

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: August 7, 2025

To: Appearance Commission

From: Noah Schumerth, Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development; Joshua Carillos, Economic and Community Development Intern

Through: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Case 25-31: Appearance Review for Tequila Restaurant, 18136 Dixie Highway

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Title	Pages	Prepared by	Date
Site and Landscape Plan	1	Joy Elizabeth Dewitt, Architect	04/20/2025
Elevations	1	Joy Elizabeth Dewitt, Architect	04/20/2025
Floor Plans	2	Joy Elizabeth Dewitt, Architect	04/20/2025
Staff Exhibits	3	Noah Schumerth, Asst. Dir. ECD	08/01/2025

BACKGROUND

The applicant has proposed the construction of a 6,000 square foot restaurant at 18136 Dixie Highway. The restaurant is proposed to be constructed on the site previously occupied by Savoia's To-Go Restaurant. The property was purchased from the Village in early 2025. The site will incorporate the former Independence Park into the overall site plan.

DISCUSSION

Site/Landscape Plans

The proposed site plan will have three primary components: a parking area, a single restaurant building, and a large patio and green space. The parking area will replace the existing parking area and will be constructed with 29 parking spaces, including two ADA-accessible spaces. The parking area will be screened from the neighboring Abundant Grace United Church of Christ property (directly to the south at 18200 Dixie Highway) with the existing six canopy trees along the property boundary, along with new landscaping installed by the applicant. Several parking spaces will be marked as "employee only" spaces to avoid conflicts between the loading door on the side of the restaurant and customer parking.

The building will be located with approximately 40' of frontage along Dixie Highway and approximately 150' of frontage along Hickory Road. The building will have a maximum height of 21', similar to the height of other nearly 1-story commercial structures along Dixie Highway. The building will include an interior seating area near the front of the building, and a large kitchen and "back of house" area in the rear of the

building. Large overhead doors will allow for movement between the building and the patio area. A loading area for deliveries with a large overhead door is provided near the northeastern corner of the building.

The patio is proposed to be 25' x 150' and located along the northern side of the building. The patio will be designed to provide large amounts of outdoor seating and entertainment space for the restaurant. The patio will be constructed with an overhead metal pergola. Two large existing oak trees will be preserved and incorporated into the patio area to provide additional shade and make the patio area more unique.

Additional green space will be preserved between the patio and the sidewalk along Hickory Road. The applicant will maintain the existing memorial plaque from Independence Park within the green space. The existing monument on the site will be removed.

Staff has recommended changes to the site plan to align with the Village Appearance Plan and Zoning Ordinance. See Standards.

Elevations

Materials: The applicant has proposed a material palette of smooth-cut brick, "hardie board" (fiber cement molded into narrow horizontal boards), and aluminum. The brick is proposed to be colored black. The fiber cement panels are proposed to be colored orange. The proposed materials meet the minimum material quality requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, as shown in the table below.

The applicant has expressed a willingness to adjust color, materials, or exterior features to provide a design compatible with the built environment in Downtown Homewood.

Staff has recommended changes to building materials and colors to align with the Village Appearance Plan. See Standards.

Transparency/Building Openings: The applicant has proposed to construct large windows and overhead doors along the north (exterior side) elevation of the building to allow for expansion of the indoor dining area into an outdoor dining space.

As a new development within the B-2 zoning district, the Homewood Zoning Ordinance requires this building to provide a minimum of 80% transparency along the front (Dixie Highway) elevation, and 40% transparency along the exterior side (Hickory Road) elevation. The exterior side elevation meets the requirement (55%), but the front elevation does not (25%). The front elevation provide additional opening windows which are raised off of the ground to allow for privacy for restaurant patrons.

Staff has recommended that the Appearance Commission exercise authority to modify transparency requirements in Section 44-05-11 (Design Standards) of the Zoning Ordinance. See Standards

Façade Articulation/Design: Two of the sides of the proposed building (interior side and exterior side) are longer than 60' and require façade articulation, or design features which break up the facades. The Zoning Ordinance provides numerous methods for creating façade articulation, including windows/doors, public art, columns and pillars, and other design features.

To provide required façade articulation, the applicant has proposed large windows and overhead doors along the exterior side elevation of the building facing Hickory Road. The applicant has also proposed a large pergola structure to add additional visual interest to this side of the building. Two large existing oak trees will also screen a large portion of the side of the proposed building.

The applicant has proposed 4' x 14' "green wall" panels along the south (interior side) and west (rear) elevations of the building. These panels will feature greenery framed in metal material matching other metal accents on the building. The panels will be bolted into the exterior walls of the building as a permanent installation. Seven panels are proposed to be installed on the interior side elevation, and three panels are proposed on the rear elevation.

Staff has recommended changes to the proposed façade articulation to align with the Village Appearance Plan. See Standards.

STANDARDS

The Appearance Commission shall utilize the Appearance Plan to evaluate new development subject to the Appearance Review process. Village staff have used the Appearance Plan to assess the design and provide feedback to the applicant during the review process for this development.

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following applicable standards for this review:

B. Relationship of Buildings to Site:

B.1. The site shall be planned to accomplish a desirable transition with the streetscape, and to provide for adequate planting, pedestrian movement, and parking areas.

B.3. Site height and scale shall be compatible with its site and adjoining buildings.

C. Relationship of Building and Site to Adjoining Area

C.1. Adjacent buildings of different architectural styles shall be made compatible by means as screens, site breaks, and other materials.

C.2. Attractive landscape transition to adjoining properties shall be provided.

C.3. Harmony in texture, lines, and masses is required.

D. Landscape and Site Treatment

D.2. Landscape treatment shall be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas, and provide shade.

D.3. Unity of design shall be achieved by repetition of certain plant varieties and other materials, and by correlations with adjacent developments.

D.4. Plant material shall be selected for interest in its structure, texture and color and for its ultimate growth. Plants that are indigenous to the area and other that will be hardy, harmonious to the design and of good appearance shall be used.

D.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.

D.8. Screening of service yards, and other places which tend to be unsightly, shall be accomplished using walls, fences, plantings, or combinations of these. Screening shall be equally effective in winter and summer.

D.10. Exterior lighting, when used, shall enhance the building design and the adjoining landscape.

E. Building Design

E.2. Buildings shall, with their own design concept, be an asset in the aesthetic sense to the Village of Homewood;

E.3. Materials shall be compatible with and complementary to the design, as follows:

a. Materials shall be permanent and require minimal maintenance;

c. Colors shall be harmonious with bright or brilliant colors mainly used for accent.

E.4. Mechanical or electrical equipment or utility hardware, whether located on the roof, ground or attached to the building, shall be screened from public view.

E.5. Exterior lighting shall be part of the architectural concept. Fixtures, standards, and placement of lighting units and all exposed accessories shall be harmonious with the building design.

E.7. Signs shall be part of the architectural concept, and all signage shall conform to the sign regulations of the...Village of Homewood.

F. Signs

F.1. Wall, ground and identification signage shall be part of the architectural concept. Size, color, letter, location and arrangement shall be harmonious with the building design, and shall be compatible with signs on adjacent buildings.

F.3. Every sign shall be scaled and designed so as to conform with the relationship to buildings and surroundings.

G. Miscellaneous Structures and Street Hardware (including furniture, art, business objects, etc.)

G.2. Miscellaneous structures and street hardware shall be designed to be part of the architectural concept of design and landscape.

J. Factors for Evaluation

1. In addition to the Appearance Plan standards, the following factors...shall be included in the Appearance Commission's evaluation of any project's design submission:

- a. Conformance to all Village ordinances and codes;*
- b. Use of exterior space;*
- c. Architectural concept and aesthetic value;*
- d. Material selection;*
- e. Compatibility with surrounding buildings, structures, and space;*
- f. Circulation – vehicular, pedestrian, and parking.*

APPROVAL CONDITIONS

Based on these standards and review of other Village codes and ordinances, staff recommends the following changes as conditions for approval:

- 1. Transparency Requirements:** Reduce transparency standards on the east (front, along Dixie Highway) elevation to accommodate folding windows that are positioned at least 42 inches above the ground.
- 2. Pergola Placement:** Adjust the location of the pergola to avoid conflict with existing oak trees. Oak trees must be preserved. *Staff recommends that Appearance Commission approval be conditioned upon the movement of the pergola to a suitable location.*
- 3. Parking Island:** Move the existing parking island to a location adjacent to the trash enclosure to provide screening for the enclosure, which meets Zoning Ordinance requirements (Section 44-08). *Staff recommends that Appearance Commission approval by conditions upon the movement of the parking island, the parking space closest to the proposed enclosure.*
- 4. Landscaping Materials:** Replace landscape materials as agreed to with the Village Arborist, including the following recommended replacements (as appropriate):
 - a. Silver linden
 - b. Zelkova
 - c. New elm species
 - d. Japanese tree lilac
 - e. Fragrant dwarf vibranum or diervilla

5. **Green Panels on South (Side) Elevation:** Add two green panels and shift all panels approximately 20-30' toward Dixie Highway to add façade articulation closer to Dixie Highway where the building is visible from the public right-of-way.
6. **Green Panels on West (Rear) Elevation:** Remove three green panels and move to blank wall area on north (exterior side) elevation, near the northwest corner of the proposed building.
7. **Brick Color:** Change proposed color of smooth-face brick material from black to a warmer tone compatible with surrounding buildings along Dixie Highway. Recommended to replace color with dark brown brick similar to that used on Homewood Brewing Company (18225 Dixie Highway) and neighboring condominium buildings (18133 Martin Avenue), or another color as recommended by the Appearance Commission.
8. **Parapet Walls:** Identify rooftop equipment height on final plans and provide a brick parapet wall suitable for screening any equipment.
9. **Lighting:** Submit a photometric plan before final approval, and identify all lighting (including string lights on patio and other recommended features) on the final plan.

PROCESS

This proposal requires approval by the Appearance Commission (Appearance Review) and Planning and Zoning Commission (Site Plan Review). The Site Plan Review application for this proposal will be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 14.

The proposed restaurant will require staff approval of building permits for all interior and exterior construction, a business license for the operation of the restaurant, and a limited-use permit for the operation of the outdoor patio.

RECOMMENDED APPEARANCE COMMISSION ACTION

The Appearance Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

Approve Case 25-31, Appearance Review for Tequila Restaurant at 18136 Dixie Highway, as proposed on the drawings submitted by Rafael Ponce and prepared by Rafael Ponce and Joy Elizabeth Dewitt, subject to the approval conditions recommended by Staff in the Standards section of this memorandum.