MINUTES OF THE JUNE 3, 2025
MEETING OF THE MORTON GROVE APPEARANCE 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 Appearance Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Pietron. Anne Ryder Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present:	Hedrick, Ingram, Manno, Minx, Pietron, and Zimmer
Commissioners Absent:	Block without notice
Village Staff Present:	Brandon Nolin, AICP, Community Development Administrator Anne Ryder Kirchner, Planner/Zoning Administrator
Trustees Present:	Minx and Thill

Chairperson Pietron thanked Commissioner Ingram for his years of service, noting he was appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Plan Commission.

Chairperson Pietron proceeded to seek approval of the April 1, 2025 minutes.

Commissioner Minx moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Ingram seconded the motion. Chairperson Pietron called for the vote.

Commissioner Hedrick voting	aye
Commissioner Ingram voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	abstain
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	aye
Chairperson Pietron voting	aye

Minutes approved (5-0)

Chairperson Pietron called for the case.

CASE: **AC 25-07**

APPLICANT: Extra Space Storage, LLC

LOCATION: 6505 Oakton
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for the installation of wall signs with waivers for sign size

In the case of **AC 25-07**, Extra Space Storage, LLC is requesting the Appearance Commission's review and approval of a sign application with applicable waivers to requirements to allow the wall signs and a directional sign to be replaced at the property commonly known as 6505 Oakton Street.

The business was purchased by Extra Space Storage in 2024. The wall signs were replaced without permit as part of rebranding and Extra Space Storage is seeking an Appearance Certificate after the fact. The wall signs are lit and are slightly larger than the "Life Storage" wall signs that were previously installed at the property. The applicant also replaced the face of an existing direction sign that was previously nonconforming due to size.

Blue awnings were removed by the applicant and that work did not require a permit and did not require an Appearance Certificate. Appearance Commission review is only required for projects requiring a building permit or for changes to an exterior color within a commercial district.

The applicant, Mckenna with Modern Signs, described the installations and re-branding of the signage. It was recognized that the work was done without a permit.

Commissioner Zimmer said there is too much wall signage and suggested all signage be removed from the Natchez Street façade.

The applicant noted the main entrance is on Natchez and the business owner would not want to lose that signage.

Chairman Pietron noted the applicant should speak with the business owner about possible revisions and the Commission could review at a future meeting.

Commissioner Ingram moved to continue the case to the July meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zimmer. Chairperson Pietron called for the vote.

Commissioner Hedrick voting	aye
Commissioner Ingram voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	aye
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	aye
Chairman Pietron voting	aye

Motion passed 6-0.

CASE: **AC 25-08**

APPLICANT: Bridge Industrial

LOCATION: 8125-45 River Drive and 8120-40 Lehigh Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

PETITION: Request for an Appearance Certificate site, landscape, and building plans associated with Case PC 25-06, a request for a Special Use Permit for redevelopment to establish warehousing, distribution centers, and light manufacturing uses with select waivers regarding setbacks, landscaping, signage, and parking located in a street side yard

In the case of **AC 25-08**, the applicant Midwest RE Acquisitions, LLC (which is an entity of Bridge Industrial) is requesting approval of site, landscape, and building plans associated with Case PC 25-06. That case is a request for a Special Use Permit to redevelop the pair of existing office buildings at the North Grove Corporate Park and establish warehousing, distribution centers, and light manufacturing uses at the property. The property is zoned MOR and all surrounding properties are zoned M-2 General Manufacturing.

Bridge Industrial is proposing an approximately 227,600-square-foot speculative single-story industrial building including 35 truck loading berths, approximately 212 off-street parking spaces, underground stormwater detention, and various site improvements.

- Regarding landscaping, the applicant is proposing dense perimeter landscaping to compensate for less-than-required shade tree plantings in the parking lot and surrounding parkway (in which plantings may potentially be hindered by utilities). Details on building height have not been provided and should be discussed.
- The applicant is proposing the construction of an insulated precast concrete building and would rely on the use of brick, glass, and colored concrete to provide for some articulation in the building's large façades. Emphasis on brick and use of glass and aluminum fascia is placed on the corners and Lehigh Frontage.
- Building signage would consist of four tenant signs, a name and address plate, and a monument sign. Location details are needed for the monument sign to ensure compliance.
- Proposed lighting consists of light poles and wall packs and staff have concerns regarding low light levels in the parking lot, spillover along the northern property edge, and glare from wall packs placed toward the top of the façade.

Curt Pascoe, Executive Vice President of Development for Bridge Industrial introduced the team for the site, he provided the group's history and examples of their other work.

The neighboring buildings and landscapes were shown, noting the industrial structures and brick tones used in the area. The site setbacks were described and it was noted there will be no access off Lehigh Avenue.

Mike Baumstarck of Cornerstone Architects described the pre-cast building with corner brick entrances and glazing. Exterior samples were provided for the brick, tinted glass, glass framing, and pre-cast concrete. It was noted that the windows are not mirrored and will be bird friendly.

Commissioner Ingram asked about the southwest corner materials. The corner will be screened by landscaping.

Kathryn Tully, landscape architect, described the interior greenspace and noted the parking lot islands do not have the required number of trees. It would not be prudent to have too crowd trees in the 600 square feet islands. They have increased the overall number of trees on the perimeter of the property to 85 trees. There will be a total of 240 trees on the property. It was explained that parkway trees would not be possible due to the water utilities, those required trees will be on the subject property. All trees and landscaping is native and non-invasive.

Chairman Pietron asked if trees hurt underground utilities and what is her experience with parkway installations.

Ms. Tully said they are required to stay 10 feet from a water line. She noted that surrounding properties also do not have parkway trees in utility locations. Mr. Nolan said the Village Engineer will be asked to verify that it is not permitted to plant in the parkway with underground utilities. The applicant will plant parkway trees if allowed.

Commissioner Zimmer asked if there will be an irrigation system. There will not be irrigation as it is a LEED certified project. The materials will be drought tolerant when established, and will be watered until established. Bridge is the property manager and will react to any property needs.

Mr. Pascoe said the lighting on the dock wall will be lowered to 25 feet and any additional light issues will be addressed as necessary.

The signage plan was presented and a waiver for the size of the address sign is required. All other signs will be code compliant.

The roof will be white and will be reinforced to support future solar panel installations.

Chairman Pietron asked if the roof top mechanicals will be screened, they will be. He further asked for the height of the building. The building will be 41 feet from the finished floor to the top of the pre-cast wall. Code measures height from the surrounding roadways, so the applicant is asking for a height of 44 feet, in case of road elevation changes.

Discussion ensued regarding bird friendly glazing. Mr. Pascoe noted they are exploring bird film which is costly given the amenities being added to the four-sided building.

Chairman Pietron asked for public comment.

Mr. Michael Tracy, owner of 8110 and 8120 River, does not like the bulk and height of the building. He does not like the multi-color facades and objects to there not being irrigation. He discussed the esthetics of River Drive and the trouble with an additional 35 loading docks disturbing the neighborhood.

Mr. Tracy said the existing building is a good building and he would like to know if the proposed building will generate more taxes. He asked if there are any covenants on the property that prohibit non-enclosed loading docks. He would prefer the docks to be located on Lehigh Avenue, or the building to be split up into four separate buildings.

Mr. Nolin noted upcoming the Traffic Safety and Plan Commission dates. Chairman Pietron noted there was no further public comments.

Commissioner Ingram moved to approve AC Case 25-08, a request for an Appearance Certificate for site, landscape, and building plans, for redevelopment to establish warehousing, distribution centers, and light manufacturing uses under Special Use Permit (PC 25-06) at the properties commonly known as 8125-45 River Drive and 8120-40 Lehigh Avenue, staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

1. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final elevations and material specifications for review and approval. Final elevations and materials must be deemed consistent with the approved elevations and materials, as determined by the Community Development Administrator and 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.
2. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final lighting plan and photometric analysis that meets the minimum requirements of Village Code for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator and Village Engineer.
3. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final landscape plans and a tree preservation plans for review and approval. Final plan selections, locations, and sizes must be deemed consistent with the approved selections, as determined by the Community Development Administrator and 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.
4. Any proposed or future illuminated signs at the subject property shall not have a color temperature that exceeds 5,000 K (degrees Kelvin).
5. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final sign plan indicating the location of the monument sign that adheres to all setbacks and landscaping requirements. Final sign plans must be deemed consistent with Appearance Commission discussion, as

determined by the Community Development Administrator. If the sign plan is deemed to be inconsistent with the approved plans, then the owner/applicant will be required to file an application for an amendment to the Appearance Certificate.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Minx.
Chairperson Pietron called for the vote.

Commissioner Hedrick voting	aye
Commissioner Ingram voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	abstain
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	abstain
Chairman Pietron voting	aye

Motion passed 4-0-2.

Hearing no further business, Chairman Pietron moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Minx. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 7:52 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner