

Good evening, Mayor and Commissioners,

My name is Grace, and I'm a proud small business owner here in Homewood. From the first day I came to this town, I was drawn to its charm — the tree-lined streets, the friendly faces, and the strong sense of community that makes Homewood truly feel like home. Over the years, I've grown to love this city deeply, and it's my dream to contribute to its continued growth and vitality in a meaningful way.

I've seen Homewood evolve — with more families moving in, more young professionals calling it home, and more visitors discovering its unique character and convenience. With this growth, I see an incredible opportunity to make downtown Homewood a one-stop, walkable destination — a place where people can shop, dine, and take care of themselves, all within just a few blocks.

Downtown Homewood is already such a special area. Its location right by the train station makes it a convenient and inviting destination for people from nearby communities to visit and experience what makes our town unique.

Tonight, I'm here to respectfully request a zoning change to allow Salon Suites and Beauty Retail at 18106–18124 Martin Avenue.

This project reflects my belief in what Homewood can become — not just a place where we live, but a place where we connect, support local businesses, and spend our everyday moments together.

Our vision is to transform an underused property into a vibrant, welcoming space that complements nearby shops and restaurants, encourages foot traffic, and adds to the beautiful rhythm of downtown life.

Here are a few key reasons for this request:

1. Small Commercial Spaces on Martin Avenue

The properties at 18106–18124 Martin Avenue were originally built with smaller commercial units. Current tenants still have leases for another two years, but the remaining spaces are too limited for many retail users such as grocery stores or boutiques.

To prevent long-term vacancies and maintain an active downtown environment, a zoning adjustment would allow more flexible use of these smaller spaces.

2. Improved Function and Parking Access

Ridge Road should continue focusing on retail businesses, while Martin Avenue is better suited for service-oriented businesses such as salons, spas, and photography studios.

The Martin Avenue location offers a large parking lot, making it easier for customers to park, stay longer, and conveniently access multiple services in one location. This setup also helps reduce street congestion on Ridge Road and creates a more balanced and functional downtown layout.

3. Enhancing Downtown Attractiveness and Economic Vitality

Diversifying zoning between Ridge Road and Martin Avenue will promote a vibrant, mixed-use downtown, attract more visitors, and support both small service businesses and established retailers.

This balance will encourage foot traffic throughout the area, improve business retention, and make downtown Homewood even more attractive for future investment.

The Salon Suites model will create independent spaces for beauty professionals — stylists, estheticians, barbers, and more — many of whom are from nearby communities such as Tinley Park, South Holland, and Matteson.

By bringing them here, we not only support local entrepreneurship but also draw their clients into Homewood, helping boost nearby shops, restaurants, and businesses. This steady flow of daily activity increases both economic vitality and tax revenue for the village.

This project is about empowerment — giving professionals a place to grow, while adding new energy and life to downtown Homewood.

Homewood has so much heart and potential. I truly believe this project can be a meaningful part of its bright future. My goal is to help our downtown continue growing into the most vibrant, walkable destination in the South Suburbs — a place where people love to visit, gather, and feel proud to call home.

Thank you so much for your time and for your continued support of local business owners like myself.