

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: **November 13, 2024**

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 6:03 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Members Quirke, Kluck, Scheffke, and Chair Hrymak were present. Members Banks, Preston and Kidd were absent.

In attendance from Village staff was Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, Assistant Director of Economic, and Community Development Noah Schumerth, and Building Department Secretary Darlene Leonard. There were two members of the public in the audience, and no members of the public were in attendance at the Zoom virtual meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Hrymak asked for any corrections or changes to the minutes from the October 3, 2024 meeting.

Member Quirke stated on page 7 of the minutes, he is listed under the vote for both Aye and Nay. He voted Aye. The Nay should be changed to reflect Member Preston's vote.

Motion for approval of the amended minutes by Member Banks; seconded by Member Kluck.

AYES: 4 (Members Quirke, Kluck and Scheffke, Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: 3 (Members Banks, Preston, and Kidd)

Chair Hrymak congratulated Angela and Noah on receiving the Healthy and Active Community Award for the Downtown TOD Master Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

CASE 24-45: Appearance Review of 2124 183rd Street Redevelopment

Chair Hrymak introduced the case and Assistant Director Schumerth presented staff findings.

Member Quirke asked if the materials in the proposal are existing.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated yes, with the exception of the metal from and composite boards.

Chair Hrymak asked if the “video” room in plans referred to video gaming, and asked about the patio fencing.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated yes, and it would be similar to what is in other businesses. The fence would be the same materials or the brown composite material and metal framing. Assistant Director Schumerth recommended approval conditioned upon the submittal of a photometric plan for the light fixtures, and impact to the surrounding properties.

Animesh Kumar stated this would second location in Homewood with the first being the Shell station next door. The restaurant menu would be Italian fusion and the first location outside of Florida.

Mr. Kumar stated after the pandemic, people like to dine outside and added that his only concern is the patio would be next to the dumpster enclosure, but they are still working on the location. Mr. Kumar stated they are hoping to go higher with the dumpster enclosure.

Mr. Kumar stated they will have the interior design completed soon, but because it is already November, they probably won't start active construction soon.

Member Quirke asked Staff if they missed the opportunity for TIF incentives.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that there was a TIF, but it expired last year.

Member Quirke asked if remediation or vents would be needed, how parking will be handled, if there will be a full bar and if there will be a grease trap.

Mr. Kumar stated the NFR said they cannot do certain things and they cannot do any excavation in the area or leave it dirt the area has to be paved and they don't need vents. There will be 12 designated parking space and is aware it will be a challenge because of the number of anticipated customers. And added, the employees will park next door at the Shell station because there is ample parking there. There will be a full bar and the grease trap will be on the exterior.

Chair Hrymak asked if it is a franchise.

Mr. Kumar stated “yes but no.” The parent company does not do franchises, but he knows the owner of the existing restaurant concept and was given “free rein” to operate, as long as he doesn't change the menu. They can even change the name, if desired.

Chair Hrymak asked about the sign location and if there will only be the one sign.

Mr. Kumar stated the sign in the renderings is not the sign that is to be constructed; it's just a placeholder for the sign location. The signs in the drawings show sign location on the building. There will be another sign by the patio. They will change the sign from the one at the Florida location because the colors are dark.

Chair Hrymak asked Staff if the Appearance Commission will review the sign.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated only if the sign needs a variance.

Chair Hrymak stated the owner flow parking would be in the neighborhood, and suggested that signage be installed directing people to the public lot by Blueberry Hill.

Mr. Kumar stated they did a traffic study on a Friday and Saturday and they expect 8-9 customers at any given time. But for handling more people, parking will be available at the Shell. Kumar stated he has bought the property behind this one that will be used for managers housing and parking.

Member Scheffke suggested the dumpster be placed at the neighboring property.

Mr. Kumar stated if such placement is allowed, he will locate the dumpster there.

Member Quirke stated the applicant will have to watch for people parking on the site and going across the street to Lassen's Tap.

Motion for approval of Case 24-45 Appearance Review, 2124 W 183rd Street Redevelopment as proposed on the drawings submitted by J. Scott McKay, Architect, dated September 27, 2024, subject to the condition of a photometric plan submittal by Member Kluck; seconded by Member Scheffke

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

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: 3 (Members Banks, Preston, and Kidd)

CASE 24-43: Signage at Essence Salon Suites, 17956 Halsted Street

Chair Hrymak introduced the case and Assistant Director Schumerth presented it staff findings.

Member Quirke asked if it was 3 signs or 3 signs and the monument sign.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated it is wall signs and a monument sign. There is a need for 39.7 square feet of additional signage. Staff recommends approval of the variance for the additional 39.7 square feet of signage.

Katie Pino stated Dave's Hot Chicken is one of top growing fast casual restaurants and there is one opening in Orland Park in the next 30 days.

Member Scheffke asked if the building would be painted white.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated after discussions with staff on the color of the building, the applicant came back with white walls and a red roof.

Ms. Pino stated that is the proposal.

Member Quirke asked what the rest of the colors are in the renderings and stated they feel like signage.

Ms. Pino stated they are drawings or murals on the sides of the building that look like a peeling back of the wall, similar to peeling brick. They are unique graphics created on site with the Dave's colors.

Ms. Pino stated she would agree to remove the sign on the side of the building, but would like to keep the one on the rear of the building.

Member Kluck stated the colors are more something of interest like bricks showing though similar to a Mexican restaurant, and that it is not signage. The colors just create interest. Member Kluck added there is a lot of landscaping in front and he is in favor of the signage.

Ms. Pino stated that when being so far back from the street is it important to be seen.

Chair Hrymak stated he is not thrilled about a variance for more signage or how bright it is with the new color; he is not sold on the white. Chair Hrymak added that he is aware that Mod Pizza wasn't there long in part because it couldn't be seen and that they have no say in the paint, just the signage.

Ms. Pino stated they can remove the sign on the south side, but would like to retain the sign on the back.

Chair Hrymak asked staff if it is considered signage if it's in the window.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it is.

Chair Hrymak stated he would be okay with the variance if the one on the side is removed. Chair Hrymak reiterated that he is "not a fan" of concept #1 on the provided table, and that he prefers #3, which matches the existing building.

Member Kluck stated a neon sign could potentially be installed in the window.

Ms. Pino stated such a sign would still be considered signage if it has the logo. They would tie the neon interior with the area and what it is known for. The rear signage is much more valuable for people to see as they go by to Target.

Member Scheffke stated the contrast between the colors and the white is very striking.

Member Quirke stated he has strong reservations about the entire proposal as the problem doesn't present a hardship and the code is very clear about what a hardship is. Quirke stated that the proposal bends all the rules too many times.

Ms. Pino stated the property is pulled back off Halsted, and the building is not noticeable because it is set back further from the street.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the KFC is currently white and red, similar to what is proposed.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated the signs are red, white, and yellow. The areas are not considered signs because they do not reference the company.

Chair Hrymak stated his preference is to keep the square footage at 119.85. He is not willing to do the variance as he thinks this will be noticeable with all the colors.

Motion for approval of Case 24-52 sign variance, Dave's Hot Chicken at 17631 Halsted Street, to permit an increase in the maximum sign area from 119.8 square feet to 159.5 square feet made by Member Scheffke; seconded by Member Kluck

Ayes: 2 (Members Scheffke and Kluck)

NAYES: 2 (Member Quirke and Chair Hrymak)

ABESTENTIONS: None

Absent: 3 (Members Banks, Preston, and Kidd)

Chair Hrymak stated it did not pass and the signs will have to meet the 119.8 square footage.

Ms. Pino asked if the rear sign is reduced to 20.5 square feet and if they remove the side sign could it be approved. It would reduce the request by approximately 29 square feet.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it would cut the variance proposed in half.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated it would be an increase in sign area of 14.2 square feet. Chair Hrymak stated it would go from the existing 119.8 to 134 square feet.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated it would be an increase of 11% instead of the 33%.

Motion to approve Case 24-52 sign variance, Dave's Hot Chicken at 17631 Halsted Street, with a change to 19.8 to 134 square feet and removal of the side sign and reduce the rear sign by 9.5 square feet for a variance of 14.2 square feet as proposed in the drawings by member Scheffke, seconded by Member Kluck.

Member Quirke asked about the colors.

Chair Hrymak stated they are not under their purview.

Ayes: 4 (Members Scheffke, Kluck, Quirke, and Chair Hrymak)

NAYES: None

ABESTENTIONS: None

Absent: 3 (Members Banks, Preston, and Kidd)

Member Kluck asked the timeframe to open and if the patio will remain.

Ms. Pino stated she wasn't sure, but was hoping by the end of the year. Pino stated that the patio will remain, as a majority of the chain's locations have them.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chair Hrymak stated he didn't see any change to the Essence Suites signage, the sign at Saint Joe's is done but the yellow doesn't go, the Gottschalk house is done, the Casino is open, and the mural by Stoney Point is interesting and not what was expected. And asked if it was complete.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the mural is complete.

Chair Hrymak stated it is very creative. Chair Hrymak said that the mural is very simplistic yet nice, and the word Homewood is hidden in the mural somewhere.

Member Kluck observed there are train tracks running through it.

Chair Hrymak asked if there is a landscape plan for the western entrance.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated there is nothing yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chair Hrymak asked can something be added to the new ordinance when the painting on the building is not harmonious with the area.

Member Quirke stated the ordinance says harmonious and the Dave's proposal is not.

Member Scheffke said if the building is being painted, it is part of the corporate identity and then the whole building could be considered as a sign.

Assistant Director Schumerth stating it is a challenge to regulate color. A permit is not needed nor is the contractor needed to register. There is no clear trigger with the Village to lead to a review.

Building Department Secretary Leonard stated a change in the Municipal Code would be required in order to require permits and have contractors register for painting and that would need to be discussed to the Village Attorney and the Village Manager.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated they can look at when color could constitute a sign when addressing the new Sign Code. Schumerth said if there is something that has commercial messaging within it, it can be looked at it and reviewed as a sign. Schumerth said that the Village doesn't want to call things signs when they aren't and not call things signs that are, and that this discussion will have to continue with the Village Attorney.

Chair Hrymak asked if signage would be approved by Staff or if it would go in front of the Appearance Commission for approval.

Member Scheffke stated if the signage meets code then it would be judgmental and is too subjective.

Member Quirke stated he thinks they are getting too close to having too many allowances and stretching so much they won't be able to get back to the ordinance in sign reviews.

Member Scheffke stated the rules don't change because of the stretch.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated they are looking at a new Appearance Plan and Sign Code. The Commission has the ability to look at every sign and they did so in the past. Mesaros stated that it was a lot of signs to review, and it became too much to effectively look at. Mesaros stated that staff can always send signs over to the Commission to review.

Member Quirke stated they don't want to look at every sign, but wants to look at every plan.

Member Scheffke stated he would like to see every sign.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated they can make a condition to require signage to be reviewed when it's a new development package and they can require signage plans for multi-tenant buildings.

Member Scheffke asked is a permit is required for every sign.

Building Department Secretary stated no. If a panel of an existing sign was broken and needs replacing a permit is not required. But one is required if it is a new business or the sign is changing.

Chair Hrymak asked if the next meeting will be about the new sign code.

Assistant Director Schumerth stated that is the plan.

Chair Hrymak asked if directional signage can be regulated, especially on the interior of a location and asked about the gateway signage.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated regulating directional signage can be looked into and any gateway signage will come before the Commission.

Member Quirke stated landscaping should be looked at carefully including the initial review and enforcement.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated landscaping is very aggressive in the new Zoning Code and the enforcement is through Code Enforcement.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made for adjourning the meeting by Member Kluck; second by Member Scheffke.

AYES: 4 (Members Scheffke, Quirke, Kluck, and Chair Hrymak)

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 3 (Members, Banks, Preston, and Kidd)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Leonard

Darlene Leonard, Building Department Secretary

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Last Revised: 01/03/2025