

# MEETING MINUTES



Village of Homewood  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
Thursday, October 28, 2021  
7:30 p.m.

Village Hall Board Room  
2020 Chestnut Road  
Homewood, IL 60430

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Sierzega called the meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:32 p.m. Chairman Sierzega stated there is a curfew of 9:30 p.m. for the meeting.

**ROLL CALL:** Members attended: Bransky, Cap, Johnson, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega; Present from the Village was Economic and Community Development Director Angela Mesaros, Building Department Secretary Darlene Leonard. There were ten people in the audience.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Sierzega asked if there were any corrections or changes to the minutes of October 14, 2021.

Mrs. Sachs stated that on Page 5, her comments are not correct and that she stated there were problems when it was a restaurant, but parking issues did not occur until after the beauty shop opened and when the chiropractor opened.

The board had no changes.

A motion was made by Member O'Brien to approve the minutes of October 14, 2021; seconded by Member Cap.

AYES: Members Cap, Johnson, and O'Brien.

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Member Bransky and Chairman Sierzega

ABSENT: Members Alfonso and Planera

**Continued Case No.21-30 – Special Use Permit and Variance from Section 11, Table 11.2 of the Homewood Zoning Ordinance for off-street parking for a salon at 2413-2415 W. 183<sup>rd</sup> Street:**

Chairman Sierzega introduced the case and reminded the petitioner, Jamilah Anderson, that she is still under oath.

Ms. Anderson stated she took the initiative to get additional spaces from more than just a business in the plaza. She stated that she has a lease to use 5 spaces from the cleaners and permission to use 5 spaces from Walt's Food Center.

Chairman Sierzega asked Staff Liaison Mesaros if the spaces at Walt's were needed also. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that if an enforceable lease is obtained from the cleaners, then the additional spaces are not needed.

Ms. Anderson stated she did have a lease from the cleaners for 5 spaces.

Chairman Sierzega asked Ms. Anderson how she planned to use those spaces. Ms. Anderson stated that she would have no more than 3-4 employees working at a time, including herself, and the employees would be directed to park at Walt's.

Chairman Sierzega stated there are 5 spaces in front of the building also. Ms. Anderson stated that is correct.

Chairman Sierzega asked if signs would be put up for clients at the cleaners. Ms. Anderson stated that she told the owner of the cleaners that she would put up a placard on the west side for her clients, and she would also direct her clients where they can park so they do not park elsewhere. Ms. Anderson stated that if the clients park elsewhere they could be towed at their expense because they are not allowed to park in any other spaces.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that if anyone is going to have cars towed then a sign does have to be posted in the lot.

Chairman Sierzega asked if there would be 3 chairs. Ms. Anderson stated yes.

Member Johnson asked if it was ever determined how many spaces were in the lot.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated there are 38 spaces, 4 public spaces, and additional unmarked parallel spaces.

Member Johnson asked if any other businesses have placards. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that none of the spaces are labeled at this time.

Member Cap commented that he is grateful Ms. Anderson was able to work out the parking needs with Walt's and wants to thank Staff Liaison Mesaros for the information provided in the packet showing the history of the parking at the site over time.

Member Cap commented that he is grateful that Ms. Anderson thought through the parking with clients and employees and compared the location to the Southgate area stating there is not a lot of land for parking and many of the businesses in other locations such as Southgate, have parking signs in front of their businesses.

Member Johnson asked if there is a monthly lease and, if so, if it had been signed yet. Ms. Anderson stated yes, and that she would provide a copy to Staff Liaison Mesaros.

Member Bransky stated that he had been by the property and it seems cut and dry and that he echoes Member Cap's statements.

Chairman Sierzega asked if there were any plans to use the back area for parking. Ms. Anderson stated no, not since she got the spaces at Walt's.

Chairman Sierzega opened the case to public comments.

Mark McGee requested to speak, and was reminded by Chairman Sierzega that he was still under oath from the previous meeting.

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Mr. McGee stated that one issue is that the dry cleaner only has 7-1/2 spaces and, last time for the variance for the dentist, Mr. Sachs did not want the dentist either. The dentist was approved because they rented 2 spaces from the cleaners. Mr. McGee stated he spoke to Ms. Mesaros and was told they need 7 spaces for their own business.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that staff counted 9 parking spaces at the cleaners.

Mr. McGee stated there are only 6-1/2 spaces and he has counted them.

Member Bransky asked Mr. McGee to clarify the number of spaces because first, he said there are 7-1/2 spaces and then he said there are 6-1/2 spaces. Mr. McGee stated there are 6-1/2 spaces and 1 handicap space; and stated that the handicap spaces were required to be installed by the Village – which took 3 of his spaces away.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the 4 spaces up front are public spaces and are not counted.

Member Cap stated the employees will be parking at Walt's. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the Village can enforce this agreement as well because of the special use and variance.

Ms. Sachs stated that the ordinance was made after the center was built and it is often empty so there is no fighting for spaces. Ms. Sachs stated that some type of business has to go in the location, and no one wants an empty building. She thinks that Ms. Anderson has done everything she can to help with the parking issue.

Rashid from the chiropractor office located at 2417 183<sup>rd</sup> Street, stated that he is concerned about the overflow spaces and that he spoke to the owner of the cleaners. Rashid stated that his customers need upfront parking because of their injuries. Rashid stated that in the past Walt's has put stickers on the cars in their lot stating they would be towed if they are not moved from the lot.

Chairman Sierzega asked how many spaces he had. Rashid stated 3 spaces.

Staff Liaison Mesaros asked if signs can be put up in front. Rashid stated yes, but when the weather is bad people park where ever they can.

Mr. Sachs stated that every day the chiropractor clients use his parking spaces and he is sure that when his businesses were open, his customers used the chiropractor's spaces also.

Mr. Sachs stated that he was concerned about spaces for the dentist, but still welcomed him and it turned out there was no problem. Mr. Sachs stated that the dentist is gone and moved to the south but he is not saying that people should use his space.

Chairman Sierzega stated that he has seen no activity in the dentist office. Mr. McGee stated that is not the point and asked what if the dentist sells his building. Mr. McGee stated that a beauty shop is the worst business to be in the center other than a restaurant and that what needs to be put in is a business that meets the parking requirements.

Chairman Sierzega stated that customers for the dry cleaners are in and out.

Mr. McGee stated that just give a spot to whoever needs it.

Chairman Sierzega asked the board if they had any more questions or comments.

Chairman Sierzega stated it is a tough one because salons need long-term parking because the customers are there a long time and that signs may help and stated that people do not always obey them.

Member Bransky stated that he is concerned about comments made about the types of business that fit this puzzle and asked if there was a business or a model that would work. Mr. McGee stated he did not have one.

Member Bransky stated that none of the businesses on Dixie meet the parking requirements and there would not be any business on Dixie otherwise.

Mr. McGee stated that he was in the plaza when the restaurant was allowed to go in.

Member Bransky asked what the parking was for Sweat Equity. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that it was the same number of spots with the garage behind it and the clothing store at the location had a variance.

Mr. Sachs stated that they had a parking variance for the clothing store and for personal training, it worked out in the center, and there were no problems. Mr. Sachs stated that the clients and customers did not all come in at the same time; it is spread out and that is how they survived.

Member O'Brien stated he has no problem with it at all and that he has been by the location thousands of times and has never seen the lot full day or night. Member O'Brien stated there are eight spaces that he cannot figure into the count and those spaces provide additional space for everyone. Member O'Brien stated that it can be monitored for a time when the lot is full.

Chairman Sierzega stated that he has never seen the lot full and he passes it at least twice a day.

Mr. McGee stated there was only an issue when the last beauty salon was allowed to expand.

Chairman Sierzega stated they will have three chairs and parking is determined by the number of chairs.

Mr. McGee stated that the last beauty salon started with 3 chairs and then increased to 5 and then added nail stations and that he has lived through it 2 times.

Chairman Sierzega stated that Ms. Anderson is requesting 3 chairs if approved, but if another chair is put in it would be up to someone in the plaza to notify the Village.

Mr. McGee asked if a nail station counts as a chair. Staff Liaison Mesaros stated yes, and that the parking is 2 spaces per chair and 1 space per employee and added that Ms. Anderson will not be allowed to operate if she increases the number of chairs.

Member O'Brien stated that if additional chairs are added then it can be questioned.

Member Bransky stated that signs can be added and is not sure why it has not been done.

Chairman Sierzega stated yes, and again not everyone reads signs.

Ms. Anderson stated that she is wanting to combine living and workspaces and is only adding the 3<sup>rd</sup> chair if there is a walk-in, but she won't take them. Ms. Anderson stated that she does not have the desire to have a large salon because she has done that before and that she does not want to have to micromanage stylists.

Ms. Anderson stated that she does understand the concerns because of what happened in the past, but she is asking that she be given a fair shake.

Mr. McGee stated that it is not personal and it was classy of Ms. Anderson to come down to his business and introduce herself.

Rashid stated that it would affect her business if her customers park in spaces other than hers. Ms. Anderson asked how it would affect him. Rashid stated that if employees or clients parked there. Ms. Anderson stated that her employees would not park there because she can control where they park or they will not work for her.

Chairman Sierzega asked if there was anything else to bring up.

Member Johnson stated his concerns were answered or covered last time and said it will continue until someone in the plaza or the Village requires signage.

Member O'Brien asked if Ms. Anderson considered herself an employee and if she would live there. Ms. Anderson stated yes to both. Member O'Brien stated that she would then be parking in the rear and that would further alleviate the parking. Member O'Brien stated that he did not see an issue.

A motion was made by Member O'Brien to approve Case 21-30, to issue a Parking Variance from Section 11.1 of the Homewood Zoning Ordinance for a salon at 2413-2415 W. 183<sup>rd</sup> Street; seconded by Member Johnson.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Johnson, and Chairman Sierzega

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso and Planera

A motion was made by Member O'Brien to approve Case 21-30, Special Use permit to operate a salon at 2413-2415 W. 185<sup>rd</sup> Street; seconded by Member Johnson.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, O'Brien, Johnson, and Chairman Sierzega

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso and Planera

**Case No. 21-35 – Special Use Permit and Variance from Section 11, Table 11.2 of the Homewood Zoning Ordinance for off-street parking for an event and banquet space at 18250 Harwood Avenue:**

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Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that originally a special use permit and a parking variance were applied for, but the usage is permitted so this requires only a parking variance, if the use is a banquet hall.

Chairman Sierzega stated one call was received about the case.

Chairman Sierzega introduced the case and swore in the petitioners, Ronald & Dwana Roby. Chairman Sierzega stated the petitioners are asking for a parking variance and the need is for 98 spaces.

Mr. Roby gave a speech about Homewood including that he is aware of Homewood's values and that it is one of the best places to live in the area and in the State. Mr. Roby stated that their goal is to create a world-class event and banquet center that is in line with the ethics and business practices that are evident throughout Homewood.

Mrs. Roby stated they work with a lot of well-known people and do custom and private catering, but the business is shifting to smaller groups and non-custom events as opposed to public events. Mrs. Roby stated that currently, she is unsure if they would need 100 spaces and the need would be more like 50-60 spaces.

Mrs. Roby stated that they would operate catering and events on one side of the building, and provide food, clothing, and training classes for food service licenses in another area of the building.

Chairman Sierzega stated in the background provided the location at 18250 Harwood is a former office space and has been vacant for 8-10 years, there are a number of code violations to be addressed before occupancy there are 6 parking spaces and 1 handicap space in the front and 9 in the rear. Chairman Sierzega stated there is no marking for spaces in the rear and asked how that number was obtained.

Mr. Roby stated he counted 10, but said there is space for 14 cars comfortably in the back.

Chairman Sierzega asked if the staffing would be 14-19.

Mrs. Roby stated that the number would only be on special nights.

Chairman Sierzega stated there are going to be 3 large ballrooms for 600-700 people, a chapel, and a rooftop venue, and the proposed number of required parking is 98 spaces. And added that the Robys stated they would not need that many.

Mrs. Roby stated all if the plan submitted is based on a vision, but there would not be 3 banquet halls and the office space is going to be rented to an insurance company. Also, the back half would be for training/missionary work and the middle would be event space.

Chairman Sierzega stated that the board can only go by what is in front of them.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the parking calculations are not based on the extra catering/ kitchen and training uses in the back.

Chairman Sierzega stated that, in reading the plan, there would be brunches, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, and the plan says if you be up to 600-700 people; Chairman Sierzega then asked where they would park all the cars.

Mr. Roby stated the facility would not hold that many people and the number provided was to be able to obtain financing; the more realistic number is 200-300 people.

Chairman Sierzega stated the plan states that events could be up to 1,000 people in 5 years. Mrs. Roby stated the goal is not aligned with the business plan or the space and that it needs to be reevaluated.

Chairman Sierzega stated that now there are plans to have a kitchen. Mrs. Roby stated yes, there will be a kitchen.

Mr. Roby stated it would be a startup place and eventually expand.

Chairman Sierzega asked if the case could be continued and they can provide a different proposal, drawings, and space for the kitchen so a more educated judgment can be made instead of just guessing.

Member O'Brien added that the use has changed.

Member Johnson stated that there was an issue with space for training, etc. on Dixie.

Member Cap asked Staff Liaison Mesaros if there are any other potential uses permitted, banquet halls permitted.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the chapel and the training, which were not included, are permitted uses, but it would have to be evaluated based on what is being done in this space and the business plan has to be about this particular space.

Mrs. Roby stated that the entire plan was submitted, not just this location.

Member Johnson stated that parking space is a premium, and when they mention spaces are available at Kirschner, at the bank, and at Spornette copies of the agreements need to be provided.

Mr. Roby stated they have a letter from Spornette and the Stuttley Group in the bank building. Chairman Sierzega asked if that would be for parking.

Mr. Roby stated no, not for parking, but they are letters of support.

Member Bransky stated, regarding the rooftop venue, he doubts that the roof was meant for occupancy, but if they would did, that would add square footage and parking needs.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated the exact square footage of the uses and any area people would assemble will need to be counted.

Chairman Sierzega stated that he assumed that the people in the audience were there because of concerns about the parking and asked if they wanted to voice their concerns.

The residents indicated that they will wait until the next meeting.

Chairman Sierzega asked when the next meeting would be.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated it would be November 11.

Mr. Roby stated they should have everything in about a week.

Member Johnson advised them to take as much time as possible.

Member Bransky stated that it is an intriguing proposal, but with a lot to consider.

Chairman Sierzega asked if the case should be continued to a specific date or not.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that no meeting is scheduled for the second Thursday in November because it is a holiday. The next meeting would be on December 9. The information would need to be submitted by November 29, but if it is not ready the case can be continued again.

Member Johnson asked if the Robys are the sole owners. Mr. Roby stated he and his wife own it; there are no investors.

A motion was made by Member O'Brien to Continue Case 21-35 Variance for Section 11, Table 11.2 of the Homewood Zoning Ordinance for off-street parking for an event and banquet hall space at 18250 Harwood Avenue to Thursday, December 9, 2021; seconded by Member Bransky.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, Johnson, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega.

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso and Planera

**NEW BUSINESS:** Chairman Sierzega asked if there was any new business.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that the second meeting date in November falls on Thanksgiving so there will be no meeting that day. However, a second meeting to discuss the religious uses/assembly uses text amendments is suggested on November 18, and stated that Village Attorney Chris Cummings will be at that meeting to present the proposed amendments.

Member Bransky stated that some of the businesses may not have spaces to give and asked if subletting spaces is allowed and if not suggested that it should be addressed in the code update.

Staff Liaison Mesaros stated that a reduction in spaces can be authorized when the hours of operating do not overlap.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman Sierzega asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Cap moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m., seconded by Member Bransky.

AYES: Members Bransky, Cap, Johnson, O'Brien, and Chairman Sierzega.

NAYES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Members Alfonso and Planera

Respectfully submitted,

*Angela Mesaros*

Angela M. Mesaros  
Staff Liaison