

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 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: Block, Dahlberg, Minx, Manno, Pietron, and Zimmer

Commissioners Absent: Hedrick with notice

Village Staff Present: Brandon Nolin, AICP, Community Development Administrator  
Anne Ryder Kirchner, Planner/Zoning Administrator

Trustees Present: Minx and Thill

Chairperson Pietron proceeded to seek approval of the August 6, 2025 minutes.

Commissioners Dahlberg and Manno noted changes to the attendance.

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

Commissioner Block voting aye  
Commissioner Dahlberg voting aye  
Commissioner Minx voting aye  
Commissioner Manno voting aye  
Commissioner Zimmer voting aye  
Chairperson Pietron voting aye

Minutes approved (6-0)

Chairperson Pietron called for the case.

**CASE:** AC 25-14

**APPLICANT:** Tony S. Kalogerakos

**LOCATION:** 5926-28 Lincoln Avenue  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

**PETITION:** Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate to allow an exterior color change for a building in a Commercial District.

In Case AC 25-14, the owner of the building is proposing to paint the exterior of the subject property and garage a charcoal gray. The existing façade is an unpainted yellow brick that is original to the structure. The applicant is not changing any materials or colors on the remainder of the façade.

Due to this being the first color change proposal in the C/R district, Staff requested that the applicant seek approval from the Appearance Commission for the color change.

Mr. Kalogerakos said he recently purchased the building and wants to freshen the look by painting the building and garage a modern, charcoal grey color.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Block moved to approve case AC 25-14, a request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for the exterior color change of the building. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zimmer.

Commissioner Block voting	aye
Commissioner Dahlberg voting	aye
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	aye
Chairman Pietron voting	aye

Motion passed 6-0.

**CASE:** AC 25-07

**APPLICANT:** Extra Space Storage, LLC

**LOCATION:** 6505 Oakton Street  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

**PETITION:** Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate and waivers to select sign requirements

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.

The applicant has revised their application originally heard by the AC in June 2025. One wall sign has been reduced in size and another wall sign have been removed entirely from the application.

Modern Signs, Inc. presented their revised plans. The business is concerned that customers will not find the main entrance without signage near and/or above the doors. It was asked if a cabinet or box sign with 11-inch letters would be acceptable.

Ms. Kirchner noted that box signs are prohibited in our code. Mr. Nolin said Staff is happy to work with the applicant regarding a small address sign or window signage to show the entrance.

Chairman Pietron asked if the illuminated signs would adversely affect the adjacent Forest Preserve. The previous signs were illuminated and the distance across Oakton buffers the lighting.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Block moved to approve case AC 25-07, a request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for the installation of wall signs with waivers for sign size and location at the property commonly known as 6505 Oakton Street in Morton Grove, Illinois with the following conditions:

1. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final elevations, material specifications, and sign locations and dimensions that must be deemed consistent with the approved signs, for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator. 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 Minx.

Commissioner Block voting	aye
Commissioner Dahlberg voting	aye
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	aye
Chairman Pietron voting	aye

Motion passed 6-0.

**CASE:** AC 25-12

**APPLICANT:** 8500 MG, LLC

**LOCATION:** 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

**PETITION:** Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for site, building, landscape plans with associated waivers for a 60-unit mixed-use development proposed under Applications for Special Use and Subdivision (PC 25-07) for the property commonly known as 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue and a portion of Chestnut Street right of way petitioned for vacation (PC 25-08) in Morton Grove, Illinois.

In the case of AC 25-12, 8500 MG LLC, is requesting the Appearance Commission's review and approval of plans for a 60-unit mixed-use development proposed under applications for Special Use and Subdivision (PC 25-07). The for the property commonly known as 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue. The subject property consists of 2.05 acres of Village-owned property across Lehigh Avenue from the Metra station. The project consists of 4 stories fronting Lehigh, a primary entrance on the south end of the site, and parking in the rear. The project includes a 4020-square-foot commercial space with an outdoor plaza/café space on the north end of the building. The ground floor residential portions of the building are screened with foundation plantings. The application includes two monument signs for the Moose property that would be located behind the proposed project. The applicant has been asked to discuss various

potential waivers needed including screening along the Forest Preserves property line, lighting, tree preservation, proposed façade materials, and façade transparency.

Joe Maschak of BSB Design described the site and building design. He noted the C/R district provides great design requirements leading to a street-sensitive mixed-use building with curb appeal for the “downtown” neighborhood.

The building reflects the warm tones of the brick and mullioned windows of the new train station. It is contemporary building with a historic downtown feel. Black balconies and bronze windows and doors add to the warm tone.

Mr. Maschak responded to all sections of the staff report, noting a waiver is not being asked for the monument signs, a waiver may not be needed for the north landscape bed along Lehigh, and a fence screening the west parking lot from the Forest Preserve will be provided in place of landscaping.

He mentioned the future inclusion of a parking lane on Lehigh, similar to that at the Metro on Main project. The applicant will work with the Village at the time of Lehigh construction changes. Street trees may have to be removed and they would be placed elsewhere.

Chairman Pietron asked if all brick was considered for the façade. Samples of the brick and Hardie board were shown to the Commission. The Hardie board offers subtle shading and adds a bounce to the elevation. This is a classic style for the neighborhood. Chairman Pietron asked if this is what the market supports. This is not too contemporary and not blocky-looking, the design cues are taken from designers and the market.

Glass transparency was discussed. There are 3 apartments facing Lehigh that will have transparent glass with window treatments. Bird strike glass will be used.

The photometric plan is being re-done to comply with Village regulations and dark sky regulations.

Commissioner Block asked how many retail units are proposed. There will be 4,000 square feet available and it could be one or three units.

Trees are being removed due to undergrounding the wires along Lehigh and due to the parking lot and driveway to the south. The south trees are small diameter Catalpa trees that are not good specimens. The landscape plan provides new trees that comply with Village overall landscape requirements.

Mr. Nolin asked about possible parkway tree removals? They are proposing parkway trees and will work with the Village regarding Lehigh reconstruction.

Commissioner Zimmer asked if bollards would protect the outdoor dining area. It is a fire lane that needs to remain accessible. They will work with the tenant on outdoor usage and amenities such as planter boxes.

The building signage wall sign plan was presented and will comply.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Minx moved to approve case AC 25-12, a request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for site, building, landscape plans, with associated waivers described herein, for a 60-unit mixed-use development proposed under Applications for Special Use and Subdivision (PC 25-07) for the property commonly known as 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue and a portion of Chestnut Street right of way petitioned for vacation in Morton Grove, Illinois, with the following conditions of approval:

1. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with a final landscape plan, including required Tree Protection and Tree Preservation Plans, for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator and Appearance Commission Chairperson. If the landscape plan is deemed to be inconsistent with the approved plan or has not been modified to remove any invasive or undesirable species, the owner/applicant will be required to file an application for an amendment to the Appearance Certificate.
2. The applicant shall install either fencing or year-round opaque screening a minimum of three feet in height within a five-foot (5') perimeter landscape bed along the west property line adjacent the FPDCC property. Any landscape installation along lot lines abutting the forest preserves must be limited to native species.
3. 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.
4. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final outdoor seating area plans for review and approval. Final seating arrangements, screening, and furniture specifications must be deemed consistent with the overall development, 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.
5. If planter boxes or containers are provided, they must be fully planted with live vegetation when the outdoor seating area is in active use. When the outdoor seating area is not in active use, the planter boxes or containers must be (1) planted with an alternative seasonal decoration, (2) covered, or (3) removed.
6. Only frosted glass or a similar type treatment shall be used for window areas permitted to be obscured, such as fitness and service areas. The glass should not be obscured with any mirrored coating, vinyl applique, artwork, or signage.
7. Before any Building Permit Application is filed, a revised sign detail shall be provided indicating a two-foot (2') landscape bed surrounding each proposed monument sign including plantings three feet (3') in height, subject to review and approval by the Community Development Administrator.
8. All ground monument and pylon signs shall be located in a landscaped bed that extends at least two feet (2') from the base on all sides. The landscape bed of a pylon sign shall be planted with shrubs at least three feet (3') in height at planting and may also include perennials, turf or other live ground cover.
9. Sign colors shall blend with the building and storefront colors through use of complementary color ranges, or as otherwise approved by the Appearance Commission Chairperson.
10. Any portable signage shall be permitted pursuant to Section 10-10-8:E, except that the signage frame and base shall be constructed primarily of metal or wood, or as otherwise authorized by the Appearance Commission Chairperson.
11. Illuminated signage and other illuminating features on the property may not exceed 5,000K (degrees Kelvin).
12. Before any Building Permit Application is filed, the lighting plan must be revised to meet all lighting requirements of the Village of Morton Grove. The lighting plan and fixtures should also comply with all standards established in IDA's lighting guidelines and any exterior lighting should be designed to minimize the amount of light entering into the forest preserves, to the best extent practicable.

13. To mitigate bird collisions with the buildings' window area, the development must adhere to bird-friendly design guidelines contained in the "Bird-Friendly Building Design" manual of the American Bird Conservancy (2015, [https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Bird-friendly-Building-Guide\\_2015.pdf](https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Bird-friendly-Building-Guide_2015.pdf)) where practicable. Mirrored coatings may not be used, but inconspicuous window films featuring simple dot or lined patterns are strongly encouraged.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dahlberg.

Commissioner Block voting	aye
Commissioner Dahlberg voting	aye
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	aye
Commissioner Zimmer voting	aye
Chairman Pietron voting	aye

Motion passed 6-0.

**CASE:** AC 25-13

**APPLICANT:** Johnnie Jiron

**LOCATION:** 6222 Lincoln Avenue and 8503-09 Fernald Avenue  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

**PETITION:** Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate

In the case of AC 25-13, the applicant is requesting an Appearance Certificate for site, building, and landscape plans for 4-dwelling unit mixed-use development proposed to be legalized and renovated under a Special Use Application (PC 25-10) for the property commonly known as 6222 Lincoln Avenue.

The existing site plan includes near-zero-foot setbacks along the Lincoln and Fernald Avenue frontages, which define the streetwall and help create a traditional neighborhood feel. The proposed parking area is located to the side of the buildings, which complies with established guidelines for C/R District development. Landscaping is limited to screening of the proposed parking area a waiver is required for façade transparency. Sign application would be required for future tenants, but Staff recommend some initial conditions in keeping with the intent of the C/R district.

The applicant obtained a Special Use Permit in 2022 with plans very similar to the plans included in the current application. A one-year extension was also granted in 2023 which has since expired. After making initial investments in window replacement, siding, and interior and structural improvements to the building, progress on the project stopped. The applicant partially completed work on the windows, capping, and siding installation in 2023, but work ceased and the exposed façade has been unfinished for approximately two years. The Special Use Permit has expired since the applicant failed to make substantive progress in bringing the property to code and implementing the improvements approved as part of the special use permit.

The applicant nor a representative for the applicant was present.

Commissioner Zimmer moved to continue case AC 25-13. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Block.

Commissioner Block voting	aye
Commissioner Dahlberg voting	aye

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

Motion passed 6-0.

Hearing no further business, Commissioner Minx moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Manno. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 7:37 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner

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