

# VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



## MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: December 12, 2024

**To:** Planning and Zoning Commission

**From:** Noah Schumerth, Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development

**Through:** Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

**Topic:** Case 24-50 and 24-51: Multi-Family Residential at 18240 Harwood Avenue



## APPLICATION INFORMATION

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| APPLICANT        | Mahmoud Essa                                |
| ACTION REQUESTED | Site Plan Review, Special Use Permit        |
| ADDRESS          | 18240 Harwood Avenue                        |
| PIN              | 29-31-312-007; 29-31-312-012; 29-31-312-020 |

## ZONING & LAND USE

| SUBJECT PROPERTY | ZONING                     | LAND USE                                |
|------------------|----------------------------|---|
| CURRENT          | B-2 Downtown Transition    | Vacant (former Spornette facility)      |
| SURROUNDING      | N: B-2 Downtown Transition | Professional Office (Harwood Bldg.)     |
|                  | E: B-2 Downtown Transition | Medical Office (Grant Orthodontics)     |
|                  | S: B-2 Downtown Transition | Office/Light Industrial (Bawadi Const.) |
|                  | W: B-2 Downtown Transition | Railroad ROW (Canadian National)        |

## LEGAL NOTICE

Legal notice was published in *Daily Southtown* on November 26, 2024; letters were sent to 25 property owners and residents within 250'.

## DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

| Title                          | Pages | Prepared by                     | Date      |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Residential Zoning Application | 2     | Mahmoud Essa, Applicant         | 12/5/2024 |
| Site Plan and Site Details     | 1     | Lucid Engineering Services, LLC | 12/5/2024 |
| Floor Plans                    | 3     | Lucid Engineering Services, LLC | 12/5/2024 |
| Elevations                     | 1     | Lucid Engineering Services, LLC | 12/5/2024 |
| Landscape Plan                 | 1     | Lucid Engineering Services, LLC | 12/5/2024 |
| Photometric Plan               | 1     | Lucid Engineering Services, LLC | 12/5/2024 |

|                                 |   |                            |           |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------|
| Special Use Standards Worksheet | 1 | Mahmoud Essa, Applicant    | 12/5/2024 |
| Site Survey                     | 1 | Exacta Land Surveyors, LLC | 1/10/2024 |

**BACKGROUND**

Nour Esbahya, owner of the property at 18240 Harwood Avenue proposes to convert the former office/warehouse property into an apartment building. The subject property is a 16,646-square-foot building on a 0.82-acre site. The proposal is 18 residential units on the first floor with a unit mix of 17 two-bedroom units and one (1) one-bedroom unit. Previously, the building was occupied by Spornette International Inc. The previous use, warehouse, and production space, is no longer permitted in the zoning district where the subject property is located (B-2 Downtown Transition). The proposed residential use will occupy the entire existing structure on the site.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW**

Site Plan

The applicant has proposed renovating the existing building at 18240 Harwood Avenue into an 18-unit multi-family residential use. The project includes interior reconstruction to support the residential use. The applicant intends to repair and preserve existing features

Proposed parking is 27 spaces within the lot, which meets the zoning requirements. The proposed use requires 27 parking spaces: *(1.5 spaces per 1 dwelling unit \* 18 dwelling units = 27 parking spaces)*. The applicant proposes that the parking be assigned to residential units. Required bicycle parking will be provided in the interior of the building.

Per the 2018 Illinois Accessibility Code, a building with no “Type A” (fully accessible) units and assigned vehicle parking, is required to provide one (1) accessible parking space. One ADA-accessible space is provided. The site meets the Illinois accessibility requirements.

Vehicular access will be provided from an existing driveway on Harwood Avenue. No modifications are proposed to the driveway. The Village Engineer has approved the design of the driveway.

The applicant plans to install a new trash enclosure on the western (rear) side of the parking lot. The applicant has proposed to extend pavement to the west of the parking lot to accommodate truck access to the trash enclosure, in addition to installing a concrete pad in the front of the enclosure. The enclosure meets all screening and capacity requirements in Section 44-05-08 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**The site plan meets all standards for off-street parking, pedestrian and vehicular access, trash enclosure and screening.**

Floor Plan

The existing building will be converted into 18 one and two-bedroom residential units. The applicant proposes one (1) one-bedroom unit and 17 two-bedroom units. The one-bedroom unit will be 500 square feet, while the two-bedroom units will range in size from 551 square feet to 624 square feet in area. The units will be arranged around a central hallway. Bedrooms in each unit will be located along the perimeter of the building with window access. Living and kitchen areas in each unit will be located interior to the

bedrooms near the central hallway. Resident access will be provided with secured doors requiring fob or code access at the front (east) and side (south) of the building. The units will have washer/dryer and HVAC in-unit. The basement will be used for storage and bicycle parking for each apartment.

Two points of egress are provided (front, and side) to ensure compliance with local fire and building codes. A third point of egress (rear) was discussed with the Site Plan Review Committee but is not indicated in the floor plans. **The staff recommends a condition of approval requiring revised floor plans showing a third access point in the rear of the building to meet adopted fire and building codes.** See *Recommended Planning and Zoning Commission Action*.

The applicant has stated that a lift will be installed to provide ADA accessibility within the building as required by building code. The lift is proposed near the southern entrance of the building. The ADA-accessible parking spaces are located adjacent to this entrance. The current version of the site and floor plans do not indicate the location of this lift. This entrance is also proposed to be accessed by stairs without a ramp or access device compliance with the 2018 Illinois Accessibility Code. **The staff recommends a condition of approval requiring the applicant to provide details of the proposed lift and ADA access to the building.** See *Recommended Planning and Zoning Commission Action*.

**The Chief Building Inspector has requested a structural report on the existing building prior to the issuance of building permits to ensure the building is suitable to support the proposed use.** See *Recommended Planning and Zoning Commission Action*.

#### Landscape Plan

The building has existing foundation landscaping along the front. The current foundation landscaping is comprised of evergreen shrubs. The applicant proposes expanding the foundation landscaping area to meet zoning requirements and updating the plant palate to include a larger variety of shrubs and grasses.

One existing mature tree is located near the southwestern corner of the property. The applicant does not propose the removal of this tree.

Per applicability requirements for landscaping in Section 44-05-06 of the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant is not required to install interior parking lot landscaping, median landscaping, or perimeter landscaping.

As permitted in Section 44-05-06(h)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance, the Director of Economic and Community Development may waive transition zone landscaping along property boundaries when a new use is proposed within an existing development. The Director has provided this waiver.

**The landscape plan meets all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for the location and design of landscaping areas within the proposed development.**

#### Grading, Drainage and Utilities

The applicant has proposed minimal changes to the existing development on the site. The primary exterior change will be the repair of the parking lot and the extension of pavement to the rear of the property to permit required fire access. The site drains toward the rear of the property, where runoff is diverted toward the 183<sup>rd</sup> Street viaduct to the south of the property. This viaduct is prone to flooding during large weather events with high amounts of runoff generated from nearby properties. The applicant has

proposed permeable pavement around the rear of the property to reduce the total runoff volume from the site, per recommendations from the Village Engineer.

The applicant is required to receive permits from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the Thorn Creek Sanitary District prior to construction.

The site is currently serviced by all required utilities from the front of the property on Harwood Avenue. All heating and residential appliances in the building will be electric.

**The proposed development plan meets all local requirements for drainage and utilities. All additional requirements shall be met prior to the issuance of building permits.**

### Elevations

The applicant proposes to preserve most features of the existing building, which was constructed in 1949. The applicant will expand the size of each window opening on the main floor residential units, increasing the size of each window to 76" x 60". The applicant will install modern sliding glass windows. The applicant will repair and replace glass block transom windows on the basement level of the building. The applicant will power wash and repair the existing brick on all four facades.

An Appearance Review is not required for the proposed changes to an existing building.

### Photometric/Lighting Plan

The existing building has minimal lighting, with two wall-mounted sodium-vapor sconce lights near service entrances to the building. The applicant will remove these lights and install new LED wall sconce lights along the southern side of the building to provide illumination in the parking area. The applicant will provide smaller LED sconce lights near building entrances, including two lights adjacent to the front entrance to the building.

**The photometric plan provided meets all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and building code for site lighting.**

### Signage

The applicant has not proposed signage as a part of this redevelopment. Any signage shall require the approval of sign permits separately from this application.

## **SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

The applicant has applied for a special use permit to allow the operation of a multiple-family residence (greater than 7 units) at the subject property. The subject property is a 0.82-acre lot with an existing building previously occupied by a light industrial use. The multiple-family residential use will occupy the entire main floor of the building, with a floor area of 16,646 square feet. The lower level of the building will be non-occupied space used for resident storage and bicycle parking.

The residence use will have 18 one and two-bedroom units; the (1) one-bedroom unit will be 500 square feet in area, while the 17 two-bedroom units will range in size from 551 square feet to 624 square feet in

area. Each unit will have one bathroom and in-unit laundry. Each unit will have an electric furnace and water heater. The maximum resident occupancy load of the building is 79 residents.

The building will have 24-hour residential access at the front and side entrances, and each entrance will be secured with fob or code access. Each unit will have assigned parking. There are no additional recreational amenities proposed for residents.

The applicant proposes residential rents between \$1,700 and \$2,000 per unit.

#### Special Use Standards

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall use the following standards and additional facts when considering the application for this special use:

- (1) Is the special use deemed necessary for the public convenience at that location? Village staff have documented an increase in residential demand in the downtown area in which this property is located. A 2016 Transit-Oriented Development Housing Market Study identified demand for additional housing (between 200-250 units). Existing conditions analysis for the recently adopted (2024) Downtown Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan demonstrates that housing density is far lower in the downtown area than other areas of the Village. The area has capacity for additional residential development. The downtown area includes a concentration of employment opportunities and public amenities, including transit access.
- (2) Will the special use be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community? Residential development is likely to increase the number of customers at nearby businesses, increasing overall economic welfare of the community.
- (3) Will the special use be consistent with the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan and other adopted plans of the village? The 1999 Comprehensive Plan and the 2024 Downtown Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan identify increased residential development in the downtown area as a policy for future planning action. The proposed use also permits the adaptive reuse of a historic downtown building in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown TOD Master Plan.
- (4) Is the special use at the subject property so designed, located, and proposed to be operated, that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected? The proposed residential use meets zoning requirements to protect health, safety, and welfare. One additional point of building egress is required to ensure compliance with local building and fire safety codes. Changes to meet accessibility code requirements are necessary to ensure the use guarantees welfare and safety for all users, including those with disabilities requiring ADA accommodations.
- (5) Is the special use a suitable use of the property and, without the special use, could the property will be substantially diminished in value? The B-2 Downtown Transition district permits a range of uses that contribute to the vibrancy of a central business district, including residential uses. The proposed residential use is not immediately adjacent to other residential properties but is supportive of the surrounding area. The existing building is suitable for the proposed use. The property value is unlikely to be diminished without the special use as several other uses could occupy this building.

- (6) Will the special use cause substantial injury to the value of other property in the neighborhood in which it is located? The proposal is a renovation of an existing property and is not expected to cause injury to the value of adjacent property. The re-occupation of a vacant property is likely to provide benefits to neighboring property, such as increased economic activity spurred by the multi-family residential use near commercial uses.
- (7) Will the special use be consistent with the uses and community character of the neighborhood surrounding the subject property? While the subject property is not immediately adjacent to other residential properties, the property is located within the B-2 Downtown Transition district, which is designed for a range of residential and non-residential uses supportive of transit-oriented development in the downtown area. The area surrounding the development is diverse in use, including office, light industrial, retail, and residential uses. The multi-family use is of a scale and housing type supportive of planning goals and will not be a detriment to the overall character of the area.
- (8) Will the special use be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for the purposes permitted in the zoning district? The special use is not expected to be injurious to other property in the neighborhood used for the B-2 Downtown Transition district.
- (9) Will the special use impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding properties for uses permitted in the zoning district? This project is renovation of an existing property and is not expected to hinder any improvement of a surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district.
- (10) Does the proposed special use at the subject property provides adequate measures of ingress and egress in a manner that minimizes traffic congestion in the public streets? The development requires changes to the proposed site and floor plans to provide adequate ingress and egress, including a third exterior point of egress and modifications to ADA-compliant access to the building for residents and visitors. *See Recommended Planning and Zoning Commission Action.*
- (11) Is the subject property adequately served by utilities, drainage, road access, public safety and other necessary facilities to support the special use? The subject property has adequate utilities and vehicle/pedestrian access to support the use. The applicant proposes changes to ensure proper drainage while meeting all requirements of local building and fire codes. The applicant has proposed public safety infrastructure, including fob access, security cameras, and lighting, to ensure public safety for all site users.

## FINDINGS OF FACT

The staff has prepared the draft findings of fact per the standards set forth in Section 44-07-11 of the Village Zoning Ordinance for special use permit applications. The findings of fact, as proposed or as amended, may be entered into the record:

1. The subject property is a 0.82-acre site comprised of three parcels;
2. The project is located at 18240 Harwood Avenue, near the northwest corner of Harwood Avenue and 183<sup>rd</sup> Street;

3. The subject property is owned by Nour Esbahya;
4. The subject property is located within the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district;
5. The proposed use is a multiple-family residence (>7 units) and requires a special use permit in the B-2 Downtown Transition zone;
6. The subject property was formerly used for light industrial. Light manufacturing uses and warehousing are currently not permitted in the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district;
7. The proposed multiple-family residence use meets all applicable standards in the proposed zoning district (B-2 Downtown Transition); and
8. The proposed residential use will operate within an existing building that is adequately served by utilities, access, and on-site parking.

**RECOMMENDED PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ACTION**

The Planning and Zoning Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

**Recommend approval** of Case 24-50 to allow a multiple-family residence (> 7 units) as a special use at 18240 Harwood Avenue;

AND

**Approve** Case 24-51, Site Plan Review for 18240 Harwood Avenue, as proposed on the drawings submitted by Lucid Engineering Services, LLC, subject to the following conditions:

1. A revised floor plan indicating the location of a) interior improvements to provide ADA-compliant access, and b) a third egress point as required for the proposed use, shall be submitted and approved by the Chief Building Inspector before the issuance of building permits;

2. A revised site plan indicating the location of a) exterior improvements to provide ADA-compliant access to the southern entrance of the building, and b) any exterior improvements required for the third point of egress to the building, shall be submitted and approved by the Chief Building Inspector before the issuance of building permits;

3. A structural report shall be completed, filed, and approved by the Chief Building Inspector before the issuance of building permits;

AND

Incorporate the Findings of Fact into the record.