

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2022
MEETING OF THE MORTON GROVE PLAN 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 Plan Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Pro-Tem Kintner. Secretary Anne Ryder Kirchner called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Dorgan, Kintner, Liston, Mohr

Commissioners Absent: Blonz, Gabriel, Stein (with notice)

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Community Development Administrator; Anne Ryder Kirchner, Assistant Land Use Planner/Secretary; Jim English, Manager Building and Inspectional Services; Rick Dobrowski, Fire Prevention; Ralph Czerwinski, Village Administrator

Trustees Present: Minx, Thill, and Travis

Prior to the approval of the minutes, a motion was made by Commissioner Dorgan to appoint Mr. Kintner as Chairman Pro-Tem. This was seconded by Commissioner Liston. Secretary Kirchner called vote.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Kintner voting	abstain
Commissioner Mohr voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner proceeded to seek approval of the November 15, 2021, minutes.

Commissioner Dorgan moved to approve the minutes of November 15, 2021. Commissioner Mohr seconded the motion.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner called for the vote.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Kintner voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	abstain
Commissioner Mohr voting	aye

Minutes approved.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner described the procedures for the meeting. The Village and the applicant will present the case and the Plan Commission may ask questions of the applicant. Then, anyone from the audience will be allowed to provide comment to the Plan Commission on the case. Four votes are required for approval, the Commission's decision is a recommendation to the Village Board.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner called for the first case.

CASE: PC 22-01

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

Loyal Order of Moose (No. 376)
6149 Chestnut Street
Morton Grove, IL 60053

LOCATION: Portion of Chestnut Street right of way directly west of Lehigh Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of a Plat of Vacation for a portion of Chestnut Street right of way directly west of Lehigh Avenue right of way in Morton Grove, Illinois, and measuring approximately 0.531 acres, in accordance with Section 12-9-5 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code.

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

Case PC 22-01 is a request for approval of a Plat of Vacation for a portion of Chestnut Street petitioned to be vacated by the Village and vested to the applicants and abutting property owners, the Loyal Order of the Moose (No. 376) and MHDC SLF LLC. The 66-foot-wide public ROW is improved with an asphalt roadway measuring approximately 32 feet from back of curb that dead ends at property owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. Upon successful vacation of the right-of-way, the property will be subdivided under Case PC 22-02 and transferred to the applicants as depicted in the staff report to the Plan Commission. The vacation is intended to expand and optimize the redevelopment site at 8500-8550 Lehigh Avenue, which is planned to be improved with a 24-unit mixed-use development proposed through a Special Use Permit to be reviewed under Case PC 22-02.

Pursuant to Village Code, staff has forwarded specific findings regarding public interests served by the parcel, the retention of easements for the benefit of public utilities and pedestrian or bicycle accessways, vesting of title, and compensation for the property, which are included in the distributed staff report. Generally, staff is supportive of the request for vacation because it supports development that aligns with the objectives of the Lehigh/Ferris Framework Plan and requirements of the C/R Commercial/Residential District.

That is all staff has to report.

I would like to present James Marston of MHDC SLF LLC to speak on behalf of the proposed vacation.

Representatives of the Loyal Order of the Moose are also present in the audience.

Secretary Kirchner swore in Mr. Marston.

James Marston, architect, described the proposed shared access to the Moose Lodge and the redevelopment of Chestnut Street. This includes a public plaza, parking and two buildings providing apartments and commercial uses.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked for questions by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Dorgan asked if the Village would be compensated for vacating publicly owned property.

Zoe Heidorn said the compensation will be determined after the Village has entered a redevelopment agreement with the developer.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked for public comment.

Martin Bresler of 8440 Callie asked for both cases to be discussed together. The vacation should be considered with PC 22-02.

Zoe Heidorn noted that the cases must be presented separately, but the vacation may be contingent upon the approval of PC 22-02.

Theodora Turula, board member of the Morton House Condominium Association, asked if a traffic study has been done, and if the railroad crossing would be improved as part of this development.

Zoe Heidorn noted the traffic study prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, who were retained by the Village to guide the study for complete transparency. Bill Grieve of Kimley-Horn is attending the meeting via Zoom and will answer questions of the commission.

Staff is working to renovate the Metra station and there may be associated improvements for the railroad crossings but they are not part of the cases presented tonight.

Commissioner Mohr said he would like to consider the cases together. Chair Pro-Tem Kintner said a motion could cover the two.

Commissioner Liston made a motion contingent on the approval of case PC 22-02 to recommend approval of Case PC 22-01, a request for approval of a Plat of Vacation for a portion of Chestnut Street right of way located directly west of Lehigh Avenue right of way in Morton Grove, Illinois, and measuring approximately 0.531 acres, in accordance with Section 12-9-5 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, subject to the following conditions:

1. Upon vacation, the property shall be subdivided and vested to the owners of the abutting property, where each owner will take title to the centerline of the vacated right of way adjacent to their property.
2. The final plat of vacation shall be prepared and recorded with the Cook County Clerk in accordance with Section 12-9-5 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code.
3. The Village reserves the right to retain any easements deemed necessary for access to and maintenance of public utilities, general access, and as otherwise deemed appropriate by the Village Administrator.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dorgan.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner called for the vote.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Kintner voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye
Chairperson Mohr voting	aye

Motion passed 4-0.

CASE: PC 22-02

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

LOCATION: 8500-8550 Lehigh Avenue and portion of Chestnut Street right of way directly west of Lehigh Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053

PETITION: Request for approval of a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, in accordance with Chapter 12-8 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, and Special Use Permits for a 24-unit mixed –use development with a bar and microbrewery (accessory use to a bar or restaurant) in a C/R Commercial/Residential District (12-4-3) with variations for number of detached accessory structures on a zoning lot (12-2-2), rear yard impermeable coverage (12-2-5), setback for open accessory parking spaces (12-2-6), location of outdoor seating area in a public right of way (12-5-5), façade transparency (12-5-7), bedroom mix (12-5-7), public parkway trees (12-11-1), and parking lot screening abutting private property (12-11-3).

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

I am pleased to present Case PC 22-02, a request for approval of a Subdivision and Special Use Permits for a 24-unit mixed-use development by applicant MHDC SLF LLC. 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, the Village has worked diligently to help bring forth a development that is deserving of the community’s support.

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 intended as a temporary use.

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, staff is pleased 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 includes some minor revisions and additional recommended conditions of approval. All revisions are in red text.

I’d like to present the developer team at this time. Greg Stec of MHDC SLF LLC will provide an overview of the project. James Marston of Gleason Architects will be able to answer any questions relative to the site and building design and Bill Grieve of Kimley-Horn is attending by Zoom to answer any questions relating to the project’s traffic and parking impacts.

The three applicants presented above were sworn in by Secretary Kirchner.

Applicant Greg Stec of Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation SLF LLC presented the development concept. He noted this is the fifteenth scheme presented to Staff. The original proposal of 7 story buildings has been perfected to two, 3 story buildings with plenty of on-site parking. 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. He noted that there will be use of either rooftops.

The proposed tenants include a micro-brewery, coffee shop, an Italian restaurant, and a cafe. Mr. Stec noted his team has worked very closely with staff to finalize this for presenting.

Proposed are 24 residential units, to include 4 studio and 14 one-bedroom apartments, and 16, two bedroom units. The rents will be roughly \$1.80 - \$2.00 per square foot. The units will attract a mix of empty nesters and millennials, with its prime location near the Metra station.

The new 2-lane drive to the south will serve the apartments and the Moose Lodge and will be marked with no parking signs on both sides. Signage will be provided on site and across Lehigh for the Moose Lodge. Resident parking is under carports and overall parking exceeds the required amount. In response to comments from the Appearance Commission, there will be added parking lot screening along the forest preserve, and the window glazing will be of a bird friendly design.

Commissioner Liston asked how the coffee shop traffic has been studied.

Bill Grieve said the traffic study considered the coffee shop traffic parking at the development and commuters coming from Metra parking lots. This is a true, transit oriented development with the commercial mix having staggered hours to serve the resident's needs.

Commissioner Mohr asked if any railroad parking would be retained. Chari Pro-Tem Kintner asked how the parking would be divided. He noted that fencing and signage would designate Moose Lodge parking.

James Marston said they provided customer parking along the buildings, the carports are for residents and their guests only. No Metra parking will be at the development. Signage will mark the parking arrangements.

Commissioner Liston asked if 8 EV stations will be sufficient.

James Marston is open to adding more, there is one per carport and others for customers.

Commissioner Dorgan asked if the charging stations would charge a fee and how long could a car be charged.

The team will have to further evaluate the EV stations. Any changes will still exceed parking requirements.

Commissioner Mohr asked about bike parking. There will be bike racks on the north side and the buildings have indoor bike parking for residents.

Commissioner Mohr asked if the commercial uses will have access off Lehigh and the parking lot. It was noted that the commercial uses will have many access points including the plaza.

Commissioner Dorgan asked about the surfaces of the parking lot. They will be asphalt and a high percentage of impermeable pavers.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked how many guest spaces will be included? He would like them to be marked reserved for guests. He further asked about the turning path studies.

Zoe Heidorn said updated studies were provided by RWG Engineering for the Moose Lodge access way and the plaza, all were found compliant.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked if the traffic study used current data or took pre-Covid counts. Bill Grieve said it used 2018, pre-Covid data.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked who is responsible for directing traffic across Lehigh Avenue. Zoe Heidorn said the Village is responsible for a crosswalk improvement and will work with the developer, Village Engineer and Director of Public Works.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked about the land use designation (932) of the restaurants. Bill Grieve said the cafe and the Italian restaurant would be considered 60-minute stay types.

Commissioner Dorgan questioned the time spent at a micro-brewery, he thinks it would be longer than 60 minutes. He also asked about sound insulation for the apartments with the proximity to Metra. He also asked about LEED criteria.

James Marston said some efficiencies are being met, but they are not seeking any LEED points.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked if there would be any low-income housing

Greg Stec said they will provide 4 units at 60% AMI. This is not a Village requirement, but the developer is open to it.

Commissioner Mohr asked about commercial tenant requirements. Greg Stec said the microbrewery and Italian restaurants are required by the redevelopment agreement. They will not be very-late night places.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked about the residential market and how many children would be in the buildings. Have they quantified the number of children?

Greg Stec said the target market is not families with children, perhaps one or two apartments would have children.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked about the future use of the property to the south, Zoe Heidorn said it will remain as Cook County Forest Preserve. He also asked if the development conformed to the Village Comprehensive Plan. Zoe noted that it follows the recommendations of the Village Comprehensive Plan its subarea plans.

Discussion ensued regarding construction coordination between the proposed project and the Metra renovation. Changing Elm Street Metra parking for only Morton Grove residents will be suggested.

Zoe Heidorn noted the subject property was not intended to be used for Metra parking. The parking was deemed a temporary use. The area is zoned for a commercial and retail mix, and is identified to be improved as such in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked if TIF funding will be sued for the proposed project. Zoe Heidorn said the Village is entering into a redevelopment agreement with the developer and the application is under review and will be considered by the Board at a later date.

Commissioner Dorgan asked about recommendation number 8, he would prefer the microbrewery be allowed a 12:00 outdoor closing time.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked if the seven traffic study recommendations would be included in the Plan Commission recommendations. Zoe Heidorn said the traffic report is part of the application and included in the submittal.

The meeting was opened to public comment.

Martin Bresler of 8440 Callie said he is impressed with the development. He questions the amount of people that will be outdoors for dining. He also is concerned about outdoor music and possible odors from the microbrewery.

Theodora Turula of the Morton House Condominiums, is pleased with the project and asked that they take the Metra shaking during the construction.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked Mr. Masrton to consider the Metra shaking comment. Mr. Stec said the microbrewery will not be odorous. The beer will be brewed off-site.

Randy Gartner, 8719 School, said the Moose Lodge is open 5 days a week. Weekdays from 3-11, Saturday from 1-12, and Sunday from 12-9.

Zoe Heidorn noted that liquor licenses regulate operating hours and any outdoor live and amplified music requires a permit from the Village Administrator. The table layouts are shown on the plans, and will not be increased.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked for a motion.

Commissioner Liston made a motion to recommend approval of Case PC 22-01, a request for approval of a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, in accordance with Chapter 12-8 of the Morton Grove Municipal Code, and Special Use Permits for a 24-unit mixed-use development with a bar and microbrewery (accessory use to a bar or restaurant) in a C/R Commercial/Residential District (12-4-3) with variations for number of detached accessory structures on a zoning lot (12-2-2), rear yard impermeable coverage (12-2-5), setback for open accessory parking spaces (12-2-6), location of outdoor seating areas in a public right of way (12-5-5), facade transparency (12-5-7), bedroom mix (12-5-7), public parkway trees (12-11-1), and parking lot screening abutting private property (12-11-3) for the property commonly known as 8500-8550 Lehigh Avenue) and a portion of Chestnut Street right of way located directly west of Lehigh Avenue right of way measuring approximately 0.531 acres in Morton Grove, Illinois, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit final site and engineering plans for review and approval by the Community Development Administrator, Village Engineer, and Village Administrator, and shall comply with all comments and recommendations provided by the Village Engineer in the staff report to the Traffic Safety Commission dated January 27, 2022, and the comments provided by the Village Engineer in the departmental comment form dated February 13, 2022, whether by strict or alternative compliance, subject to the Village Engineer's final approval.

2. Conspicuous design elements shall be included in the final site design to provide awareness of the need to maintain the 24-foot-wide fire lane within the plaza clear of temporary or permanent fixtures that could interfere with emergency access, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
3. The applicant shall install signage indicating that parking, stopping, and standing are prohibited at any time along both north and south sides of the shared access drive. Additional measures shall be required if the Village observes an issue of vehicles parking, stopping, or standing within the shared access drive, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator. The applicant shall be responsible for controlling the behavior of vehicles along this accessway.
4. The applicant shall explore opportunities for additional parking within the Chestnut Street right of way to be vested to the Loyal Order of Moose (No. 376), including, but not limited to, parallel parking or an additional row of perpendicular parking. The final plan's parking and circulation layout shall not diverge significantly from the approved site plan and shall be subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
5. The applicant shall locate the Moose Family Center trash enclosure to a location desirable to the Loyal Order of Moose (No. 376), subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
6. The applicant shall size the stormwater detention facilities to accommodate the future redevelopment of the property at 6149 Chestnut Street and portion of Chestnut Street to be vested to the owner.
7. The applicant shall bury existing aboveground utilities within the development site as required by the Village, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
8. Outdoor seating shall not be permitted on private or public property after 12:00 a.m. for the Microbrewery and 10:00 p.m. for other commercial uses. Noise shall be contained within the premises so as not to be a nuisance to nearby residents or neighbors.
9. Approval shall be contingent on Board of Trustees approval of a vacation of a portion of Chestnut Street right of way located directly west of Lehigh Avenue right of way measuring approximately 0.531 acres, as presented under Case PC22-01.
10. All exterior garbage and recycling receptacles shall be lidded or shall be emptied or moved indoors overnight to prevent any environmental nuisance, including, but not limited to, overflowing and animal feeding.
11. All commercial and residential uses on the site shall be provided recycling service.
12. All deliveries to the site shall occur no earlier than 7:00 a.m. and no later than 7:00 p.m. No delivery vehicle shall park, stop, or stall on Lehigh Avenue or within the shared access drive for any period of time. All deliveries to the site shall occur in the designated loading zones or at alternative locations within the internal parking area, subject to delivery plan approval by the Village Administrator.
13. The final landscape and improvement plan for the Lehigh Avenue right-of-way shall be modified as necessary to meet the needs and requirements of the Village, subject to review and approval by the Village Administrator.
14. The Applicant shall advise the Department of Community and Economic Development of any proposed change in ownership or operation of the subject property. Such changes may subject the owners, lessees, occupants, and users to additional conditions and may serve as the basis for amendment to the Special Use Permit.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dorgan.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner called for the vote.

Commissioner Dorgan voting	aye
Commissioner Kintner voting	aye
Commissioner Liston voting	aye
Chairperson Mohr voting	aye

Motion passed 4-0.

Chair Pro-Tem Kintner asked for any other business or discussion. Hearing none, Commissioner Dorgan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Liston.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 8:20 p.m.

Minutes by: Anne Ryder Kirchner