

MINUTES OF THE
CREST HILL PLAN COMMISSION

The May 21, 2026, Plan Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Thomas, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Center, 20600 City Center Boulevard, Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Roll call indicated the following present: Chairman Bill Thomas, Commissioner Ken Carroll, Commissioner Gordon Butler, Commissioner Marty Flynn, Commissioner Jeff Peterson, and Commissioner John Stanton.

Also present were: City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi, Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter, and Administrative Clerk Linda Riha.

Absent were: Commissioner Cheryl Slabozeski.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Plan Commission meeting held on April 9, 2026, for Commission approval.

(#1) Motion by Commissioner Peterson seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to approve the minutes from the Plan Commission meeting held on April 9, 2026.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Peterson, Carroll, Stanton, Butler, Flynn, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARING: Chairman Bill Thomas presented the Public Hearing and Consideration of petition SU-26-6-5-2, a request of Bernardino Estrada seeking approval of a Special Use for a Self-Service Storage Facility located on the approximately 12,789 sq-ft, B-3 Business Service District zoned property located at 103 Elsie Avenue, Crest Hill.

Chairman Thomas asked if the paperwork was in order. City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi stated that the necessary paperwork was in order.

Chairman Thomas asked for a Motion to Open the Public Hearing for Case number SU-26-6-5-2.

(#2) Motion by Commissioner Butler seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to open a public hearing case number SU-26-6-5-2.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Butler, Carroll, Peterson, Stanton, Flynn, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:03 p.m.

Chairman Thomas asked City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi to present the specifics on this case.

City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi presented the case, explaining that Bernardino Estrada is the owner of the subject property at 103 Elsie Ave. Mr. Bernardino is requesting approval of a special use permit for a self-service storage facility for the existing commercial property. No variations have been requested regarding the application, and no site improvements have been proposed. Therefore, the existing legal non-confirming physical attributes of the Subject Property will remain unchanged. The facility would utilize the existing entrance on Elsie Avenue, and the existing basement space was not included in the proposal. Proposed hours of operation are Monday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. City Planner Ghaznawi described the self-service storage use as low-impact, generating minimal traffic, noise, and parking demand, and noted that the reuse of a currently vacant commercial property supports the stability and continued investment in the surrounding area.

Bernardino and Sophia Estrada signed in and were sworn in by Chairman Thomas.

Sophia Estrada stated that they want the special use permit for the noted property to be a self-service storage facility. Ms. Estrada stated they already have the loading dock and there wouldn't be any parking changes or modifications to the building needed.

Chairman Thomas asked when the applicant bought the building. Ms. Estrada stated that the building was bought about a year and a half ago and it's been vacant since the purchase. She went on to say that recently, they have a tenant who wants to utilize the existing space as a storage unit.

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter provided additional context, noting the property presents a unique set of challenges: it is zoned B-3, is not situated on a main roadway, and is surrounded by residential properties on three sides. These characteristics made it difficult to attract conventional tenants.

City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi stated that a warehouse use—another logical option for the building—would have required an upzone to M-1 (Limited Manufacturing District), which was deemed undesirable given the proximity to residential uses. The self-service storage special use was determined to be the more appropriate solution.

Commissioner Peterson inquired about site access. It was confirmed that customers would enter via the loading dock at the front of the building, and since the basement is not included in the proposal, the gravel driveway at the rear leading to the basement would not be used to access the self-storage facility. It was noted that the parking spaces out front would be adequate for those who are renting storage space.

Commissioner Carroll asked about security fencing. Director Ritter explained that traditional fencing is not required and that, given the building-contained nature of the operation, cameras would provide adequate security. Commissioner Carroll also asked about night-time lighting, and Ms. Estrada confirmed that existing exterior lighting is in place for the parking area and entrance. There were no public comments.

Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

(#3) Motion by Commissioner Peterson seconded by Commissioner Stanton, to close the public hearing for petition SU-26-6-5-2.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Peterson, Stanton, Butler, Flynn, Carroll, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:19 p.m.

Chairman Bill Thomas asked for a motion to approve a request of Bernardino Estrada seeking approval of a Special Use for a Self-Service Storage Facility located on the approximately 12,789 sq-ft, B-3 Business Service District zoned property located at 103 Elsie Avenue, Crest Hill.

(#4) Motion by Commissioner Stanton seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to recommend to the City Council the conditional approval of the petition SU-26-6-5-2, a request of Bernardino Estrada seeking approval of a Special Use for a Self-Service Storage Facility located on the approximately 12,789 sq-ft, B-3 Business Service District zoned property located at 103 Elsie Avenue, Crest Hill.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Stanton, Carroll, Peterson, Flynn, Butler, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Thomas explained to the applicant that any recommendation that is given by the Plan Commission will be contingent on the two (2) conditions for approval, which that City staff has discussed with the applicant. The conditions are:

1. Hours of operation are limited to Monday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
2. Prohibition on the storage of flammable, explosive, toxic, hazardous, or radioactive materials.

Chairman Thomas asked the applicant if he agreed to the two (2) conditions. The applicant stated he agreed.

The Plan Commission unanimously recommends City's Council's conditional approval of the Special Use for a Self-Service Storage Facility located on the approximately 12,789 sq-ft, B-3 Business Service District zoned property located at 103 Elsie Avenue, Crest Hill. Chairman Thomas announced that this recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council and to keep in

mind that the Plan Commission is a recommendation body only. There will be a work session meeting on June 8th for discussion with City Council and then the City Council meeting will be on June 15th for the formal vote.

Chairman Bill Thomas presented the Public Hearing and Consideration of petitions RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1, a request of Javier Salazar, seeking the City of Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance special approvals to rezone the Subject Property from B-2 to B-3; Special Use for a Contractor-Based Business known as Concrete Raising & Waterproofing, Inc.; and Variations request from Table 2 Zoning District Standards for Nonresidential Districts, and Section 8.2-18 Outdoor Storage of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance to decrease the required lot size, increase the maximum permitted lot coverage, and decrease the minimum required front yard, side yard, and rear yard setbacks, located on the approximately 13,860 sq-ft, B-2 General Business District zoned property located at 1818-1820 N Broadway Street, Crest Hill.

Chairman Thomas asked if the paperwork was in order. City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi stated that the necessary paperwork was in order.

Chairman Thomas asked for a Motion to Open the Public Hearing for Case numbers RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1.

(#5) Motion by Commissioner Butler seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to open a Public Hearing and Consideration of petitions RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Butler, Peterson, Flynn, Carroll, Stanton, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:24 p.m.

Chairman Thomas asked the City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi to present the specifics on this case.

City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi presented the multi-petition request of Javier Salazar for the approximately 13,860 sq-ft, B-2 General Business District zoned property at 1818–1820 N Broadway Street. The proposal is to rezone the Subject Property from B-2 to B-3; consolidate two parcels into one parcel, and dedicate 10 feet Utility and Sidewalk Easement; approval of a Special Use permit for a Contractor-Based Business known as Concrete Raising & Waterproofing Inc.; and Variations request from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance to decrease the required lot size, increase the permitted lot coverage, and decrease the required front yard, side yard, rear yard setbacks for the existing building and the proposed outdoor storage. Additionally, the applicant will discontinue and seal the existing septic and water wells on the property and connect to the City's water and sewer, and will install sidewalk and landscaping improvements along Broadway Street as part of this project.

City Planner Ghaznawi described the business as specializing in concrete raising, basement waterproofing, concrete resurfacing, driveway and foundation repair, masonry sealing, and related services, and characterized the contractor-based business as compatible with the existing mix of automotive and commercial uses along the Broadway corridor. The proposed contractor-based business will have limited on-site customer traffic, with activity primarily consisting of administrative functions, equipment storage, and dispatching vehicles to off-site job locations. It was noted that a contractor-based business is not permitted under B-2 zoning and outdoor storage is not permitted in standard business districts, making both the rezoning and special use necessary for the applicant to legally operate their contractor-based business.

Attorney Sara J. Gray appeared on behalf of applicant Javier Salazar. She was sworn in by Chairman Thomas. Ms. Gray explained that she is representing Mr. Salazar and his business. Mr. Salazar is currently leasing a separate off-site storage facility to store the equipment for his business and it is causing him economic strain. The zoning change will give Mr. Salazar a better chance of success, having all of his business-related materials and equipment in one place and being able to manage his employees and business operation more efficiently. Community & Economic Development Director Ritter provided background, noting that Mr. Salazar purchased the property prior to Director Ritter's tenure with the City and had been collaborating with staff to navigate the zoning requirements. Director Ritter emphasized that Salazar had already made meaningful improvements to the site—painting the building, removing a deteriorating awning, adding planters, and replacing the roof—and had adhered to interim guidance from staff regarding exterior storage, keeping trucks and equipment stored inside the building overnight.

Director Ritter identified this project as significant beyond the individual property, noting that it would be the first property on the east side of Broadway Street to connect to the city's newly extended water main, and that the frontage improvements—sidewalk, parkway, landscaping, and utility easement—are consistent with goals articulated in the city's comprehensive plan. Director Ritter expressed the intention to use this project as a reference for future redevelopment along Broadway Street.

Commissioner Stanton raised questions about the nature of the B-2 to B-3 rezoning and whether the zoning districts carried different dimensional standards. City Planner Atefa Ghaznawi clarified that the minimum lot area and setback requirements are actually the same between B-2 and B-3; the primary driver for the rezoning is the B-3 district's allowance of contractor-based businesses and outdoor storage, neither of which are permitted in B-2.

Commissioner Stanton also raised concerns about the extent of the requested variations, particularly the reduction of the required lot area from 1 acre to approximately 0.3 acres—a reduction of roughly 70 percent. He further questioned the drainage implications of converting a largely pervious site to an almost entirely impervious one. Director Ritter acknowledged the significant gap between the required lot size and what is being proposed but explained that virtually no parcel on the Broadway corridor meets the current 1-acre minimum, as these lots were subdivided and developed before the City was incorporated and before current zoning codes were in effect. He noted that the City Engineer had reviewed the proposed site drainage and found it acceptable in principle, with all stormwater required to be directed to Broadway via sheet drainage

and storm sewer—none of which may flow onto neighboring properties. Full grading and slope details would be required at the time of permit.

Commissioner Stanton acknowledged the rationale but expressed the view that, given the extent of the requested variations, the applicant should be expected to make more substantial improvements to the building's front facade as part of the trade-off. He framed his concern not only for this project but as a matter of setting expectations for future Broadway redevelopment. In response to Commissioner Stanton's concerns, Attorney Sara J. Gray stated that since her client purchased the property in 2025, he has made significant interior and exterior improvements to the property. By dedicating Utility and Sidewalk Easement, he is willing to work with the City to extend the water main to the east side of Broadway Street, and providing landscaping and street improvements along the property frontage. Sealing the existing wells on the property and connecting to the City's water and sewer is also another costly investment that will be completed as part of this project. Chairman Thomas and Director Ritter both acknowledged the point, with Director Ritter noting that the frontage improvements—sidewalk, landscaping, utility easements, and water connection—represent significant public benefit and that the improvements Mr. Salazar has already made to the building are significant and meaningful. Director Ritter added that staff would be willing to incorporate additional information, including before-and-after photographs, into the City Council presentation to illustrate what the applicant has already invested. Director Ritter also invited the Plan Commission to provide specific suggestions for building improvement standards that could be applied to future Broadway corridor projects, noting that an overlay zoning district is one long-term option staff can consider but it would have its own challenges for implementation.

Chairman Thomas acknowledged that the variations are substantial but contextualized them within the unique character of the Broadway Street corridor, where the existing non-conforming lot conditions make strict code compliance practically impossible for any reinvestment scenario. He expressed support for the project as an example of the kind of incremental improvement the city is seeking along Broadway Street.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to close the public hearing for cases RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1.

(#6) Motion by Commissioner Flynn seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to close the Public Hearing and Consideration of petitions RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Flynn, Peterson, Stanton, Butler, Carroll, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The Public Hearing was closed at 8:01 p.m.

Chairman Bill Thomas asked for a motion to approve the requests of Javier Salazar.

(#7) Motion by Commissioner Peterson seconded by Commissioner Flynn, to recommend to the City Council the conditional approval of the Public Hearing and Consideration of petitions RZ-26-1-5-1, SU-26-5-5-1, and V-26-5-5-1, a request of Javier Salazar.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Peterson, Flynn, Carroll, Butler, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: Commissioner Stanton.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being five (5) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Thomas confirmed that the applicant was aware of and agreed to the six (6) conditions of approval:

1. A 10-foot-wide public sidewalk and utility easement shall be dedicated along the entire west property line facing Broadway Street, and contiguous parcels under the same ownership shall be consolidated. A Plat of Easement and Plat of Consolidation (or a combined Plat of Subdivision) shall be prepared by a licensed surveyor. The signed and stamped Plat(s) shall be submitted by the property owner in the required form within 60 days following approval of the Special Use permit and recorded prior to any exterior storage occurring on-site.
2. Curbed turf area, landscaping, and trees shall be provided along Broadway Street frontage as part of the proposed site development per the approved plans. This shall encompass the parkway, subject to IDOT approval, and a minimum of 10 feet inside of the lot frontage.
3. A 5-foot-wide sidewalk shall be installed along Broadway Street frontage. The property owner shall work with the City to coordinate the sidewalk and landscaping improvements with the City's Water Main Installation. An IDOT permit shall be obtained for any work within the public right-of-way. Please refer to the IDOT website for more information regarding the IDOT permit requirements.
4. The property owner shall connect to the City's water main within 6 months following completion of the City's water main installation on the property. This requirement may be extended up to an additional 6 months with approval of the Director of Engineering for weather, technical, or other delays not caused by the property owner.
5. The property owner shall discontinue and seal the existing septic and water wells on the property and connect to the City's sewer main within 6 months following approval of the Special Use permit and prior to any exterior storage occurring on-site. A permit shall be obtained from the Will County Public Health Department, in addition to the City of Crest Hill, to discontinue and seal the existing septic and water wells.
6. No parking shall occur in the front yard, unless solely accessed from the private lot. Pavement shall be minimized in the front yard to only what is necessary to access the building and site per the proposed site plan.

Ms. Gray stated that she had spoken with Mr. Salazar about these conditions, and he agreed to the six (6) conditions.

The Plan Commission recommends City's Council's conditional approval to rezone the Subject Property from B-2 to B-3; Special Use for a Contractor-Based Business known as Concrete Raising & Waterproofing Inc.; and Variations Request from Table 2 Zoning District Standards for Nonresidential Districts, and Section 8.2-18 Outdoor Storage of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance to Decrease the Required Lot Size, Increase the Maximum Permitted Lot Coverage, and Decrease

the Minimum Required Front Yard, Side Yard, and Rear Yard Setbacks, subject to the project being implemented in substantial conformance with the six (6) conditions for approval and application documents referenced in the May 21, 2026, Plan Commission Staff Report for petitions Case # RZ-26-1-5-1, Case # SU-26-5-5-1, and Case # V-26-5-5-1. Chairman Thomas announced that this recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council; keep in mind that the Plan Commission is a recommendation body only. The City Council will hear this case at the June 8th, 2026, work session meeting and the June 15th, 2026, City Council meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Chairman Bill Thomas presented the reorganization of the plan Commission (election of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for one-year terms), stating that pursuant to the Plan Commission bylaws, the annual election of officers is conducted at the May meeting. All three current officers expressed interest in retaining their positions. Bill Thomas as Chairman, Ken Carroll as Vice Chairman and Cheryl Slabozeski as Secretary.

Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to approve an additional one-year term of Bill Thomas as Plan Commission Chairman.

(#8) Motion by Commissioner Carroll seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve an additional one-year term of Bill Thomas as Plan Commission Chairman.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Carroll, Peterson, Stanton, Flynn, Butler, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to approve an additional one-year term of Ken Carroll as Plan Commission Vice Chairman.

(#9) Motion by Commissioner Peterson seconded by Commissioner Stanton, to approve an additional one-year term of Ken Carroll as Plan Commission Vice Chairman.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Peterson, Stanton, Butler, Flynn, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Carroll.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being five (5) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Thomas asked for a motion to approve an additional one-year term of Cheryl Slabozeski as Plan Commission Secretary.

(#10) Motion by Commissioner Flynn seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to approve an additional one-year term of Cheryl Slabozeski as Plan Commission Secretary.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Flynn, Carroll, Peterson, Stanton, Butler, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED.

The slate of officers remains unchanged: Chairman Bill Thomas, Vice Chairman Ken Carroll, and Secretary Cheryl Slabozewski.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

Community & Economic Development Director Dan Ritter provided a staff update on several recent and upcoming developments:

- FAVA Auto Body (1923 Broadway St), Playtime Soccer (former bowling alley, 905 Theodore St), and Muscle Methods were all approved by City Council and are ongoing. Muscle Methods has opened in its new space.
- QuikTrip (former City Hall site) has completed lead and asbestos abatement and is working toward utility disconnection, with demolition anticipated in early July and site work planned for summer and fall 2026.
- Seasons of Crest Hill (new apartment complex) has submitted building permits and final engineering for review, with site work and underground utility work expected to begin within the next one to two months.
- The June 11 Plan Commission meeting has been canceled.
- New Route 66 centennial 3D signs, consistent with the sign outside City Hall, were delivered to the Public Works facility and will be installed across the city within the coming weeks, accompanied by a social media campaign and public contest.
- The Comprehensive Plan update is nearing a first draft, with Houseal Lavigne close to completing initial materials. Staff review will be followed by Plan Commission review and a public open house.
- Mather Farm / US Capital Development Project (Division Street and Weber Road, southwest corner): City Council gave conceptual approval. The project covers the western half of the Mather Farm property and will consist of two approximately 375,000 sq-ft speculative light industrial warehouse buildings with single-sided docks facing existing freight operations, and an office-oriented front facade along Weber Road. Commercial lots along Weber Road will remain and are expected to be more marketable as the area develops.
- Lucky Brothers Gas Station (Quick Run at Broadway/Route 66): Phase 2 truck fueling modifications are being revised due to challenges with site layout and bedrock conditions.

There being no further business before the Commission, a motion for adjournment was in order.

(#11) Motion by Commissioner Peterson seconded by Commissioner Stanton, to adjourn the May 21, 2026, Plan Commission meeting.

On roll call, the vote was:

AYES: Commissioners Peterson, Stanton, Flynn, Butler, Carroll, Chairman Thomas.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Slabozeski.

There being six (6) affirmative votes, the MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

As approved this _____ day of _____, 2026.

As presented _____

As amended _____

BILL THOMAS, COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

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