

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



MEETING MINUTES

DATE OF MEETING: **January 16, 2025**

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 6:05 pm.

ROLL CALL:

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

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

Tikia Kidd resigned due to schedule and Chair Hrymak thanked Member Kidd for her services.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Hrymak asked for any corrections or changes to the minutes from the November 13, 2024 meeting.

Chair Hrymak stated to correct the following items from the minutes:

- Pg. 4 change Essence Suites to Dave's Hot Chicken.
- Pg. 5 he stated to the correct the spelling of the word "signs".
- Pg. 7 add the Appearance Commission should be more involved with the approved plans for signs.
- Pg. 8 add Member Kluck stated its more of a Fire Department issue.

The Commission declined to make a motion on the amended minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

25-01 SIGN CODE UPDATE

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the Village Attorney states that it is important to provide definitions when making revisions to the code.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the purpose of the meeting is to collect questions and concerns regarding Sign Code Update before the next workshop with the Appearance Commission.

Chair Hrymak requested a map of the zoning district with descriptions.

Staff Liaison Mesaros provided an introduction to the proposed updates to the Sign Code. Mesaros stated that the last major amendment to the code was in 1997.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the proposal includes moving the Sign Code into the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that changes to the format will include organizing the code by sign type, replacing long text with tables which are consistent with the existing Zoning Ordinance, and adding graphics. Mesaros noted that the consultant who worked with the Zoning Ordinance will also complete graphics for this plan.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that a key issue is that the B-1 and B-2 districts have different sign regulations, but it is hard to understand the differences in the regulations for these unique areas. Mesaros noted proposed changes to regulations for electronic changing message board signs and awning signs, and the addition of new sign types and maintenance standards.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that new procedures for sign variances, permitting, and historical sign designation are provided in the proposed update. Mesaros noted that procedures are also provided for Comprehensive Sign Plans (CSPs), sign abandonment and amortization.

Staff Liaison Mesaros discussed the tentative timeline for approval.

Member Scheffke stated the new code will help keep discussions on track when hearing new cases from applicants.

Member Scheffke offered a correction of the date for the proposed Planning and Zoning Commission hearing for the proposed code.

Member Scheffke noted that it will be challenging for discussion to be contained in a single meeting.

Chair Hrymak noted that there are duplicate pages on pages 28-29 and 30-31.

Chair Hrymak asked that restating definitions in code language being reviewed could help with clarity for the Commission to understand what they are reading.

Chair Hrymak asked for clarification about how ECMs and monument signs are described in the new code, since the code for ECM signs includes provisions for ECMs placed within ground signs.

Chair Hrymak noted that on page 35, image display duration should be “no less than,” not “exceeding.” Staff Liaison has not

Chair Hrymak asked for clarification about what a pylon sign is. Staff Liaison Mesaros said they are the same as pole signs in the current code.

Chair Hrymak expressed concern about eliminating electronic changing messages on pole signs. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that some existing pylon signs on Halsted Street include electronic changing message boards, and that this regulation should be discussed.

Chair Hrymak asked what was meant by the proposal to prohibit painted signs on awnings. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that this requires that these signs are professionally applied and can't just be hand painted onto an awning.

Member Kluck stated that a definition is needed for gas station canopy signs to make it clear what is being regulated for these canopy signs in the code.

Chair Hrymak expressed concerns about frosted window installations in the Village. Chair Hrymak asked if frosted windows are counted as sign area, and what can be done to mitigate this type of window coverage.

Member Banks stated that in La Grange, since public safety officials needed to look into windows, frosted material is counted as signage and adds to percentage of window coverage. Chair Hrymak expressed agreement with La Grange's regulation.

Chair Hrymak asked for the definition of pennants. Chair Hrymak stated that the consecutive sign language may allow sign to be placed one day after the allowed time period ends.

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that "window signs" language in the section on pennants should be replaced with "pennants."

Chair Hrymak asked for clarification on language about damage and how damage is defined. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that it may be best to combine "major repair damage" and "major repair cost" sections.

Chair Hrymak expressed support of the amortization section.

Chair Hrymak asked if language should be stronger for Village removal of abandoned signs. Member Banks stated that the language could be replaced with "Village discretion" to allow for flexibility. Chair Hrymak stated he wished to remove flexibility for abandoned and amortized signs.

Staff Liaison Mesaros added that language "at the owner's expense" should be added for sign removal.

Chair Hrymak asked if aesthetics of the property are being considered in Appearance Review by the Commission. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that staff would look into adding language.

Chair Hrymak asked if the consideration of aesthetics could be put into the definition and purpose of the Appearance Review itself.

Chair Hrymak asked what is meant by language consulting other governmental bodies. Staff Liaison stated that staff would consider changes to the language.

Chair Hrymak praised the changes to require design review of mural and public art installations.

Chair Hrymak asked if the option to defer cases to the Village Board was something the Commission could do already. Staff Liaison Mesaros said no, and that the language was new in the code update.

Chair Hrymak expressed support of Planning and Zoning Commission approvals being required prior to Appearance Review.

Chair Hrymak asked what it means that murals and public art installations are considered accessory uses. Staff Liaison Mesaros said that they will be defined in the definitions of the proposed code update. Mesaros stated that the accessory use language refers to other sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Hrymak asked about content-based restriction language. Staff Liaison Mesaros clarified that all regulations need to be content-neutral.

Member Preston commended staff for the work put into the proposed code update.

Staff Liaison Mesaros noted that changes will be made to the draft code and definitions will be provided prior to the next workshop with the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Member Scheffke asked about the paint work done on Dave's Hot Chicken at 17631 Halsted Street and expressed concerns about the appearance of the building. Staff Liaison Mesaros noted the main public concern has been why a part of the building belonging to another tenant is unpainted.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made for adjourning the meeting by Member Kluck, second by Member Preston.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

ABSENT: 2 (Members Quirke and Kidd)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Schumerth

Noah Schumerth, Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development