

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2022  
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 John Pietron. Secretary Anne Ryder Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Pietron, Block, Hedrick, Ingram, Manno, Minx, Zimmer

Commissioners Absent: None

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator; Anne Ryder Kirchner, Assistant Land Use Planner

Trustees Present: Minx, Thill, and Travis

Chairperson Pietron proceeded to seek approval of the November 1, 2021, minutes.

Board Member Block moved to approve the minutes of November 1, 2021. Board Member Manno seconded the motion.

Chairperson Pietron called for the vote.

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

Minutes approved.

Chairperson Pietron called for the case.

**CASE: AC 22-01**

**APPLICANT:** MHDC SLF LLC  
8 South Michigan Avenue, suite 3100  
Chicago, Illinois 60603

**LOCATION:** 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue (PIN 10-19-204-020-0000, 10-19-203-021-0000, 10-19-203-022-0000, 10-19-203-023-0000, 10-19-203-025-0000, 10-19-203-013-0000) and a portion of Chestnut Street right of way petitioned for vacation (PC 22-01)  
Morton Grove, Illinois 60053

**PETITION:** Request by MHDC SLF LLC for an Appearance Certificate for site, building, landscape, signage, and outdoor seating plans with associated waivers for a 24-unit mixed-use development proposed under Applications for Special Use and Subdivision (PC 22-02)

Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator, provided the following introduction:

Staff is proud to introduce Case AC 22-01 to the Appearance Commission tonight. Acknowledging the project's high visibility and critical location at the heart of Morton Grove's transit-oriented district, just across the street from the Metra station, we have worked hard to help bring you a development we feel is deserving of the community's support.

To provide some background, the properties at 8500-50 Lehigh were originally improved with commercial and light industrial buildings constructed in the 1960s. Seeing the importance of this site in the long-term future of this area, the Village acquired the properties between 2008 and 2010 and demolished the aging structures. The property at 8500 Lehigh has remained vacant and the property at 8550 Lehigh was improved with a commuter parking lot.

After over a decade of marketing the site and unsuccessful development proposals, in 2020, the Village issued an RFQ seeking mixed-use, multi-family, or commercial development. The project before you was selected by staff because it presented the best balance of commercial and residential uses, activated the public realm, incorporated a public plaza as a focal point for the community, and was the most fitting to and respectful of the surrounding neighborhood and uses.

After working closely with the developer over the past year and reviewing over 15 site plan and elevation iterations, the Village is proud to introduce a 24-unit mixed-use development by MHDC SLF LLC that will serve as a catalyst for this transit-oriented center and Morton Grove's oldest and most historic mixed-use district.

We have distributed a revised staff report that better addresses the submitted photometric plan and related lighting requirements. We have added recommended requirements for bird-friendly design where feasible and improved screening of the abutting forest preserves to better protect these biologically sensitive areas. All proposed changes are in red text.

The developer team would be happy to provide an overview of the project and address any of your questions or concerns.

Applicant Greg Stec of Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation SLF LLC presented the development concept. The two buildings sharing a courtyard/public plaza will be a destination for the area. The neighborhood friendly design creates a "downtown" feel for the transit oriented housing and proposed first floor tenants.

The proposed tenants include a micro-brewery, coffee shop, and an Italian restaurant. Mr. Stec noted his team has worked very closely with staff to finalize this for presenting. He thanked staff and asked for Mr. Gleason to speak to the specifics of the project.

Thad Gleason, architect, presented more details on the two buildings, site design, access and parking. He noted the façade details and materials to be used. The stone, brick, and fiber cement panels are very durable and will provide articulation and interest for both buildings and the courtyard.

Mr. Gleason described the apartment layouts which include four studio and one bedroom units, sixteen two-bedroom units, all with access to fitness and bike rooms.

The development includes a shared access road to the south to accommodate the Moose Lodge. New signage for the Moose Lodge will be provided on site and across the road on Lehigh by the developer.

Parking for the residences and first floor tenants exceeds the Village requirements. Residents will have carports and all parking is behind the buildings. This is in keeping with the downtown feel of the development, with the buildings being focal points close to the pedestrian way.

Mr. Gleason noted the maximum use of windows on all facades, a small waiver is needed to allow window configurations necessary for apartment layouts.

Landscape will meet all requirements for the buildings, parking lots and outdoor café area. Staff notes a waiver is required to allow one less parkway tree due to site restrictions. Parking lot landscape standards may be reduced for the areas abutting the Forest Preserve District. Photometric adjustments will comply with village regulations and steps will be taken to mitigate bird collisions with the window areas.

Prior to the Plan Commission meeting, a truck turning radius exhibit will be prepared to ensure the Moose Lodge has adequate ingress and egress.

Chairperson Pietron thanked the presenters and asked for questions and comments. He asked if the carports would be steel and if they would not hold debris.

Mr. Gleason said they would be durable steel and would be pitched to drain.

Chairperson Pietron noted that lighting would be less than 5000 degrees Kelvin and was pleased that the Forest Preserve will be screened from headlight pollution.

Commission Block asked how the Village will provide Metra parking with the loss of this lot.

Zoe Heidorn said new configurations along Elm street and at the Metra station lot will supply parking.

Chairperson Pietron and Commissioner Ingram asked about the upkeep and screening of the outdoor seating on Lehigh.

Mr. Stec said the developer will maintain the seating according to the approved plan.

Commissioner Ingram asked if the potential brew-pub will be brewing on premises. Mr. Stec said they intend to have a kettle for show, but not brew on premise.

Commissioner Block asked for the material of the cornices. Mr. Gleason said it is durable stone.

Chairperson Pietron asked Mr. Stec if he was comfortable with all of the recommendations listed, Zoe read the added recommendations as noted in red on the Staff Report.

Mr. Stec said yes to all recommendations.

Commissioner Zimmer then moved to approve the request including all recommendations provided in the updated Staff Report dated 2/7/22, seconded by Commissioner Block.

Chairperson Pietron called for the vote.

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

Motion passed 7-0.

Chairperson Pietron asked for any other business or discussion. Hearing 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 7:20 p.m.

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Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner