November 6, 2014

Daniel Paul Johnson
School Business Services
Illinois State Board of Education
100 N 1st Street
Springfield, IL 62777

Re: Township High School District 113
Highland Park High School
433 Vine Avenue
Highland Park, IL 60035

Mr. Johnson -

It has been brought to our attention that a concern was raised regarding the configuration of fire lanes at the new Physical Education additions at Highland Park High School. In reviewing the governing code, 2009 International Fire Code, Section 503: Fire Apparatus Access Roads, there appeared to be two separate and distinct issues to address, as detailed below:

503.1.1 Buildings and facilities. Approved fire apparatus access roads shall be provided for every facility, building or portion of a building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction. The fire apparatus access road shall comply with the requirements of this section and shall extend to within 150 feet (45 720 mm) of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building or facility.

Exception: The fire code official is authorized to increase the dimension of 150 feet (45 720 mm) where:

1. The building is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1, 903.3.1.2 or 903.3.1.3.
2. Fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an approved alternative means of fire protection is provided.
3. There are not more than two Group R-3 or Group U occupancies

Regarding §503.1.1, above, there is a marked fire lane that surrounds the new building on three sides and provides access to the entirety of the new building within the required 150 feet, refer to attached sketch. Additionally, the planned project also meets Exception 1 of this section, as it is a fully protected building. It should be noted, also, that the improvement project also includes a significant area within the building that is fully-protected by an automatic sprinkler system. This includes the remainder of the physical education areas of the building, the existing main classroom building A, and the new PE and academic additions. Provisions are also in place for future expansion of the sprinkler system as needed.
503.4 Obstruction of fire apparatus access roads. Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum widths and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 shall be maintained at all times.

At the new PE building, the east and west face of the building, the long sides, are immediately adjacent to a marked fire apparatus access road. On the north and south sides, there is parking adjacent to the building, however, it does not impinge on the requirements of 503.1.1 and access to the building from either the east side or the west side is provided within the 150’ requirements.

Subsequent to our review of the conditions around the new construction, we also reviewed fire apparatus access for the entire school and determined, along with the concurrence of the Lake County Regional Office of Education and the Highland Park Fire Department, that parking provided along the north side of Vine Avenue, directly abutting the building, provided a sufficient obstruction of the fire apparatus access per §503.4. At that time, it was the recommendation of the governing authorities and the design team to designate these spaces as transient ‘pick-up/drop-off only’. This was implemented immediately by the District to the approval of the governing authorities.

After reviewing the conditions with the Highland Park Fire Department, Lake County Regional Office of Education, and the Office of the State Fire Marshall, we believe, to the best of our abilities, that the designed solution meets the intent of the code.

Please let me know if you have any additional comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Dolter AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Project Architect, Associate

Attach

CC: Roycealee Wood, Lake County Regional Office of Education
    John Frase, Lake County Regional Office of Education
    Roberta Biederer, Lake County Regional Office of Education
    Patrick Tanner, Highland Park Fire Department
    George Fornero, Township High School District 113
    Barry Bolek, Township High School District 113
    Daniel Mortensen, Township High School District 113
    Mark Jolyceur, Perkins+Will