
ORDINANCE NO. O-1415-26

ITEM NO. 9

STAFF REPORT

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT	GSH AOII Oklahoma, L.L.C.
REQUESTED ACTION	Special Use for a Fraternity or Sorority House
EXISTING ZONING	R-3, Multi-Family Dwelling District
SURROUNDING ZONING	North: R-3, Multi-Family Housing District East: Unclassified - OU South: R-3, Multi-Family Housing District West: R-3, Multi-Family Housing District
LOCATION	1411 Elm Avenue
SIZE	0.86 acres, more or less
PURPOSE	Sorority House
EXISTING LAND USE	Sorority House
SURROUNDING LAND USE	North: Sorority/Fraternity East: University of Oklahoma Housing South: Sorority/Fraternity West: Sorority/Fraternity
LAND USE PLAN DESIGNATION	High Density Residential

SYNOPSIS: The applicant, Alpha Omicron Pi, is requesting Special Use for a sorority house. Currently, the parcel is zoned R-3, Multi-Family Dwelling District. This is an existing sorority house and Special Use is required to meet the current zoning standards. The applicant is applying for the Special Use because they intend to expand in the future, and currently they are a legal non-conforming use; to allow expansion the zoning must be in conformance.

ANALYSIS: Alpha Omicron Pi was chartered at the University of Oklahoma on March 22, 1924 and remained active until after the post-depression era. Economic hardships were felt by many of the members, and most members had to leave school to care for extended family or simply couldn't afford a higher education anymore. Therefore, in June 1933 the executive board of the chapter accepted the charter to be held in trust.

Then on November 24, 2002, after a 69-year absence, Alpha Omicron Pi reinstalled its 29th chapter at The University of Oklahoma.

The current site located at 1411 Elm was first placed in the R-3, Multi-Family Dwelling District, on August 23, 1955 when the City of Norman extended the city limits with the adoption of Ordinance No. 906. At that time, Special Use was not required for quasi-unit quarters and the sorority was allowed by right.

Then on June 27, 1996 City Council held a Study Session regarding concern for rooming and boarding houses in residential neighborhoods. An ordinance was drafted that requires all rooming and boarding houses, including fraternities and sororities, to obtain Special Use only in multi-family dwelling districts. Since the adoption of Ordinance No. O-9697-6, all quasi-unit quarters, which include sororities and fraternities, must acquire Special Use. This type of Special Use can be obtained only in the RM-2, Low Density Apartment Dwelling and R-3, Multi-Family Dwelling District, and in RM-6, Medium Density Apartment District.

Because the sorority intends expansion in the future for a building addition of 3,600 square feet for a chapter room and living area they will be required to have the Special Use.

ALTERNATIVES/ISSUES:

- **IMPACTS** The sorority will not create any adverse impact to the surrounding area; this area has been established as 'Greek Row' and evolved as the University of Oklahoma expanded. This sorority is directly abutting university housing to the east and sororities and fraternities are to the north, south and west.

OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS:

- **PARK BOARD:** Parkland dedication is not required as part of this project.
- **PUBLIC WORKS:** The site is platted and public infrastructure is in place.
- **PREDEVELOPMENT: PD14-35 held on November 20, 2014**
There were no neighbors in attendance for the Predevelopment meeting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recognizes that this sorority has been long established at their current location and for future expansion or reconfiguration of the sorority house the use is required to be in conformity. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Special Use, Ordinance No. O-1415-26.