

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: **November 8, 2023**

APPEARANCE COMMISSION

6:00 pm

Village Hall Board Room
2020 Chestnut Street
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Hrymak called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Quirke, Smith, Scheffke, Kluck and Chair Hrymak were present. Members Kidd and Preston were absent. Village President Rich Hofeld was in attendance. In attendance from Village staff was Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, and Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development Noah Schumerth. No other members of the public were in the audience, and no members of the public were in attendance on the Zoom virtual meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

No corrections to the meeting minutes from September 7, 2023, were requested. The meeting minutes were approved.

AYES: 5 (Smith, Scheffke, Quirke, Kluck, Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 2 (Preston, Kidd)

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

CASE 23-30 – 17951 Dixie Highway - St. John Neumann’s Parish Church – Sign Variance

Chair Hrymak introduced the case. Neither the applicant nor a representative speaking on behalf of the applicant was present. Director Angela Mesaros recommended the continuance of the case to the December 7, 2023 hearing.

A motion was made by Member Quirke to continue the item to the December 7, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Member Scheffke.

AYES: 5 (Members Smith, Scheffke, Quirke, Kluck, Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 2 (Preston, Kidd)

CASE 23-31 – 18620 Kedzie Avenue - All Nations Community Church – Sign Approval

Chair Hrymak introduced the case. Neither the applicant nor a representative speaking on behalf of the applicant was present. Director Angela Mesaros recommended the continuance of the case to the December 7, 2023 hearing.

A motion was made by Member Quirke to continue the item to the December 7, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Member Scheffke.

AYES: 5 (Members Smith, Scheffke, Quirke, Kluck, Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 2 (Preston, Kidd)

Members expressed concerns about the lack of attendance of the applicants. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that correspondence received from a representative of the signage company on one of the cases, but this representative was not the primary applicant for the case and was not able to attend.

OLD BUSINESS:

CASE 23-07 – Appearance Plan Update Presentation

Director Angela Mesaros provided introductory information about the Appearance Plan Update and ongoing work by Village staff to complete a revision to the Appearance Plan, last updated by staff in 1998.

Chair Hrymak requested the presentation about the Appearance Plan Update project. Assistant Director Noah Schumerth provided information about the Appearance Plan project, identifying the project as an implementation tool for other plans approved by the Village Board, and Planning and Zoning Commission. Assistant Director Schumerth identified previous goals to the project.

Member Quirke requested information about whether analysis had been completed by staff to show divergence between the Zoning Ordinance and the Appearance Plan. Director Mesaros noted that the Zoning Ordinance was passed in January 2023, and extensive analysis between the Appearance Plan and Zoning Ordinance had not taken place.

Member Quirke requested additional information about how Appearance Plan will align with the newest version of the Village Zoning Ordinance once the Appearance Plan Update is complete. Assistant Director Schumerth stated that more discussion is welcome.

Assistant Director Schumerth identified additional goals staff looks to achieve throughout the timeline of the project.

In discussion of enforcement goals for design in Homewood, Member Quirke asked whether some goals fall within the scope of work already required for other staff members including the Village Arborist.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the Appearance Plan will be updated with collaboration from staff members and should serve as a tool to guide enforcement for Village staff.

The presentation was paused due to the entrance of a member of the public. Member of the public joined the audience of the meeting and expressed a wish to speak on a matter of bicycle facilities in Homewood.

Assistant Director Schumerth described reasons for updating the Appearance Plan, citing age of the existing plan, difficulties in plan interpretation, and public demand for greater focus on design review in Homewood. Chair Hrymak expressed the need for historical elements to be included in the plan citing stucco and poor durability of modern building materials as concerns from residents. Assistant Director Schumerth cited how Appearance Plan is to be designed to provide leverage for integrating historic elements into modern structures.

Chair Quirke requested more definition for the term “adaptive reuse.”

Assistant Director Schumerth described the work timeline for the project, including additional engagement opportunities for the public. Member Quirke asked for information about the relationship between the Appearance Plan Update and planned updates to Village ordinances regulating signage. Schumerth indicated that Village sign ordinances are to be updated concurrently with the Appearance Plan Update.

Schumerth identified that a report summarizing public engagement information will be provided for the Appearance Commission at a future meeting.

Member Quirke asked that Village staff participate closely with the process of developing Appearance Plan language.

Member Quirke addressed Village President Rich Hofeld and requested information about the perceived regulatory burden of local ordinances in Homewood. Village President Hofeld noted that Homewood has received few complaints about development procedures, and that development partners are aware of increased standards for design which must be carried into the new Appearance Plan.

Assistant Director Schumerth identified potential solutions for limiting regulatory burden on development partners.

Village President Hofeld identified concerns about LED lighting reducing visual character on convenience stores and similar uses.

Assistant Director Schumerth identified additional concepts which may be employed by staff in writing the new plan document.

Member Scheffke asked about the definition of compatibility with neighboring land uses and the importance of this concept in Appearance Commission decisions. Response and case examples from Homewood were provided by Assistant Director Schumerth.

Assistant Director Schumerth provided a proposed project timeline. Member Quirke expressed that the timeline is aggressive and requested information about whether the timeline was designed to

accommodate a particular project or goal. Assistant Director Schumerth stated no individual projects were influencing the timeline, and existing work on the Plan allows an accelerated timeline.

Assistant Director provided a summary of goals for the Appearance Plan Update.

NEW BUSINESS:

Member Smith identified that the signage and lighting at the gas station at the northeastern corner of 183rd and Hardwood is very bright, and asked if such lighting and signage is approved by Village ordinances. Chair Hrymak said such signage should be accounted for in updated signage regulations.

Member Kluck discussed concerns about signage timing on existing electronic signage around the Village and expressed the need to time message duration on existing signage. Director Mesaros concurred with need to identify potential violations in partnership with code enforcement staff. Assistant Director Schumerth identified importance of revisiting signage regulations in Village ordinances to avoid concerns about signage design and electronic message duration in B-1 and B-2 zoning districts.

Member Quirke requested information about whether Wind Creek Casino construction is still in compliance with development agreements approved by the Village of Homewood and intergovernmental agreements completed with the Village of East Hazel Crest. No concerns were identified.

Member Smith provided review of window installation at the Hibbing Building at 18220 Harwood Avenue and identified that the building owner and contractors had built windows with 7 inches of clearance from ground level.

Member Scheffke identified that Village President Rich Hofeld had been the final signatory on the 1998 Appearance Plan and commended the Village President on the length of tenure.

Village President Hofeld identified that greater attention is to be paid to landscaping material health and maintenance by Village staff. Director Mesaros identified that efforts are to be taken by Village staff to ensure landscaping compliance.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Member Kluck. Seconded by Member Smith. Chair Hrymak called for a vote of unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m. The motion passed.

AYES: 5 (Members Smith, Scheffke, Quirke, Kluck, Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 2 (Preston, Kidd)

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Schumerth

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development