

**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 20, 2022
MEETING OF THE MORTON GROVE PLAN COMMISSION
MORTON GROVE VILLAGE HALL, 6101 CAPULINA AVENUE, MORTON GROVE, IL 60053**

Pursuant to proper notice in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Chairman Blonz. Secretary Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Blonz, Dorgan, Gabriel, Liston, and Mohr

Commissioners Absent: Kintner and Stein (with notice)

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator; Anne Ryder Kirchner, Assistant Land Use Planner/Secretary; Jim English, Manager Building and Inspectional Services; Rick Dobrowski, Fire Prevention; Ralph Czerwinski, Village Administrator

Trustees Present: Grear, Khan, Thill, and Travis

Chairman Blonz asked for approval of the May 16, 2022, minutes.

Commissioner Gabriel moved to approve the minutes of May 16, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Liston seconded the motion.

Chairman Blonz called for the vote.

Commissioner	Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner	Gabriel voting	aye
Commissioner	Liston voting	aye
Commissioner	Mohr voting	aye
Chairman	Blonz voting	abstain

Minutes approved.

Chairman Blonz described the procedures for the meeting. The Village and the applicant will present the case and the Plan Commission may ask questions of the applicant. Then, anyone from the audience will be allowed to provide comment to the Plan Commission on the case. Four votes are required for approval, and the Commission's decision is a recommendation to the Village Board.

Chairman Blonz called for the first case.

CASE: PC 22-08

APPLICANT: M/I Homes of Chicago, LLC
400 E. Diehl Road, Suite 230
Naperville, Illinois 60563

LOCATION: 8350 Lehigh Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of a Map Amendment, in accordance with Section 12-16-4:E.4 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, to zone the property within the C/R Commercial /Residential District.

Chairman Blonz clarified that this a re-zoning from M-2 to C/R.

Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator, provided a brief introduction to the application. The staff report dated June 14, 2022, was entered into the public record.

Ms. Heidorn presented the case for the Village. She explained that Case PC 22-08 is a request for approval of a Map Amendment to rezone the 7.6-acre property commonly known as 8350 Lehigh Avenue from M-2 General Manufacturing to C/R Commercial/Residential. The intent of the C/R District is to accommodate compact residential development and compatible commercial uses, supporting both horizontal and vertical mixed-use development.

Ms. Heidorn said that due to the building's low ceiling heights and functional obsolescence for modern industrial uses, the property has not attracted any viable industrial reuse since being placed on the market over three years ago. The Morton Grove Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 1999, encourages the redevelopment of older industrial property located along Lehigh Avenue and foresees future residential development occurring on re-developable property along major corridors, including Lehigh Avenue.

Further, the more current 2014 Industrial Areas Plan encourages the retention of active industrial uses, but also explicitly encourages continued development of the downtown area centered around the Morton Grove Metra Station. The Lincoln/Lehigh Redevelopment Project Area Plan, adopted last year, calls for a mix of uses for the property, including residential, commercial, or mixed-use redevelopment.

Ms. Heidorn explained that the property meets the two of three qualifying criteria for a Map Amendment. Staff recommends that the Map Amendment should be contingent on the Board of Trustees' approval of the Planned Unit Development and Subdivision Application submitted by the Applicant under Case PC 22-09.

Secretary Kirchner swore in the representatives of applicant M/I Homes of Chicago, LLC, including Mark McLaughlin, Julie Workman, Erin Brudder and Monica Goshorn-Maroney. Bill Grieve of Kimley Horn was also sworn in via Zoom.

Julie Workman, Levenfeld Pearlstein, LLC, representing M/I Homes, introduced herself and Marc McLaughlin of M/I Homes. She explained that M/I Homes has been constructing high-quality residential developments for over 40 years and has projects throughout the region and the U.S. She noted that M/I Homes was recently named Developer of the Year in Arlington Heights.

Ms. Workman noted that they have appeared before the Traffic Safety Commission and Appearance Commission. They have incorporated their feedback and continuously work with Village Staff to make adjustments.

Ms. Workman described the site and its current conditions, noting the site is contaminated with environmental hazardous substances.

The site plan was presented, 16 buildings, 89 townhomes, a large green space at the northeast corner, and a storm water detention basin planted with native plants. Parking will far exceed the requirements, with 42 guest spaces, 3-car garages, and 2 spaces available on each driveway.

The architectural design is a new design for M/I Homes, that has not been used in other developments. This is intended to be a transit-oriented development, with lots of walkable areas.

Ms. Workman noted that the first item to consider is the map amendment, Seeking to re-zone from M-2 General manufacturing to C/R Commercial residential. This is in-keeping with the Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plan for the area. The obsolete structure will be replaced with a transit-oriented development that M/I Homes believes will be a great fit for the neighborhood.

Ms. Workman asked if she could continue the presentation that will cover the next agenda item. Chairman Blonz said the Commission could hear the entire presentation at this time.

The Special Use Permit for the Planned Unit Development would allow a fresh start for the area, replacing an obsolete and contaminated site with a very desirable townhome community. Townhomes provide a great opportunity for a wide variety of demographics. There is a strong need for luxury townhomes in this area.

The Preliminary Plat of Subdivision and Final Plat of Subdivision are being sought simultaneously. The approvals being sought need to be approved before the developer can close on the property. M/I Homes is the contract purchaser. The Final Plat will not vary substantially from the Preliminary Plat, 89 townhome lots and 3 common area lots. Each home will have its own Pin number.

The development meets the criteria of the Comprehensive Plan and Lehigh sub-area Plan, providing townhomes with easy access to transit, eliminating a blighted and contaminated site, creating a greenspace feature, and meeting the need for such homes.

The site plan and elevations were presented. Access from Main Street and Lehigh Avenue with emergency access on the west side. The south emergency access point was removed after consulting with Village Staff. There are two color palettes which will alternate between buildings. The Appearance Commission unanimously voted in favor of the designs.

Chairman Blonz asked for questions by the Commissioners, keeping mind that this is regarding PC 22-08.

The Commissioners had no further questions.

Chairman Blonz asked for public comment. Members of the public provided no comment.

Commissioner Gabriel made a motion to recommend approval of Case PC 22-08, a request for a Map Amendment to zone the property commonly known as 8350 Lehigh Avenue within the C/R Commercial/Residential District, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The Map Amendment to include the subject property at 8350 Lehigh Avenue within the C/R District shall extend to the centerlines of Lehigh Avenue, Main Street, Nagle Avenue, and Oak Street.
- 2) Approval of the Map Amendment shall be contingent on the Board of Trustees' approval of the Planned Unit Development and Subdivision Application (PC 22-09) submitted by the Applicant.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dorgan.

Chairman Blonz called for the vote.

Commission Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Gabriel voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye
Chairperson Mohr voting	aye
Chairman Blonz voting	aye

Motion passed 5-0.

CASE: PC 22-09

APPLICANT: M/I Homes of Chicago, LLC
400 E. Diehl Road, Suite 230
Naperville, Illinois 60563

LOCATION: 8350 Lehigh Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision and Final Plat of Subdivision with associated waivers, in accordance with Chapter 12-8 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, and Planned Unit Development (PUD) Special Use Permit for 89 attached single-family dwellings in a C/R General Commercial/Residential District with waivers to accessway standards (12-9) and the location of surface parking (12-5-7).

Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator, provided a brief introduction to the application. The staff report dated June 14, 2022, was entered into the public record. The same presenters were noted to still be under oath.

Ms. Heidorn explained the Applicant is requesting approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Plat of Subdivision to authorize the construction of an 89-unit townhome development at 8350 Lehigh Avenue. The applicant is concurrently requesting a rezoning of the property from M-2 General Manufacturing to C/R Commercial/Residential.

The applicant is proposing the construction of 89 townhomes within 16 buildings, internal accessways, landscape and detention areas, and 220 accessory parking spaces for resident and guest use. The development will be served by two points of public access, one along Lehigh Avenue and one along Main Street, and two emergency access drives, one along Nagle Avenue and one along the south lot line, which abuts property owned by the Village. The "rear-loading" townhomes will front on Lehigh Avenue, Main Street, and Nagle Avenue, with parking areas and driveways located to the rear. The proposed subdivision will allow for the future sale of the townhomes on individual lots, with common areas to be owned and maintained by a proposed homeowner's association (HOA).

The Traffic Safety Commission unanimously recommended approval of the project on June 2, forwarding comments provided by the Village Engineer, and the Appearance Commission unanimously recommended approval of the project on June 6 with conditions. Staff recommends that approval of the PUD and Subdivision should be contingent on the Board of Trustees' approval of the Map Amendment Application submitted by the Applicant under Case PC 22-08.

Ms. Workman thanked the Commission and said there was not much to add from the previous presentation. The applicant is happy to answer any new questions about PC 22-09.

Chairman Blonz asked for questions and comments from the Commission.

Commission Dorgan asked if the recently passed Affordable Housing Ordinance is applicable to this development.

Ms. Heidorn said it is applicable and the Village is working with the applicant to comply.

Commissioner Dorgan asked if tandem parking is allowed. Mr. English said it is not prohibited by the building code. Ms. Heidorn said that the zoning code does not recognize tandem parking spaces, and we do not prohibit them.

Commissioner Gabriel commented on the proposed pedestrian walkways and the need for more connectivity areas. He would like more connections prior to the Final Plat being adopted.

He also commented on the water retention area. He is worried about West Nile virus and asked how the retention area will be treated for mosquitos. He noted the remediation that was used in the Woodlands development.

Ms. Workman said the area is not to be a retaining pond, it will only have measurable water during a storm event.

Commissioner Gabriel noted the plans show 6 inches of water present.

The landscape architect, Ms. Goshorn-Maroney, said the basins are designed to hold 6 inches of water in the bottom, they are designed with native plantings that allow natural predators of the mosquitos to thrive in the ponds. It is a natural control if mosquito larvae.

Mr. Brudder said the basin design is driven by MWRD requirements. After a large storm, water will drain within 48-60 hours.

Commission Gabriel asked about the lack of a walkway or maintenance path around the basin. He asked if there is a fencing plan to keep children and large animal life out of the area?

Ms. Goshorn-Maroney said the area is not a large enough area for larger animals to be attracted to the water source. She noted there is a service walk and turf strip by the basin. Signage will describe the wildlife and setting.

Mr. McLaughlin said M/I homes has not fenced any of their basins in their communities, and have not had problems with wildlife or children entering the basins.

Commissioner Gabriel would like a small fence for protection. He commended the developer for providing the turning radius information for emergency vehicles.

Commissioners Mohr and Gabriel asked about the turning radius by buildings 1-4. Would traffic be able to turn around to exit or back-up. Discussion ensued regarding deliver trucks and reversing with 3-point turns.

Mr. Brudder noted that one-building length is appropriate for this reversing maneuver and livability.

Mr. Dobrowski said the lanes meet the fire code.

Mr. McLaughlin said the townhome varying lengths exceed fire code requirements by 50 and 30 feet. They have worked with Village staff to ensure this is acceptable and exceeds requirements.

Commissioner Gabriel asked about the dead end between building 13 and 14. It seems too close to Main Street and may have a tree that would inhibit emergency access.

Mr. McLaughlin said the fire department did not ask for emergency access at that location, but they are not opposed to providing access.

Chairman Blonz would not want the access to be construed as public access. The area should not be paved.

Ms. Workman noted that these questions will not change the Final Plat of Subdivision, as these areas fall within out-lots which are not platted.

Commissioner Mohr asked about landscape between the driveways.

Ms. Goshorn-Maroney said it is planted with hardy ornamental grasses and stone. It is flush with the asphalt.

Commissioner Dorgan asked about irrigation.

Ms. Goshorn-Maroney said the species they chose do not require any additional water, as they are drought tolerant.

Commissioner Dorgan asked if a sidewalk would connect to the train station.

Ms. Heidorn said the long-term plans calls for improving Lehigh Avenue and its pedestrian access.

Chairman Blonz asked about current access on the east side of Lehigh Avenue. It is currently, paved Metra parking with a sidewalk.

Commissioner Mohr asked about the south emergency access. Ms. Heidorn said it is a Village street and can be offered as an easement to the developer under a license agreement.

Chairman Blonz and Commissioner Gabriel asked about snow removal. The HOA will be responsible.

Chairman Blonz asked why the lots are deemed not buildable on page 3 of the staff report.

Ms. Heidorn noted that the lots are only buildable with the PUD and could not be developed independently.

Chairman Blonz asked Mr. Dobrowski if there is adequate access and maneuverability. The accessways are all 24 feet and allow 2-way passage.

Chairman notes that on street parking is not supported. The Village engineer does not support parking that would inhibit Lehigh Avenue nor Main Street. The engineer also does not support the south emergency access as we do not know how that land will be developed in the future. Staff will to keep this in the plan and put funds in escrow in case it is needs to be provided.

Chairman Blonz further complimented the other Commissions and staff for their thorough review. He asked about the wooden walkway that must serve a Commonwealth Edison installation. It is in the right-of-way that will provide the emergency access. An additional walkway to the north will be replaced with a sidewalk.

Chairman asked about the lighting at the northeast corner of Main noted the foot-candles may be too high. These will be adjusted at the time of permit. He asked if trees will be saved. Unfortunately, with the contaminated soils, trees will need to be removed.

Chairman asked what contaminants are on the site and how they will be removed. Ms. Workman listed; Asbestos, PCBs, arsenic, heavy metals etc. They will all be remediated on site, and waste will be hauled away. It is the responsibility of the developer to clean the site.

Chairman Blonz asked if the buildings will be sound proofed due to proximity to the railroad. The windows will have a sound proofing element.

Chairman called attention to the traffic study, he asked about page 9 listing future development by others. The numbers for the new development to the north are significantly higher than this development. Mr. Grieve said this is due to the commercial aspect of the other development.

Chairman Blonz asked if the recommendations on page 11 of the traffic study are being incorporated. Ms. Workman said they are working with the Village to determine the best crosswalk solution. Bike racks are not needed due to the garage storage.

Chairman noted that the Village Administrator is present for this case. He then asked for public comment, hearing none, he asked for Commission discussion.

Commissioner Mohr made a motion to recommend approval of Case PC 22-09, a request for approval of a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision and Final Plat of Subdivision, with associated waivers in accordance with Chapter 12-8 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, and a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Special Use Permit for 89 attached single-family dwellings in a C/R General Commercial/Residential District with waivers to accessway standards (12-9) and the location of surface parking (12-5-7) for the property commonly known as 8350 Lehigh Avenue in Morton Grove, Illinois, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval shall be contingent on Board of Trustees approval of Case PC 22-08, a Map Amendment to zone the subject property within the C/R Commercial/Residential District.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit final site and engineering plans for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator, Village Engineer, and Village Administrator, and shall comply with all comments and recommendations provided by the Appearance Commission, the Traffic Study and the Village Engineer in the staff report to the Traffic Safety Commission dated May 25, 2022, and the comments provided by the Village Engineer in the departmental comment form dated June 14, 2022, whether by strict or alternative compliance, subject to the Village Engineer's final approval.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit all turning path diagrams requested by the Fire Prevention Bureau Coordinator, Community Development Administrator, and Village Engineer, subject to the review and approval of the Village Administrator.
4. The final landscape and improvement plan for the abutting public rights of way shall be modified as necessary to meet the needs and requirements of the Village, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
5. The Applicant shall bury existing aboveground utilities within the development site as required by the Village, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
6. Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the Applicant shall submit a signage plan that includes accessway and parking area signage for review and approval by the Village Administrator and shall install and maintain signage in accordance with the approved signage plan.
7. The Applicant shall advise the Department of Community and Economic Development of any proposed change in ownership or operation of the subject property. Such changes may subject the owners, lessees, occupants, and users to additional conditions and may serve as the basis for amendment to the PUD Special Use Permit.
8. The development will comply with any Affordable Housing requirement of the Village.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Liston.

Chairman Blonz thanked the Commissioners for their hard work and called for the vote.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Gabriel voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye
Commissioner Mohr voting	aye
Chairman Blonz voting	aye

Motion passed 5-0.

The Commissioners thanked the Staff and the developer for their fine efforts.

Chairman Blonz asked for any other business or discussion. Hearing none, Commissioner Dorgan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gabriel.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 8:32 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner