

**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 7, 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: Anne Ryder Kirchner, Planner/Zoning Administrator

Trustees Present: Minx and Thill

Chairperson Pietron proceeded to seek approval of the September 2, 2025 minutes.

Commissioner Minx moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Dahlberg 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 first case.

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 applicants and the general contractor were present.

Chairman Pietron acknowledged the project has been in progress for some time, he said many residents of the Village ask him for a timeline on when the project will be completed.

Commissioner Zimmer said he is disappointed that the building does not add to the streetscape.

The applicant said they had a hard time getting a loan and working with the code requirements of the Village. The property was up for sale and a buyer was interested, the family did not continue with a closing as they now have secured a loan and want to keep the building. Conditions of the loan require the proper permitting from the Village.

The general contractor said they have done a lot of work and are continually responding to the building code requirements of the Village. He believes they are 3 months until completion.

Commissioner Minx moved to approve case AC 25-13, request for an Appearance Certificate for site, building, and landscape plans with associated waivers for a 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 and 8503-09 Fernald Avenue in Morton Grove, Illinois, 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, material specifications, and landscaping plan for review and approval. Final plans must be deemed consistent with the approved elevations, materials, and landscape plan 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) Future 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.
- 3) 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 Village Administrator.
- 4) Illuminated signage and other illuminating features on the property may not exceed 5,000K (degrees Kelvin).

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Manno.

Commissioner Block voting	aye
Commissioner Dahlberg voting	aye
Commissioner Minx voting	aye
Commissioner Manno voting	aye

Commissioner Zimmer voting no
Chairman Pietron voting aye

Motion passed 5-1.

CASE: **AC 25-15**

APPLICANTS: Dr. Jeff Ruttencutter and Dr. Priscilla Chang

LOCATION: 9147 Waukegan Road
 Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate to reface an existing pole sign that is nonconforming due to sign type, location, lack of landscape bed and inclusion of off premise signage

In the case of AC 25-15, Dr. Jeff Ruttencutter and Dr. Priscilla Chang of Uptown Dentistry (the applicant) is proposing to reface an existing pole sign on the subject property located along the Waukegan Road frontage within an existing parking lot island. Pole signs are a prohibited sign type and per Section 10-10-9, refacing an existing nonconforming pole sign requires approval by the Appearance Commission.

The sign also requires waivers for location as it will be located adjacent public right of way where a minimum setback of four feet, nine inches (4' 9") is required; and adjacent a side lot line where a minimum setback of eight feet (8') is required. A compliant landscape bed is also not provided at the base of the sign. The proposed sign would include advertising for the dentist office to be located on the subject property ("Uptown Dentistry") as well as an off premises sign for the dentist office on the adjacent property to the south at 9133 Waukegan Road ("Morton Grove Dental Associates"). Off premises signs are prohibited.

The applicant received an Appearance Certificate under case AC 23-09 wherein they received approval for two wall signs on the subject property as part of a renovation. At that time, the applicant did not wish to include the existing sign in their application and communicated intent to remove the nonconforming sign. Per comments made by the applicant's architect and included in the minutes for case AC 23-09, "*The new applicant does not wish to keep the pylon sign and will make that a landscaped area.*"

The applicant has indicated they have changed their mind regarding the need for an additional sign and the existing nonconforming sign previously planned for removal is now included in this request (AC 25-15).

The applicants presented the request to reface the sign and include the adjacent neighbor's sign information. It would be a hardship to remove the sign for both businesses.

Chairman Pietron said he would like to see more landscaping around the sign. Discussion ensued as to whether the sign would be illuminated at night. If it will be illuminated, it should not exceed 5,000 degrees Kelvin.

Commissioner Zimmer moved to approve case AC 25-15, a request for replacement of a panel in a nonconforming pole sign at 9147 Waukegan Road in Morton Grove, Illinois.

1. Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final site plans for review and approval including required setback dimensions. Final plans must be deemed consistent with the approved plans as determined by the Community Development Administrator. If

such designs are 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.

2. The Applicant shall file a final landscape plan for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator prior to issuance of a sign permit that demonstrates the landscape bed will be planted or maintained with shrubs at least three feet (3') in height at planting. The plan may also include perennials, turf, or other live ground cover in accordance with Section 10-10-7:G.5.
3. All landscaping shall be continually maintained in accordance with the approved landscape plan and all planting areas shall be kept free of weeds and debris.
4. Illuminated signage and other illuminating features on the property may not exceed 5,000K (degrees Kelvin).

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 25-16

APPLICANT: Madina Gardens, LLC

LOCATION: 6037 Lincoln Avenue
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate and approval of site, landscape, and building plans with select waivers associated with PC 25-11, a request for approval of a Subdivision and Planned Unit Development to develop four (4) attached single-family dwellings and five (5) single-family dwellings.

In the case of AC 25-16, Madina Gardens LLC is requesting approval of a preliminary plat of subdivision for the proposed 7-lot Medina Gardens Subdivision, under a Planned Unit Development application (PC 25-11). The project requires waivers to lot width, floor area ratio, impervious lot and rear yard coverage, driveway setback, lot standards, and accessway design to allow for the development of 5 detached single-family residences and 4 townhomes. Lots 1 through 5 will be improved with 5 single family residences that will be accessed by a cul-de-sac and extension of Elm Street westward. The cul-de-sac design includes a landscape island and 5-foot parkway. Lot 6 and Outlot A will be improved with 4 townhomes and common areas, including an access drive and 4 guest parking spaces.

The five (5) single-family lots are to be sold independently, with final architectural and landscaping designs to be determined by future buyers. To ensure the future single-family residences are designed to be compatible with the

surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends that the Appearance Commission include a condition of approval in its issuance of an Appearance Certificate in the case of AC 25-16.

In the case of AC 25-16, the Appearance Commission may forward comments on the general appearance and compatibility of the overall development. However, the Appearance Certificate issued in the case of AC 25-16 will only approve the building and landscape plans for the townhome portion of the development.

Mr. Tibu, representing the general contractor, described the development layout for the townhomes and single-family lots. The materials and landscaping for the townhomes was presented.

Chairman Pietron asked for the burning bushes to be replaced with a non-invasive variety of shrub. He also asked if the waiver for lot coverage on lot six could be reduced. Mr. Tibu said they would consider a reduction.

Parking lot and landscape lighting will be LED. The lighting along the driveway will be on motion sensors and the bollard lighting will be less than 5000 degrees Kelvin.

Chairman Pietron said the new homes will be reviewed separately by the Appearance Commission.

Commissioner Block moved to approve case AC 25-16, request for an Appearance Certificate for site, building, and landscape plans with associated waivers associated with PC 25-11, a request for approval of Subdivision to develop four (4) attached single-family dwellings and five (5) single-family dwellings, for the property commonly known as 6037 Lincoln Avenue in Morton Grove, Illinois, staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

- 1) Prior to filing any Building Permit Application for the development of Lots 1 through 5, final elevations, materials, and a landscape plan must be reviewed and approved by the Appearance Commission.
- 2) Prior to filing any Building Permit Application, the Applicant must submit a revised landscape plan for Lot 6, Outlot A, and the landscape buffer screening the cul-de-sac paved ground surface area that replaces all "burning bush" plantings with a desirable species similar in height and character, subject to staff review and approval.
- 3) Prior to filing any Building Permit Application for the development of Lot 6 and Outlot A, the Owner/Applicant shall provide the Village with final landscape plans, 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 Land Use Planner and Chairperson of the Appearance Commission. 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 Manno.

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.

Commissioner Zimmer asked whom is the Village Trustee liaison for the Appearance Commission. Trustee Kahn is the liaison.

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 7:27 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner