

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: **February 23, 2022**

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

7:00 pm

Village Hall Board Room
2020 Chestnut Street
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Sierzega called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Members attended: Bransky, Cap, Castaneda, Johnson, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega. Member Alfonso was absent. Present from the Village were Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, Village Planner Valerie Berstene, and Building Department Secretary Darlene Leonard. There was one person in the audience and 1 person on zoom. The public was able to listen and watch the meeting via Zoom webinar.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chairman Sierzega asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of February 9, 2023.

Member Cap noted that none of the comments made by Member O'Brien at the end of the last meeting, including talking points evaluating the new zoning ordinance process, appeared in the minutes and asked why they were not included. Village Attorney Cummings stated the purpose of the minutes is to revisit the actions the zoning board takes. It is not a verbatim transcript.

Member Cap stated the zoning ordinance was part of the agenda and the action was a discussion. He agreed that the point is not to have a verbatim transcript, but that concise comments be included. The fact that Bill's sentences were not included in the minutes was surprising and shocking.

Member O'Brien stated something is going on, but he wants to move forward from it. The December 8 minutes had all the changes except one from Member Castaneda. At the last meeting there were 8-10 items and corrections from something in the code, he had spoken to the consultant, and certain things were not in process. Only 1 of the items is in the minutes and he doesn't understand it.

Village Planner Berstene stated she also listened to the minutes and understands the details wanted and stated that the recording of the meeting is posted online.

Village Attorney Cummings stated comments can be submitted to staff ahead of time to get specific information into the minutes instead of the day of or at the meeting.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated a lot of discussion occurred at the meeting, and she thinks the minutes are very detailed, but if there are ever any items that the commission wants in the minutes, let her know and she will include them.

Member Bransky stated on page 4 in the middle of the page, it should be discussed before the case is presented and that the context is missing and a lot of discussion was in the middle of the case.

Member Bransky stated there will always be questions about the minutes. If something is not clear or pertinent then it should be asked beforehand.

Member Cap stated the quality of the minutes is the best they have ever been, and asked who makes the decision on what appears and what doesn't.

Village Attorney Cummings stated ultimately it's the Commission, but said to give comments to staff in time so they can get them in the draft Minutes. It is the Planning and zoning Commission minutes so they can put in whatever they want.

Member Johnson stated the problem can be addressed because there is a recording of all the meetings on the website, which are available to everyone. Member Johnson stated the fact is staff summarizes comments and what they think is relevant, but some may think it is not so they have to be discussed. It makes it easier for staff and they don't have every little thing in the minutes. The focus is on the summary. Member Johnson stated if he has a list of things, he does not expect everything to be taken down, just a summary. Member Johnson stated if there are corrections to be made or added let staff know

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated there is a lot of detail, but the staff tries to capture the spirit. For these minutes, the discussion of the zoning case was more detailed because it was a public record of a hearing and the rest of the meeting was a discussion.

Member Johnson stated the options are to have a stenographer or to summarize the meeting.

Member O'Brien clarified that he was raising a question not a criticism. He continued that this trend of content in the meeting minutes has happened in the last few meetings. He offered to adapt his comments to begin with a subject first so that the topic can be included in the minutes as a point of discussion. Village Planner Berstene stated that would be very helpful.

Member Johnson stated the Commission shouldn't expect verbatim minutes. Member O'Brien stated he isn't expecting verbatim. Member Johnson suggests maybe having a basic one page summary of what was discussed. Chairman Sierzega stated in some cases there has to be details in it. Member Johnson stated there is the recording.

Member Bransky stated it's going down a rabbit hole and asked if it really all needed to be in the minutes. There is some information that has to be in there because it is relevant to the case.

Member Johnson stated at the end of the day they need to find a way to shorten the minutes because they have the recording. He added that they may have to think about it.

Member Bransky suggested that if commission members take good notes they can be submitted to staff.

Member Cap asked if the recordings are archived. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated they are on the website.

Member O'Brien asked if the minutes can be distributed early. Village Attorney Cummings stated yes, they can get them early to review and can submit a statement or corrections and to be brought up at the meeting.

Member Bransky stated on page 4 the intention of the list is so staff would have the maintenance of the list, and asked that the sentence be flip-flopped.

A motion was made by Member O'Brien to approve the minutes of February 9, 2023, as corrected; seconded by Member Cap.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, Castaneda, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Member Johnson

ABSENT: Member Alfonso

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Commissioner Training Refresher and Zoning Discussion

Staff Liaison Mesaros introduced the next agenda item of Commissioner Training, to be led by Village Attorney Cummings and Village Planner Berstene.

Village Planner Berstene noted that there was a member of the public in the audience and asked if there were any comments before starting the presentation. The member of the audience, Mr. Montgomery, stated not yet.

Village Planner Berstene addressed the three topics listed in the agenda, starting with an overview of the new applications and changes to the Staff Memo.

Commission members asked that applicants be required to submit plans with clearly labeled dimensions. Staff agreed to adjust this requirement on the application form and work with applicants to provide that information to the commission.

Chairman Sierzega asked about a handwritten signature. Village Attorney Cummings stated electronic signatures are very common and stated that since the applicant is at the meeting the commission can ask if the application was filled out by them and added that wet signatures are going away.

Member Bransky suggested adding a box to be checked saying something along the lines of "the information provided is true and correct."

Village Planner Berstene proceeded with the presentation, attached herein. Village Attorney Cummings contributed his expertise. Members raised questions and discussed best practices, as introduced by the presentation.

Member O'Brien asked about the requirement for an accurate plat, weighing the necessity for accurate information with the cost and time to homeowners. Staff Liaison Mesaros replied that Staff works with applicants to determine and obtain the required information based on the scope of a proposed project.

OLD BUSINESS:Working List of Considerations for Future Zoning Text Amendments

Member O'Brien turned the discussion to basketball hoop regulations. Staff Liaison Mesaros addressed that the new regulations were introduced to the draft ordinance about 1-1/2 months before it was approved. Regarding a previous zoning case for a basketball hoop variance (Case 21-39), Staff Liaison Mesaros clarified that it was found that the pole did not need a variance so it was withdrawn, and per the procedures of the Commission, no further action was needed.

Staff Liaison Mesaros addressed that there are questions about basketball hoops and how they are regulated. A big change was the adding of the setbacks as there were no specific requirements in the old code. She then asked if the Planning and Zoning Commission want to regulate them in a specific way.

Member Cap stated it would then raise more questions about batting cages, tennis, golf, etc.

Member Johnson noted that when considering laws/regulations it's impossible to anticipate every situation and that is not what a code is designed to do. It is addressed when it is a problem on a larger scale to change the code. He added that they spent 18 months on the code and agreed on December 8, 2022. Items that couldn't be discussed in total can be handled via amendment.

Member Bransky suggested that members have the option to say they aren't voting in favor of a case and state that the findings of are not "in the spirit of" the ordinance when it is not otherwise clearly addressed in the text. Village Attorney Cummings stated it would be a reason, but they have to be good to the specific standards, e.g. too loud, too many lights, etc.

Chairman Sierzega stated he had questions about fences, but none about basketball hoops.

A member of the audience, Mr. Montgomery shared that since the object is to increase density in the downtown, there will be a lot of changes that will have to be made for bikes and the reduction in parking spaces. People will want more outside seating and more walkability and more scooters will show up. It's going to be an active town.

Content of Meeting Minutes

Member Johnson asked if they still want to address the question of the minutes; maybe go back or have a discussion on how they might be improved. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it can be old business at the next meeting and they can collect other items.

Chairman Sierzega asked when the next meeting would be and if there was anything on the agenda for it. Village Planner Berstene stated March 9 and a massage therapy business.

Chairman Sierzega asked if there will be time to discuss amendments at the next meeting. Village Planner Berstene stated yes, she will have it on the agenda. Member Cap added other sports. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, they are listed in the old code and the new code and they can do recreation at the meeting.

Chairman Sierzega asked if they will hold off discussing the minutes or have it on the agenda too. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated they can discuss it. Member Johnson asked if there is a good way to summarize and reduce the minutes. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it can be researched. Staff summarized that they will bring more information on different approaches to meeting minutes and work with the Commission to determine the right balance of information to be included.

ADJOURN:

Chairman Sierzega asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m., seconded by Member Cap.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, Castaneda, Johnson, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Member Alfonso

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Mesaros

Director of Economic and Community Development