

# MEETING MINUTES



Village Of Homewood  
Appearance Commission  
Thursday, March 3, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

Village Hall Board Room  
2020 Chestnut Road  
Homewood, IL 60430

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Wright called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Members Zander, Preston, Hayes, Hrymak, Quirke, and Chairman Wright were present. Member Grant was absent. In attendance from the Village was Director of Economic and Community Development. Eight people in the audience.

Chairman Wright asked Staff Liaison Mesaros if it was confirmed that Member Grant moved.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chairman Wright asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes for February 3, 2022. There were no changes or corrections. There being no changes or corrections a motion was made by Member Quirke to approve the minutes of January 6, 2022; seconded by Member Hrymak.

AYES: Members Hayes, Hrymak, Preston, Quirke, Zander, and Chairman Wright.

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Member Grant.

## **AGENDA ITEMS:**

### **Case No. 22-06, Variance for Signage for Burlington at 17825 Halsted Street.**

Chairman Wright asked Staff Liaison Mesaros to present the case.

Staff Liaison Mesaros introduced the case and stated that the applicants are on zoom, Doug Franklin and Alex Kaligarcic. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated she reviewed previous cases for similar signage variance approvals and found none; the Ross store at Washington Park Plaza applied for a similar sign and was denied.

Alex Kaligarcic stated that due to poor visibility and being 175-feet from Halsted Street, according to the viewing chart, it would be difficult to see the sign from Halsted Street without increasing the size.

Chairman Wright asked if there would be signage on the street pylon. Mr. Kaligarcic stated yes.

Chairman Wright asked if the applicant has provided the signage renderings in compliance with the ordinance. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated no, only the proposed signage was received.

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Doug Franklin stated he represents Burlington with Identity Resources. Mr. Franklin stated the sign would be 34-inches in height, and the issue is that the viewing distance would make it hard to see. They want to gain customers' attention before they see the pylon and when people are in the parking lot. Mr. Franklin stated the 84-inches fits better and is proportional to the façade and visibility distance.

Member Zander stated he is having trouble with the variance when other signs meet the code. He is not in favor of enlarging it over the ordinance.

Member Hayes stated they do not have precedence over other stores and that if it complied with the code it would be 35% smaller, and asked if the size of the sign is typical for other Burlington locations. Mr. Kaligarc stated it is a typical size from store to store.

Mr. Franklin stated the 84-inch "B" is the standard size coast-to-coast, so it would be a little more than a 35% reduction in size. Member Hayes stated it would look weird.

Chairman Wright asked what size the ordinance allows. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated 295 square feet.

Chairman Wright asked if that included the pylon sign. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, with the pylon sign.

Member Quirke asked Staff Liaison Mesaros if the UC Medical Center asked for a variance or if their sign meets the standard because the frontage is smaller and it seems to be 50% of what Burlington is seeking. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that yes it meets the standard.

Member Quirke stated Home Depot has two frontages and their sign is smaller than the proposed sign. Member Quirke stated the law requires that to get the variance the applicant has to show a hardship and he has not heard any indication of one and that the flanking businesses seem to be doing okay with smaller signs.

Member Quirke asked Staff Liaison Mesaros if they have pylon signs. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated Home Depot has one and so do Jewel and UC Medical.

Member Quirke asked if they could show a hardship if it is not approved. Mr. Kaligarc stated he can only draw on history and that the store does not do as well with smaller signage. Mr. Kaligarc stated they wish to move forward and hope that the city is friendly for the signage knowing the setback from the road is so great.

Member Quirke stated the question was "is there a hardship" but he did not hear a hardship. Mr. Kaligarc stated what is being asked is a solid data point to tell if the store performs well or not.

Member Quirke asked what the reaction would be if it was approved without the pylon sign. Mr. Kaligarc stated he would take it back to the client, but he thinks they would not agree to it.

Member Hrymak stated the sign from Office Max could be seen from the street. Member Hrymak stated he is glad that Burlington is coming to Homewood, but does not see a need for a large sign and he thinks people will find the store. Member Hrymak stated he is having a hard time seeing a justification for a variance.

Member Preston stated that being on the main street visibility would not be an issue. Member Preston stated that from a hardship perspective, bringing metrics would be something to consider, but the sign size is not what brings people into the store; the name is.

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve the variance for signage for Burlington at 17825 Halsted Street. Chairman Wright stated the variance has failed for lack of a motion, but they could appeal to the Village Board, and stated that Staff Liaison Mesaros can provide the next Board meeting date. Chairman Wright added that the Commission is not anti-Burlington, they are just holding to the standards in the code.

**Case No. 22-07, Approval of a Building Addition to Winston Churchill Elementary at 1300 190<sup>th</sup> Street.**

Chairman Wright asked Staff Liaison Mesaros to present the case.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the addition is 2,566 square feet on the east side with two classrooms. Staff had no comments during the site plan meeting, and the façade will match the existing façade.

Scott McAlister, Superintendent of School District 153, stated that education has changed since the buildings were built in the 1950s/1960s. Today, they need smaller group spaces because of the intervention provided by the school. To accommodate, they need to increase the square footage of the property. The district added mobile units 4 years ago, which will still be maintained, but they need additional space.

Jim Smiley, of White & Co., stated the addition will be a little over 2,500 square feet and will meet the setback requirements. It will be an extension of an eight-classroom wing from 1964 with a roughly 800 square foot classroom, two smaller rooms for individual help/instruction, and an egress door and cubbies for coats, etc. Mr. Smiley stated they are trying to keep within the original context of the building. Mr. Smiley stated the brick will match the existing brick and the metal roof will match.

Member Quirke asked if they are confident, it will be okay with the decrease in space for the drop-off/pick-up area. Mr. Smiley stated yes, that it is still largely a holding area, but they feel it is a big enough space. During construction, they would route kids around and may have to utilize Center Avenue for pickups and drop-offs.

Member Quirke asked if they had ever considered having a drop-off lane. Mr. Smiley stated there used to be trees, but the Village removed them and paved the area to give an “apron” so the kids can be dropped off on asphalt.

Member Quirke asked if there would be landscaping added because the area is sparse. Mr. Smiley stated that about 12 months ago, the neighbors were concerned about too much landscaping, so it was taken out. Mr. Smiley stated there are plans for trees to be added later, and added that having landscaping is good, but maintenance can be an issue.

Member Quirke asked how long the additional space would be needed, possibly 10 years. Mr. Smiley stated absolutely.

Member Quirke asked for the timeframe of the construction. Mr. Smiley stated they plan to start after Memorial Day with occupancy by January/February 2023.

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Chairman Wright stated that it is not under the Commission's purview, but residents have talked to the Mayor about the traffic. Mr. Smiley stated that the Police Department works closely with the school and this is the best solution and the traffic is gone by 3:30 pm.

Member Hrymak stated he is glad to see they will match the brick and asked how difficult it is to maintain the landscaping. In addition, a teacher stipend to maintain the landscaping during summer might be a consideration because landscaping makes schools look better and getting kids involved gives them pride.

Motion was made by Member Zander to recommend approval of Case 22-07 – Building Addition to Winston Churchill Elementary at 1300 190<sup>th</sup> Street.; Seconded by Member Hrymak.

AYES: Members Hayes, Hrymak, Preston, Quirke, Zander, and Chairman Wright.

NAYES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: Members Grant.

**Motion passed.**

**Case No. 22-08, Façade change/exterior vestibule enclosure at Culture at 18031 Dixie Highway.**

Chairman Wright asked Staff Liaison Mesaros to present the case.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the applicant, Culture, is seeking to improve the façade by adding an exterior vestibule enclosure that is a welded galvanized tubing frame with clear vinyl windows and black fabric with a hinged door.

Chairman Wright stated that the signage complies. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, the signage complies.

Joan Sullivan stated they opened on December 31, 2019, with the intention to construct a commercial kitchen. Shortly thereafter, they were closed due to Covid-19. They have now started construction of the commercial kitchen with plans to open the first week of May 2022 with a grand reopening. Ms. Sullivan stated the sign would be up before opening. The vestibule will give visitors space and it will block the outdoor temperatures from the stage, etc. inside. Ms. Sullivan stated they know that it cannot extend out, but they want to bring it straight across and the door will open out.

Chairman Wright asked if this went before Staff. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it did not.

Member Zander stated he is not familiar with this type of construction, and stated that it looks good to him. Member Zander asked if it is a fabric. Ms. Sullivan stated yes.

Member Zander stated he is familiar with a similar one in Tinley Park and it works well.

Member Hayes stated he is looking forward to the kitchen opening and stated it is an improvement on the look.

Member Quirke stated that it is a nice addition.

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Member Hrymak stated that it looks good and he is familiar with the material, and asked which direction the door opens. Ms. Sullivan stated the door would open out.

Member Hrymak asked if they would be leaving the “wines, private parties, etc.” up. Ms. Sullivan stated no. They may just paint over it.

Member Preston stated that it looks amazing.

Chairman Wright thanked Ms. Sullivan for cleaning up the façade and that the sign enhances it.

A motion was made by Member Hayes to recommend approval of Case 22-08 – Façade change/exterior vestibule enclosure at Culture at 18031 Dixie Highway. Seconded by Member Quirke.

AYES: Members Hayes, Hrymak, Preston, Quirke, Zander, and Chairman Wright.

NAYES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: Members Grant.

Motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Chairman Wright asked if there was any new or old business.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated no.

Chairman Wright asked if there was any old business.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the Homewood Brewing Company received a unanimous recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Commission and will go to the Village Board in March for final approvals. The casino garage proposal was tabled because the PZC had questions about the sound barrier regarding the neighborhood to the west and this item will go back to the PZC for a vote.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Member Hrymak to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m.; seconded by Member Preston. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela M. Mesaros  
Staff Liaison