

# VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



## MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: October 16, 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 25-40: Appearance Review, Park West Plaza, 3003-3029 W 183rd Street

## DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

| Title                               | Pages | Prepared by                       | Date       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Applications                        | 3     | Mike Myszkowski, Applicant        | 09/29/2025 |
| Landscape Plan                      | 2     | Mike Myszkowski, Arbeen Landscape | 09/05/2025 |
| Plant List                          | 1     | Tyler Arbeen, Arbeen Landscape    | 09/05/2025 |
| Front Elevation with Material Board | 1     | Arete Design Group Ltd.           | 10/06/2025 |
| Staff Exhibits                      | 2     | Noah Schumerth, Asst. Dir. ECD    | 10/07/2025 |

## BACKGROUND

The applicants (Mike Myszkowski of Arbeen Landscaping, and Charles Smith of Arete Design Group Ltd.) have proposed improvements to Park West Plaza Shopping Center, located at 3003-3029 W 183<sup>rd</sup> Street. These improvements include new landscaping, a full reconstruction of the main structure and front façade of the building, and new pole signage and a comprehensive sign program to regulate future signage for the building.

The Village recently sold this property in May 2025 to Caton Commercial Group. Caton Commercial proposed a full renovation of the property to improve the commercial performance of the center, which has suffered high vacancy rates for several years.

## DISCUSSION

### Landscaping

The current site has two interior parking lot landscape islands and two large landscape beds along the front of the property near 183<sup>rd</sup> Street. The applicant has provided plans to repair these landscape beds on the property and replace many of the existing plants and landscaping materials currently on the site.

- **Front Landscape Islands:** The applicant has proposed a plan to remove all existing shrubs and small trees currently installed in two large front landscape islands near the northwest and northeast corners of the property. These islands are currently covered in grass. The plantings in these islands

are overgrown and deemed by the Village Arborist to be in poor health and will require significant maintenance or removal.

The applicant has proposed to install large beds of mulch in these front landscape islands. New plantings will be installed each of the new mulch beds. The largest bed, located on the northeast corner of the property, will feature a range of ornamental evergreen plants, flowering perennials and small shrubs. The smaller bed, located near the driveway on the northwest corner of the property, will include a new deciduous tree and several small evergreen shrubs and flowering perennials. A plant palette is included with this memo.

- **Interior Landscape Islands:** The applicant proposed to repair and add plantings to the two existing 9' x 18' landscape islands in the parking lot of the plaza. Each of the existing islands have two locust trees installed in dirt and grass beds. The existing trees will be pruned. The applicant will install a range of grasses and shrubs around the existing trees in each island. The applicant will also install a gravel band around the perimeter of each landscape island to protect plantings from road salt and other hazards.

The applicant has also proposed to add a landscape island in the middle of the parking lot. This new island will be 27' x 18' in area. The applicant will install a swamp white oak tree in this island, along with a mix of grasses and shrubs similar to those proposed in the existing parking islands. The new island will also include a gravel band around its perimeter to protect plantings in the new landscape area. The new parking island required Site Plan Review, which was reviewed by a Village staff committee and approved on October 7, 2025.

No additional landscaping installations are required by the Village Zoning Ordinance. Additional screening may be installed adjacent to this property along the west property boundary when the adjacent lot is developed, as redevelopment of this site may require transition zone landscaping.

A full plant palette is attached to this memo. The Village Engineer has reviewed the proposed changes to landscaping and requested revisions at the time of building permit submittal to include a curb and gutter to drain water away from the new parking island. The Village Arborist has also proposed the replacement of several species from the applicant's plant palette to conform to Village requirements for native plantings. These replacements are indicated in the table below:

| Current Proposed Planting | Current Planting Location    | Recommended Planting             |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Drift rose                | Front (NE) landscape area    | Coral berry                      |
| Calamintha nepeta         | Front (NW) landscape area    | Russian sage                     |
| Spruce (any)              | Front (NE) landscape area    | Bald cypress or dawn redwood     |
| Limelight hydrangea       | Front (NE) landscape area    | Smooth or oakleaf hydrangea      |
| Reed grass                | Existing parking lot islands | Little bluestem                  |
| Crabapple tree            | Front (NW) landscape area    | Redbud, serviceberry or ironwood |
| Swamp white oak           | Center parking lot island    | Burr oak                         |

### Façade Renovation

The applicant has proposed also proposed the renovation of the front façade of the building. The current building is clad in tan cement block, brick and stucco. The current building has gable roofs with two large brick arches on the west and east ends of the building. The building is in need of significant repair and maintenance, including the installation of a new roof, storefront system replacement, tuckpointing repairs for brick and block materials, and other material repairs.

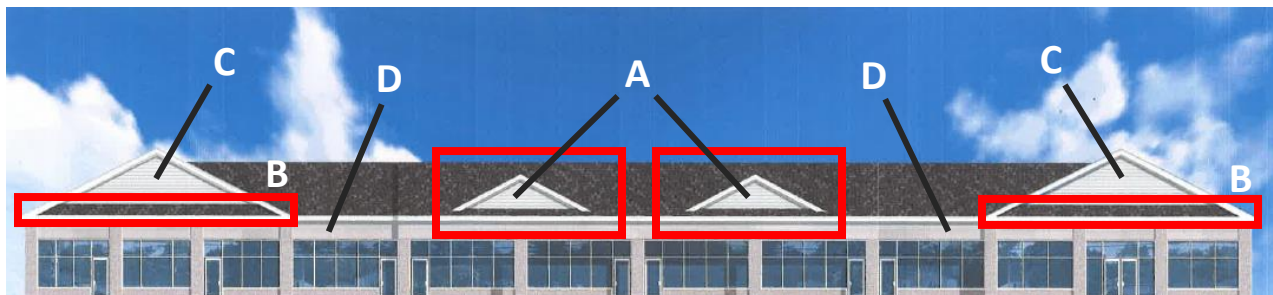
The applicant has proposed the following improvements to the building:

- **Roof Replacement and Redesign:** The applicant has proposed a full replacement of the roof to address code requirements and maintenance needs. The applicant has also proposed a redesign of the roof structure, including adding two dormers in the center of the building (**"A"** in Figure 1) and smaller pent roofs (**"B"** in Figure 1) under the two large gables at the east and west ends of the building. The roof will be fully replaced and will be clad in dark grey shingles.
- **Material Replacements:** Some materials on the building will be replaced to repair current damage on the front façade. The front of the two existing roof gables, currently clad in stucco, will be replaced with fiber cement boards (**"C"** in Figure 1). The fiber cement will be colored light grey. Larger fiber cement panels will replace stucco under the soffits of the building across the entire length of the front façade (**"D"** in Figure 1).

The current brick accent columns will be repaired and painted with a grey color. The bases of these columns, which are currently clad in stucco in poor condition, will be replaced with a thin-clad stone tile veneer. The existing brick arches on the west and east sides of the building will be partially removed and replaced with the new roof structures.

Other fixtures, such as downspouts and gutters, will be replaced and colored grey to match the proposed color palate of the building. New outdoor LED sconce lighting fixtures will be installed on the exterior of the building along the front elevation, replacing the four exterior lanterns currently installed on the building.

**Figure 1: Proposed Elevation Changes, Front Elevation**



- **Other Elevations:** No architectural changes are proposed to the other elevations. The walls will be painted to match the grey color found on the fiber cement panels on the front of the building. Gutters and downspouts will be replaced and painted to match those installed on the front elevation.

Signage

The applicant plans to submit proposed renovations to the existing pole sign near the northeast corner of the property. The applicant also plans to submit a comprehensive sign plan for the center to coordinate signage between current and future tenants.

Staff has not yet received these materials. These materials will be reviewed at a future Appearance Commission meeting date.

Appearance Plan

When reviewing these proposed improvements, the Appearance Commission should consider the following provisions of the Appearance Plan:

*D. Landscape and Site Treatment*

*"Landscape elements included in these criteria consist of all forms of planting vegetation, ground forms, rock groupings, water patterns and all visible construction except buildings and utilitarian structures.*

*2. Landscape treatment shall be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas and/or provide shade.*

*3. Unity of design shall be achieved by repetition of certain plant varieties and other materials and by correlation with adjacent developments.*

*4. Plant material shall be selected 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.*

*5. In locations where plants will be susceptible to injury by pedestrian or motor traffic, they shall be protected by appropriate curbs, tree guards and other devices.*

*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.*

*8. Screening of service yards and other places which tend to be unsightly, shall be accomplished by use of walls, fencing, planting, or combinations of these. Screening shall be equally effective in winter as in summer.*

*10. Exterior lighting, when used, shall enhance the building design and 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 limited...and brilliant colors avoided."*

### *E. Building Design*

*“Architectural style- contemporary, traditional, or other- shall not be restricted. Evaluation by the Appearance Commission of building design and its supporting elements shall be based on:*

- 1. Acceptable design principles 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 minimal amount of maintenance;*
  - b. Exposed structural frames that reflect the design principles 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.”*

### *J. Factors in Evaluation*

*“In addition to the Appearance Plan, the following factors relating to buildings, signs, structures or developments which affect appearance will be included in the Appearance Commission’s evaluation of a project’s design submission.*

- 1. Conformance to all ordinance of the Village of Homewood*
- 2. Use of exterior space*
- 3. Architectural concept and aesthetic value*
- 4. Material selection and quality*
- 5. Compatibility with adjoining buildings, misc. structures and space*
- 6. Circulation for vehicles and pedestrians, and parking”*

## **RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION**

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

**Approve** Case 25-40, Appearance Review, Park West Plaza, 3003-3029 W 183rd Street as proposed on the drawings submitted by Arete Design Group, Ltd. and Arbeen Landscape.