

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: February 6, 2025

To: Appearance Commission

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

Through: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Case 25-01: Sign Code Update – Appearance Commission Workshop

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Title	Pages	Prepared by	Date
New Village Sign Code Draft		Economic and Community Development (ECD) Department	01/29/2025
Existing Village Sign Code (Section 30, Village Code of Ordinances) - Municode		Village of Homewood	07/13/2021
Code Comparative Table		Economic and Community Development (ECD) Department	01/03/2025
Zoning Map - Village of Homewood		Village of Homewood	01/10/2023
Zoning Districts - Purpose and Intent		Village of Homewood	01/10/2023

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Village Sign Code, located in Section 30 of the Village Code of Ordinances, is the Village's set of regulations for any property owner or applicant seeking to install signage within Village limits. The regulations dictate form and construction requirements for signs and define Village procedures related to the approval and regulation of signs.

The Village initiated a process to overhaul the Village Sign Code in late 2022. The last major amendment to the Village Sign Code was completed in 1997, with another set of minor amendments completed in 2004. The Sign Code predates the Appearance Commission (established in 1998). The Commission reviews and approves sign variances, and the Appearance Plan (also established in 1998). The Appearance Plan provides additional design guidelines for signage in the Village.

The Sign Code also predates the recently adopted new zoning ordinance by 26 years. Since the adoption of the original Sign Code in 1997, there have been broad changes to how signs are designed and reviewed, including changes in signage and lighting technology and shifts in legal precedent surrounding sign regulation and its role in protecting (or limiting) constitutional rights. Additionally, the built environment of Homewood has seen significant changes since the adoption of the current Village Sign Code. These include development in the Downtown area and changing development demands in the Village's other commercial corridors. A new Sign Code will modernize local regulations to meet the current legal, technological, and aesthetic challenges surrounding signage in Homewood.

DISCUSSION

At the Appearance Commission meeting on January 16, 2025, Commissioners received an initial introduction to the Sign Code Update project, including a draft document.

Please refer to the January 16, 2025 packet for information previously provided, including information on project goals and a summary of all sign code changes proposed.

Additional project information has been provided below. New attachments have been provided for review.

TIMELINE

Since 2022, Village staff has completed a lengthy process to prepare the attached draft of the updated Sign Code for review by the Appearance Commission. The process has included widespread public engagement for input on future sign regulation in the Village. Staff has engaged in careful analysis of best practices for sign regulation in peer and aspirational communities in the Chicago metropolitan area, as well as legal review with resources from various planning and legal agencies.

Table 1. Project Schedule to Date (2022 – 2025)

Review	Date
Public Engagement – Fall Fest 2022	September 24, 2022
Public Charrette/Workshop – Sign Code and Appearance Plan	March 8, 2023
Public Engagement – Holiday Lights	December 6, 2023
Resident Public Survey – Sign Code and Appearance Plan	December 2023 – January 2024
Business Public Survey – Sign Code and Appearance Plan	December 2023 – January 2024
Appearance Commission Workshop	March 3, 2024
Peer/Aspirational Community Research and Code Analysis	April 2024 – June 2024
Sign Code Draft Development	July 2024 – December 2024

This workshop serves as the second review of the draft of the updated Sign Code by the Appearance Commission. Following this workshop, recommendations will be required from the Appearance Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, with final approval by the Village Board.

Table 2. Proposed Remaining Project Schedule

Review	Date
Staff Review (Economic and Community Development, Building Dept./FD, Public Works)	December 20, 2024 – February 20, 2025 (ongoing)
Appearance Commission Workshop #2	February 6, 2025
Appearance Commission Public Meeting	March 6, 2025
Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing	March 13, 2025
Village Board of Trustees Public Meeting	March 25, 2025

All dates subject to change during review of draft Sign Code Update.

RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION

This item is presented at this meeting for an additional in-depth review and workshop with the Appearance Commission. The final version of all proposed Village Sign Code amendments will be reviewed for a formal recommendation at a future public meeting of the Appearance Commission.

No motion required.