

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING:

March 14, 2024

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

7:00 pm

Village Hall Board Room
2020 Chestnut Street
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Pro Tem called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were Members Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, and Johnson. Member Bransky served in the role of Chair Pro Tem. Present from the Village was Assistant Director of Economic & Community Development Noah Schumerth, who served as Staff Liaison for the hearing. There were three people in the audience. The public was able to watch and listen to the meeting via Zoom webinar. There were no attendees on the Zoom webinar recording.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Pro Tem Bransky asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes of January 25, 2024. Member O'Brien requested that a sentence stating:

"Member O'Brien expressed concerns about the future of the on-street parking supply on Dixie Highway."

Be replaced with the following language as written:

"Member O'Brien made reference to the brewery on Dixie Highway, expressing concerns about the future of on-street parking supply on Dixie Highway."

Member O'Brien moved to approve the minutes as corrected; seconded by Member Cap.

AYES: Members Cap, O'Brien, and Johnson, Chair Pro Tem Bransky

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

REGULAR BUSINESS:

CASE 24-01: Variance for Driveway Expansion at 2716 Debra Lane

Chair Pro Tem Bransky introduced the case and swore in the petitioners, Marc and Audrey Beaudruy, who are homeowners at the property in question at 2716 Debra Lane.

The applicant Marc Beaudruy described the purpose of the project. The applicant stated that the existing driveway at his home was dilapidated and created a negative appearance for his home. The applicant also explained that multiple family members are living at the home, which can increase the strain on parking in the driveway. The applicant noted that the construction of the driveway was previously completed in 2023.

Member Johnson asked if the driveway expansion would be used to park three vehicles on the driveway instead of the two that could fit on the existing driveway. The applicant denied that three cars would be parked in the driveway, and stated that only two would be able to fit with room to allow for handicap access in and out of vehicles, as is needed for the homeowners.

Member O'Brien requested clarification from Village staff about a sentence in the staff memo, stating that a sentence discussing the addition of driveway width (page 11 of the packet) did not make sense. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the change of the word "addition" to "additional" in the sentence in question created a sentence that was difficult to understand. Assistant Director Schumerth noted the change.

Member Cap asked for clarification regarding the statute that was being considered with the variance. Assistant Director Schumerth stated that though the driveway was within the 24' maximum width for any residential driveway in the Village, no driveway may extend beyond 3' from the edges of the garage door face. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the driveway as constructed extended 5' 3" from the east side of the garage door face, aligning with an existing path on the site and thus requiring a variance, which exceeds the 3 feet maximum.

Member Cap asked if there were any problems with the necessary expansion of the driveway apron within the Village-owned parkway, given restrictions on placement and width in the Village right-of-way. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the driveway apron was compliant with Village ordinance and that the Village Engineer Max Massi had not previously noted any concerns with the driveway apron in providing a citation to the applicant.

Chair Pro Tem Bransky asked whether the approval of the variance will ensure all business with the Village is resolved regarding this driveway. Assistant Director Schumerth stated that the citation letter, which was sent to the applicant on November 15, would be voided. Schumerth stated that there were to be no further approvals needed beyond the Village Board's approval of the variance.

Member O'Brien requested correction of the legal notice date in the staff memo for the variance, noting that the posting date was February 29, 2023, when the date should be February 29, 2024. Assistant Director Schumerth noted the change and stated that corrections would be reflected in the minutes of the meeting and the final posted version of the meeting packet.

Member O'Brien requested correction of the submittal dates for attachments included in the staff memo for the variance case. O'Brien noted that the dates in the final packet did not seem consistent with their references in the description of the case and that the citation letter date was listed as being from 2022. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the dates were incorrect and were from a previous template used by the Village. Schumerth noted the change and stated that corrections would be reflected in the minutes of the meeting and the final posted version of the meeting packet.

Chair Pro Tem Bransky suggested that a motion be made for approval of the proposed variance.

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Member O'Brien noted the need to adjust the language of the motion recommended by staff, stating that the language:

"...to permit the construction of the driveway..."

Should be replaced with the language:

"...permitting the construction of a driveway..."

Member O'Brien noted that the change was needed to clarify that the driveway is already constructed and that the variance is permitting the driveway to remain with its current dimensions.

Chair Pro Tem suggested that a motion be made for approval of the proposed variance as amended. Motion was made by Member O'Brien. Seconded by Member Johnson.

AYES: Members Cap, O'Brien, Johnson, and Chair Pro Tem Bransky

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Assistant Director Schumerth stated that the Downtown Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan is being compiled into a final draft, and would be released to Village staff, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, members of the Appearance Commission, and the public the following week. Planning and Zoning Commissioners could expect to receive a plan copy by Monday or Tuesday of the following week.

Member O'Brien stated that in reviewing a draft copy of the plan received by members of the steering committee (O'Brien is a participant), the proposed reduction of lanes on 183rd as part of a "road diet" project, included in the plan, required further assessment. Member O'Brien cited the location of a driveway immediately adjacent to a right turn lane near the intersection of Harwood Avenue and 183rd Street as an example of a need for further assessment of bicycle infrastructure recommendations, given that they seem to be creating unforeseen safety hazards. O'Brien also cited concrete walls and wrought iron fences along 183rd Street near the train viaduct as creating visibility challenges for cyclists, especially near the intersection of Park Avenue and 183rd Street.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the Village remains committed to finding solutions for bicycle infrastructure that travels west-east through the Village.

Member Cap noted that 183rd Street is a primary arterial running west-east through the Village, and asked if there could be clarification about the status of this project; though it is included, there is public knowledge that the project may not be moving forward.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the project is in question due to funding for the project.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the Village was still interested in continuing to pursue traffic

calming and bicycle infrastructure improvements along 183rd Street. Member O'Brien questioned the efficiency of traffic flow with the lane reduction proposed on 183rd Street and stated that more work was needed on this topic in the final Downtown TOD Plan.

Member O'Brien stated that the plan was a "great first step toward a plan." Chair Pro Tem Bransky noted that the Steering Committee had reviewed a near-final draft and that the plan was nearing completion.

Member O'Brien noted that the plan was light on detail, citing a need to create a list of recommendations that are to be taken on with a budget. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the plan document will include an implementation matrix which was not included in the version received by the steering committee., Consultants are working out the details of the table with staff and finalizing the design of that section of the plan. Chair Pro Tem Bransky noted that the plan is a higher-level document and that the Village handles budgeting on an annual basis based on planning recommendations.

Member O'Brien also noted a need for greater detail in other areas of the plan, such as the inclusion of locations for bicycle parking and statements on who may be responsible for constructing bicycle parking. Assistant Director Schumerth stated that the comment was received and that more comments will be available to Commission members. Comments because they are highly desired by Village staff as the plan is finalized.

Member O'Brien noted that there are visual learners and auditory learners, and this is an excellent document for visual learners.

Member Cap noted a need for further focus on safety for micromobility users and noted that the plan broadly does not cover this topic, even as these vehicles become more common. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the conversation is an important one. While these modes of transportation are generally included in conversations about bicycle infrastructure, they have special constraints and considerations for parking and design related to streets without special bicycle infrastructure such as lanes or paths.

Member O'Brien asked whether the Village is updating electric vehicle parking recommendations and asked how the Village enforces proper installation of electric vehicle charging stations, citing the dangers of home installations or installations into systems that are not prepared for the supply of the additional power needed to charge an electric vehicle.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that this is an area of code enforcement for individual properties and is difficult to monitor unless there is a complaint or a flagrant violation that is cited by Village staff. Schumerth stated that this is something that can be monitored by code enforcement and building inspection staff. Measures can be taken by Village staff to provide concise information on residential installation with individuals to install EV systems. Schumerth noted this is also something that is touched upon in the new Homewood Zoning Ordinance, but more can be done to provide standards and design guidance for new EV systems.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that any comments or questions on the Downtown Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Master Plan before the hearing date for the discussion of the plan could be forwarded to staff or entered into the comment form which will be available on the Village website.

ADJOURN:

Member O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Member Cap; all members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Schumerth

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development