in agreement with the applicant's assertion that the new building's architecture "blends seamlessly" with existing homes in the neighborhood and that we should "assume it as a residence that has been here all along".
2. While the new proposed building does incorporate certain Mediterranean architectural features found in other homes along Via Tuscany, to me it still projects a commercial vs. residential image to me. Despite its function and interior floor plan, I would be more receptive to a building appearance that blends more with other homes in the neighborhood. Recall that the applicant for the Rollins Welbourne Apts finally got it right on the third revision of the building's appearance. I hope the WPRC applicant walked away from the meeting embracing the need to meaningfully modify the appearance of the building, perhaps utilizing more pronounced Mediterranean architectural detail than shown.

Conceptual Landscape Plan

1. Conditional Use applications require submission of a conceptual landscape plan which the applicant provided. The plan, however, inaccurately depicted the site plan of the new building and parking lot, rendering it impossible for P&Z board members to offer an opinion.
2. I would encourage a revised plan that includes more buffering of the building's front elevation, perhaps inclusive of some variety of Italian cypress trees in the palette.

Unless it's a violation of Sunshine regulations or otherwise deemed inappropriate, please pass these observations along to the other P&Z board members. If not, I can provide them with copies at our next workshop.

Thanks Allison. As 1 of 7 reviewers, I hope this input is helpful in the event the applicant solicits further guidance.

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Michael Dick
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