



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

John Hicks, Chair
Sarah Pollyea, Vice Chair
Michael Greenberg
James Mako
Thomas W. Shapaka
Michael Suriano
Michael Tamarkin

Sophia McGuire, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

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 January 22, 2025. The agenda for this meeting was published on January 17, 2025. Chair John Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sarah Pollyea.

Present 7 - John Hicks, James Mako, Sarah Pollyea, Michael Suriano, Michael Tamarkin, Thomas W. Shapaka, and Michael Greenberg

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA - NONE

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2025-0013](#)

Planning Commission meeting minutes 1.8.2025

A motion was made by Greenberg, seconded by Suriano, that the Minutes be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Hicks, Mako, Pollyea, Suriano, Tamarkin, Shapaka and Greenberg

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

[DP-0001-2025](#)

To consider a Development Plan Application for property located at 63 Mill Street; Parcel ID 025-000100; Current Zoning CMU - Creekside

Mixed-Use; Skin & Sugar; Cassie Tackett, applicant.

City Planner Maddie Capka provided a summary of the application; see attached staff report. Capka stated the application is for a Major Development Plan at 63 Mill Street for Skin and Sugar. The site is part of the Creekside Mixed Use District. Capka shared the zoning map. The property is on the west side of Mill Street, just north of Granville Street. The rear of the site is visible when traveling East on Granville Street. The Major Development Plan is to keep the exterior of the building pink. Portions of the building were painted a light pink color in September, 2024, without City approvals. The application was submitted shortly after due to code enforcement action. The color is a light pink Sherwin Williams color. The painting included the south side of the building, portions of the west side, along with the gutters, soffits, columns, stairs, and doors. The building used to have a medium green accent color; however, that color did not cover as much of the building as the current pink color does. The zoning code states that any color not explicitly listed as an approved color requires approval of a Development Plan. The applicant states that if the pink color is not approved, they will paint the pink portions of the building a Sherwin Williams softer tan color, which is permitted in the code. Capka shared swatches of each color. She then shared three photos of the building that were submitted by the applicant.

Capka then shared the Major Development Plan criteria that must be met in order for the application to be approved. They are: the development meets the applicable development standards of the Zoning Ordinance; it is in accord with appropriate plans for the area; it would not have undesirable effects on the surrounding area; and it would be in keeping with the existing land use character and physical development potential of the area. Staff recommends disapproval of the Major Development Plan as submitted. The pink south side of the building is visible when driving along Granville Street. The zoning code stipulates that Creekside also has stricter design guidelines than any other zoning districts. Staff has no objection to the backup softer tan color as it fully meets code requirements.

Chair Hicks opened public comment at 7:07 p.m.

Property owner Sarah Jacobson introduced herself and provided background information on Skin and Sugar. The business does facial services and sugaring hair removal. The business originally opened in 2017 and has grown to three locations, Gahanna being the third. Her business serves over 16,000 clients around the Columbus area and has a team of 18 women on staff. She recalled the dilapidated conditions of the building when she first purchased it in 2022, after it sat vacant for 2 years. She felt that verbal confirmation had been received from the City

when her team was informed they did not need a permit to paint. She said there was no malicious intent in painting, and they thought they followed the correct protocol. The goal in painting was to make the building stand out and bring awareness to the building. She said that clients regularly remark positively on the color. She expressed hope that Planning Commission would consider allowing Skin and Sugar to keep the color.

Chair Hicks closed public comment at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Greenberg asked Ms. Jacobson to elaborate on the services her business provides. Ms. Jacobson said Skin and Sugar provides facials, facial massage, and sugaring hair removal. The other two locations of her business are Powell and Upper Arlington. Mr. Greenberg wondered if the buildings are painted the same color as the building at Creekside. Ms. Jacobson explained they are leased spaces located in retail areas. Mr. Greenberg expressed appreciation for locating her business in Gahanna.

Mr. Shapaka asked the administration if the color had been painted over with a color that complied with code, would Planning Commission need to review this application. Capka replied with her understanding that Ms. Jacobson preferred to go forward with the application, just in case the pink color was approved. Mr. Shapaka expressed sympathy with Ms. Jacobson's situation. He was not in favor of it being entirely tan, and understood the desire to have some color that would stand out.

Mr. Mako directed a question to the administration. He wondered if the area was an overlay district. Capka clarified the zoning is Creekside Mixed Use with no overlay. He asked if the standards were from the present code, which was adopted May 1, 2024. Ms. Capka confirmed. Mr. Mako then asked if any standards differed between the new code and the prior code. Capka replied that the prior code had fewer design guidelines. The new code created a guidelines section, part of which is specific to the Creekside area. There are now more specific regulations for Creekside than there are for other districts. Director Blackford added that several years ago, before the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, there were several land use plans that had some jurisdiction over the Creekside area. Some plans had recommendations for colors, including specific color palettes. It would require additional research to determine what the accepted colors were. He noted that these were fairly broad compared to what he anticipated. He referenced the blue color of Upper Cup, which was technically part of the historic color palettes in previous land use plans. He stressed that in the past, there were more standards than just the zoning code that were considered. Mr. Mako asked the

applicant if this was any type of branding for the business. Ms. Jacobson said that a subtle pink is used inside the buildings, but not on the exterior of the other buildings, because they are leased spaces. This building was purchased, allowing an opportunity to paint the exterior and draw attention to the space, potentially adding to clientele. Mr. Mako referenced the conversations her team had with City staff regarding painting, and wondered if color was referenced. She noted that her contractor reached out to the City. She did not know who the contractor spoke to. The contractor was informed that painting did not require a permit. Ms. Jacobson did not know there were restrictions on color.

Ms. Pollyea wondered if the color was shared with the City personnel. Ms. Jacobson noted that the contractor was aware of the color but was unsure if it was shared with the City. Ms. Pollyea asked if signage would be added. Ms. Jacobson replied that a black and white sign was recently approved by the City, and it now needs to be created. Ms. Pollyea asked how long the business has been open, to which Ms. Jacobson replied it has been open since October, 2024. Ms. Pollyea closed by asking if Ms. Jacobson had considered incorporating the pink into the color scheme if the application was denied. Ms. Jacobson said it was a consideration. Ms. Capka stated that painting below 25% of the building would not require a development plan. She added that Planning staff may want to receive proof that it was below 25%, perhaps through a zoning certificate, but noted it would not require another development plan.

Chair Hicks asked if Skin and Sugar is a franchisee of a larger organization, and whether there are any franchise agreements she must adhere to. Ms. Jacobson replied that the business was started by her and she is its sole owner. Mr. Hicks said his understanding of the zoning code is that the Creekside Mixed Use section refers to development standards in another area of code, which read, "exterior colors shall be neutral tones of light brown, tan, beige, white, cream, gray, black, and other similar colors, and that no more than a total of four colors are allowed." Ms. Capka confirmed that was the case.

A motion was made by Suriano, seconded by Shapaka, that the Development Plan be Approved.

Discussion on the motion:

Mr. Greenberg said he appreciated Mr. Blackford's explanation of why other colors were previously permitted in Creekside. He said that when driving by the business, the amount of pink is overwhelming to his eye. He agreed that if less of a percentage was permitted, he would be more comfortable.

Mr. Suriano expressed appreciation to Ms. Jacobson for bringing her business to Gahanna. He understood the intention of wanting a color to draw attention to the building, but agreed with Mr. Greenberg that it was overwhelming. He felt that the color was not compatible, and suggested they consider using less

of the color and pairing it with more suitable colors. He stated he would not be in favor of the application.

Mr. Tamarkin noted concerns with setting precedent. He felt it was important to comply with code in this situation.

Mr. Shapaka said he liked the idea of the branding, but felt it was a bit bright. He suggested Ms. Jacobson find a way to incorporate the color in another way. He noted he would not be in support of the project.

Mr. Mako said there is subjectivity to selecting color, but felt that the Commission needed to apply the zoning code objectively in this case.

Ms. Pollyea said she understood Ms. Jacobson's goal in painting the building. However, she referenced one criteria for a Major Development Plan, that it meets the applicable development standards the Zoning Ordinance. She agreed with Mr. Mako that the Commission needed to objectively apply the Zoning Ordinance in this scenario.

Chair Hicks expressed his appreciation to Ms. Jacobson and for improving the building and the area. He recalled a fire that happened at the building. He said similar applications have come forward, in which a color was chosen and the primary issue was the extent of the color. Across from Skin and Sugar, there was a building that was painted black. While black is an approved color, the extent of the black was the concern. He felt that of the four criteria required for approval of the development plan, the first criteria is not met. He stated he would also not be in support of the application.

Ms. Jacobson expressed understanding and thanked the Commission for their time.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 0

No: 7 - Hicks, Mako, Pollyea, Suriano, Tamarkin, Shapaka and Greenberg

[CC-0001-2025](#)

To recommend approval to Council, a change to Part Eleven - Zoning Code, Section 1117.10(e)(1)(A) - Required Improvements of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna.

Director Blackford said this is a section of code that is not traditionally something the Planning Department has a lot of involvement in. However, it is impactful language. The addition clarifies that the improvements listed in the section are only required when a Site Civil Engineering Plan is required. The Site Civil Engineering Plan is not something that Planning Commission is typically involved in, but is required for larger projects such as new development construction and earth clearing on an acre or more of land. Nearly every type of improvement requires a building or zoning permit, but those are often for projects such as a fence or a shed.

The improvements listed in this section of code are geared toward creation of new roads, subdivisions, and things of that nature. The code language is not new, going back to at least 1975. This means that, for external users with minor permits such as sheds or fences, the permitting process will be expedited. Director Blackford noted that no departments involved with this process felt the language was ever intended to apply to single permits. There will likely be additional changes going forward to Council for Chapter 9, which does not require Planning Commission approval.

Chair Hicks opened public comment at 7:33. There were no members of the public who wished to comment.

A motion was made by Pollyea, seconded by Greenberg, that the Code Change be Recommended to Council for Approval.

Discussion on the motion:

Mr. Tamarkin expressed his understanding of the purpose of the change.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Hicks, Mako, Pollyea, Suriano, Tamarkin, Shapaka and Greenberg

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

G. NEW BUSINESS - NONE

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Director of Planning

Director Blackford said the City is evaluating and re-writing Chapter 9, which is related to Engineering. He said there were elements that would be extracted from the zoning code and moved to Chapter 9. These are expected to come forward later in the year.

Council Liaison

Ms. Pollyea reported that Council recently discussed the strategic plan for the City at a "Table Talk" with a facilitator. There is a goal to solicit feedback to discuss Gahanna's strengths and opportunities for improvement. There is also an online survey. Additional rounds of discussion will be held later in the spring. Pollyea also shared information about the Council Office's plan for a bimonthly newsletter. Mr. Hicks

encouraged the Commission members who were unable to attend the joint Table Talk with Council, to take the survey or attend a different Table Talk.

Mayor

Mayor Jadwin thanked the Planning Commission members for attending the prior evening's Table Talk and shared information about upcoming Table Talks. Mayor Jadwin reported it will help to form the mission, vision, and values for the City. The goal is to have as many community members participate as possible. The Mayor also shared information on an upcoming procurement fair. The fair gives small businesses an opportunity to sign up with vendors and share information. The event is scheduled for February 27, 2025, 11:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m. at the Peak at Edison. The Mayor thanked the Commission for their thoughtful discussion on the development plan application.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS

Mr. Hicks noted that there were emails received relating to the development plan application, which would be added to the record.

J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

Mr. Suriano expressed gratitude to be back working with the Commission for a new year.

Mr. Mako remarked positively on the joint table talk workshop the prior evening.

Ms. Pollyea said there would be a table talk the upcoming Sunday at 1:00 pm at City Hall, specifically for the residents of the Rathburn Woods area.

K. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.