

# MEETING MINUTES



Village Of Homewood  
Appearance Commission  
April 4, 2019  
6:00 p.m.

Village Hall Board Room  
2020 Chestnut Road  
Homewood, IL 60430

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Wright called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Members Grant, Hayes, Quirke and Chairman Wright were present. Members Burlison, Pohrte and Hrymak were absent. In attendance from the Village was Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros. There were two people in the audience.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chairman Wright asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes for October 4, 2018. There being no changes or corrections a motion was made by Member Hayes to approve the minutes of October 4, 2018; seconded by Member Quirke.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no comments from the audience.

## **AGENDA ITEMS:**

**Case No. 19-09, 2000 Ridge Road, Advanced Petroleum:** Chairman Wright introduced the case and invited Staff Liaison Mesaros to give a brief overview.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the petitioner is the owner of the petroleum station at 2000 Ridge Road. They are seeking approval of façade improvements, including signage due to a change from Marathon to Advanced Petroleum station. In the Commissioner's packets are the graphics for the new signage, canopy, and pump colors. The proposed colors are already on a portion of the canopy.

Mr. Zahaban stated that they are changing from Marathon to Advanced Petroleum. The company name, colors, logo and image will change; and the color of the building will change from blue to red.

Member Grant had no questions.

Member Hayes asked Staff if there are any variances needed for the request. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated no, the proposal meets all requirements in the sign code. The request is to change design and color.

Member Quirke asked if the "Pay Your Bills" sign can be removed. Mr. Zahaban stated yes, the sign can be removed. Member Quirke asked why the petitioner only has one price sign. Mr. Zahaban stated that when he moved to this location in 2008, the sign had one price. He decided to keep it that way. They have three different prices on the pumps.

Member Quirke stated that the State requires that three prices are displayed. Chairman Wright asked if the State requires that the sign have all three process displayed. Mr. Zahaban stated that if the State requires that the sign have more than one price, they would be happy to comply.

Staff Liaison Mesaros asked if the petitioner needed a State certification/license to operate. Mr. Zahaban stated yes, he has to get a license once every 3 years from the State Fire Marshall. Member Quirke asked why they needed a license from the Department of Agriculture. Chairman Wright stated for weights and measures. Mr. Zahaban stated that the Department of Agriculture inspects the station once a year.

Chairman Wright stated that he might propose under that circumstance, if the Commission is amenable to approving the change as proposed, however if Ms. Mesaros determines that additional tri-signage is necessary by law they can revisit the request.

Member Quirke stated that there are many different colors. For example, the stanchion signs that are white, posts are black and telephones are silver. Mr. Zahaban stated that when the vendors change the image and the blue and white was requirement for the Marathon franchise and now the vendor can do what we want. The canopy from the top will be red and yellow, the bottom of the building is white and the banner will be red.

Chairman Wright asked Member Quirke if he is asking that there be a standardization when it comes to colors and other related structures. Member Quirke stated yes. Mr. Zahaban stated that he will be happy to work with the Commission on whatever they see fit. Member Quirke asked if the facade piece across the front is painted or applique.

Motion was made by Member Quirke for approval of proposed Façade Improvements including signs for Advanced Petroleum (AP) at 2000 Ridge Road, in accordance with the submitted plans, further improvements and uniform paint colors of all elements, including poles; Seconded by Member Grant.

AYES: Members Grant, Hayes, Quirke, and Chairman Wright

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Hrymak, Burlison, and Pohrte

Motion passed.

## **Case No. 19-06, Discussion - Amendments to the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 86, Signs:**

Chairman Wright introduced the topic and invited Staff Liaison Mesaros to give an overview.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that this subject has come up, because several reviews this past year have not had specific regulations to address them. Staff proposes to address three areas: electronic message signs, number of items of information, and Master Sign Plan. Electronic message signs are not permitted in the Village's code, but there are several in Homewood.

The South Suburban Humane Society contacted the Village to ask for an electronic sign at their new adoption center on 183<sup>rd</sup> Street. Looking at the code, such signs are not permitted. The Village can either begin enforcing the code by not allowing the signs or discuss allowing signs, with restrictions such as location, images, brightness, etc.

The Sign Code currently does not have a definition for "Electronic Message Sign." If the Commission recommends regulating electronic signs, we should begin with a definition. A very basic definition could be "*a sign designed where a portion of the sign area uses changing lights to form a message or messages in text and/or image form where the sequence of messages and the rate of change is electronically programmed and can be modified by electronic processes.* Time/Temperature signs are not considered Electronic Message Signs. Member

Quirke asked if the sign at Grady's Snack and Dine is an electronic message sign. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that there is no electronic message sign at Grady's, but they do have marquees and a monument sign that is interchangeable.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the businesses that do have the electronic signs are Homewood Chevy, The Roomplace, First Midwest Bank, Shell station on Halsted Street and McDonalds on 183<sup>rd</sup> Street. The park district also has an electronic sign; however, they are exempt from the permit process because they are a government body.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that Staff recommends allowing electronic signs in the B-3 Business District, B-4 Shopping Center District (main locations) and, PL-2 District would also include the SSSH building. The village is not aware of any currently located in the Downtown District or in Southgate, which is B-1 and B-2.

Chairman Wright stated that on Halsted St. overabundance could cause safety issues.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the current electronic signs are the proper size and the village has not had issues with them.

Member Grant expressed his concern that Halsted Street could turn into I-294 if not regulated. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that is one reason the Commission could look at placing limitations on the type, size, and number. For an image to be static means that the image cannot be a cartoon, video or flashing. The Commission can also define the duration of the message.

Chairman Wright asked if our sign ordinance has been updated and current, and what other communities do. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that she has a list of other communities' regulations.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that she wanted to introduce this as a discussion item. The Commission has many things to consider. There is always the option to say that the businesses cannot have them. Chairman Wright stated that electronic signs pop up without the Commission's knowledge. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, but then the other side is that if the Commission wants to eliminate one, the village does not have the backing of the Code, because no regulations are in place to control the signs.

Chairman Wright stated that if the village allowed electronic message signs, he definitely would not want to see them in the Central Business District.

Member Quirke asked if the interest in amending the code for electronic signs is because of safety or to make sure it does not turn garish. Member Quirke asked if all discussion about pros and cons on safety will have to be left out, because that would weaken our position. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that both safety and appearance are important considerations. For example, transitioning every 12 seconds is a highway standard.

Member Hayes asked if the signage size limitations take care of the problem. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that if The Roomplace made their entire sign an electronic sign and it was bright and flashing, it might be considered a distraction.

Member Quirke asked if the movable sign could be taken out of the total allotment. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes.

Chairman Wright asked for the consensus of the Commission. Would the Commission be amiable to having the signs in specific areas, such as 183<sup>rd</sup> and Kedzie and Halsted Corridor, and then go forth with deciding elements that are more specific?

Member Quirke asked if the lettering that is internally lit at the Walgreens in Cherry Creek would be considered an electronic signage. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated this type of sign is not an electronic message sign.

Member Grant asked if it is possible to permit the signs that already in place, but moving forward the Commission will not approve additional signs. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes the Commission can say that if that is the stance the Commission wants to take.

Member Hayes stated that he is okay with the signs on Halsted and west 183<sup>rd</sup> Streets. As far as the concern with the amount of signs, maybe there can be wording on the amount of signs, or tie it to the size of the business.

Chairman Wright stated that Staff send out the information obtained during the discussion and get the opinions of the members who are absent tonight.

Member Quirke asked if it would be beneficial to confer with the Village Board.

Staff Liaison Mesaros referred to the visual of the signage on the building at 183<sup>rd</sup> Street, this sign has a lot of information that is difficult to read, with repetitive wording. The sign advertises CNA schooling, help wanted, states the phone and fax number three times. The size is within Code requirements. Staff suggested that the Village could amend the Code to limit the number of items of information on a sign.

Chairman Wright stated that it is important that signs that do not appear before the Commission, can be regulated by Staff.

Member Hayes asked if the signage is for different businesses. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that it is a sign for one business.

Member Quirke stated that there are multiple businesses that have a stack of signs that can be read rather quickly. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated this case is different from a building directory with multiple business names, because this example is only one business.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the Commission discussed requiring that multi-tenant buildings have a sign plan when developed. For example, the sign proposed by a new business going into the former RadioShack space does not align with the façade. If the Village required a plan in place for new PUDs and multi-tenant building developments, the Commission could assign a specific space for each business's sign. The Appearance Commission would approve each new business's signs.

Member Quirke asked if they could regulate typeface, color, etc. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, as long as it is content neutral, they can regulate it. Member Quirke asked if they can put together a draft plan to get it started. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, and then create guidelines.

Member Hayes asked what the Commission can do. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the Code could require a Master Sign Plan for the entire center.

## MEETING MINUTES

Case 19-06 is deferred until the next scheduled meeting on May 2, 2019 for further discussion.

**2018 Appearance Commission Annual Report:** Chairman Wright asked if there are comments or concerns. No comments or concerns were voiced.

Motion was made by Member Quirke for approval of the 2018 Appearance Commission Annual Report; Seconded by Member Grant.

AYES: Members Grant, Hayes, Quirke, and Chairman Wright

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Hrymak, Burlison, and Pohrte

Motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS:** New cases coming to the Commission include the gas station at 183<sup>rd</sup> Street & Harwood to change color and signage, and the new windows at the Gottschalk House. The Village considers the building an official historic landmark.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

A motion was made by Member Grant to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m.; seconded by Member Quirke. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Angela Mesaros*

Angela M. Mesaros  
Staff Liaison