



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Michael Greenberg, Chair
Michael Tamarkin, Vice Chair
Bobbie Burba
John Hicks
Thomas Shapaka
Michael Suriano
Thomas J. Wester

Pam Ripley, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL

Gahanna Planning Commission met in regular session on October 13, 2021. The agenda for this meeting was published on October 8, 2021. Chair Greenberg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Burba.

Present 6 - Thom Shapaka, Michael Greenberg, John Hicks, Bobbie Burba, Michael Suriano, and Thomas J. Wester

Absent 1 - Michael Tamarkin

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA - NONE

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2021-0211](#)

Planning Commission Minutes 9-22-2021

Motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Wester, that the Minutes be approved.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Hicks, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

D. SWEAR IN APPLICANTS & SPEAKERS

Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth administered an oath to those persons wishing to present testimony this evening.

E. APPLICATIONS - PUBLIC COMMENT**VRGII Residential Project**[Z-0001-2021](#)

To recommend approval to Council, a Zoning Application for 1.59+/- acres of property, located at 5847 and 5875 Taylor Rd., Parcel ID Nos. 027-000110 and 025-013635; Current Zoning OCT; PID; proposed zoning MR-1; VRGII Residential Project; Jordan Fromm, applicant.

In accordance with Planning Commission Rules Section 7.4.1.1., if there is more than one application on the same project, they may be discussed as one.

Director of Planning Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached staff presentation. The request is to rezone the property back to residential zoning. The applicant anticipates having four lots on the property. The property is not developable under current zoning due to the property depth, topography, setbacks, parking, and development footprint. The variance is for a front yard setback and a side yard setback. The conditional use permit is requesting a three (3) year commencement request. The requested use is less impactful. Less traffic, environmental, lighting, and noise. Staff is in support of the request. They will be conveying land to the City that will connect to Central Park Reserve.

Chair opened public comment at 7:15 p.m.

Applicant Jordan Fromm stated they initially brought this before the Commission approximately one year ago. They determined looking at a larger development plan with more density and listening to some stakeholders that the best option was to find a site plan that did the following; created a low density opportunity, found a way to convey land to the City to connect the walking path to the conservation zones; and to find a way to develop the site with as little of an environmental impact as possible. They have marketed the land for about 12 years and have found there are no other options under this current zoning arrangement. Fromm is available for any questions.

Greg Stonerock, 5829 Taylor Rd, Gahanna asked if the existing building is going to be demolished. If it is, will the neighbors be informed of asbestos removal and dust control. Fromm stated they are looking to splitting the site into four lots. One which would contain the home. Their intention is to market the site as is and any asbestos removal procedures that must be taken, will occur in conformance with the city and state law.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:18 p.m.

Chair called on questions from the Commission: Hicks asked what is happening with the back area of the parcel. Fromm stated that as part of a future application they will be bringing forward for a lot split for a subdivision without plat application. The eastern portion of the land would be a lot split from the lot four parcel. Hicks stated that VRGII owns the property and they asked if they are trying to get a product that will work and not sell it to another developer who might do who knows what with it. Fromm stated they have assessed the property over 12 years and determined the best use for the site is and is the reason for the rezoning request.

Chair re-opened the public comment at 7:21 p.m.

Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth administered an oath to those persons wishing to present testimony this evening.

Ron Brubaker 5949 Taylor Rd, Gahanna asked when they develop the two-family units is it going to be Section 8 housing. Fromm stated at this time this application does not contemplate the build type for a product that would go on these sites. The application is requesting a conditional use on single family. The methods in which to acquire tenants and seek any Section 8 reimbursement from the county or the state or the federal government is not contemplated at this time.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:23 p.m.

Hicks asked Blackford is they re-zone and approve conditional uses and variances for this parcel is there any concern that they will re-zone the entire parcel down to Franklin Peak as multi-family. Blackford stated that no, the legal description does not include south of what is shown.

Greenberg stated that the application has a phase one; he thinks there was a recognized condition and it's an old phase one and it had to do with the landfill that was a potential issue, has any of that been investigated. Maybe that aspect of the property is not part of this proposal. The old phase one application is out of date and can't be used under Ohio law because it is more than 18 months old. Are there any plans to update that? Fromm stated there are no plans to update it. Buyers of the sites may choose to do their own environmental due diligence. This site is not adjacent or relevant to the phase one work or landfill closure.

Motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Burba, that the Zoning change be

recommended to Council.

Discussion on the motion: Hicks is in support of the applications. Suriano is in support and the proximity to residential and the rezoning is more restrictive it creates some surety and appropriateness.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Hicks, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

[CU-0002-2021](#)

To consider a Conditional Use Application for property located at 5847 and 5875 Taylor Rd., Parcel ID Nos. 027-000110 and 025-013635; Current Zoning OCT; PID; VRGII Residential Project, Jordan Fromm, applicant.

Motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Burba, that the Conditional Use be approved.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Hicks, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

[V-0039-2021](#)

To consider a variance application to vary Chapters 1147.08(a), 1147.08(c) AND 1169.05(a) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna, for property located at 5847 and 5875 Taylor Rd.; Parcel ID Nos. 027-000110 and 025-013635; Current Zoning OCT; PID; VRGII Residential Project; Jordan Fromm, applicant.

Motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Burba, that the Variance be Approved.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Hicks, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

ADB Safegate Project

[V-0040-2021](#)

To consider a variance application to vary the overlay text of as a part of Ordinance ORD-0069-2009, for property located at the SE & SW corners of Tech Center & Science Blvd; Parcel ID Nos. 027-000113, 027-000110, and 025-013636; Current Zoning OCT-L; ADB Safegate North American Headquarters; David Poe, applicant.

In accordance with Planning Commission Rules Section 7.4.1.1., if there is more than one application on the same project, they may be discussed as one.

Director of Planning Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached staff presentation. There are three parcels associated with the request. The zoning is OCT with an overlay. There have been several projects with this overlay. It is standard to see variances for the overlay. This is an existing Gahanna business. The city owns the property to the west of the property, the city is partnering with them. They are going to build their North American Headquarters on the property. On the city property is a retention basin, they will be preserving trees on the west side of the city property. Staff is in support of the project; it is compatible to other projects in the area. It is a big improvement and elevates the design in the area. The Land Use Plan calls for this area to be professional office. Staff feels this is a great use of the property.

Chair opened public comment at 7:41 p.m.

Applicant David Poe is available for comments.

Ron Brubaker 5949 Taylor Rd, Gahanna asked if Tech Center Dr. will be extended to Taylor Station Rd. Poe stated it will be extended to the end of their property. The City owns the right-of-way through to Taylor Station Rd.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:43 p.m.

Chair called on questions from the Commission.

Wester asked what is on the roof. Poe stated it is going to be a meeting and entertainment area.

Shapaka asked what the inspiration was for the architectural detail of the building. Poe stated the inspiration came from the tenant. Their main business is airport safety and lighting, they wanted to have a kind of airport feel to it.

Suriano stated the materials on the building are precast concrete and metal and asked if the brown supports are wood. Poe stated the supports will be fashioned as wood but will be steel.

Greenberg asked why a chain link fence. Poe stated that the area that will be chain link is the warehouse area. It will be screened with landscaping. It will be minimally visible from Tech Center Dr.

Motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Variance be approved.

Discussion on the motion: Shapaka stated that the images provided show a nice dynamic corner building. He doesn't have an issue with not including brick on the building if the rhythm that is presented pans out. He also has no issue with a chain link fence since it is in the back. Suriano concurs with Shapaka and the orientation of the building is a net positive. The precast can be nice and is durable material. He has no issues with any of the variances. Greenberg agrees with the other Commissioners.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Abstain, COI: 1 - Hicks

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

[FDP-0012-2021](#) To consider a Final Development Plan application for property located at the SE & SW corners of Tech Center & Science Blvd.; Parcel ID Nos. 027-000113, 027-000110, and 025-013636; Current Zoning OCT-L; ADB Safegate North American Headquarters; David Poe, Applicant.

Motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Final Development Plan be approved.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Abstain, COI: 1 - Hicks

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

[DR-0027-2021](#) To consider a Design Review Application for site plan, landscaping and building design, for property located at SE & SW corners of Tech Center & Science Blvd.; Parcel IDs: 027-000113, 027-000110 and 025-13636; Current Zoning OCT-L; ADB Safegate North American Headquarters; David Poe, applicant

Motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Design Review be approved:

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Abstain, COI: 1 - Hicks

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

Code Changes

[CC-0002-2021](#) To recommend approval to Council, changes to Part Eleven - Planning and Zoning Code, Chapters: 1105, 1108, 1131, 1133, 1151, 1169, 1177, 1181, and 1187, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of

Gahanna.

Clerk of Council Krystal Gonchar stated that the objective for the code changes is to modernize the way public hearing notices are published. Similar changes were proposed in March 2019; formal hearing at Planning Commission in April 2019. The Commission recommended approval to Council by unanimous vote. At that time, Council opted not to move forward with those changes. The current asks are to move away from publishing ads in the newspaper. The internal processes are limited by functions and deadlines of the local newspaper, which is not truly a local paper any longer. The paper printing has been outsourced to Indiana; notary services have been outsourced to Wisconsin. The Rocky Fork Enterprise distribution has changed; it is now a combined paper of Gahanna and New Albany and is not consistently delivered to all residents. The costs of running ads in the paper continues to increase while there are numerous other options for publishing notices at a zero cost to taxpayers, which are more effective in reaching people in larger numbers. Earlier this year Ohio Municipal League provided testimony to the Senate Finance Committee on HB 110, calling for state leaders to ease municipal public notice requirements for items required by ORC. Those requirements predate the internet age.

The COVID pandemic has forced government to modernize communication methods by using things such as official websites and social media. It has forced offices to find creative ways of reaching the public and it has forced the public to utilize other methods of getting their information. We tried prior to COVID, prior to the telecommuting wave to modernize our processes, but because of COVID we have gotten better at communicating electronically and residents have become more receptive.

Sections 1105.03 and 1108.04 are not related to public notices but are being brought forward because the wording "accepted by" is difficult to nail down or define in the application process. By striking those words, we are making these two sections more in line with other applications such as variances and conditional uses.

Chair opened public comment at 7:55 p.m.
No comments from the public.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:55 p.m.

Chair called on questions from the Commission: Hicks stated that two years ago the Commission attempted this change and Council didn't want it to go forward. He asked Gonchar what her sense was of the current Council to adopt these changes. Gonchar stated that given the

changes that COVID has brought she believes the public and Council will be more receptive.

Suriano asked is it staffs' opinion this helps with efficiency of notice in clarity and timelines. Gonchar stated she believes it does. The Clerks office and the Planning Department work closely together and if we have a deadline from the newspaper it limits the amount of time that the Planning Department has to get the items to the Clerks in order to have proper notice. If we eliminated the newspaper portion we are no longer limited by another party and our staff can get it posted on the website and social media in a matter of minutes. Also, the only difference from what was presented in 2019 is that there is a proposed charter change on the ballot in November. Pre COVID the two boards outside of chambers were used to post public notices. Due to COVID the public was unable to enter City Hall. The charter change is asking for public notices to be posted on the boards outside in an area accessible to the public. Suriano asked that any of the publications that we would have advertised in if they are free publications. The publications are not free. The Rocky Fork Enterprise is free if you can find a physical copy. It cost \$100 - \$800 for public notices.

Greenberg asked if the notifications will be on a specific web page or its own public notice page. Gonchar recommends that it be posted on the City website on a main page and run on the news feed and we could also have a public hearing page.

Motion was made by Shapaka, seconded by Wester, that the Code Change be recommended to City Council.

Discussion on the motion: Suriano stated pandemic notwithstanding, increasing the ability to communicate electronically the spirit of what we are trying to accomplish is to increase awareness and access to information about what's happening in the city and making it as accessible as we can to our community. Paying for newspaper publications seems inherently inefficient. With all the modes available today to be able to access information including putting it in physical space, modernization of this charter and code is warranted. Hicks stated this is an opportunity to save money and make things more efficient and timelier. It made sense two years ago and it makes sense now. Greenberg agrees, and the cost savings is going to be significant and providing the information on the website is a great place to point residents.

Motion carried with the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Shapaka, Greenberg, Hicks, Burba, Suriano and Wester

Absent: 1 - Tamarkin

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

G. NEW BUSINESS - None

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Assistant City Attorney - None

Director of Planning - None

Council Liaison

Shapaka stated that there was a first reading for the contract with Meacham & Apel Architects, Inc., Feinknopf Macioce Schappa Architects, Inc., Toole & Associates, Eight One Consulting, and William E. Conroy II, for plan review, back-up personnel, and inspection services. Mayor Jadwin stated the contracts are required by ORC. Blackford stated that it is required that we have backup. Meacham & Apel do plan review and not really inspections. The majority of what is needed are inspections. These are all companies that the city has used for quite a while.

CIC Liaison

Hicks stated CIC meets on Tuesday, October 19, 2021.

Chair - None

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS - None

J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

Shapaka thanked Blackford for his explanations on items and the knowledge and history he brings is invaluable.
Hicks stated it was good to see so many people attend the meeting.

K. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the Board adjourned at 8:05 p.m.