

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: April 2, 2026

To: Appearance Commission

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

Through: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Case 26-20: Appearance Review for Commercial Expansion at 18114 Gottschalk Avenue

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Title	Pages	Prepared by	Date
Application	1	Domani Builders, Applicant	03/18/2026
Proposed Site Plan	2	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Proposed Floor Plans	2	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Building Detail Drawings	2	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Existing Elevations with Demo Plans	1	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Proposed Elevations	1	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Proposed Building Sections	1	Ideal Designs, Architect	03/10/2026
Staff Exhibits	3	Noah Schumerth, A.D. ECD	03/26/2026

BACKGROUND

The applicant has proposed the construction of a 1,347 square-foot addition to an existing dental office (Signature Smiles Dentistry) at 18114 Gottschalk Avenue. This addition will expand the existing dental practice, adding new dental procedure rooms, expanding the waiting area and lobby, and adding new offices and employee spaces.

HISTORY

The original building was constructed in 1950. The building was occupied by an insurance office (Knoll Insurance) for many years. The building was converted into a dental office in 2006, with a new practice (Signature Smiles) opening in 2024. The building was originally clad in brown-orange brick with Art Deco stone accents. The building had awnings and windows added in 2006, and was renovated into its current appearance (cream-colored brick with Art Deco stone accents) in 2013.



Figure 1: Existing Building @ 18114 Gottschalk Avenue (2025)

DISCUSSION

Building Elevations/Site Plan

The exterior of the new building area will be clad in similar brick material to the brick found on all four elevations of the building. The cladding will be smooth-face brick with bricks measuring approximately 10" x 3". This brick has been initially proposed to be colored in dark cream similar to the existing portion of the building. The brick on the existing portion of the building is proposed to be retained to match the brick on the new addition. **The applicant has requested feedback from the Commission on the color of the building, and has provided an alternative color scheme in white with black accents for consideration by the Commission (see Staff Exhibits)**

The angled front entry of the existing building facing northeast (toward the intersection of Gottschalk and Ridge) will remain, as the new building expansion will be setback from Gottschalk Avenue by approximately 10 feet. The precast stone accents around the front entry will also remain.

The new building will have a large picture window facing Gottschalk Avenue, which will replace the existing picture window facing north which will be removed with the building expansion. Three other single-hung windows installed in the north and east elevations of the building will mimic the single-hung windows installed in the existing building and provide windows in new offices constructed in the expanded building. New windows will also be installed in the west elevation of the building; however, these windows will be transom windows elevated to 6' above the ground to improve privacy in dental procedure rooms.

The north elevation facing the rear alleyway will have an employee entryway installed to connect to the existing parking area along the alley. The entryway will be designed with precast stone cladding to match the stone panels found around the front entry of the existing building. This entry meets current ADA requirements for employee entrances.

The new building expansion will also feature an identical precast stone parapet design to the one which is installed on the existing building. The parapet will screen two new rooftop HVAC units which will upgrade the existing air conditioning system in the building. The new building expansion will have a flat roof at the same height as the roof on the existing building.

The new building addition is subject to the design standards found in the Village Zoning Ordinance.

Material Quality: The Village Zoning Ordinance requires at least 50% of the exterior side (Gottschalk Avenue, east) façade of the building and 25% of all other facades to be clad in "Tier I" materials, determined to be of a higher quality standards for their longevity, durability, and overall aesthetic alignment with existing development in the Village. This requirement applies to the new building expansion only.

This applicant proposes Tier I materials on 100% of all three exterior sides of the building addition, as smooth-face brick and pre-cast stone are considered Tier I materials in the Village's zoning regulations. **Requirement is met.**

Façade Articulation: The Village Zoning Ordinance requires any wall face greater than 60' long to be articulated with building façade movement, doors/windows, awnings, or other design features. The

exterior side (Gottschalk Avenue, east) facade of the building will be greater than 60' in length with the construction of the new building addition.

The applicant proposes to set the building addition back from the existing building by approximately 10' on the Gottschalk Avenue side of the building. Pre-cast stone accents provide additional articulation on the facade of the building. This design meets the requirement for façade articulation in the Village's zoning regulations. **Requirement is met.**

Transparency: New construction in an existing development (such as this building addition) requires that transparency requirements in the Village Zoning Ordinance be met "to the extent possible within existing conditions." The new building addition is required to have a minimum of 40% façade transparency along the exterior side (Gottschalk Avenue, east) façade of the building.

The applicant has provided a design where 29% of the length of the façade has transparent openings, including a large picture window and an office window. Due to the presence of private offices along this wall of the building, there are limited opportunities to add additional transparency along this side of the building.

The Director of Economic and Community Development may waive the requirement for transparency on this project, provided the project is created façade transparency "to the extent possible within existing conditions." Staff recommends that this requirement is waived on this façade. **See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.**

Conditions: Staff has recommended the following building design considerations for approval (see *Recommended Appearance Commission Action*):

1. Director of economic and community development shall provide a waiver of the transparency requirements for the building as permitted in Section 44-05-11.(d) of the Village Zoning Ordinance.

Landscaping and Tree Preservation

The current building has a 7' buffer of foundation landscaping around the north side of the building. This landscape buffer contains flowering plants and manicured shrubs. The building expansion will require removal of this landscaping and replacement with a new foundation landscape buffer around the north and east sides of the new building area. This buffer will have a meandering perimeter which mimics the shape of the currently installed landscaping. The applicant has agreed to install new landscaping with a plant palette in conformance with the Village's native plant list.

Staff has provided a condition of approval for building permits to submit a plant palette which is in alignment with the Village's native plant species list. The Appearance Commission may wish to recommend specific species or types of plantings. **See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.**

The placement of the new foundation landscaping meets zoning requirements. The foundation landscape area is the only new landscaping required with this building expansion.

The removal of landscaping will require the removal of a mature and healthy ornamental tree from the property. This will not require an application through the Village's tree removal ordinance, which

requires permits for removal of any tree over 12" in diameter. However, the Village Arborist recommends the replacement of the ornamental tree.

Any current turf area which is not planned to be impacted by the construction of the new building and landscaping will remain as turf. No changes are anticipated to the parking area except as required to meet ADA accessibility requirements.

Conditions: Staff has recommended the following landscaping conditions for approval (see *Recommended Appearance Commission Action*):

1. Provide a plant palate and identify final planting locations on a revised landscape plan in alignment with Village native plant species list, prior to issuance of building permits.
2. Revise landscape plan to include a new ornamental tree to replace the existing ornamental tree to the north of the existing building prior to approval of building permits;

Lighting

The existing building has a small exterior light located above the front entry to the dental office, and a security light located on the interior (west) side of the building. The proposed building addition will have new LED wall sconce fixtures installed near the proposed employee entrance of the building. No additional lighting fixtures are proposed.

Staff has noted upon review of the property that lighting is very limited in the rear of the property due to a lack of security lighting or nearby lighting in the public alley. Staff has recommended the adjustment of security lighting plans to ensure security on all four sides of the commercial structure.

Conditions: Staff has recommended the following lighting considerations as conditions of approval (see *Recommended Appearance Commission Action*):

1. Replace existing light fixture near the main entrance of the building to improve the availability of lighting at the building entrance and match new fixtures installed on the building addition to ensure consistency of exterior lighting across the building.
2. Add an additional shielded security lighting fixture at the northwest corner of the building on the west façade, matching the existing security lighting fixture at the southwest corner of the building on the west façade, to ensure sufficient security lighting on this side of the building.

Signs

The proposed expansion will require the removal of existing signage on the north (rear) and east (Gottschalk Avenue) sides of the building. The new building will have two wall signs with the logo of the dental clinic installed on the north (rear) and east (Gottschalk Avenue) sides of the building. These signs will be constructed with a similar size and type to the existing signage on the north side of the building.

The applicant has requested feedback on the type and placement of signs on the building. The applicant has provided an alternate sign design (wall sign with backlit cabinet letters) for consideration by the Commission.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Appearance Commission may use the Appearance Plan as a set of standards for the review of any Appearance Review application. The Commission may wish to consider the following standards in the evaluation of this proposal:

B. Relationship of Buildings to the 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.*
- 3. The height and scale of each building shall be compatible with its site and adjoining buildings.*
- 4. Newly installed utility services, and service revisions necessitated by exterior alterations, shall be underground. Transformers mounted on utility poles shall be discouraged.*
- 5. In relating buildings to site, the provisions of the Homewood Municipal Code in regard to bulk regulations, standards, and off-street parking shall be part of this criteria.*

C. Relationship of Building with Surrounding Area

- 1. Adjacent buildings of different architectural styles shall be made compatible by such means as screens, site breaks, and other materials.*
- 3. Harmony in texture, lines, and masses is required.*
- 4. Buildings should have a similar scale to those in the surrounding area.*

D. Landscape and Site Treatment

- 2. Landscape treatment shall be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas, and provide shade.*
- 4. Plant material shall be selected for interest in its structure, texture, and color and for its ultimate growth. Plants that are indigenous to the area and others that will be hardy, harmonious to the design and of good appearance shall be used.*
- 6. Parking areas and traffic ways shall be enhanced with landscaped spaces containing trees or tree groupings. Parking areas shall be treated with decorative elements, building wall extensions, plantings, fences or other innovative means so as to largely screen parking from public view.*
- 7. Where building sites limit planting, the placement of trees in parkways or paved areas will be required. Planting areas within parking lots shall be encouraged.*
- 9. In areas where general planting will not prosper, other materials, such as fences, walls and pavings; of wood, brick, stone, and gravel, shall be used. Carefully selected plants shall be combined with such materials where possible.*

10. Exterior lighting, when used, shall enhance the building design and the adjoining landscape. Lighting standards and fixtures shall be of a design and size compatible with the building and adjacent areas. Lighting shall be restrained in design, and excessive brightness so it has no light spill over to adjacent properties, and brilliant colors avoided.

E. Building Design

1. Acceptable design principals and proper use of materials and supporting surrounding elements;
2. Buildings shall, with their own design concept, be an asset in the aesthetic sense to the Village of Homewood;
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 principals of the building shall be an integral part of the building design;
 - c. Colors shall be harmonious, with bright or brilliant colors used mainly for accent.
4. Mechanical or electrical equipment and utility hardware, whether located on the roof, ground or attached to the building, shall be screened from the public view. Screening shall be accomplished with the use of fences, walls, enclosures or approved plantings. Materials used shall be compatible with the materials used on the building and throughout the project.
5. Exterior lighting shall be part of the architectural concept. Fixtures, standards and placement of these units and all exposed accessories shall be harmonious with building design. Lighting shall be restrained in design and excessive brightness so it has no light spill over to adjacent properties, and brilliant colors shall be avoided.

F. Signs

1. Wall, ground, and identification signs shall be part of the architectural concept. Size color, lettering, locations, and arrangement shall be harmonious with the building design, and shall be compatible with signs on adjoining buildings.
2. Materials used in signs shall be of sound architectural character, be durable, and be harmonious with building design and surrounding landscape. Materials that tend to become illegible shall be avoided.
3. Every sign shall be scaled and designed so as to conform with relationship to buildings and surrounds.

STAFF COMMENTS

The proposed addition will increase the square footage of the existing medical office to greater than 2,500 square feet. A special use permit will be required to operate the expanded dental office, which will need approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission and Village Board.

The applicant has also recently executed a parking lease for ten (10) spaces at the American Dance Center property at 1933 Ridge Road. This lease ensures they meet the parking requirements for the property. The only changes required to the parking area will be the addition of one ADA-accessible parking space.

RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

Approve Case 26-20, Appearance Review for Signature Smiles Dental at 18114 Gottschalk Avenue, as proposed on the drawings submitted by Domani Builders, subject to the following conditions:

1. Provide a plant palette and identify final planting locations on a revised landscape plan in alignment with Village native plant species list, prior to issuance of building permits.
2. Revise landscape plan to include a new ornamental tree to replace the existing ornamental tree to the north of the existing building prior to approval of building permits.
3. Modify lighting fixtures on the existing entry to match LED fixtures proposed on the new section of the building to meet Appearance Plan standards and ensure consistency with current lighting requirements of the Village Zoning Ordinance.
4. Add an additional shielded security lighting fixture at the northwest corner of the building on the west façade, matching the existing security lighting fixture at the southwest corner of the building on the west façade, to ensure sufficient security lighting on this side of the building.
5. Director of economic and community development shall provide a waiver of the transparency requirements for the building as permitted in Section 44-05-11.(d) of the Village Zoning Ordinance.