

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: September 12, 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 7:01pm.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were Members Alfonso, Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, and Chair Sierzega. Members Johnson and Castaneda were absent. Present from the Village were Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros (serving as Staff Liaison), Assistant Director of Economic & Community Development Noah Schumerth, and Administrative Secretary, Building Division Darlene Leonard. There were five members of the public in attendance in person. The public could watch and listen to the meeting via Zoom webinar.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chairman Sierzega asked for proposed changes to the minutes from the July 11, 2024 meeting. No changes were requested.

Member O'Brien motioned to approve the July 11, 2024 minutes. It was seconded by Member Cap.

- ❖ AYES: Members Alfonso, Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Chair Sierzega
- ❖ NAYS: None
- ❖ ABSTENTIONS: None
- ❖ ABSENT: Members Johnson and Castaneda

Chair Sierzega asked for proposed changes to the minutes from the August 8, 2024 meeting. Member O'Brien presented a statement regarding business discussed at the previous meeting at 1947 Miller Court (Case 24-21). Member O'Brien asked why guardrails were not installed as originally recommended by the Commission and that the answer to the question in the minutes was unacceptable. Member Cap recounted a conversation with the Village Engineer about how the decision to not install the guard rail was a mutual decision and that other options would be explored.

Member O'Brien motioned to approve the August 8, 2024 minutes as discussed. Seconded by Member Cap.

- ❖ AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Chair Sierzega
- ❖ NAYS: None
- ❖ ABSTENTIONS: Member Alfonso
- ❖ ABSENT: Members Johnson and Castaneda

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

REGULAR BUSINESS:**CASE 24-35: Site Plan Review – Ollie’s/Brunswick Zone, 3043 W 183rd Street**

The applicant, Silken Patel, was sworn in by Chair Sierzega.

Chair Sierzega read a description of the case and asked staff had received any public comments. Assistant Director Schumerth replied no comments.

Mr. Patel introduced himself and briefly described the progress of site work on Ollie’s property at 3043 W 183rd Street. Mr. Patel provided a timeline for the construction and opening of Ollie’s.

Member Cap asked if Mr. Patel was prepared to provide enhancements to stormwater storage as requested by the Village Engineer.

- **Mr. Patel stated that they were prepared to provide enhancements. The construction of this system was moved to the third phase of development. The site has constraints because minimal disturbance triggers MWRD requirements. Engineering work has been completed to design and assess the planned system.**

Member Cap asked what the phases of development will be.

- **Mr. Patel stated that Phase 1 was the operation of the first tenant (Ollie’s) and a portion of the parking area. The remainder of the parking area and building renovation will be in Phase 2. Phase 3 is full site completion.**

Member Cap asked if there was a risk of having to redo development work.

- **Mr. Patel said that building permits will be phased to accommodate the development timeline without repeated work. All required site work has been planned as part of the proposed site plan review.**

The applicant noted that the drainage work for Lot 2 (Starbucks Outlot) will be accomplished separately and not be accommodated with the current site work.

Member O’Brien asked why the report stated that there was no new construction proposed when a new Starbucks was proposed in the front of the site.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that Starbucks is proposed on Lot 2, an outlot of the site, under separate ownership requiring separate review from the Ollie’s “Lot 1” project.**

Member Alfonso asked if signage will be available for future tenants in the building.

- **Mr. Patel stated that the second pole sign on the property will be used by the remaining two tenants.**

Chair Sierzega asked if new water service is installed and fire hydrants have been moved.

- **Mr. Patel said that all hydrants have been moved and water lines through the front of storefronts have been installed.**

A member of the public, Anthony Hawthorne was sworn in. Hawthorne asked if the additional tenants in the building are known and if the Village has to approve the new tenants.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that one of the new tenants, Bevda's liquor store, is known. The Planning & Zoning Commission will only have to approve a new tenant if it is classified as a Special Use; if the use is permitted as of right the Staff will approve the use through the business certificate process.**

A member of the public, Marilyn Wells was sworn in. Wells expressed concerns about past noise and loitering at the previous use (bowling alley) and asked if measures would be taken to mitigate noise and loitering from the liquor store use.

- **Mr. Patel said that he will own the new liquor store tenant and people will not be drinking on site. The use is for packaged alcohol only. The applicant has considered additional security measures to prevent loitering and illegal activity.**

Wells also expressed concerns about lighting, traffic, landscaping, and fencing repairs needed on the property.

- **Mr. Patel stated that lighting, landscaping, and fencing will be repaired as part of the approved site work.**

A member of the public, Candace Wilson, was sworn in. Wilson expressed concerns about noise and loitering from the site. Wilson expressed concerns about additional activity in the area causing illegal gatherings as was witnessed this summer. Wilson also expressed concerns about litter on neighboring properties. Wilson also expressed concerns about the increasing number of liquor stores in the community, and crime and safety due to a recent robbery at the site.

Member Cap asked if the applicant owned another business in Homewood.

- **Mr. Patel said that he also owns Homewood Deli and Liquor on Halsted Street.**

Member Alfonso motioned to approve Case 24-35. Seconded by Member O'Brien.

- ❖ AYES: Members Alfonso, Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Chair Sierzega
- ❖ NAYS: None

- ❖ ABSTENTIONS: None
- ❖ ABSENT: Members Johnson, Castaneda

CASE 24-30: Special Use Permit for Drive-Through and CASE 24-36: Site Plan Review, Starbucks, 3047 W 183rd Street

Chair Sierzega introduced both Cases 24-30 and 24-36 and stated that the cases would be heard together as a single agenda item.

Representative of the applicant, George Arnold, attorney, was sworn in by Chair Sierzega.

Chair Sierzega read a description of the case and asked staff if there were any comments received from neighboring properties. Assistant Director Schumerth replied no comments.

George Arnold provided a brief description of the project and the need for a drive-through at the location.

Member Alfonso expressed concerns about pedestrian safety for those using the parking lot and entering the store. Alfonso asked if any measures were taken to increase visibility for pedestrians.

- **Mr. Arnold stated that the plan was designed to minimize crossover of the drive-through. The crossover will have slow traffic turning into parking area or drive aisles. The applicant stated they were open to implementing additional pedestrian improvements.**

Member Cap identified the need for separation between the Starbucks and the Jewel-Osco site and stated the landscape separation from the neighboring lot will have a positive impact on the site.

Member O'Brien asked for clarification of the text of the memo about whether there was direct public ingress and egress to the drive-through.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth said that the drive-through lane does not have direct access from the street. However, the site is publicly accessible and the drive-through can be reached indirectly from 183rd Street.**

Member O'Brien asked for clarification on whether architect renderings or lighting plans should be included in the Findings of Fact.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth stated that the renderings were the correct drawing to include in the list in the Findings of Fact. Staff will make this correction.**

Chair Sierzega asked on which side of the building the patio would be.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros said that the proposed patio will be located on the north side in the front of the building.**

A member of the public previously sworn in, Anthony Hawthorne, asked how many ADA-accessible parking spaces were included on the plan and whether the project met requirements.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth state that there is one ADA-accessible space provided on the Starbucks lot. The site is required to provide 1 ADA-accessible space per the 2018 Illinois Accessibility Code.**

Anthony Hawthorne noted that the ADA-accessible space provided at other Starbucks locations are often not available when needed. Hawthorne asked if there were options for adding more spaces.

- **Mr. Arnold agreed to bring the concern to the client. There are more spaces than required on the site, allowing for potential additional conversions into ADA-accessible spaces.**

A member of the public previously sworn in, Candace Wilson, asked what other businesses will be moving into Lot 3 (the other outlot).

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros said that there are no plans or tenants for Lot 3 at this time.**

Candace Wilson asked if there were any other potential conflicts with pedestrians which may make the site unsafe, and expressed concerns about pedestrian safety.

- **Mr. Arnold cited that traffic flow entering the drive-through is taken to the western edge of the lot to avoid conflicts between pedestrians and incoming traffic. The pedestrian connection to the parking area was placed where the natural flow of traffic is slower due to stops for the order window.**

Candace Wilson asked what the gap in landscaping was at the drive-through window and asked if it was a pedestrian crosswalk.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth noted that the gap in question is a drainage outlet for the drive-through.**

Member O'Brien asked how many parking spaces are proposed on the site.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth stated that there are 25 parking spaces including the one ADA-accessible space.**

Anthony Hawthorne asked what the required ratio of parking is for the site, including ADA-accessible spaces.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth said that the parking requirement is 1 space per 200 square feet for all parking spaces for a restaurant use (13 spaces). Schumerth added that the required ratio for ADA-accessible spaces is 1 per up to 25 parking spaces. This is a minimum requirement and the applicant can exceed the amount required.**

Anthony Hawthorne asked if bike racks would be provided.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth stated that two u-rings for bicycles are planned.**

Candace Wilson asked if trash receptacles could be provided for the site to ensure litter is controlled.

- **Mr. Arnold said that trash receptacles will be provided, and that the applicant stated an interest in site cleanliness.**

Member O'Brien motioned to approve Case 24-30 and Case 24-36, with the Findings of Fact for Case 24-30 amended to reflect the correct set of drawings in Finding #8. Seconded by Member Alfonso.

- ❖ AYES: Members Alfonso, Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Chair Sierzega
- ❖ NAYS: None
- ❖ ABSTENTIONS: None
- ❖ ABSENT: Members Johnson, Castaneda

CASE 24-32: Planned Development, and CASE 24-37: Site Plan Review, Apparel Redefined, 1313-1351 175th Street

Chair Sierzega introduced both Cases 24-32 and 24-37 and stated that the cases would be heard together as a single agenda item.

The applicants, John LaRoy (business owner), Bruce Roth (architect), and Joe Pilewski (finance), were sworn in by Chair Sierzega. The applicants set up exhibits for the presentation of the cases.

John LaRoy introduced the business and the goal of creating a headquarters and new production facility in Homewood. LaRoy presented a video to introduce the product lines provided by the company.

John LaRoy introduced that much of the employee base lives in Cook County and the company has a high level of community involvement, especially in high school programs to improve job skills and to support local student groups.

John LaRoy introduced the proposed site and building design. LaRoy introduced the proposed modifications included in the Planned Unit Development, including the reduced front setback and the proposal to include a corrugated metal material which is currently prohibited by Village ordinance. LaRoy introduced the stucco pattern finish on some metal panels and explained the two color tones to be included on the building.

John LaRoy explained that a 6' x 6' section of the paneling will be constructed and presented at the final building design approval with the Appearance Commission on October 3, 2024.

Member O'Brien complemented the presentation by the applicant. Member O'Brien noted that the PINs were inconsistent between the two case memos.

Member O'Brien noted that the existing building square footage varied between the site plan, staff memo and other exhibits, and asked for clarification on the square footage of the building.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth clarified that the 4,999 square feet indicate the footprint of the existing office building. The 9,526 square feet references the size of the building and the new connector being built on the new site plan. Schumerth also clarified that the applicant referred to the building as an 8,900 square foot office building which reflects the building record published by Cook County. Staff noted that they would follow up with clarification.**

Member O'Brien asked why shipping and receiving areas are turns into the building instead of straight motions, which will create inefficiencies.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that semi-trucks are generally not used by Apparel Redefined. At peak shipping seasons, the business will see 2-3 semi-truck deliveries a month. The business generally uses 28' box trucks that can maneuver more easily than semi-trucks.**

Member Alfonso expressed approval of the connection of the new building to the existing office building and the connector between the two. Alfonso also stated that the open space was of a high quality.

Member Alfonso asked if the existing building would be painted.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that the existing building at 1313 175th Street would likely be painted or stained for visual cohesion with the front of the new building being constructed.**

Member Alfonso stated that the parking setback modification was a good choice to create a visually cohesive site.

Member Alfonso asked how much customer or client traffic would be visiting the site.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that few clients visit the site, though walk-ins are welcome. Most sales and client work is done online.**

Member Bransky asked what the maximum height of the proposed berm on the south side of the lot.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that the berm will be 8', or the maximum height allowed by engineering standards. Space is limited for the berm. The berm will provide additional screening from the preserve. It will be constructed from fill soil produced from site construction where possible.**

Member Bransky asked what lighting would be placed on the back of the building.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that minimal lighting is proposed to be installed on the south side of the building.**

Member Bransky asked what types of industrial waste are created by the business and how they would be managing any waste by-products.

- **Mr. LaRoy clarified that plastic products and cardboard will be the bulk of the waste produced. SafetyClean and CrystalClean are services which come every 4 weeks to remove the solutions and ink used in the process. Buckets store ink and plasticizers and other production**

waste for disposal. All production is VOC compliant and uses environmentally-conscious materials which can be safely broken down without environmental risk.

Member Bransky asked where refuse will be located.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that the current plan will locate refuse within the receiving and loading dock area of the building. The vast majority of the waste stored in dumpsters will be plastic wrapping and waste.**

Chair Sierzega asked what types of packaging are used for the products.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that plastic wrapping is used and is generally using recycled plastic packaging. Some custom packaging (custom bags, tape, etc.) will be used for some orders. No packing peanuts or other older methods of packaging will be used.**

Member Cap asked if the steel building cladding has a brand or product manufacturer.

- **Mr. Roth mentioned that American Steel is the common supplier for this material used on other Apparel Redefined products. There is a second manufacturer in Iowa which may be used.**

Member Cap asked if the existing office building will be clad in metal material on the front or on all sides of the building.

- **Mr. Roth stated that if the existing building is clad in any metal material, only the visible front side of the building will be clad in the metal material. The remainder of the building will be painted or stained.**

Member Cap noted that the Village has new material requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, and asked how the proposed building complies with the materials required in the Ordinance.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth clarified that the material does not comply with the Village Zoning Ordinance. They are proposing a modification of standards through the Planned Development process.**

Chair Sierzega asked if there is already a building constructed using these materials.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that Canadian National has approximately 200,000 square feet of building area clad in a similar corrugated metal material. Homewood Disposal and a tire shop on Halsted Street also use a similar material. Some of these buildings include the corrugated finish, not the smooth panel finish.**

Member Cap noted that some of the buildings clad in the material are maintenance buildings.

Member Cap noted that the berm at Homewood Disposal is very large and is steep due to natural groundcover. Member Cap expressed that the berm height of the new berm should be similar to the height of Homewood Disposal where possible, with groundcover to stabilize soil.

Member Cap asked if Imprint is a competing business.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that this business out of Appleton, WI is a competitor. However, they specialize in different product segments. Apparel Redefined focuses on apparel, especially on-field athletic products.**

A member of the public, Maureen Forte, was sworn in. Forte stated that she is a Trustee of the Village of East Hazel Crest. Forte expressed concerns about traffic on 175th Street. Forte stated that the grass on the property needs to be cut down, and that there are wildlife impacts created from the grass growing on the property. Forte also mentioned previous instances of abandoned weapons in the grass area.

Forte asked if the grass would be cut down.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the grass will be removed as part of the construction process. The grass is currently left in place due to Village policy and proximity to the nature preserve.**

Forte asked how lighting will impact the neighboring homes.

- **Mr. LaRoy stated that lighting will be similar to neighboring properties on 175th Street, with only 5 poles being added to the site.**

Forte asked how fumes would affect neighboring development.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that production has improved and environmental impact in the air is minimal from the type of production done by Apparel Redefined.**

Forte invited the applicant to speak at a future meeting in East Hazel Crest.

A member of the public previously sworn in, Anthony Hawthorne, asked about the impact on a local business, Nix Nax.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that the business has a different product than the local existing business. The applicant stated that in 19 years of business, there has not been competition with this business. The applicant noted that many small businesses need local manufacturing arms, and Apparel Redefined does not do direct storefront sales and is often a manufacturing arm for other businesses.**

Hawthorne also asked what types of offerings will be available for local students, such as internships or scholarships.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that 8 current employees at the Crestwood business began their work as high school students directly trained and hired into the company and are still working with Apparel Redefined.**

Member O'Brien asked why a variance application is marked on the zoning application for the project.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth and Staff Liaison Mesaros clarified that the variance is a set of modifications proposed by the applicant. These modifications are approved through the Planned Development process. Each proposed modification has to meet at least one modification.**

Member O'Brien asked why the recommended planning action creates a Planned Development for 6.38 acres, but the site plan shows only 5.58 acres of property.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth clarified that the roughly 0.8 acres which comprise the 6th parcel on the eastern side of the property was not included in the site plan exhibit. The zoning application includes this parcel, totaling 6.38 acres.**

Chair Sierzega asked what the timeframe was for completing the second phase of development included in the site plan review drawings.

- **Mr. LaRoy said the earliest date would be within three years. It is based on demand for production space.**

Chair Sierzega asked if the west wall would be removed with building expansion.

- **Mr. LaRoy said the west wall would be removed with the building expansion.**

Chair Sierzega asked how the area reserved for future building expansion would be used prior to the construction of the expansion.

- **Mr. LaRoy said that it would be left maintained but vacant.**

Director Mesaros noted that the grass currently on the property is left long because of its status as a wildlife habitat adjacent to the Izzac Walton preserve.

A member of the public previously sworn in, Candace Wilson, asked why the grass could not be removed right now if it will be removed during building construction.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros said that the parcel is Village-owned and Village policy is to maintain these lots in a natural state.**

Member Cap asked if the steel material will be insulated.

- **Mr. LaRoy said the exterior material will be insulated. The interior of the building will be heated and cooled.**

Member Cap asked what the role of the Appearance Commission is in reviewing the steel building material.

- **Assistant Director Schumerth clarified that the material will be reviewed in detail by the Appearance Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation involves whether to permit the modification to allow the steel material to be used.**

Member Cap requested the addition of a condition to the Site Plan Review case to require the construction of a berm which matches the height of the berm on the property to the west where applicable.

Member Alfonso motioned to approve Cases 24-32 and 24-37, with a condition added to require the construction of a berm in alignment with the existing berm on the property to the west wherever possible. Seconded by Member O'Brien.

- ❖ AYES: Members Alfonso, Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Chair Sierzega
- ❖ NAYS: None
- ❖ ABSTENTIONS: None
- ❖ ABSENT: Members Johnson, Castaneda

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Member O'Brien asked if future cases are upcoming.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that a zoning map amendment at 3131 Olive Road is proposed and will be heard on September 26, 2024.**

Member Alfonso noted that the landscaping is dying at Homewood Brewing.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros said that the brewery property owners have been contacted regarding the maintenance and improvement of landscaping before opening.**

Chair Sierzega asked about the opening date of Wind Creek Casino.

- **Staff Liaison Mesaros said that the casino will be open on November 11, and the hotel will be open in January 2025.**

ADJOURN:

Member Cap made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Member Bransky. The meeting adjourned at 9:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Noah Schumerth

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development