

City of MORRISON

200 West Main Street
Morrison, Illinois 61270-2400
Phone 815.772.7657
Fax 815.772.4291
morrisonil.org



PLANNING / ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AGENDA

City Hall
200 West Main Street
Morrison, IL 61270

August 26, 2026 5:30 p.m.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of July 29, 2026 Minutes
- IV. Public Hearing
 - A. Rezoning of 102 South Base Street, 103 South Genesee Street and 104 South Genesee Street from R-2 General Residential District to C-2 General Commercial District
 - B. Request for Special Use – 600 W Lincolnway
- V. New Business
- VI. Old Business
- VII. Other Considerations
- VIII. Adjournment

BOARD MEMBERS PLEASE CONTACT

CITY HALL (772-7657) IF YOU ARE

UNABLE TO ATTEND THIS MEETING! THANKS!

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MEETING MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Commission
July 29, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

The Planning & Zoning Commission met on July 29, 2026, at City Hall, 200 West Main Street. Chairperson Kevin Kuehl called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. City Administrator Brian Melton recorded the minutes.

Commission members present on the roll call were Kevin Kuehl, Mike Buckwalter, Jim Workman, Vaughn Maxfield and Kathy Schmidt. Sherrie Shirk and Kevin Dunne were absent.

Other city officials present – City Administrator Brian Melton.

Commission member Workman moved to approve the June 24, 2026, meeting minutes; seconded by commission member Schmidt. On a voice vote, the motion was carried with all Ayes.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on the Variance request for a free-standing sign at 210 West Lincolnway, applicant being Marshall R Sign Corp. on behalf of the property owner, Sali Malithuruthel. The property owner is requesting to replace the existing sign with a new sign utilizing the same base, pole and location. The C-1 Downtown Commercial District otherwise prohibits free-standing signs. The property owner was present to answer questions. During the public hearing the Commission discussed the Illinois Dept. of Transportation's proposed Rt 30 reconstruction with the property owner due to the direct impact of the proposed project plan. City Administrator Melton offered to provide additional information to the property owner of IDOT's project. Commission member Buckwalter moved to recommend the sign variance as requested be approved, seconded by Commission member Maxfield. On a roll call the motion was carried with all Ayes.

New Business

None.

Old Business

None.

Other Considerations

City Administrator Melton introduced a rezoning issue to the Commission that is being initiated by the City. The City is seeking to rezone 102 South Base, 103 South Genesee Street, and 104

South Genesee Street from R-2 General Residential to C-2 General Commercial. These properties have always been used for business activity consistent with the C-2 General Commercial District. There is no record of why this property was zoned R-2 General Residential. The City will begin the public hearing process for the next regular Commission meeting.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be **August 26, 2026.**

At approximately 5:50 p.m. Commission member Maxfield moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commission member Buckwalter. On a voice vote, the motion was carried.

BRM

City of Morrison, Illinois
200 West Main Street, Morrison IL USA 61270

Permit No.: _____

Date Issued: _____

SPECIAL USE PERMIT

APPLICATION

A Special Use is, as the name suggests, a use of property, which is not specifically permitted within the Zoning District in which the property is located. A Special Use Permit is required whenever the intended use of a building, structure, or zoning lot does not conform with the use(s) specified within the Zoning District in which the building or lot is located.

PROPERTY

Address or Location of Property: 600 W. Lincolnway, Morrison, IL

Property Tax ID (PIN) Number: 09-18-126-014

Existing Zoning: R1

APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER

Name: Greenfield Properties, LLC

Address: 9870 Hyland Croy Rd., Plain City, Oh 43064

Contact No.: 614-353-3969 Email: martyparkernews@gmail.com

NATURE OF SPECIAL USE: Please explain the nature of the special use request and why it should be granted. Use additional pages and attach if necessary.

The building used to be an attorney building, a chocolate store, apartment buildings and a bed & breakfast.

We want to building to be an airbnb with three suites in the main house and one suite in the back house.

It would have a total of 8 people at a time on the property. The guests will come form Chicago to other large cities.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS (if necessary)

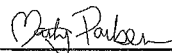
- ✓ **Legal description** of the property.
- ✓ **Name and address of all owners** of the site as well as the names and addresses of all professional site planners, architects, engineers, surveyors, or other consultants.
- ✓ **Page 3 Drawing** (to scale):
 - Show adjacent property owners, including across rights-of-way
 - An indication of the area surrounding the site showing land use, unusual physical features, public facilities, and existing zoning
 - Show streets, railroads, waterways, and other physical features
 - Conceptual drawing, plan set, blueprints, etc. may be attached as well

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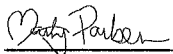
Public Hearing: After your application has been submitted and reviewed by the City Administrator (or designee), it will be referred to the next regularly scheduled Planning and Zoning Commission meeting for a public hearing. The Planning and Zoning Commission meets the last Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall, 200 W. Main Street. At the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, you will present your request. A rezoning or amendment cannot be recommended by the Commission unless it finds, based upon the application and evidence presented at the public hearing, that all of the following conditions have been met:

- ☐ The proposed special use is necessary or desirable to provide a service which is in the interest of public convenience;
- ☐ The proposed special use does not create a nuisance or threat to public health, safety, or welfare;
- ☐ There will be no additional public expense for flood protection, public safety services or repairs to roads, utilities, or other public facilities/infrastructure;
- ☐ There will not be an unduly increase in traffic congestion on public roads and highways due to this proposed special use;
- ☐ The essential character of the locality of the property in question will not be altered;
- ☐ Other requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, such as parking, landscaping, etc., will be met;
- ☐ The proposed special use is compatible with the Morrison Comprehensive Plan.

Certification: To the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein, and on the attachments, is true, accurate, and correct, and substantially represents the existing features and proposed features. Any error, misstatement, or misrepresentation of material fact or expression of material fact, with or without intention, shall constitute sufficient grounds for the revocation or denial of the special use permit application.


Signature of Applicant

8/4/2026
Date


Signature of Owner

8/4/2026
Date

After receiving a completed application, the City Clerk will file notice of your request with the local newspaper and with the adjoining property owners. If you have any questions, please contact the City Administrator at (815) 772-7657.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Fee Amount Paid: \$175.00

Date Paid: 8/6/26

P&Z Commission Meeting Date: 8/26/26

Action Taken: _____

ATTACHMENT A

NATURE OF SPECIAL USE REQUEST

Supplement to Special Use Permit Application
600 W. Lincoln Way, Morrison, IL 61270 — “Previous Hillendale Location” —
Airbnb - Romantic Adventure Getaway

Property Address	600 W. Lincoln Way, Morrison, IL 61270
Property Tax ID (PIN)	0918126014
Existing Zoning	R-1 Single-Family Residential District, City of Morrison Official Zoning Map
Current/Proposed Use	Short-term rental lodging (Airbnb) — four themed suites: three within the main historic residence and one within the detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU)
Applicant / Owner	Greenfield Properties, LLC – Marty Parker 614-353-3969 – martyarkernews@gmail.com

This attachment is submitted in support of the Special Use Permit application for 600 W. Lincoln Way, Morrison, Illinois (historically known as “Hillendale”), and describes the nature of the requested special use, the history and community value of the property, and the manner in which the request satisfies each of the findings the Planning and Zoning Commission must make under the City of Morrison Zoning Ordinance.

I. Property History: A Legacy of Adaptive, Community-Serving Use

This property was built in 1891 by prominent Morrison banker Edward A. Smith for his wife, Ellen M. (Sprague) Smith, on 1.37 acres purchased from John H. Gray. Mr. Smith was instrumental in the growth of Morrison — helping bring the Libby, McNeill & Libbey company to town, organizing the city’s first electric light company, and helping route the Lincoln Highway through Morrison. The house was designed and built to house his and his extended family there. The home was remodeled several times during his lifetime, including construction of a tea house and ponds, and an evolution from Queen Anne to its current Tudor Revival style.

Following Mr. Smith’s death in 1957, the property has been continuously repurposed to serve the changing needs of the community, always under uses well beyond a single-family residence:

- 1957 – 1962: Converted by George and Hazel Jones into seven apartments, with the main stairway reconfigured for direct access to the second and third floors.
- 1962 – 1989: Continued as rental apartments under Harry and Orvilla Watt.
- 1989 – 2009 (opened 1991): Restored by Mike and Barb Winandy and operated as the Hillendale Bed & Breakfast, a licensed lodging and hospitality use.
- 2009 – 2025: Purchased by Ludens & Potter Law Office and operated as a professional office.
- Present: Owned by Greenfield Properties and operating as a four-suite short-term rental (Airbnb), continuing the property’s 130-plus-year tradition as a multi-unit, guest-serving, non-single-family use.

This unbroken history — apartments, a bed & breakfast, and a law office — demonstrates that the essential character of this property has never been that of an ordinary single-family home, and that the City and its residents have long recognized and accommodated a higher-intensity, guest- and public-facing use on this particular parcel. The current short-term rental use is, in this context, not a departure from the property's character, but a continuation of it — and arguably the most historically sympathetic use the building has had since it operated as the Hillendale Bed & Breakfast.

II. Description of the Current Use

600 W. Lincoln Way currently is a, high-end, movie-themed overnight airbnb experience. The property offers four individually themed suites: three within the main historic residence and one within the detached ADU. Each suite is fully immersive and meticulously designed around a distinct storyline, with themes that center around Harry Potter, Aladdin, and Indiana Jones.

Guests are welcomed with custom, story-driven touches — including having their own wedding song play as they enter their suite — and each suite includes hand-crafted riddles that couples work through together as part of their own adventure narrative. One suite features the largest bed in the State of Illinois, a distinction that has become a point of regional and even statewide notoriety.

Guests are respectfully asked not to eat within the suites and are actively directed to dine at Morrison's local restaurants. This is a deliberate operating policy, not an incidental courtesy — it is designed to route visitor spending directly into the downtown business community rather than keeping it inside the property. This way our guests don't have to spend time cooking and cleaning but instead enjoying their stay.

The typical guest is a couple who has been married 15 to 20 years, visiting Morrison specifically to celebrate an anniversary, birthday, or to find an amazing date night. These are low-impact, high-value visitors: mature couples seeking a quiet, memorable experience, not large groups or party rentals. Guests routinely travel from out of state and from hours away specifically to stay at this property — meaning nearly all revenue generated is new money brought into Morrison from outside the local economy, rather than money simply recirculating among existing residents.

III. Nature of the Special Use and Why It Should Be Granted

The nature of this request is to permit the continued operation of a four-unit, high-end, Airbnb lodging use at 600 W. Lincoln Way. This use should be granted because it (a) continues a documented, decades-long tradition of guest lodging and multi-unit occupancy at this specific historic property; (b) generates measurable tax revenue and downtown economic activity for Morrison and Whiteside County; (c) operates at lower intensity than several of the property's prior approved uses (seven apartments; a law office with regular client and staff traffic); and (d) preserves and actively reinvests in one of Morrison's most architecturally and historically significant homes. The sections below address each finding the Commission must make.

IV. Response to Required Findings

Finding 1: The proposed special use is necessary or desirable to provide a service which is in the interest of public convenience.

Morrison currently has no comparable lodging product. The property fills a genuine gap in the regional hospitality market: an immersive, destination-caliber experience that exists nowhere else in Whiteside County, drawing overnight visitors who would otherwise have no reason to stop in Morrison at all. In doing so, it provides a public convenience both to the traveling public seeking a unique lodging option, and to the City of Morrison, which benefits from visitor traffic, tax revenue, and regional visibility (including the statewide notoriety of the property's "largest bed in Illinois") that it would not otherwise receive.

Finding 2: The proposed special use does not create a nuisance or threat to public health, safety, or welfare.

The use operates at a modest scale — four suites total, serving primarily mature couples on romantic getaways rather than large groups, parties, or events. This guest profile is inherently low-impact: quiet, respectful, and typically staying only one to two nights. The property sits on a substantial 1.37-acre lot with ample off-street parking, and the operator maintains the property to modern fire, life-safety, and housekeeping standards. Notably, this guest volume and intensity is materially lower than the property has hosted historically — it once housed seven separate apartment units.

Finding 3: There will be no additional public expense for flood protection, public safety services, or repairs to roads, utilities, or other public facilities/infrastructure.

The property is already fully served by existing municipal roads, utilities, and infrastructure that supported its prior uses as a seven-unit apartment building, a bed & breakfast, and a law office. No expansion of public infrastructure is required. Furthermore, unlike a purely residential use, this operation is a net contributor to public revenue rather than a draw on it: the business remits short-term rental/lodging tax that generates approximately \$3,000 per month for Whiteside County and the City of Morrison when properly assessed across Morrison's Airbnb operators — funds that can be applied toward exactly the kind of public services and infrastructure this finding is meant to protect.

Finding 4: There will not be an unduly increase in traffic congestion on public roads and highways due to this proposed special use.

With only four suites and nightly (not daily-turnover) stays, vehicle trip generation is minimal — far below that of the property's prior use as a seven-unit apartment building or as a law office with daily staff and client visits. Guests typically arrive once and remain on-site for the duration of their stay, parking in the property's existing off-street parking areas rather than adding to on-street congestion.

Finding 5: The essential character of the locality of the property in question will not be altered.

No exterior alterations inconsistent with the home's historic Tudor Revival architecture have been made; if anything, the current ownership has invested in restoring and preserving character-defining features of the property. The use is entirely internal to the existing structures. Visually and physically, 600 W. Lincoln Way will continue to read as the distinguished historic residence it has always been — consistent with, and arguably more protective of, the essential character of the neighborhood than several of its prior institutional and multi-family uses.

Finding 6: Other requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, such as parking, landscaping, etc., will be met.

The property's 1.37-acre lot provides ample area for off-street parking for all four suites, and existing landscaping is actively maintained. The applicant will comply with all applicable parking,

landscaping, signage, and life-safety requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and will work with City staff to confirm and satisfy any additional site-specific requirements identified during review.

Finding 7: *The proposed special use is compatible with the Morrison Comprehensive Plan.*

The use directly advances goals common to comprehensive plans in small historic river towns like Morrison: preservation and adaptive reuse of significant historic structures, growth of the local tourism and hospitality economy, and support for downtown restaurants and retail. By design, guests are directed off-site to eat and shop in downtown Morrison, making this property an active engine of foot traffic and revenue for the businesses the Comprehensive Plan is intended to support.

V. Economic and Community Benefits of the Current Use

Beyond satisfying the required findings, the current use delivers measurable, quantifiable value to Morrison and Whiteside County:

- Average nightly rate of \$605 — several times the typical nightly rate of other short-term rentals identified in and around Morrison (generally in the \$110–\$261 range) — reflecting a premium, destination-tourism product rather than a budget Airbnb.
- Approximately \$3,000 per month in local and county tax revenue attributable to this property when the Morrison Airbnb/short-term-rental tax is properly assessed — on the order of \$36,000 annually — supporting the same municipal services and infrastructure referenced in Finding 3.
- Guests are drawn from out of state and from hours away specifically to this property, importing outside spending into Morrison’s economy rather than displacing local spending.
- A deliberate house policy against in-suite meal prep early has guests venturing out to Morrison’s restaurants and shops during their stay, directly supporting downtown small businesses.
- The presence of a high-end, well-maintained, actively marketed destination property tends to support and lift surrounding property values and reinforces the case for continued investment in Morrison’s historic housing stock.
- Regional and statewide attention generated by distinctive features (such as the largest bed in Illinois) provides Morrison with marketing exposure it would not otherwise receive.

Nightly Rate Comparison — Subject Property vs. Identified Regional Short-Term Rentals

Property	Approx. Location	Nightly Rate
600 W. Lincoln Way — Romantic Adventure Getaways (subject)	W. Lincoln Way, Morrison	\$605 average
The Tailor — restored 1892 apartment	Downtown / historic district, Morrison	~\$110–\$261 (published Morrison-area range)
The Cottage in Motown	Near Morrison Community Hospital / Courthouse	~\$110–\$261 (published Morrison-area range)

Other regional comparables (Sterling, Rock Falls, Prophetstown, Savanna)	Within ~20-mile radius of Morrison	Generally \$100–\$300/night
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VI. Conclusion

600 W. Lincoln Way has served Morrison for well over a century as far more than a single-family residence — as an apartment building, a bed & breakfast, and a professional office. Its current use as a high-end, movie-themed short-term rental is a natural and historically consistent continuation of that legacy, one that restores and celebrates the property's architectural significance while generating substantial, quantifiable benefit to the City of Morrison and Whiteside County: premium visitor spending, meaningful tax revenue, downtown restaurant and retail traffic, and regional visibility for the community. The applicant respectfully requests that the Planning and Zoning Commission find that the required conditions have been met and recommend approval of this Special Use Permit.

ADDITIONAL MORRISON AIRBNB LOCATIONS

Here is a map of other Airbnb's that fall in and outside of the R1 Residential Zoning areas. Of the six available Airbnb's in Morrison. Three of them are in a downtown area and two or three of them are in residential areas.

6 homes within map area

Prices include all fees



Apartment in Morrison
The Cottage in Motown
★ 4.88 (32) · 1 bedroom · 2 beds · 1 bath
Sep 11–13
\$214 for 2 nights
Pay \$0 today. Free cancellation.



Loft in Morrison
The Tailor
★ 4.97 (321) · 2 beds · 1 bath
Sep 11–13
\$229 for 2 nights
Pay \$0 today. Free cancellation.

