

**MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2026
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, Ms. Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Dahlberg, Israel, Manno, Minx, Pietron, and Zimmer

Commissioners Absent: Block without notice

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Director of Community and Economic Development
Anne Ryder Kirchner, Planner/Zoning Administrator, Secretary

Trustees Present: Khan, Minx, and Thill

A moment of silence was observed for the recent passing of Commissioner Donna Hedrick.

Chairman Pietron proceeded to seek approval of the April 7, 2026 minutes.

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

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

Minutes approved (6-0)

Chairperson Pietron called for the first case.

CASE: AC 26-05

APPLICANT: Malik Lighting & Signs on behalf of St. Mary's Oil/Morton Grove Amoco

LOCATION: 5801 Dempster Street
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of an Appearance Certificate for a signage plan for the rebranding of an existing automobile mini mart and service station in the C-1 General Commercial District.

Ms. Heidorn introduced the case. The applicant is requesting approval of an Appearance Certificate with select waivers to authorize new signage for the rebranding of an existing Amoco automobile minimart station at 5801

Dempster Street to a Citgo station. The existing nonconforming 23-foot-tall pylon sign, gas canopy, and gas pumps are being updated with new signage.

Waivers are being requested for:

- the number of exempt small signs to be installed on the pumps, which are typical of gas stations but not supported by the Village's current regulations;
- approval of a pole sign, which is a prohibited sign type;
- the pole sign's setbacks, which are based on a sign height of approximately 23 feet, and is limited by the site's existing landscape bed and parking; and
- the pole sign's combined face area.

A Commissioner requested verification of the heights of similar gas station signs along the Dempster Corridor for comparison. In early 2026, the Appearance Commission approved a sign with a height of 24.63 feet for the BP at 5601 Dempster Street, and the Shell station directly across the street was authorized to have a sign height of 17 feet in 2000.

She noted that staff is actively working with the separate service station business on the site, Lee Elston Auto, to correct multiple noncompliant signs and other property maintenance violations relating to this business.

Chairman Pietron asked about the waiver for the 20 exempt signs, associated waivers have been approved for other stations in Morton Grove. Ms. Heidorn noted surrounding communities allow these types of pump and island signage.

A representative from Malik Lighting & Signs asked the revised plans showing a revised sign face could be presented. Staff noted that the revised plans required another variation due to the sign face exceeding the allowable square footage. Staff had notified the applicant was notified to not make the change and that staff would not be presenting the revision.

A representative from St. Mary's Oil Company asked if they could proceed with the current submittal. They wish to have new poles installed and to rebrand to Citgo.

Chairman Pietron noted that a tall sign is not necessary for this location on Dempster. A pole sign's visibility will not be any better than a smaller monument type sign. He asked if the sign could be shortened by 5 feet.

Commissioner Zimmer said he would not approve a pole sign. Discussion ensued regarding the height and the amount of signage proposed.

The St. Mary's Oil Company representative said he will ask the owner if he would agree to a shorter sign.

Commissioner Israel asked for the height of the gas pump canopy. He said the pole sign should not be any taller than the canopy. He also noted that landscaping on the property should be properly maintained, especially on the east lot line.

Commissioner Israel made a motion to approve the request for an Appearance Certificate for new signage with associated waivers described herein under Appearance Certificate (AC 26-05) for the property commonly known as 5801 Dempster Street in Morton Grove, Illinois, staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

1. Illuminated signage and other lighting features on the property may not exceed 5,000K (degrees Kelvin). All

lighting on the property shall be directed away from surrounding properties and all lighting fixtures shall be of full cutoff design. Light shall be directed only within the subject property and shall not extend beyond the property line in any direction, except for minimal indirect reflection. Sign illumination and lighting shall not be blinking, fluctuating, or moving. With the exception of the electronic price signs, all LED lighting on the property shall be required to provide full shielding from the light source. The Director of Community and Economic Development shall reserve the right to require a full photometric plan, subject to review by the Village Engineer or their designee, to verify compliance with this condition of approval.

2. The proposed pole sign height will be decreased by five feet and the height shall be measured from grade level.
3. Prior to filing any Sign Permit Application, the owner/applicant shall provide the Village with final details regarding all sign locations and dimensions on the subject property, including existing signs on the primary structure that are to remain, that must be deemed consistent with the approved signs, as determined by the Community Development Administrator and Appearance Commission Chairperson. 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.

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

Motion passed (6-0)

Other Business

None

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 7:21 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner