

# VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



**MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE OF MEETING:**

**May 23, 2024**

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**7:00 pm**

Village Hall Board Room  
2020 Chestnut Street  
Homewood, IL 60430

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

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

## **ROLL CALL:**

In attendance were Members Bransky, O'Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, and Chair Sierzega. Members Alfonso and Cap were absent. Present from the Village was Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros (serving as Staff Liaison) and Assistant Director of Economic & Community Development Noah Schumerth. There were five members of the public in the audience. The public was able to watch and listen to the meeting via Zoom webinar. There were no audience members present via Zoom.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Chair Sierzega requested any proposed changes to the May 9, 2024 minutes.

Member O'Brien noted that on page 6 of the minutes, the sentence:

*"Schumerth noted that this situation is why the case has two project numbers, as the variance project number was assigned after the original special use permit project number was"*

was to be considered incomplete and should be corrected to the following:

*"Schumerth noted that this situation is why the case has two project numbers, as the variance project number was assigned after the original special use permit project number was **assigned.**"*

Motion made to approve the minutes as corrected made by Member O'Brien; second by Member Castaneda. Motion carried 4-0-1.

AYES: Members Bransky, O'Brien, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Member Johnson

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

**REGULAR BUSINESS:****CASE 24-05: Special Use Permit for Salon/Spa and Variance for Parking Requirements at 2207 W 183<sup>rd</sup> Street (Continued from May 9, 2024).**

Chair Sierzega provided a summary of the previous continuance. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the applicants had provided additional documentation for the proposed changes several hours prior to the hearing, and that paper copies had been provided to each member of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The applicants Elsayed Elbanna and Shareef Farhoud stated they had received estimates from contractors about the demolition of the external kennels on the front of the structure to accommodate more on-site parking at the site. The lowest cost estimate received by contractors was \$43,000, not including pavement costs. The applicant stated that this cost was infeasible and would hinder the project from being economically viable. The applicants stated that the \$50,000 to \$60,000 of additional investment in the property beyond what was already estimated for the project would be too costly.

Chair Sierzega asked if the plan was to maintain the kennel structures on the building. The applicant stated that it was the plan to maintain the kennel area and use the interior space as storage while removing the outer portions of the kennels and cleaning up the exterior of the building.

Chair Sierzega asked if the plan to potentially move the dumpster on the site to add parking spaces to the site would be feasible. Applicant Elbanna stated that it would be feasible to move the dumpster, and the removal and relocation of the existing dumpsters would add 1-2 parking spaces. Chair Sierzega asked if it was permitted to move the dumpsters. Elbanna stated that it was possible for them to move the dumpsters existing on the site.

Member Bransky asked if there would be circulation issues for garbage collection trucks caused by moving the dumpsters. Applicant Elbanna said that this would need to be assessed in architectural work for the building but was possible on the western side of the building. Member Bransky asked if there would be room for vehicles collecting trash to move. Applicant Elbanna considered alternatives for moving the dumpsters to different locations.

Staff Liaison Mesaros asked if the dumpster was on private property. Applicant Farhoud stated that the dumpster was located on private property. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the dumpsters were located on the easternmost parcel of the three parcels making up the site. Mesaros noted that a trash enclosure would be required for any dumpster on the site with the new work on the building being completed.

Member Johnson asked if the dumpsters on the site are only used for the former animal hospital building. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the dumpsters are only used for the animal hospital property, and that neighboring uses were prohibited from using them. Member Bransky said that Blueberry Hill has dumpsters in a separate small enclosure near its parking lot.

Member Bransky noted that the refuse company will need to be involved in the decision around where to place the dumpsters to ensure access for trash collection vehicles.

Member Castaneda asked how the applicant arrived at the prediction that 50-60% of the suites will be occupied at any given time. Applicant Farhoud stated that they had a business partner whom they worked with to estimate demand; often 70-80% of suites are filled up at any given time in salon suites uses, and demand projections were pared back.

Member Johnson asked for clarification about the proposed hours for the business. Applicant Farhoud stated that the hours for public access for appointments would be between 7:00am and 11:00pm. Member Johnson expressed concerns about the hours of operation extending until 11:00pm near residential areas and asked if it was necessary to operate the business so late. Applicant Farhoud noted that there was a bar that operated until after midnight nearby. Applicant Elbanna noted that the hours were developed in partnership with Assistant Director Schumerth as a member of staff. Member Johnson noted that the hours developed by staff were maximum hours for operation, and questioned whether all of the hours were necessary.

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission could further restrict the hours of operation allowed for the special use. Schumerth noted that the hours were similar to those applied to other special uses for other similar uses in the downtown, but that the Planning and Zoning Commission had full authority to further restrict hours beyond what is proposed by staff.

Member Johnson asked if the applicants would be present on site. Johnson expressed concerns about absentee landlords in downtown businesses allowing improper use of buildings to occur. Johnson noted that there was no office proposed for the business and asked if the owners would be present regularly on site. Applicant Elbanna stated that the owners would not be present on the site but would visit regularly to check in on tenants and the condition of the property. Elbanna noted that all building entry and activity could be monitored through the tenant app which will be used to control access to the property and provide resources to individual tenants.

Chair Sierzega asked what the hours of operation are for Lassen's Tap on 183<sup>rd</sup> Street. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that he did not know the answer readily.

A member of the audience associated with the project, Jennifer Sjoblom, noted that Lassen's Tap is open until 12am on Monday and Tuesday, 1am on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, and 2am on Friday and Saturday.

Chair Sierzega asked if the applicants would consider reduced hours to require closure of public access at 10:00pm. Applicant Elbanna said that they would consider it but worried that it would cause them further disadvantage against competition which can remain open for 24 hours with less use restrictions, such as the Essence Suites in Homewood opening later in 2024. Chair Sierzega asked where the competing salon suites are located in Homewood. Staff Liaison Mesaros said that they would be located on Halsted Street near Ridge Road. Chair Sierzega asked if it was located near residential areas. Mesaros said that the salon suites would not be near residential and would be in a very different kind of location than the proposed salon suites, which would be immediately adjacent to residential uses.

Chair Sierzega said his greatest concern was the residents across the street from the proposed use.

Chair Johnson said he has concerns about the "creep" of hours from the business. Johnson stated that the doors are open for access until 11pm, but that appointments could run much longer as tenants would not kick out clients at 11pm but would finish their services. Applicant Elbanna noted that even

with this being true, there is a bar next door with hours that go far later than any appointment would go.

Staff Liaison Mesaros said that the biggest challenge around hours was still around access management and understanding how activity may be controlled after hours, and that people may have parties or misuse the space after hours in a manner which could directly affect residents nearby. Applicant Elbanna stated that the leases for the tenants would be the primary method of controlling tenant access and behavior, as violations would cause leases to be terminated.

Assistant Director Schumerth asked for Elbanna to clarify the use of the app which would control building access. Elbanna said that each tenant would have an app which would allow for the front door to be unlocked and would allow for the monitoring of building access. Mesaros asked for confirmation that the app could be used to monitor overall business activity. Elbanna confirmed that this was true.

Schumerth asked for further clarification about whether time stamps could be recorded for all building entries, allowing the applicants to monitor which tenant was allowing in customers. Applicant Elbanna stated that this was true and that it could be used for lease enforcement with a high degree of detail. Schumerth also asked for clarification about how operating hours would be enforced in the app. Elbanna noted that the access management app would restrict any building access for clients at 11:00, and customer entry would be restricted.

Member Johnson asked if there was an opportunity to add detail to the condition requiring an access management application to restrict general access to the building, but then declined to request additional language in the final recommendation to the Village Board. Johnson said it would be difficult to provide additional language which would restrict access, and that it was not the Village's role to monitor the specifics of access management to the building in a manner which could be captured in special use conditions.

Member Johnson said his primary concern was that the building would solely be used for the operation of business by tenants in the space.

Chair Sierzega asked whether there was a condition related to receiving a report from the Village Engineer for this case. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the condition that Sierzega was alluding to was related to the subdivision case which would be heard after a decision was made on the special use and variance cases.

Chair Sierzega made a call for public comment. No public comment was provided.

Member O'Brien stated his concerns about appointments and cleaning activity occurring after the 11:00pm closing time for the business. O'Brien asked if tenants would need to make appointments by 9:00pm for two hour services, or make other accommodations to ensure that appointments would conclude by the final closing time required by the special use permit conditions. Applicant Elbanna noted that the business would be run by appointment only, but that there was little that could control an appointment going past the final closing time for the business. O'Brien stated that he was worried about the "hour creep" being described as appointments run late. Elbanna noted that tenants would not generally be operating this late, and that if there was this "creep" past 11pm, tenants would be solely focused on completing work for clients and leaving. Elbanna stated that it was up to the tenants up

ensure that their appointments did not become too late beyond closing time in a manner that is inconvenient to them.

Member Castaneda agreed with Member O'Brien and said that the issue is that activity at the buildings could be occurring very late in the evening because of the nature of the appointment-based business. Applicant Elbanna said that the policies around late night work would be largely controlled by the lease. Member Johnson made a comment that the lease could control behavior and that there could be recommendations in the lease to restrict late night activity. Johnson said that the owners would have clear knowledge about what might be happening in the building at any given time.

Chair Sierzega asked if there were any changes proposed to the total number of suites in the building. Applicant Elbanna said no. Elbanna stated that the total number of suites was based on a general estimate of a maximum number of suites which the building could hold, as generated by the architect. Elbanna said the final number of suites could decrease. Sierzega confirmed that the total number of allowable suites would not be changing. Elbanna agreed and said there would be no more than 16 suites.

Assistant Director Schumerth said that the maximum total of 16 suites was established as a condition of the salon suites use, and that staff was not recommending any changes to the restriction on having more than 16 leases operable on the site at any given time.

Member O'Brien asked how many accommodations would be created for shampoo and hairdresser bowls and other uses requiring water. Applicant Elbanna said that the goal was to provide water for each individual suite as was proposed in the Chicago Heights location of the salon suites. Elbanna said that there may be alternative accommodations which need to be constructed if this goal is not able to be realized as the building engineering work is completed. Applicant Elbanna said that an alternative would be operating as other salon suites locations do, where 30 suites could be serviced by 4-5 bowls with water access on each end of the building. Elbanna said the goal is still to provide plumbing to each individual suite with a fitting which allows for a head sink and hand sink in a single unit.

Member O'Brien asked if cost estimates had been generated for the plumbing work required to complete the final buildout as intended. Elbanna said that he was aware of the cost and that the cost was significant.

Member O'Brien asked if the applicants had estimated total costs for the project. Elbanna said that they had and that the cost is significant, especially with framing out 16 suites and providing plumbing to each suite.

Member O'Brien asked if the applicants were still planning on charging approximately \$800/month. Elbanna said this was still their planned rate, with additional opportunities for weekly rentals at around \$200/month. O'Brien stated that many salons in the area charge \$1,000 – 1,200/month for salon chairs, and questioned how the business model would be successful with a charge of \$800/month per suite with the capital costs associated with the project. Member O'Brien noted that it was not in the purview of the Planning and Zoning Commission to comment on the private financial specifics of the business owners.

Chair Sierzega asked for a motion for the project. Assistant Director Schumerth provided clarification on the need to approve the variance first to allow for the special use to be considered as a hearing item.

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that the motions were in reverse order in the packet. Schumerth noted that the correct motion to be read was on page 35 of the packet, and that it should not be confused with the original recommendation from the May 9 hearing on page 46 of the packet.

Member Johnson made a motion for approval; Member O'Brien seconded. Schumerth noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission needed to set the total number of spaces that would be varied based on the plans considered by the applicant. Member Bransky said that the changes proposed to add parking may not be feasible. Member Johnson recommended to retain the existing language for the variance recommendation.

AYES: Members Bransky, Johnson, Castaneda

NAYS: Member O'Brien, Chair Sierzega

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that a motion for approval with only three votes would be considered a recommendation of denial to the Village Board and no further discussion was required on the item.

#### **CASE 24-12: Resubdivision, Washington Park Commercial Subdivision, 17750 Halsted Street - Preliminary Plan/Final Plat at 17750 Halsted Street**

Chair Sierzega introduced the case. Applicants Kaitlyn Colbertson and Steve Shanholtzer were sworn in to speak on the case.

Member Johnson asked if any action was needed for this case by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission needed to make a decision to determine the suitability of the proposed plat and make a recommendation for the Village Board's decision on the final decision of the resubdivision.

Applicant Colbertson discussed the purpose of the resubdivision to allow for the development of a quick-service restaurant proposed on the new outlot. Colbertson discussed the proposed revisions recommended by staff and Max Massi, Village Engineer, including the elimination of a sign easement and the reduction of dedication area ceded to the Village. Colbertson expressed support for the proposed revisions.

Chair Sierzega asked if there was a proposed tenant in place for the quick-service restaurant. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that since there was no official tenant in place, staff were not at liberty to discuss the specifics of a tenant. Applicant Colbertson noted that there was not an official tenant in place.

Chair Sierzega asked if the final plat of subdivision would be revised to adjust the easements on the map and dedications to the Village. Applicant Colbertson stated that there had been discussions with Max Massi, Village Engineer, and that there had been updated drawings submitted which executed exactly what the Village Engineer wished to see in revisions, including the removal of dedications along Halsted Street and the removal of the sign easement encroaching into the new outlot. Applicant Shanholtzer noted that the Maple Avenue dedications to the Village were required because pavement area of Maple Avenue is located within the area identified for new dedications.

Member O'Brien asked for clarification about the Lot Area tables on page 13 of the agenda packet, stating that the areas do not add up perfectly together. O'Brien also asked for clarification about the square footage included in the findings of fact and what the correct acreage should be.

Member O'Brien stated on page 14 that at the top of the page in the last bullet, the sentence was not written properly. O'Brien stated that the sentence should be: *"into the continuing land **proposed to be dedicated** to the Village of Homewood."*

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted the clarifications made by Member O'Brien.

Member Castaneda stated she had no questions and that it was a wise use of a parking lot with no parking usage.

Member Bransky asked if the monument easement issue could be explained again. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that the monument sign that is currently on the private property on the corner of Maple Avenue and Halsted Street, and that the Village plans to move the sign on the property. Mesaros explained that with the removal of the sign, the easement was no longer needed and the land would be absorbed for full use by the property owner.

Member Bransky asked if the second condition in the recommended motion would be struck from the final motion for approval. Chair Sierzega said that this was correct. Member Bransky praised the use of the property and stated it will be a good decision to use a lot for development which currently has minimal parking demand.

Applicant Shanholtzer stated that he spoke to Max Massi, Village Engineer and stated that once all zoning approvals for special use permits or other permits were received, the site plan drawings would be finalized and the final dedication of easements or removal of other easements would be executed to respond to formal development plans.

Member O'Brien asked about the timeline for the proposed project. Applicant Colbertson noted that the goal was to list the property on the market in the week following final approval of the resubdivision. Colbertson noted that the owners wished for a quick closing on the property and a contract signed with a tenant during summer 2024. Member O'Brien asked if the property would open in 2024. Applicant Colbertson noted that it was very difficult to know. O'Brien asked if it would open by mid-2025. Colbertson stated that there was very little clarity and it would become more certain once a tenant was officially signed for the property and site plan work began.

Member Bransky made a motion to affirm the acceptability of the preliminary plan and recommend approval of the proposed resubdivision. Member Johnson paused and stated that changes were necessary to the first motion to include proposed revisions to the final plat drawing. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that this was correct and that revisions needed to be made to remove language suggesting "all dedications" being approved and replace with language removing dedications made to the Village of Homewood only along Halsted Street.

Member Bransky made a revised motion to affirm the acceptability of the preliminary plan as revised, and recommend approval of the plat for final Village Board approval; seconded by Member O'Brien.

AYES: Members Bransky, O'Brien, Johnson, Castaneda, Chair Sierzega

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso, Cap

### OLD BUSINESS:

None

### NEW BUSINESS:

Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission will hear a pair of Special Use Permit applications and a text amendment for modifications to zoning requirements for place of assembly uses in the Village. Schumerth noted that the next hearing will occur on June 13.

Member O'Brien asked for more information about the text amendment proposed for the next hearing. Assistant Director Schumerth noted the music and film production use proposed in one of the Special Use Permit applications to be considered on June 13 was not currently allowed in the M-1 Limited Manufacturing zoning district. The Village has run into issues with places of assembly being proposed in the M-1 district and being potentially compatible with surrounding businesses, but being prohibited by code requirements.

Member O'Brien expressed concerns about the severe reductions in parking required by the new zoning ordinance passed in 2023, using St. John Neumann church as an example of how churches have had severely reduced parking requirements. O'Brien expressed concerns that the usage of places of assembly are not accommodated because of changes from "by unit" (seats, etc.) parking requirements to parking requirements by square foot. Member O'Brien noted that it was a "loose end" in the zoning ordinance and asked if there were opportunities to bring forward these "loose ends" for consideration.

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that it would likely be an appropriate time to bring forward parking changes to the place of assembly uses, given the other text amendment proposed. Mesaros said that publication for the next hearing could be completed to allow for consideration of the parking changes to places of assembly uses. Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the original text amendment to allow places of assembly in the M-1 Limited Manufacturing zoning district would only pertain to *indoor commercial places of assembly*.

Member O'Brien recommended a meeting in September to assemble a list of needed small changes to the zoning ordinance to fix issues which have cropped up in zoning administration since 2023 when the code was approved. Member Bransky brought up concerns around religious institutions and place of assembly code requirements, and asked for a refresher on a previous court case involving religious protections from zoning requirements. Staff Liaison noted that the court case was a major reason to consolidate uses into a single place of assembly use category with changes to zoning administration to avoid religious discrimination in zoning practice. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that the Village Attorney would need to be present for a discussion about these items.

Chair Sierzega asked for details about the ongoing renovation work for the train station in downtown Homewood. Staff Liaison Mesaros commented that the renovation work was to a very high standard.

### Meeting Minutes | May 23, 2024



Mesaros noted two challenges facing the project were issues in procuring an elevator for the station building and the negative impact of the realignment of fare zones by Metra, which significantly reduced costs for those using the adjacent Calumet station in East Hazel Crest by placing the station in Zone 2, opposed to Homewood's location in Zone 3.

**ADJOURN:**

Member O'Brien made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Member Johnson. The meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Noah Schumerth**

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development