

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING:

April 25, 2024

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

7:00 pm

Village Hall Board Room
2020 Chestnut Street
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Sierzega called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were Members Bransky, O'Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, and Chair Sierzega. Members Alfonso and Cap were absent. Present from the Village was Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros (serving as Staff Liaison) and Assistant Director of Economic & Community Development Noah Schumerth. There were no audience members present. The public was able to watch and listen to the meeting via Zoom webinar. There were no audience members present via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Sierzega requested any proposed changes to the minutes. Member O

Member Castaneda requested a change to the name "Bill Moss" as an audience member at the 4/11 Planning and Zoning Commission hearing; the correct name is Bill Mott. Member Castaneda noted a missing phrase in the report, but discovered the phrase on a different page and declined the request for edits.

Member O'Brien noted an incomplete sentence on page 5 of the minutes, asking what follows the following phrase:

"Consulting team member Kelsey Zlevor noted that the Village can do social media campaigns and other _____."

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the sentence should read as follows:

*"Consulting team member Kelsey Zlevor noted that the Village can do social media campaigns and other **initiatives to raise awareness about the intersection redesign.**"* Schumerth noted that the phrase was accidentally deleted during the final editing of the hearing packet.

Member Bransky noted that he referenced only seniors in his comments on parking for community members on page 7 of the minutes. The phrase:

"...greater concern for parking for seniors and other vulnerable members of the community," should read as:

"...greater concern for parking for seniors."

Bransky noted he has a great deal of care for other vulnerable members of the community, but wished to have his quote from the hearing properly recorded in the minutes.

Member Bransky also noted that title for Case 24-07: Upham Subdivision in the minutes should be 3043-3055 **W 183rd Street**, rather than 3043-3055 Ridge Road.

Motion made to approve the minutes made by Member Bransky; second by Member O'Brien.

AYES: Members Bransky, O'Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

REGULAR BUSINESS:

CASE 24-06: Special Use Permit for Motor Vehicle Rental at 17803 Bretz Drive

Chair Sierzega introduced the case and called the applicant, Wes Jenkins, to the podium. Chair Sierzega clarified that Jenkins was authorized by the original applicant, Lakeisha Williams, was authorized to speak on her behalf. Jenkins answered that Williams is his fiancé and they are partners in the operation of the proposed business. Chair Sierzega read the details of the case.

Applicant Jenkins stated that he will be operating both a vehicle rental facility and an auto service facility providing small-scale repairs such as "paintless dent removal" (PDR) and brake service. Chair Sierzega asked if brake service and similar repairs would be available at the new business. Jenkins stated that such services would be available. Sierzega asked for clarification whether the auto service side of the use would be available to the general public. Jenkins stated that services would be available to the general public.

Member Bransky asked if the proposed business is a new operation or is a new location of an existing business. Jenkins noted that the business will be a new operation undertaken as a startup business.

Member Bransky asked if an exhaust system will be retrofitted into the space, given that indoor vehicle service will continue in the winter. Jenkins noted that he plans on installing a vehicle exhaust system with an installation attached to vehicle tailpipes which can route fumes to the exterior of the building through a door.

Member Bransky asked if the door used to install the exhaust system will be a front door or rear door. Jenkins stated that the door will be located in the rear of the building, along with all vehicle service.

Member Bransky asked if any harsh chemicals requiring special storage and disposal, such as degreasers and other chemicals, will be used at the business. Jenkins stated that only common cleaners, lubricants, and other compounds will be used.

Member Bransky asked how many vehicles will be maintained by the rental business. Jenkins noted that the size of the garage in the tenant space restricts the number of cars which can be used for rental. Jenkins stated that eight vehicles will be used for rental, which will be moved in and out of the garage space as storage is needed; vehicles will generally be in transition between rental uses.

Member O'Brien asked whether the applicant intended to state in the Special Use Application to answer "yes" to whether the use would be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the error was made by the applicant in filling out the applicant, and the applicant is claiming that there is no detrimental impact to economic welfare surrounding the use.

Member O'Brien noted that staff cited nearby similar uses, and asked which uses nearby provide similar uses. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that there is another auto service facility located in the same center located at the 17800 block of Bretz Drive.

Member O'Brien asked for clarification about the applicant's statement in application materials that there are no vehicle rental facilities nearby, asking where the nearest competing facility would be located. The applicant Jenkins noted that the nearest competitor is located south of the proposed business on Halsted Street; it is an Enterprise car rental facility.

Member O'Brien asked what was meant by staff by the phrase "proposed restrictions on the Special Use Permit." Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the phrase is referencing proposed conditions on the use which are included in the recommendation to the Commission at the end of the staff memo provided to Commission members. O'Brien asked if the conditions are the two bullet points listed on page 15; Schumerth clarified that these are the two impacts on surrounding businesses which staff are attempting to control with the proposed conditions in the recommendation made to the Commission. Schumerth also said that there are conditions recommended which are standard to the proposed use.

Member Bransky asked for clarification that the business could store vehicles longer than 30 days indoors, based on the proposed condition that limits vehicle storage to 30 days. Schumerth noted that the condition would only apply to outdoor vehicle storage, and that there are no restrictions to indoor vehicle storage.

O'Brien noted that the language used in the Special Use Permit application is different than the language used in the report; the question "is the special use injurious to the use and enjoyment of property in the neighborhood for the purposes permitted in the zoning district?" was stated in the memo as, "will the use hinder the use and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for the purposes permitted in the zoning district?" Schumerth clarified that it is an issue of copying Special Use Standards language into the memo, and that it can be corrected in the final version of the packet and future applications.

Member O'Brien asked why existing businesses can answer "no" to the question, "is the use adequately served by utilities, access, and other facilities." Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that this can be addressed by staff to ensure clarity in the application.

Member O'Brien asked if the symbol on the staff exhibit on Page 23 is the location of the proposed business. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the business was located to the right (south) of the symbol, and the symbol is a product of the Google Street View image which was used to create the graphic. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that staff should label the exact location of the business on the staff exhibits.

Member Johnson expressed confusion about the specific purpose of the rental business; Johnson cited that he originally believed the vehicle rentals were for auto service customers at this particular location. Applicant Jenkins noted that generally, auto service and repair facilities contract with other rental

vehicle locations to provide rentals for those having vehicles serviced. Jenkins noted that his plan is to do such contracting with other auto service facilities in addition to general rental availability.

Member Johnson asked Jenkins if the business operators will be licensed and insured as needed to oversee a vehicle rental facility. Jenkins answered that this was true.

Member Johnson asked if the condition limiting outdoor rental vehicle parking to 4 spaces was sufficient for the applicant. Jenkins mentioned that the only use for the outdoor spaces would be supporting late night drop-off services, and that additional outdoor storage is not needed to operate the business.

Member Castaneda asked what "PDR" stands for throughout the application materials. Jenkins noted that "PDR" standards for *paintless dent removal*.

Member Castaneda asked if rates will be market competitive if there are plans to provide short term rentals available for the general public (similar to Enterprise). Jenkins noted that rates will be competitive and at a market rate.

Member Castaneda asked if the ventilation and exhaust system will be contracted out or installed by the applicant. Jenkins noted that the work will be done by himself. Castaneda asked if the work for this system would require permits and signoffs from the Village. Staff Liaison Mesaros and Assistant Director Schumerth noted that inspections would be required.

Jenkins contacted the Fire Department and had them look at the site, and it was the Fire Department who provided information about the Special Use Permit. Schumerth asked if the exhaust system was approved by the Fire Department. Jenkins noted that the Fire Department inspected fire suppression system, exit signs, floodlights, and fire extinguisher installations. Schumerth stated that the exhaust system would need to be approved by the Fire Department upon completion, and Mesaros noted that the system would need to be contracted and approved prior to installation through the building permit process.

Schumerth asked for clarification on the type of exhaust system to be used on the site, asking if it would be similar to exhaust systems used in older businesses with a limited scope of services which rely on a tube connected to a vehicle exhaust pipe and run to a doorway. Jenkins noted that the exhaust system would be run out the garage door from the vehicle. Mesaros said it is essential that the system is approved and inspected.

Member Bransky said that this conversation should be continued with the Village Fire Chief. Schumerth noted that it is essential that the system is included in the final building permit application and set of inspections. Mesaros and Schumerth noted that staff will follow up with the applicant.

Castaneda asked how the tenant space in the building is organized, given that the garage is large enough to house 8 vehicles. Schumerth noted that the tenant spaces is a small office area with a large flex space in the rear of the space, designed to support a variety of commercial or light industrial activities. Schumerth noted that the frontage of the building has the appearance of an office building, indicative of the front space being used for small offices and customer-facing areas.

Chair Sierzega asked how many employees the proposed business will use. Applicant Jenkins said that two people will be employed by 119 Transit.

Chair Sierzega asked what the hours of operation of the proposed business will be. Jenkins stated that the business will be open Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm, Saturday from 12pm to 3pm, and closed on Sundays. Late night rental drop-offs will be allowed.

Sierzega asked what size of vehicles will be rented by the proposed business. Jenkins stated that only economy size vehicles, such as a Chevy Cruze, will be rented due to space constraints and demand.

Sierzega confirmed that the rental business would be available for use by the general public. Jenkins confirmed.

Sierzega stated that the business needs eight parking spaces; two for employees and six for customers. Sierzega asked how eight vehicles will be stored for rentals, and wished for confirmation as to whether the vehicles will be parked inside. Jenkins confirmed that vehicles being used for rental or for service will generally be stored inside the garage of the business.

Sierzega asked if both rental vehicles and vehicles being serviced will be located in the same garage. Jenkins answered that the statement was correct.

Sierzega asked what the time limit on rentals will be. Jenkins noted that there is not a clear time limit, but that vehicles are generally rented for short amounts of time. Jenkins said that longer rentals are still generating consistent revenue, so there are few concerns about the maximum time allotted for a rental. Jenkins said that there will likely be a minimum of 24 hours for rentals, as the business is not designed to be an hourly rental facility, especially less than two hours.

Member Bransky asked about the business model of the proposed business, asking if other vehicle service centers will keep 119 Tranzit on retainer and be available for customers who do not have vehicle rental built into their auto insurance, or who go to body shops which do not have loaner vehicles available. Jenkins stated that the business is an alternative to Avis or Enterprise, and the driver will pay directly or pay out through an insurance policy if they elect to get a rental vehicle.

Member O'Brien asked for clarification about the business model, asking how many rental vehicles are generally in use at any given time. O'Brien asked how the applicant has projected the rate of vehicle use to ensure the business makes a profit. O'Brien asked how vehicles are to be anticipated and scheduled for returned, and noted that if 30 cars all come back at the same time (even though the applicant does not have 30 vehicles due to business size), it will not be possible to store all of the vehicles at the same time, especially if there is vehicle service. Jenkins noted that he is limited in space and cannot have 30 cars; however, even with a smaller business, customers generally are coming in sporadically due to accidents or after dropping a vehicle off at a body shop. According to Jenkins, when businesses contract with a body shop, there are rarely 10+ people needing a rental at any given time to overwhelm demand. Jenkins mentioned that generally, vehicle service needs to be scheduled and when there is not space, the business may not take in a new vehicle. Vehicle rental companies, even small ones, rarely see all vehicles scheduled to return at the same time. Instead, vehicles are coming in at scheduled times that allow rentals to be anticipated to be stored or loaned out again to a new person.

Member O'Brien stated that there seem to be restrictions on growth for such a business, given the limits on capacity and the nature of rental businesses. Jenkins noted that there are hopes to expand the business if it is successful, and that the business of motor vehicle rental is difficult to start in. Member

Johnson noted that the auto service facility will provide additional revenue and supplement rental income by providing “repeat business” that is not available for a normal rental vehicle facility.

Member Johnson asked if the condition limiting the number of vehicle parking spaces to 4 for rental vehicle storage contradicts statements by staff about the parking availability on the site. Schumerth noted that the vehicle rental use at this site requires 6 spaces at a rate of one (1) parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area (GFA). These spaces need to be reserved for employees and customers. However, the building is a multi-tenant shopping center which requires 78 spaces (at the same rate of one (1) space per 300 square feet GFA) and provides 145 spaces. Schumerth noted that while some of those spaces are reserved for a fourth building in the commercial center which was never built, the entire center was designed to have approximately 10 spaces available for each tenant (~14 tenant spaces at 10 spaces each). With six (6) spaces required and 10 spaces provided by the original developer of the site, staff felt it was suitable to allow four (4) spaces available for short-term rental vehicle storage or display.

Member Johnson asked if the vehicle storage had to occur in marked parking spaces. Schumerth confirmed this statement, citing that conditions restricting storage to marked parking spaces preserves the aesthetics of the commercial center and protects access to other businesses, especially along the rear drive aisle of the building which needs to preserve access for shipments and service to other businesses.

Chair Sierzega asked which side of the business would be the primary business: motor vehicle rental or auto service. Applicant Jenkins stated that the rental business would be the primary aspect of the business.

Sierzega asked if oil changes and brakes will be serviced at the site. Jenkins stated that he is unsure about providing oil changes because it may not be financially feasible. Sierzega clarified that brake work would be done on the site. Jenkins confirmed brake work would be completed at the new business.

Sierzega asked if a lift would be required for vehicle service. Jenkins noted that a portable riser could be purchased to perform work without the installation of a permanent lift.

Sierzega asked if a certified mechanic will be on site doing the work. Jenkins noted that there will be a mechanic on site. Sierzega asked how many mechanics will be on site. Jenkins noted the business is small and only one mechanic will be present to start. Staff Liaison Mesaros asked if the mechanic will be one of the two employees that the applicant stated would be on the site. Jenkins said that this was correct, as the business is too small for additional employees. Jenkins mentioned that the early days of the business will have limited mechanic work to complete.

Sierzega asked for confirmation that the applicant would only rent economy vehicles. Jenkins confirmed that this was correct. Sierzega asked what to do if he wished to rent a pick-up or van. Jenkins stated that the business could not support these vehicles because it would limit vehicle storage in the garage. If the business expands, new vehicle types could be introduced in a new space. Only vehicles which have about the same size as an economy vehicle could be rented.

Sierzega asked if someone wanting to do a short-term rental could use the business, as it is a popular option, and asked for clarification about the 24 hour rental limit. Jenkins noted that short-term rental facilities are labor intensive with vehicles constantly entering and exiting the business; according to the

applicant, “the paperwork for the business would take the same amount of time as the use of the vehicle.”

Sierzega asked if a vehicle breaks down at home and a tow is needed, a tow could be arranged by the applicant’s business to get the vehicle to the shop for light service, such as a starter installation. Applicant Jenkins stated that he works commonly with AAA in other vehicle service facilities, and that it should not be an issue to work with a towing company to get the vehicle moved to the new business.

Member O’Brien asked if the applicant anticipates any additional traffic from the new Wind Creek Casino on Halsted Street. Jenkins noted that all businesses should see more business, and “more cars nearby means more problems, more problems means more service.” Jenkins says he has no idea about the impact of the casino on business, but he is hopeful about the increase in traffic.

Chair Sierzega requested a motion for action on the agenda item. Schumerth reminded the Commission that conditions proposed for the Special Use Permit needed to be read with the motion.

Johnson made a motion for approval; seconded by Member O’Brien.

AYES: Members Bransky, O’Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

CASE 24-05: Special Use Permit for Salon/Spa and Variance for Parking Requirements at 2207 W 183rd Street

Chair Sierzega stated that the agenda item for the salon suites is proposed to be continued. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that staff has requested additional time to analyze the site and complete a review of the variance proposed for the site to vary from parking requirements. The applicant is in agreement with a continuance.

Chair Sierzega asked how many public parking spaces are available in the lot adjacent to the proposed use. Schumerth noted that there are 68 spaces in the lot. There are 16 parking spaces required for the proposed use and 8 spaces available on the applicant’s site; therefore, the variance must waive 8 required spaces. Schumerth noted that the demand would be generally accommodated by the public parking lot if the use was approved.

Chair Sierzega noted that the neighboring use has its own parking in addition to common use of the public parking lot. Schumerth stated that the public parking area adjacent to the applicant’s site has regular use from patrons of Lassen’s Tap and Blueberry Hill Pancake House.

Member Johnson noted that there was a similar use that had leasing of smaller spaces within a building that was looked at by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Member O’Brien said the use was on the west side of Dixie Highway. Member Johnson had concerns about the amount of deliberation required for the previous referenced project, and stated that there was a large amount of time spent on whether the business would be properly licensed, and how licensing would occur.

Member Bransky stated that the purpose of a Special Use Permit is to clarify what the use will actually be on a given site, and that this case needed to be presented in a way which provides clarity on the use.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that some issues with the previous case are going to be avoided because the applicant has provided greater clarity about what types of services will be allowed, and because the applicant is constructing a similar use in another community. Schumerth said that the uses will be clarified.

Member Castaneda noted that the applicant cannot open a tattoo business as their narrative suggests. Schumerth clarified that there will be restrictions placed on the business via the Special Use Permit, and that staff will work with the applicant to provide clarity about what is and isn't allowed in the use category for which they have applied to operate. Schumerth stated that the variance needed to be considered first before uses could even be evaluated, because if the variance is not approved then the use will not go forward.

Schumerth noted that the applicant is proposing 10' x 10' suites and would have electrical and water hookups for beauty services. Schumerth stated that the business licenses would be provided for each individual tenant. Member Johnson stated that the undertaking would be significant to license businesses in this way. Staff Liaison Mesaros expressed that she had doubts that the business would be licensed in that way.

Member O'Brien asked for clarification about the proposed variance. Schumerth noted that the plan for the business would be to accommodate additional demand in the public parking lot. Schumerth said that concerns come from the applicant stating that peak demand could be 25-30 visitors, which would need to use the public parking area.

Member Johnson asked if the continuance date of May 9 was enough time to prepare the information that staff needs to make a recommendation. Schumerth noted that staff will work to ensure that as much information is gathered as possible prior to May 9. Schumerth noted that there is a chance that the use will be recommended for denial because the use will generate too much parking demand in the adjacent public parking lot.

Member Bransky noted that the building will require a significant amount of work. Schumerth said that there will be significant amounts of work required to get the building to current code standards.

Member O'Brien asked how the new use would affect the recently approved the Downtown Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan. O'Brien asked how this plan might change the way that parking is administered for each individual proposal, and whether any tools can be used to "reduce the thinking" required for planning each site in the downtown. Schumerth said that this work is being done for an individual lot in this project, and Schumerth noted that there may be a need for a centralized tool that monitors public parking demand in each part of the downtown.

Chair Sierzega asked if a motion is required for continuations. Mesaros confirmed that continuations require a motion.

A motion for continuation was made by Member Bransky; seconded by Member O'Brien.

AYES: Members Bransky, O'Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

The case is to be continued to the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing scheduled for May 9, 2024.

OLD BUSINESS:

Member Bransky asked about the status of the closed commuter train station. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that the elevator is currently being installed, and there was a delay in procuring the supplies for the project. The platform reconstruction which necessitated the closure is complete except for the elevator.

Member Johnson asked about the work being completed in the Starbucks parking lot on Harwood. Chair Sierzega said the drive-through is being widened, and Member Castaneda said that a large patio is being constructed. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that there is not a major change being made to the traffic circulation on the site.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURN:

Member Castaneda moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Member O'Brien; all members present voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Schumerth

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development