

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: February 11, 2025

To: Village President and Board of Trustees

Through: Napoleon Haney, Village Manager

From: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Special Use – Multiple Family dwelling (7+ units), Mahmoud Essa, 18240 Harwood Avenue

PURPOSE

Mahmoud Essa is proposing to convert the existing building at 18240 Harwood Avenue into an apartment building. The subject property is a 16,646-square-foot building on a 0.82-acre site. The proposal is for fifteen (15) two-bedroom residential units. Previously, the building was occupied by Spornette International Inc. as a warehouse and production space. Under the new zoning ordinance (adopted in 2023), the light industrial use is no longer permitted in the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district. The proposed residential use will occupy the entire structure.

A multiple family dwelling with seven (7) or more units is classified as a special use in the B-2 (Downtown Transition) zoning district. A special use permit is required for uses that have a unique character that must be individually evaluated for potential impact on adjacent properties and the perceived public need for the use at a specific location.

PROCESS

The applicant proposes to renovate the existing building into a multi-family residential use with eighteen (18) two-bedroom market-rate apartments. The project includes interior reconstruction to support residential use. The applicant intends to repair and preserve existing features of the building. Each apartment will have washer/dryer and HVAC in-unit. The basement will be used for storage for each apartment. Proposed parking spaces are twenty-seven (27) which meets the zoning requirement. The applicant proposes parking spaces assigned to the residential units. Required bicycle parking will be provided in the interior and exterior of the building.

Building residents will have 24-hour residential access at the front and side entrances through secured fob or code access. The plan is to keep the brick on the façade and add windows on the sides for each apartment unit.

The Staff Site Plan Review Committee reviewed the site plan on October 29, 2024, and requested changes to the plan. The applicant made the requested revisions and provided an updated site plan.

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At its regular meeting on December 12, 2024, the Homewood Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the requests for site plan approval and special use permit. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the special use permit, but tabled the site plan review to a future meeting. Commissioners requested additional information from the applicant and changes to the plans that included ADA compliance, emergency exits, minimum size of the units and bedrooms, landscaping, noise mitigation, and rental market projections.

On January 23, 2025, at a public hearing with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the applicant presented a revised site plan and response to the Commissioners' questions. Revisions to the floor plan and site plan included:

1. provided interior improvements with ADA-compliant access;
2. added third egress as emergency exit (locked, egress only);
3. reconfigured the main floor regarding the units' square footage size to 15 units (vs. 18 units originally proposed); increased unit size to 888 sq. ft.; all units are now 2 bedroom (vs. one-bedrooms originally proposed); and increased bedroom sizes (smallest bedroom is 108 square feet);
4. added storage rooms along the southern hallway;
5. provided ADA lift near the southern entrance;
6. revised landscaping palate to meet Village requirements; and
7. added exterior bicycle parking.

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the site plan by a vote of 5 to 1 (five ayes to one nay), with the condition that the applicant provide a structural report for Village staff review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit.

The Commission member who voted against the site plan felt that there was a mismatch between the unit design and the targeted market of "young professionals." Commissioners in support of the proposal felt that the units' size and the design of the warehouse conversion to apartments was creative and would attract a younger demographic.

OUTCOME

After consideration of public testimony, the following Findings of Fact (as proposed or amended) by the standards set forth in Section 2.16 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 183rd Street;
3. The subject property is owned by Nour Esbahya;
4. The subject property is located within the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district;

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5. The proposed use is a multiple-family dwelling (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);
8. The proposed residential use will operate within an existing building that is adequately served by utilities, access, and on-site parking; and
9. The proposed development is to be constructed in general conformity with the following plans: Multi-Dwelling Unit Build-Out plans, dated 01/08/2025 prepared by Lucid Engineering Services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- **Funding Source:** N/A
- **Budgeted Amount:** N/A
- **Cost:** N/A

LEGAL REVIEW

Completed

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Pass the attached ordinance granting a special use permit to allow a 15-unit multiple family dwelling at 18240 Harwood Avenue on application by Mahmoud Essa in the B-2 Downtown Transition zoning district.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Ordinance
- Plans