

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: May 7, 2026

To: Appearance Commission

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

Through: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Case 26-34: Appearance Review for 7Brew Drive-Thru Coffee, 17855 Halsted Street

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Title	Pages	Prepared by	Date
Application	1	Who Brew LLC (Chris George)	04/14/2026
Site Plan	1	Veritas Architecture + Design	04/13/2026
Landscape Plan + Plant List	1	DVG Team Inc.	04/09/2026
Elevations	5	Veritas Architecture + Design	04/14/2026
Renderings	1	Veritas Architecture + Design	04/14/2026
Photometric Plan + Lighting Cut Sheets	1	Aaron M. Fiegel, P.E.	04/15/2026
Staff Exhibits	2	Noah Schumerth, Asst. Dir. ECD	05/01/2026

BACKGROUND

The applicant has proposed the construction of a drive-through coffee restaurant at 17855 Halsted Street. The applicant has proposed plans to demolish the existing restaurant building on the site (formerly occupied by Boston Market, closed in 2024) and fully redevelop the site into the new drive-through restaurant. The restaurant will be primarily oriented toward drive-through customers and will have no indoor seating or walk-up service.

7Brew is a national restaurant chain with over 700 locations in 38 states. The vast majority of the restaurant locations are also drive-through only locations.

DISCUSSION

Site Plan Overview

The applicant has proposed a 1,031 square-foot building on the site to support a drive-through coffee business. The building will be served by two drive-through lanes bringing traffic from the north up to the building. Customers in the drive-through lanes will be served from two large sliding doors in the building where employees can enter and exit the building and walk to customers in vehicles. A pass-through lane will be provided to the west of the drive-through lanes to provide access to parking for employees. Additional parking will be provided on the north side of the site where existing parking is currently

located. A large landscape median will be provided between the new aisles and the private drive located to the east of the site.

Landscaping

The applicant has proposed landscaping along the front of the site, in addition to accent landscaping in the rear and near the side of the building.

The following requirements for landscaping for this development are set forth in the Village Zoning Ordinance (Section 44-05-06):

- Parking lot perimeter landscaping area (along Halsted Street)
- Building foundation landscaping area

The landscape plan must also meet the standards of the 2015 Halsted Street Corridor Landscape Plan. No mature trees are proposed to be removed, and the Village's tree preservation ordinance does not apply (Section 44-05-07 of the Village Zoning Ordinance).

Foundation Landscaping

The applicant must provide a building foundation landscaping area on the front (Halsted) side of the building with a minimum width of seven feet. This area shall extend along at least 80% of the length of the façade.

The building is not proposed to provide this foundation landscaping, as the drive-through lane will directly abut the front (Halsted) façade of the building. The Village Zoning Ordinance authorizes the director of economic and community development to approve other alternatives as outlined in the Village Zoning Ordinance, including the use of stormwater detention planters or tree plantings elsewhere on the site in lieu of the foundation landscaping.

The applicant may provide one (1) additional canopy tree planting for each 50' of required building foundation landscaping to be removed. One (1) additional canopy tree must be provided for the 69' of building foundation landscaping to be waived. The applicant has proposed 16 trees along the front and side of the subject site in the perimeter landscape zone along Halsted Street, where 14 canopy trees are required. **The applicant provides an approved alternative to building foundation landscaping and is not required to provide building foundation landscaping.**

Parking Lot Perimeter Landscaping

The applicant is required to provide a minimum 15' wide landscape area along Halsted Street as a parking lot perimeter landscape area. This area shall be located between parking spaces and the property line adjacent to the right-of-way of Halsted Street. This landscape area shall meet the following requirements:

- For every three feet, one shrub or native grass shall be provided – **not met**
- For every 25' of landscape area length, one understory/evergreen tree shall be provided – **not met**

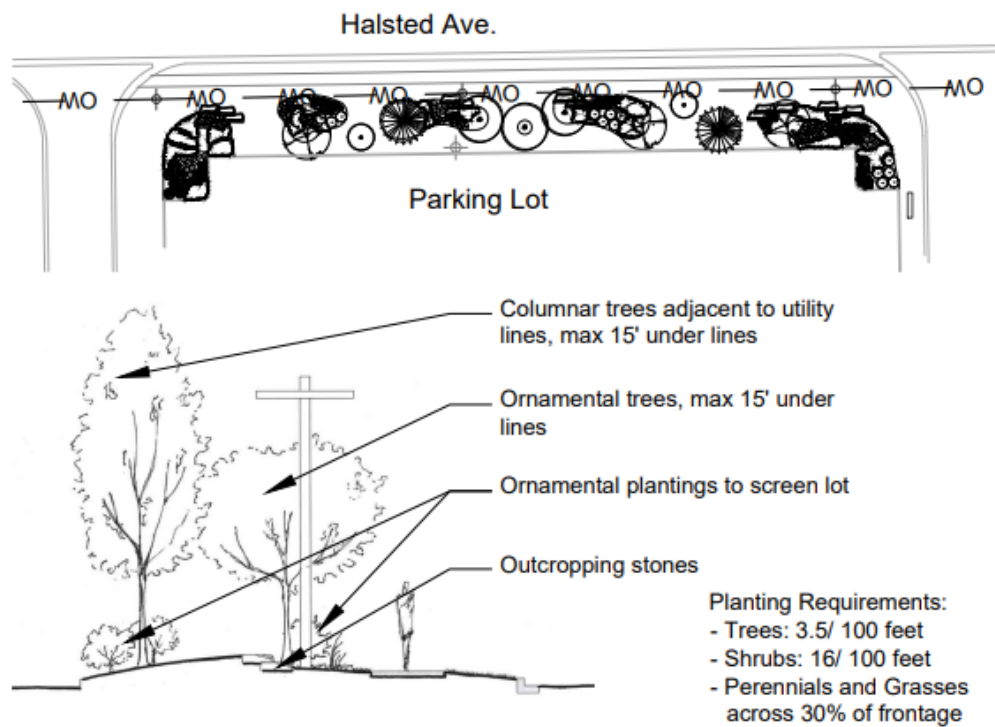
- For every 25' of landscape area length, one canopy tree shall be provided – **met, 14 trees required, 16 trees provided.**
- The remainder of landscaped area outside of shrubs/plantings shall be planted with live groundcover – **met**

The applicant has also provided a perimeter landscaping area which is narrower than the required width for the landscaping area (12' vs. 15'). The applicant has submitted a variance for this reduction in required width, which will be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at a future meeting.

Staff has recommended a condition of approval to require the addition of shrubs/native grasses and understory/evergreen trees to meet current zoning requirements. See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.

Halsted Street Landscape Plan

The applicant must also meet the minimum requirements of the 2015 Halsted Street Corridor Landscape Plan. This site would be subject to the planting prototype for a parking lot with a buffer, as found in Exhibit 2 of the landscape plan (shown below).



2 Planting Prototype, Parking Lot with Buffer

This plan recommends the following landscaping improvements with new development:

- Tree plantings (minimum 3.5' per 100' frontage) – 13 trees minimum (**met**)
- Shrubs – 57 shrubs minimum (**not met**)
- Perennials or native grasses – across 30% of the frontage (**not met**)

Staff has recommended a condition of approval to require the addition of shrubs/native grasses and understory/evergreen trees to meet the recommendations of the Halsted Street Corridor Landscape Plan. See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.

Elevations

The proposed 1,031 square-foot restaurant building will be constructed as a modular building. Modular components are constructed off-site and assembled at the restaurant location.

All new development must meet the requirements of the Village Zoning Ordinance, including requirements for building materials, transparency and façade articulation. Staff has provided a review of this development against these standards in this memo. The Appearance Commission shall review conformance of the proposed development by these standards.

Materials

The applicant has proposed building elevations primarily clad in fiber cement panels. The panels are colored and textured to simulate the appearance of smooth-face or split-face brick, with the smooth-face pattern primarily used on the foundation of the building and the split-face pattern across the majority of the building.

The building will also feature a series of canopies clad in aluminum paneling. These panels will be colored blue to match the brand colors of 7Brew. The largest canopy will cover the drive-through lanes of the building, while additional smaller canopies will be installed over service doors.

The roof will be designed with a curved, concave shape sloping toward the southern end of the building. The roof structure will be constructed of aluminum panels with seams running lengthwise along the roof. The roof structure will also be colored blue to match the brand colors of 7Brew.

The following requirements for materials are set forth in the Village Zoning Ordinance (Table 44-05-11.(b)):

Building Facade Elevation	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Front and Exterior Side	Minimum 50%	Maximum 50%	Maximum 25%
Interior Side and Rear	Minimum 25%	Maximum 75%	Maximum 25%

On the front (Halsted) side of the building, a minimum of 50% of the façade is to be clad in Tier I materials. On all other sides, a minimum of 25% of the façade is to be clad in Tier I materials. Tier I materials are considered durable and high-quality materials which reflect traditional building methods and serve as a unifying element throughout buildings in the Village.

Fiber cement panels are considered as a Tier II material. Tier II materials may not cover more than 50% of the front of the building, or 75% of the other sides of the building. **The applicant shall provide a revised set of elevations which meets the design requirements of the Village zoning ordinance or request a variance from the building material requirements through the zoning variance procedure.**

Façade Articulation

The proposed building will be approximately 69' x 15.5'. Façade articulation is required on the front (Halsted) and rear (private drive aisle) elevations of the building which will be greater than 60' in length. Façade articulation may be achieved through a variety of architectural features or design methods, including the addition of:

- Changes of depth of the facade such as projections and recesses
- Architectural features such as pilasters, cornices or other ornament
- Change in materials
- Windows and doors
- Awnings and canopies
- Public art



Both facades include several changes in the depth of the façade. The front (Halsted) elevation includes opaque glass panels to simulate windows (example from Florida location, left) and projections in the façade. The rear façade includes two canopies and several changes in materials.

The applicant meets requirements for façade articulation for this development.

Building Transparency

The building is required to meet transparency requirements “to the extent possible within existing conditions, unless otherwise approved by the director of economic and community development.” This requirement requires that a minimum of 60% of the front (Halsted) elevation include transparency.

The applicant has provided a front elevation with approximately 8% of the façade as transparent area. The building is not proposed to be a building which services customers outside of their vehicles, and the entire floor area of the proposed building will be occupied by kitchen areas or interior cooler space. To account for this proposed layout, the applicant has provided spandrel glass (faux windows) across the entire front façade. With these areas considered as transparent area, approximately 40% of the façade area would be considered as transparent area.

Staff has recommended a waiver of transparency requirements as permitted with approval by the economic and community development director. See Recommended Appearance Commission Action.

Lighting

The applicant has proposed to install three additional parking lot light fixtures, in addition to maintaining two existing parking lot light fixtures and replacing another existing fixture. All parking lot lights will be LED fixtures mounted at 20' height.

The proposed building will have one additional security light fixture installed on its north façade. The canopy over the drive-through area will have twenty-one (21) recessed light fixtures installed to provide lighting for vehicles and employees under the canopy.

Lighting fixtures and lighting level measurements meet the standards of the Village Zoning Ordinance.

Signage

The applicant has proposed the installation of three wall signs, wall-mounted instructional signs and a new freestanding monument sign. The wall signs will be located on the front (Halsted), side (south driveway) and rear (private drive) of the building. The monument sign will be located near the southwest corner of the site near the driveway in the shopping center to the east of the subject site.

The proposed monument sign will require approval by the Appearance Commission at a future meeting. The wall signage meets the requirements of the Village Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCE PLAN STANDARDS

When reviewing these proposed improvements through the Appearance Review process, the Appearance Commission should consider the following provisions of the Appearance Plan as standards of approval in Section 44-07-15 of the Village Zoning Ordinance:

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.*

F. Signs

- 1. Wall, ground, and identification signs shall be part of the architectural concept. Size color, lettering, locations and arrangement shall be harmonious with the building design, and shall be compatible with signs on adjoining buildings.*
- 2. Materials used in signs shall be of sound architectural character, be durable, and be harmonious with building design and surrounding landscape. Materials that tend to become illegible shall be avoided.*
- 3. Every sign shall be scaled and designed so as to conform with relationship to buildings and surrounds.*
- 4. Colors shall be used harmoniously and with restraint. Lighting shall be harmonious with the design. If external spot or floor lighting is used, it shall be arranged so that light source is shielded from view.*
- 5. The provisions of the Homewood Municipal Code as it regulates signs, shall be part of the criteria of this sub-section.*

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”*

FUTURE TIMELINE

In addition to approval of this Appearance Review application, the applicant will be require approval of the following by the Planning and Zoning Commission:

- Site Plan Review – for all site improvements
- Special Use Permit – for construction of a new drive-through facility
- Variance – perimeter landscaping width (reduction from 15’ to 12’)
- Variance – Tier I materials (if applicant chooses not to amend materials on the building to meet zoning requirements – applicant will need to demonstrate hardship)

RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

Approve Case 26-34, Appearance Review for 7Brew Drive-Thru Coffee at 17855 Halsted Street, as proposed on the drawings submitted by Veritas Architecture + Design and DVG Team Inc., subject to the following conditions:

1. Submit a revised landscape plan to provide shrubs/grasses and understory/evergreen trees as required by the Village Zoning Ordinance and the Halsted Street Corridor Landscape Plan, subject to review by Village planning staff and Village Arborist;
2. Director of economic and community development shall provide a waiver of the transparency requirements for the building as permitted in Section 44-05-11.(d) of the Village Zoning Ordinance;
3. Applicant shall receive a variance from Tier I material standards set forth in Section 44-05-11 of the Village Zoning Ordinance.