

**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 15, 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 8:54 p.m. by Chairman Blonz. Secretary Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Blonz, Dorgan, Kintner, Liston, Mohr, and Stein

Commissioners Absent: Gabriel (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; Chris Tomich, Village Engineer; and Ralph Czerwinski, Village Administrator

Trustees Present: Minx and Thill

Chairman Blonz asked for approval of the July 18, 2022, minutes.

Commissioner Kintner moved to approve the minutes of July 18, 2022 meeting with the time of the meeting being corrected to 7:20 pm. Commissioner Dorgan seconded the motion.

Chairman Blonz called for the vote.

Commissioner	Dorgan voting	abstain
Commissioner	Kintner voting	aye
Commissioner	Liston voting	aye
Commissioner	Mohr voting	abstain
Commissioner	Stein voting	aye
Chairman	Blonz voting	aye

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 case.

**CASE: PC 22-11**

**APPLICANT:** Village of Morton Grove  
6101 Capulina Avenue  
Morton Grove, IL 60053

**LOCATION:** Morton Grove Metra Station  
8501 Lehigh Avenue  
Morton Grove, IL 60053

**PETITION:** Request for a Special Use Permit for a Public Service Use in a C/R Commercial/Residential District (12-4-3:D) with variations to front yard (12-5-7:C), corner side yard (12-5-7:C), location of surface parking (12-5-7:A.3.j), and select landscape requirements (12-11).

Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator, provided a brief introduction to the application. The staff report dated August 9, 2022, was entered into the public record. She explained that Case PC 22-11 is a request for a Special Use Permit for the construction of a new Morton Grove Metra station, with select dimensional variations.

Ms. Heidorn stated the subject property at 8501 Lehigh measures just over one acre and is currently improved with an existing station that was constructed in the 1970s and last updated in the 1980s. In 2021, the Village issued an RFQ for architectural and engineering services to support a renovation or reconstruction of the station. The project was awarded to RM Swanson Architects, and principal architect Rick Swanson will be providing a brief presentation of the proposed design. After considerable review, staff is proposing a relocation of the station to improve site access, circulation, and visibility. Metra engineers have indicated that they support relocation. The existing vehicular accessway at Elm Street will be removed and the parking lot will be reconfigured to provide safer and more efficient internal circulation.

The proposed 1,300-square-foot station has been designed in a Craftsman style with gabled roofs, overhanging eaves, tapered columns, exposed rafters, and natural building materials. Because the site plan is subject to minor changes due to future input from Metra, staff requested and the Appearance Commission approved a waiver to all landscaping requirements to allow full flexibility in the final design, which will receive considerable future input from Metra. The Traffic Safety Commission Chairperson determined that the project will have an insignificant impact on the community from a traffic safety perspective and waived the review of the application by the full Commission.

Chairman Blonz asked if there were any questions for Ms. Heidorn

Secretary Kirchner swore in the architect, Rick Swanson.

Mr. Swanson noted that he was retained due to his experience with an identical 1970's station in Libertyville. This was a station design repeated at many villages. The intent in Libertyville was to remodel the station, but that was not possible due to many original design flaws. His work with Metra has helped streamline the review of the design for Morton Grove.

Mr. Swanson then presented the site plan, the site plan of the proposed new buildings across the street on Lehigh, the new station floor plan and elevations. These covered the objectives of studying the surrounding architecture, traffic patterns, public safety, and creating an attractive focal point for the area.

By moving the station, parking spaces are gained and better flow for drop-off and pick-ups is provided. The "Kiss and Ride" area is highly sought by Metra. Another benefit is keeping the existing station open while the new is being built.

Mr. Swanson described the many features of the station and noted the new interior features which are favored by Metra, including an off-hours waiting room, restroom, ticket machines, covered outdoor waiting areas, and a retail area.

The exterior design is Craftsman and fits in well with the surrounding old and new architecture of Morton Grove. This design features oversized eaves, pitched roofs, brick and stone elements, and tapered columns. A clock tower will be an identifier for the new business district.

Chairman Blonz thanked Mr. Swanson for his presentation and for sitting through the earlier Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. He asked if Commission members had questions for the architect.

Commissioner Kintner asked about heating the outdoor covered areas, and asked for more information about the off-hours waiting area.

The indoor off-hours waiting area will be heated and the architect will explore infrared heat for the outdoor area.

Commissioner Kintner asked about sidewalk access to the north that would serve the new development across Lehigh. It was noted that the landscape and sidewalk plans are able to be changed.

Commissioner Dorgan if the future sewer and paving project on Lehigh would affect the Metra parking lot.

Chris Tomich noted the work on Lehigh will be flexible and will incorporate the needs of the new developments and train station traffic patterns.

Chairman Blonz offered his opinion on the station location and architecture.

Chairman Blonz asked for questions from the audience.

Anita Miller, a Morton House resident, is concerned with the safety of the Lincoln/Lehigh intersection.

Chairman Blonz noted the station is being replaced in-kind and the traffic patterns will not change. He asked for the Village to consider the safety concerns of the intersection.

Eileen Stein would like to know about the parking exit, she is concerned with it conflicting with the Morton House exit on Lehigh.

Mr. Swanson and Mr. Tomich said the current entrance will not change. Ms. Heidorn noted the project will not add more northbound traffic.

Chairman Blonz asked for any further discussion. He noted that all comments and reports in the staff report have been included in the review.

Commissioner Liston made a motion to recommend approval of Case PC 22-11, a request for approval of a Special Use Permit for a Public Service Use in a C/R Commercial/Residential District (12-4-3:D) with variations to front yard (12-5-7:C), corner side yard (12-5-7:C), location of surface parking (12-5-7:A.3.j), and select landscape requirements (12-11) for the property commonly known as 8501 Lehigh Avenue, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the Village shall submit a final landscape plan for review and approval by the Appearance Commission Chairperson. If the landscape plan is deemed to be inadequate in quality or does not comply with the requirements of Chapter 12-11, unless where a Village requirement conflicts with Metra design standards or requests, or is unfeasible, the Village will be required to file an application for an amendment to the Appearance Certificate.

2. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the Village shall submit final elevations and material specifications to the Appearance Commission Chairperson for review and approval. Final elevations and materials must be deemed consistent with the approved elevations and materials, as determined by the Appearance Commission Chairperson. If such designs are deemed to be inconsistent with the approved plans or if materials are deemed to be of a lower quality than the approved materials, then the owner/applicant will be required to file an application for an amendment to the Appearance Certificate.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kintner.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Kintner voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye
Commissioner Mohr voting	aye
Commissioner Stein voting	aye
Chairman Blonz voting	aye

Motion passed 6-0.

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

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 9:40 p.m.

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Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner