VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD

MEMORANDUM **DATE OF MEETING: November 5, 2026**

To: Appearance Commission

From: Noah Schumerth, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Case 26-72: Mixed-Use Building Renovation/Expansion at 1722 Ridge Road

APPLICATION INFORMATION

APPLICANT	Mona Navitsky Property Owner 1722-1734 Ridge Road Homewood, IL 60430
ACTION REQUESTED	Request for Appearance Review approval for commercial building rehabilitation and expansion
ADDRESS	1722 Ridge Road, Homewood, IL 60430
PIN	29-31-406-020

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Title	Pages	Prepared by	Date
Schematic Design Drawings	1	M.J. Root Architects	10/30/2026
Additional Site Drawing	1	Kevin Welsh, Applicant	09/27/2026
Design Inspiration Renderings	1	Kevin Welsh, Applicant	10/30/2026

REQUESTED ACTION

Mona Navitsky and Kevin Welsh ("Applicants") have submitted initial schematic plans for the renovation and expansion of an existing vacant commercial structure at 1722 Ridge Road. The Applicants are requesting Appearance Review approval for the expanded commercial structure. Appearance Review approval is required for all new developments by the Village Zoning Ordinance.

BACKGROUND

Mona Navitsky and Kevin Welsh ("Applicants") have submitted initial plans for the renovation and expansion of an existing vacant commercial structure at 1722 Ridge Road. This project is the first phase of a planned multi-phase mixed-use development at 1722-1734 Ridge Road. The Applicants plan to submit plans for additional townhouses on vacant parcels to the west of the subject development in 2027.

The proposed commercial mixed-use project will involve the removal of a portion of the front of the existing building and a major rehabilitation of the existing commercial building, including the construction of a second floor.

Kevin Welsh is the owner of the neighboring Dairy Queen. The applicant plans to locate a restaurant tenant into the ground floor of the renovated building to further draw commercial traffic to the far eastern portion of the Village's central business district.

HISTORY

The property on the 1700 block of Ridge Road has historically been used for a mix of residential and commercial uses. Several commercial buildings and a home site were located on the site in the 1920s. A portion of the site was originally accessed from a driveway from the north (now a driveway accessing private property at 1735 Linden Road). Two of the three commercial buildings on the property were torn down in 2017. The commercial building on the subject property at 1722 Ridge Road remained.

Figure 1: The appearance of the 1700 block of Ridge Road, prior to the demolition of most vacant structures on the site in 2017 (Source: Google Maps, 2013 imagery). The subject property is located in the foreground of the image.

The subject property was originally occupied by a small commercial structure (front portion of the existing building) constructed in the 1940s. The remainder of the existing building was constructed in 1965. The building was historically used as an office. The most recent use of the building was Brownstone Development, which closed in 2007. The building has been vacant since 2007.

Figure 2: The subject property photographed in July 2025 (Source: Google Maps, 2025 imagery)

DISCUSSION

Site Plan

Current Site Plan: The current site plan includes a single-story ~2,400 square-foot building near the front of the property and a large single-story ~1,200 square-foot garage in the rear of the property. The site has a single-lane driveway on the east side of the building accessing the garage building and a large parking area in the rear of the property.

Proposed Site Plan: The site plan is proposed to remain largely unchanged. Approximately 400 square feet of the existing building (front of the building) will be removed. The removal of this building area will increase the front setback of the building by approximately 20'. The remaining 2,045 square-foot building footprint will remain. A 2,030 square-foot second floor with two residential units is proposed to be built on top of the existing building footprint.

Patio: A large patio area is proposed to be constructed in the front of the building, connecting to the public sidewalk along the north side of Ridge Road. Staff has recommended a condition to construct this patio from pavers or other decorative material to ensure an attractive transition from Village right-of-way.

Driveway: The existing driveway will be rehabilitated. The Applicants have considered replacing the aging asphalt surface with permeable pavers.

Parking Area: The rear parking area will be repaired to serve the commercial tenant and visitor parking for residences on the second floor.

Garage: The rear garage is proposed to be rehabilitated to match the principal building. The garage may be used for residential parking.

Landscaping

General Landscaping Requirements: This development project requires Site Plan Review. All projects requiring Site Plan Review must conform to the Village's landscaping requirements (Section 44-05-06 of the Village Zoning Ordinance). Based on plans for the building, the developer is required to add the following types of landscaping:

- Foundation landscaping
- Transition zone (screening) landscaping (between neighboring properties)

Foundation Landscaping: The project is required to have foundation landscaping along front and exterior side facades where the building is to be substantially modified (which includes much of the existing front façade of the building). Plans for this development include a patio extending from the front façade of the building to the public sidewalk, which will be dedicated for pedestrian use. In cases where all area between the building and the street curb or property line is dedicated for pedestrian use, canopy trees may be provided at a ratio of 1 tree per 50 feet of linear frontage. One additional canopy tree planted on the property will satisfy this requirement.

Staff recommends that the Applicants provide an additional landscaping plan showing the location of an additional canopy tree. *See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.*

Transition Zone (Screening) Landscaping: The development is required to provide screening in the future between residential and commercial (eating/drinking) land uses ("Type B", including a variety of canopy and understory trees).

There is common property ownership between the subject property and neighboring properties to the east and west. Screening which complies with the landscaping requirement exists to the east of the subject property (on the Dairy Queen property). The residential uses proposed to the west of the subject property have not yet been constructed on neighboring vacant property. No screening is currently required between the subject property and the vacant land (open space) to the west.

The future residential development to the west of the subject property will require a Planned Development ordinance, which will incorporate this property. The residential component of the project will be required by ordinance to provide screening to satisfy the requirement for this type of landscaping.

Tree Preservation: The site will be subject to the Village's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Section 44-05-07 of the Village Zoning Ordinance). This ordinance requires that any mature tree removed from the site (> 12" diameter) must be replaced with at least three additional trees or compensated with a "fee in lieu" of plantings. The Applicants have not requested the removal of any mature trees on the property for this redevelopment.

Frontage

Existing Frontage: The existing frontage of the building has significantly deteriorated. The building was originally designed with an office entrance in the frontmost portion of the structure. This portion of the building has a large picture window facing Ridge Road. The remainder of the façade is clad in masonry or has large service doors which served previous uses.

Proposed Frontage: The Applicants have proposed a full overhaul of the existing frontage. With the removal of the frontmost portion of the structure, the building will be set back 20' further from the street. The Applicants will build a new storefront system on the first-floor façade with large windows facing the front restaurant patio and Ridge Road to increase visibility of the commercial space. Two new doors will be installed on the front façade – the left door will access the commercial space, while the right door will provide access to the two residential units on the second floor.

The second-floor façade will have large double-hung windows for the front residential unit. A round dormer window will be installed near the peak of the gable roof.

Zoning Compliance: All frontages are required to meet transparency standards set forth in Section 44-05-11 of the Village Zoning Ordinance. An analysis of compliance with transparency requirements is included below.

Building Elevation Transparency

Elevation	*Required % Transparency*	*Proposed % Transparency*
Front (South)	80% (B-2 Zoning District)	80%

Materials

Proposed Design: The existing building will remain with the redevelopment of the property. The masonry cladding of the existing building will remain. The existing cladding is proposed to be repaired (tuckpointed) and recolored.

The second-floor addition above the existing building is proposed to be clad in vinyl siding. The gable ends of the roof above the second floor are proposed to be clad in wood shake siding.

Zoning Compliance: All material usage for new development is required to meet the material quality standards set forth in Section 44-05-11 of the Village Zoning Ordinance. An analysis of compliance with material requirements is included below.

Tier I Material Use (stone, brick, etc.)

Elevation	*Required % of Building in Tier I Materials*	*Proposed % of Building in Tier I Materials*
Front (South)	Minimum 50%	50%
Interior Side (West – facing vacant property)	Minimum 25%	56%
Interior Side (East – facing Dairy Queen property)	Minimum 25%	56%
Rear (North)	Minimum 25%	50%

Tier II Material Use (composite board, wood siding, etc.)

Elevation	*Max. % of Building in Tier II Materials*	*Proposed % of Building in Tier II Materials*
Front (South)	Maximum 50%	25%
Interior Side (West – facing vacant property)	Maximum 75%	0%
Interior Side (East – facing Dairy Queen property)	Maximum 75%	0%
Rear (North)	Maximum 75%	25%

Tier III Material Use (composite board, wood siding, etc.)

Elevation	*Max. % of Building in Tier III Materials*	*Proposed % of Building in Tier III Materials*
Front (South)	Maximum 25%	0% (25% clad in prohibited material)
Interior Side (West – facing vacant property)	Maximum 25%	0% (44% clad in prohibited material)
Interior Side (East – facing Dairy Queen property)	Maximum 25%	0% (44% clad in prohibited material)
Rear (North)	Maximum 25%	0% (25% clad in prohibited material)

The proposed building design calls for use of building materials (vinyl siding) prohibited in the Village Zoning Ordinance. The Appearance Commission may allow prohibited materials upon approval with other required approvals by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Staff has reviewed the design against the standards set forth in the Appearance Plan and finds that the use of the material will not adversely impact surrounding property or the overall architectural character of the area. Staff has provided a recommendation to permit the use of the proposed vinyl building material. *See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.*

Building Design

Existing Building Design: The existing building is a small commercial structure constructed primarily out of masonry and concrete block. The style of the building is early modern, reflecting the era of construction for much of the building (1965). The building has a flat roof with small parapet walls along the roofline. The building has masonry columns along the exterior of the building in a tan/red color, while the remainder of the building is clad in grey/black masonry and concrete block.

Proposed Building Design: Much of the existing building on the subject property will remain. The masonry work is proposed to be restored and colored white/tan. Accent features (such as window and door frames) will be colored black. All structural elements (including the masonry columns) on the existing building will remain and will be incorporated into the new structure.

The proposed building addition above the existing building takes queues from the Craftsman (Arts and Crafts) style of construction. Design features reflecting this style include a large gable end facing Ridge Road which will be clad in wood shake siding, large overhanging eaves along the roofline, and the use of numerous dormers along each side of the gable roof.

Figure 3: Schematic View of the proposed building design at 1722 Ridge Road. (Source: Drawings provided by Applicants)

Lighting

The Applicants have provided concepts for lighting on the site. The Applicants have considered wall lighting on the rear of the property to illuminate the rear parking area on the property. The Applicants have also considered the use of wall-mounted architectural lighting along the side (east) façade of the building along the building's driveway. Staff finds that these wall lighting additions will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians on the site and ensure that the proposed design meets the standards set forth in the Village Appearance Plan. Staff recommends revisions of all final drawings to include these lighting fixtures as presented in renderings. *See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.*

A photometric plan is required for additional submittals (Site Plan Review). Staff recommends completion of a photometric plan showing the location and impact of any light fixtures to be installed on the property. *See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.*

Signage

The Applicants have not yet secured a tenant for the commercial space on the first floor of the building. The Applicants will share signage plans in future submittals to the Village. No signage requiring additional Appearance Review is proposed with this submittal.

Appearance Plan

When reviewing these proposed improvements through the Appearance Review process, the Appearance Commission should consider the following provisions of the Appearance Plan:

B. Relationship of Buildings to Site

1. The site shall be planned to accomplish a desirable transition with the streetscape, and to provide for adequate planting, pedestrian movement, and parking areas.

C. Relationship of Building and Site to Adjoining Area

2. Attractive landscape transition to adjoining properties shall be provided.

4. Plant material shall be selected for interest in its structure, texture, and color and for its ultimate growth. Plants shall be indigenous to the area, or others that will be hardy and harmonious to the design and of good appearance, shall be used.

8. Screening of service yards, and other places which tend to be unsightly, shall be accomplished by use of walls, fencing, planting or combinations of these. Screening shall be effective in winter and summer.

E. Building Design

3. Materials shall be compatible with and complimentary to the design, as follows:

a) materials shall be of a permanent nature and require a minimum amount of maintenance;

b) exposed structural frames that reflect the design principles of the building shall be integral to building design;

c) colors shall be harmonious, with bright colors mainly used for accent.

H. Lighting

3. Exterior lighting shall not be designed to permit an adverse effect on neighboring properties.

I. Site Maintenance

2. Materials and finishes shall be selected for their durability and wear as well as for their beauty.

3. Proper measures and devices shall be incorporated for protection against the elements, neglect, damage and abuse.

J. Factors in Evaluation

"In addition to the Appearance Plan, the following factors relating to buildings, signs, structures or developments which affect appearance will be included in the Appearance Commission's evaluation of a project's design submission.

1. Conformance to all ordinance of the Village of Homewood
2. Use of exterior space
3. Architectural concept and aesthetic value
4. Material selection and quality
5. Compatibility with adjoining buildings, misc. structures and space
6. Circulation for vehicles and pedestrians, and parking"

RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

Approve Case 26-72, Appearance Review for a Mixed-Use Building Renovation/Expansion at 1722 Ridge Road, as proposed on the drawings submitted by M.J. Root Architects submitted on October 30, 2026, subject to the following conditions:

1. The Applicants shall provide wall-mounted architectural lighting along the east side of the building to provide adequate illumination for the driveway on the property.

2. The Applicants shall provide pavers or other decorative paving material in the front of the building to provide an attractive transition from Village right-of-way and improve site environmental performance;

3. A revised landscape plan shall be submitted demonstrating the location of one (1) additional canopy tree to satisfy requirements for alternatives to required foundation landscaping. Landscape plans shall be reviewed and approved prior to the issuance of any building permit;

4. Vinyl siding shall be approved as a permitted material, subject to additional approvals as required by Village staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission.

5. The accessory garage structure in the rear of the property shall be clad in a material used on the primary structure to provide cohesiveness of design between principal and accessory structures.

6. A photometric plan shall be provided prior to approval of required reviews by the Planning and Zoning Commission; a copy of the photometric plan shall be provided to the Appearance Commission upon receipt.