



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Michael Tamarkin, Chair
Thomas Shapaka, Vice Chair
Michael Greenberg
John Hicks
James Mako
Michael Suriano
Thomas J. Wester

Pam Ripley, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

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 November 2, 2022. The agenda for this meeting was published on October 28, 2022. Chair Michael Tamarkin called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Shapaka.

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

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Sheetz Project the sign variances will be read separately into the record.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

[DR-0020-2022](#)

To consider a Design Review Application for site plan and building design for property located at 1356 Cherry Way Drive; Parcel ID: 025-010878; Current Zoning PCC; Columbus Aesthetics and Plastics; Kendra Cook, applicant.

Director of Planning Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached staff presentation. The request is for approval of a Design

Review Application for exterior alterations of a medical office building. The zoning is Planned Commercial Center District (PCC). The scope of work is to include re-roofing with charcoal asphalt shingles, trim/fascia repair to be painted tricorn black. The existing copper portions of the roof will remain the same. Primary building and remote utility building will be whitewashed. The brick and stucco are to be painted Greek Villa and the decorative lighting will be replaced with matte and satin black fixture. New storefront windows will be installed. The parking lot is to be restriped. New mechanical units to be installed at north end of building, screened by brick enclosure matching building. Two new rooftop mechanical units to be installed and screened. Staff recommends approval of the application.

Chair opened public comment at 7:10 p.m.

Applicant Nicholas Bruckelmeyer, 166 N. Cassady Ave. Bexley, project architect with OHM Advisors representing Columbus Aesthetics and Plastics. They are looking forward to being part of the community. He is available for questions.

No comments from the public.

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

Questions from the Commission: Suriano asked for an explanation on the whitewashing of the brick versus painting it. Bruckelmeyer said in lieu of having a painted brick with an opaque finish it will be more of a translucent finish with the white character, but some of the red that is on the existing brick will show through. It will add more depth to the building. Suriano asked if the mechanical units on the roof are screened with louvers. Bruckelmeyer said there is a self-screened louver unit they are using called cityscape.

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

Discussion on the motion: Tamarkin said the building is a great building and good location and this is a great use of the building. He is looking forward to having this tenant and this type of use in Gahanna.

Motion carried with the following vote:

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

[DR-0021-2022](#)

To consider a Design Review Application for landscaping and exterior painting for property located at 306 W. Johnstown Road; Parcel IDs: 025-002990 & 025-002810; Current Zoning MFRD; Gahanna Manor; Steven Stieglitz, applicant.

Director of Planning Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached staff presentation. The property is located within the Multi-Family Residential zoning (MFRD). The request is for approval of a

Design Review Application to paint the existing buildings three different shades of gray, the trim will be re-painted white, and the railings are going to be painted black. There is not a required color shade in code. It says it should be harmonious with other color palettes. We have seen the gray in the area. The apartments under construction across the street a similar color palette. The Design Review Criteria to consider is as follows: is it compatible with existing structures, does it contribute to the improvement of the design of the district, does it contribute to the economic and community vitality of the district, and does it maintain, protect, and enhance physical surroundings? We like to see improvements and new investment in buildings. Staff recommends painting the shutters a darker color to stand out. Staff recommends approval of the recommendation.

Chair opened public comment at 7:16 p.m.

Applicant Steven Stieglitz 536 S. Wall St. Columbus, owner, agent, and Joe Hoehn, 503 Tristaine Ct., Galena owner CertaPro Painters. Hoehn said that the rendering shows the shutters colored because they will be removing all the shutters.

No comments from the public.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:17 p.m.

Questions from the Commission: Greenberg asked if there are any plans for landscaping around each of the buildings. Stieglitz said the landscaping is another project they are working on. At the front facing Johnstown Road they plan on some additional landscaping and tree plantings to enhance the curb appeal. They are working on removing some of the trees but are in the process of getting a tree survey so they can come back with a comprehensive landscape proposal.

Motion was made by Greenberg, seconded by Shapaka, that the Design Review be approved.

Discussion on the motion: Suriano is in favor of the application and thinks the paint and color modifications are improvements to the development and will make it nice and consistent across the project. Tamarkin agrees with Mr. Suriano and said anytime we enhance and upgrade an existing piece of property in the community it is good for everybody.

Motion carried with the following vote:

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

Sheetz

[CU-0009-2022](#)

To consider a Conditional Use Application for property located on Johnstown and Morse Roads; Parcel IDs: 025-011244, 025-011243 and 025-011226; Current Zoning NC; Sheetz Gahanna; Sarah Gold,

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. The sign variances were read into the record separately.

Director of Planning Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached staff presentation. The property is zoned Neighborhood Commercial and is surrounded by neighborhood commercial. There are a variety of zonings development in the area, High Bank Distillery, The Goddard School, and Story Point. No re-zoning is required to allow a gas station and food service place, but it does require a conditional use within the neighborhood commercial zoning category. The Land Use Plan in this area is Community Commercial. We don't see that designation a lot. It does promote medium to large scale uses. It also talks about uses in the area that would be more of a regional community draw. It encourages a mix of uses and interconnectivity. Morse Road and Johnstown Road does have a walking path and sidewalks already. There is a variety of uses on just over four acres, which is a large parcel for a gas station. There is a considerable number of undeveloped areas of green space. It is three parcels they are going to combine that has frontage on both Morse and Johnstown Roads. The building is just over six thousand square feet and is set back quite a bit from both roadways. It is setback 209 feet from Morse Road and 180 feet from Johnstown Road. The canopy has 16 fueling stations. That setback is at 130 feet. They do have more parking than what code requires. Code requires 34 spaces, and they are providing 43 spaces. There is a large amount of landscaping associated with this request. A lot of it is along the perimeter and a little bit on the northeast side of the site and quite a bit on the southern side. There is a considerable amount of lighting like you typically see within gas stations. They provided some great plans in their photometric plan, and it does meet code as far as what that light level is at the property line, which is one-foot candle. They do meet that requirement, although there is a considerable amount of lighting it is all sort of contained on site. No variances for that. The building design façade is a modular gray brick veneer; the awnings are bronze with canvas. It meets the typical Sheetz building. The trim is dark bronze and meets all the requirements of the design review code. Code does not have a lot of color material standards in some of the commercial zoned districts. Blackford showed the submitted site plan; there is a considerable amount of landscaping on site along the east and again in the northeast corner. There is not a bunch of landscaping within the parking lot area. This is one of their variances that make sense in his opinion in this case to put it throughout this site. It does screen quite well the site and activity on site from Johnstown Road. There is an abundance of landscaping provided which he believes exceeds the minimum code requirement. The building is brick veneer and is similar in appearance to what we see on The Goddard School and the senior living facility to the west. It has double frontages, so it is architecturally finished on all four sides.

Blackford shared the variances requested. Two are related to the site plan. The first is the dumpster location. Code says that the dumpster must be located to the rear of the building but in this case with a frontage to the north of the site and the frontage to the south of the site. Technically this property

does not have a rear yard by our zoning code. So, they can't place the dumpster meeting the technical requirements of the code. It is located about 60-feet from Johnstown Road. There is going to be a lot of natural screening they are going to provide with the landscaping. It will have a fence and vegetation around it as well. Staff does not have any objections to this variance even though it is not to the rear of the building. The next variance request is for interior landscape, five percent of the area which equates to 37 trees, 11 trees will be planted within that parking lot area, but they are proposing 86 new trees. They are well exceeding what the code requirements are for landscaping. It is just going to be dispersed throughout the site a bit more evenly and not just clustered in the parking area. Technically it does require a variance.

The next request is for signage. Planning Commission typically doesn't see signage unless there are variances that are required. All together there is about 220 sq. ft. of signage they are asking for. You really see a lot of signage with gas stations and fast food. There is a drive-through and those drive-throughs have menu boards. From a zoning code standpoint, all those signs must be looked at as individual signs. The ground sign is under 35 sq. ft. and six-and-a-half feet in height. Blackford showed the approximate location of those signs. The commission is not technically approving the wall signs design but will be approving if they approve the variances or the number and the size but not necessarily the style. In looking at the rendering of the signs they are not overly large signs or overly intrusive that we see in some areas and on some roadways. Even though there is a lot, they are modestly sized. There are several drive-through signs, but they are typical to what you see in and around the city and elsewhere. The drive-through signs are technically signs, so it does add up into that 220 sq. ft. of signage, fueling information signs count as well. These are classified as projecting signs and code limits that to one, so that's part of the variance request as well. Blackford did a deep dive into all seven of these sign variances. The first one is again that code pretty much for any commercial zoning District, 150 square feet total sign area is permitted, and 225 square feet is what's proposed with double frontage and with the commercial use. When looking at this compared to some similar uses, gas stations or fast-food places, Blackford thinks we saw maybe the Burger King a year ago or so, and they had a considerably more amount of signage and only one frontage. So, no objection from staff with the 220 square feet. The code also says there's one ground sign per street frontage. Typically, when we talk about ground signs, it's that large sign that sits out by the roadway. But in this case, all the signs that you see in the drive through are classified as ground signs. So again, code does limit the number of ground signs. But those aren't the type of ground signs that are visible from the right of way. They are internal facing signs that are only visible to folks in the drive-through or in the canopy area of the gas station. There are two projecting signs underneath the canopy of the gas station.

Signs C1 and C2, that is the signs that staff does have some objection to and some concern that would be able to allow the reduced to 5-foot setback for that 33 square foot sign. They're requesting a 5-foot setback from the right of way. The code requires 10 feet. It also requires 50 square feet of landscaping. Staff does have some concerns with this variance, and it really has to do with

safety. As we've talked about with some other applications recently, whether it was the High Bank improvements, so just to the East, or the Morse Road rezoning for the multifamily, this is a corridor that's experiencing increased traffic largely from other projects outside of Gahanna to the east and north of us. Anytime that there is increased traffic, there's a possibility of additional right away at some point in time being necessary. We just don't want to have any safety issues where folks are trying to turn out of a project at those peak hour times and then have any type of obstruction related to signage. So, staff does not typically see that reduced setback. Blackford thinks we have seen that once or twice before on roadways with less vehicular traffic and already a large amount of right away. We do have some concerns, and we would be opposed to granting that reduced setback. Additional sign variances requested is the clearance bar, that's sort of in the drive-through. Code allows eight feet in height, and they're requesting 18 feet in height. They are providing 18 square feet of landscaping. The code says 50 square feet. But again, that's really meant for large signs that are out on the roadway, that 33 square foot sign, and not for these small ones within a drive-through area. It doesn't make sense to have that amount of landscaping. So again, no objections from staff there. Second to last, the variance is another similar one. This is the order point ground sign. That's where you're ordering food. Again, similar with the landscaping. Reducing that from 50 square feet to 18 square feet and the height in this case is 13 feet instead of eight. These are all internal facing signs. Blackford does not know of any reason why this would be a safety issue or be overly obtrusive. And the last one, another landscaping one, they are requesting 18 square feet as opposed to 50 square feet for the menu board.

Regarding the criteria to approve or deny the design review application, compatibility with existing structures, it is very similar in materials and colors as adjacent structures in staff's opinion. Would it be an improvement to the design of the district? Does it contribute to the economic and community vitality of the district? This property and some of the adjacent properties have been available and marketed, and it has been a challenge for 8 plus years to get users in this area. Staff does feel that this request would contribute to the economic and community vitality.

Regarding the Final Development Plan, does the plan meet the applicable development standards? It does, except for the variances. Only two of those variances are to the actual site plan. Most of them are signage. Is it in accord with appropriate plans for the area? Again, the land use plan calls for this area to be community commercial which is located on major thoroughfares such as Morse Road. It does call for commercial uses that are more of a citywide or regional draw, which gas stations tend to be. Would it have undesirable effects on the area? Is it consistent with the land use character of the area?

Conditional use criteria to approve or deny. Is it a conditional use of the zoning district? Well, there's two conditional uses like the gas station and then the drive through for the food service. Those are conditional uses of the zoning, otherwise we wouldn't have a conditional use application. Is the development in accord with appropriate plans in the area? The land use plan does call for these types of activities in the area. Would have undesirable effects? Is it in

keeping with the existing land use character?

The three criteria to approve for variances, special circumstances, or conditions applying to the land or building. Is the variance necessary for the preservation enjoyment of substantial property rights? Would the granting of the application be detrimental to the public welfare? Staff did have the one concern with the five-foot reduction for the signs on those busy roadways. Staff does believe that there are special circumstances with the land. Again, technically with the dumpster it can't be located on the property regardless of the use meeting code. So again, staff's opinion, certainly some of these there are special circumstances. Staff supports all the applications: the design review, the conditional use, final development plan, and in eight of the nine variance applications.

Blackford said the applicant provided some new materials to the Clerk and him yesterday. Staff does not normally take in additional materials after an application has been advertised and already published. Blackford has not been able to do any type of review, nor were other staff members. If there is some additional information the applicant wants to provide, he will do his best answer the commissions questions. It's up to planning commission if they want to entertain any new materials that the applicant might want to discuss tonight.

Chair opened public comment at 7:39 p.m.

Applicant Drew Miller, Project Manager 4270 Morse Road, Columbus with Skilken Gold. Miller does not have any additional information to share and said there was some confusion between what they had submitted and the comments back on their engineering plans. They were commenting back and addressing those comments and just complied with them and resubmitted those to Mr. Blackford. The team of engineers on the project are here tonight and ready to address any comments or concerns. Miller said the ground sign C .1 and C .2. on Morse Road sits back about 45 feet from the curb of Morse Road. And that entrance and egress of this site is right in, right out. While he appreciates the concern for safety, he doesn't believe that would cause issues for folks who were exiting the site to have visibility to traffic moving west and east. They are happy to answer any questions.

Public Comment:

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

Patricia Kovacs 527 Haversham Dr., Gahanna said she is concerned about the Sheetz and is concerned about having it there because it's multifamily and residential. Kovacs said she knows there's a few businesses on the corner of restaurants and stuff, but a gas station is a totally different beast. There is a Sheetz that was just built on Johnstown and Stygler Road. She rides bicycles, and the traffic there got so much higher from that Sheetz because she thinks their gas is cheaper than most places. She is concerned about the traffic that is going be brought to that. She does not really see that many gas stations by roundabout. She is really concerned about people

trying to pull in and out and with the roundabout being there. The Sheetz at 161 put in a lot of side paths. If this thing does go in, she hopes there'll be a lot of ways for people to walk and bike there. She just doesn't think it's a good location for a gas station.

Chair closed the public comment at 7:44 p.m.

Tamarkin noted that the commission received a letter from a resident, Gail Hayes, which will add into the into the record. Hayes had many concerns about the project.

Questions from the Commission:

Mr. Greenberg asked if there has been a traffic study done for this new Sheetz. Miller said there has been and their traffic engineer is in attendance. Greenberg asked if he could answer what the traffic study recommended or any changes that were necessary to Johnstown or Morse Road. Drew Laurent 6612 Singletree Drive, Columbus with Carpenter Marty Transportation. A traffic study was done and approved by Gahanna and Columbus. The improvements associated with the Sheetz are a left turn lane for the Johnstown Road access and then a signal installation at Morse Road and Albany Chase Drive. That is the full access point just west of the site. There is cross access between Story Point property, the Goddard School, and the Sheetz development, all of which will have access to the signal. Those were the improvements that were required and recommended as a part of the study.

Mr. Hicks asked if there is still direct access from this site to Morse Road. Laurent said yes, there's an existing right in, right out access, which only allows right in and right-out movements. So, if you're heading westbound on Morse Road, you'll need to use the signal to turn left into the site. And then there's the access to Johnstown Road as well.

Mr. Suriano asked if there is a site plan that shows the relationship of the curb cuts to the streets and turn lanes. Laurent said the site plan on the visual is not showing the left turn lane on Johnstown Road, but there is existing width there. There may be some minor widening necessary. But there's essentially just northeast of the existing access point is a three-lane section, which tapers back down to a two-lane section south of the drive. There may be some minor widening necessary, maybe a few feet here and there, but it's mostly restriping for that left turn lane. Suriano asked where is the signal location? Laurent said it is at the intersection of Morse Road, and the north leg is called Albany Chase Drive. He doesn't think the south leg has a name. The analysis in the study basically showed that left turns on the Morse Road during peak hours are difficult. You must fulfill a state and federal warrant to install a signal. You have to have enough traffic on the main line and enough traffic generated on the side street to warrant signalization, which this does. That was a part of the recommendations of the study. Suriano asked if there is direct access from this parcel to Morse Road dog legging around to the signal. Laurent said that the service road has cross access connectivity through there. Suriano

commented there is no northbound access to Morse Road at that point. Laurent said there is. It is existing there today, but it is not shown on the aerial. There is a right in, right out access. It was pointed out on the aerial where it will connect into the site and currently connected to the other two developments as well. Suriano asked if it will continue to be right in, right out. Laurent said that is correct. Suriano asked if there is any concern about queueing during peak hours, backing up all the way to the roundabout with that signal? Laurent said no, not in their analysis in the opening year or the 10-year horizon. The signal is going to heavily favor Morse Road traffic. So, you're going to get a lot of green time on Morse Road with occasional breaks with stopping traffic to let people out via both developments north and south.

Wester asked if it is a full access signal and what does that mean? Laurent said that it means it will be under signalized control in and all movements will be permitted, so you can turn left. Wester asked how many movements are there? Laurent said left, right and through. Wester asked if he is going eastbound on Morse Road, and he comes to that signal, will a left turn be permitted? Laurent said yes. Wester asked if by arrow. Lauren doesn't know the answer to that question. He will have to look into it. It depends on what the analysis calls for, but it meets acceptable level of service. Wester said he thought he heard there will be a left turn access line. Laurent said yes, there are existing left turn lanes. Morse Road is a three-lane section. With the two way left turn lane, so there will be dedicated left turn lanes for the signal in both directions. Wester asked if he is going westbound on Morse Road, how many movements does he run into? Laurent said just one. You can turn left at the signal and access the Sheetz or The Goddard School or the Story Point development. Wester said he thinks this is new enough information that he would like to see some kind of write up or an analysis by the city engineer with regards to that. Laurent said this is not new information. They have an approved traffic study by Gahanna and Columbus. Wester said by new information he is referring to the document he has, that he received Thursday or Friday of last week that preps him for this meeting. A full access signal is a complete surprise to him. He can't speak for the other members here. Tamarkin said it is the first he has heard. Wester said that was one of the considerations he had as they went into this overall traffic in that area, the impact on Johnstown Rd. Laurent said to reiterate, gas stations in general along with Sheetz developments generate a lot of what's called pass by traffic of approximately by national data, 2/3 of the cars that will come from this site are going to be people that are already on Morse Road or already on Johnstown Road. It doesn't necessarily bring more traffic to the area as much as it attracts existing traffic on both of those roadways. Wester said that at one time that roundabout was one of the most troublesome in the United States. There's a lot of people that have studied that roundabout, and why? Laurent said it started out as a two by two and now it's a single one by one with right turn lanes. They had to do that as mitigation for safety and this was one of the first roundabouts in Central Ohio, too, so it was very new at the time.

Tamarkin asked Blackford, or Mayor Jadwin, are the signals the recommendation of the traffic study, and if it is going happen, what's the process to get a signal? Blackford said that the process is it is engineering

plan review and study and if it's required, it is going happen. It's part of the construction of this project. Planning Commission doesn't have the authority to waive engineering requirements. So it's separate but related to what we're here tonight. He knows that's confusing. Tamarkin said it's also not a done deal that it's 100% going to happen. Blackford said if it is required, then yes. He doesn't think they're electing to do it. They have to do it as part of the construction of the project. If the project goes forward the signalization of the intersection will happen. That's why it's not subject to not part of the Planning Commission process typically.

Greenberg asked if it's part of the construction project, then Sheetz is paying for the light and lanes and everything that's needed to make this happen? Blackford said to the best of his knowledge, that is correct. It is not 100 percent of his purview, but that's typical. The project that's generating the need pays for the improvement.

Mr. Shapaka said he is looking at the sheet DTD-1. As Mr. Wester said, the information that the commission got is kind of conflicting with what we're talking about. That plan that he is looking at, which is the drive-through side, looks like there is an access that is going to go over to the commercial business to the right in addition to the exit to Morse Rd. Is that still in the planning? The landscaping plan looked like it chopped that off. But is that being a good neighbor with putting an access over there? Laurent said there is no cross access proposed to the east where the Donatos and High Bank is. Shapaka said that the plan he is looking at shows that there is a road there. Laurent showed the current plan. Shapaka said, he was showing the conflicting information that the commission received.

Mr. Mako asked with respect to the existing right in and right out on Morse Road, are there no concerns about the right in proximity to the to the roundabout? Laurent said, no, it is existing today. People use it today. It's connected to the existing developments, though. It is a little further away from the full access there. It is a stop-controlled condition. It's like turning right on red. You can go when there's a gap in traffic. No capacity issues as far as the analysis goes. Mako said no real safety concerns there. Laurent said no.

Shapaka asked if the bike path is on the north side of Morse Road. Laurent said he believes the shared use path is on the north side of Morse Road and a sidewalk on the south. Shapaka said it isn't conflicting at all with what we are doing with the right in and right out. Laurent said the signal will be required to have crosswalks across Morse Road as a part of the design process so pedestrians will have safe access to cross Morse Road in addition to the roundabout. Shapaka asked if they were anticipating more people from Morse Road to enter or from Johnstown Road? Laurent said the majority of traffic is coming to and from Morse Road. The percentage is about 25% from the West, 25% from the East in addition to Johnstown Road North was about 15 to 20. It was fairly balanced, but there's more traffic on Morse Road.

Greenberg said in the drawing there's an existing retention pond. He asked if it is an existing retention pond or is that something they are putting in? Miller

said there is an existing retention pond. Greenberg said gas stations are pretty much all asphalt and there's going to be lots of runoff. He would think there's been calculations to ensure that a significant flood event or storm event can be handled by that one drainage area. He asked if all the drainage go towards that. Andrew Gardner 6628 Burbank Pl., Westerville with V3 Companies, civil engineer for Skilken Gold and Sheetz on this project. The detention basin is existing. It was put in as part of a master plan for this parcel. They are taking all the drainage and routing to it. It then connects into a public storm sewer on Johnstown Road. It is sized and designed to meet the City of Gahanna storm water management standards and requirements. He doesn't recall if they are doing a little bit of tweaking to the grading to clean it up a little bit. It looks a little rough now and thinks they will probably clean it up. But as far as the volume capacity, water quality capacity, those types of things, it is sized for the site. It is sufficient. Greenberg said the site is near a school and asked what the requirements are for Sheetz as far as fire issues, such as somebody drives off with a cap and it blows up. He assumes there are a lot of requirements that they have to comply with for fire and hazardous spills. David Brockelmeyer, 630 Morrison Rd, suite 150. Gahanna, Engineering Permit Manager with Sheetz. For fire safety there are emergency stops located in appropriate locations around the site. If there's a fuel emergency, or something's going on at the pump, you hit a button and it shuts off. That's a National Fire code safety requirement. We have onsite spill kits. They have 24/7 monitoring with cameras. Those are monitored by people in Pennsylvania. If there's a big issue, they see that as well and there are fire extinguishers located around the site and other safety concerns taken into consideration. Greenberg is glad to hear there are cameras on site. Brockelmeyer said there are about 20 plus cameras on every site monitored 24/7 365 by live personnel.

Mako asked about water quality and if it has also been reviewed. Gardner said that yes, they are providing water quality as well in that basin. It'll have a multistage outlet designed for it that will provide the appropriate water quality drawdown to meet EPA and City of Gahanna requirements. In addition, all the runoff from underneath the fuel canopy goes through an oil water separator before they ever tie into the storm sewer as well. That is also part of the project. With the way those canopies are designed, they pitch them one direction. They have a trench drain that's just on the one edge of the canopy. Any runoff might catch drips and things like that from the gasoline and stuff all that runs into that trench drain, it goes through an oil water separator before it ever goes into the storm sewer. The second stage is the detention basin.

Shapaka brings up the issue of conditional use and asked Blackford if they had a workshop or anything about what we would like to do with this site, did he miss it? Blackford said he doesn't think so. With this particular site previously looking at this property, he does not believe they have. Shapaka said this is the first time that it's actually been presented to the Planning Commission. Blackford said yes, he doesn't recall this site getting any special look as part of like the land use plan or any other type of workshop. This is definitely the first application that he has seen in eight years on the property. Shapaka's concern is that they are seeing a pretty well thought out solution to putting this here. And if the Commission turns down the conditional

use, we really don't deal any further than that. It seems to him like it would be a very important thing to get approval up front before getting to this point. Blackford said correct and that is sort of that delicate balance of how much information do we get at this stage. Engineering folks don't go through that because they don't know if they can have the use or not. It's separated processes. Sometimes it makes a lot of sense. Sometimes maybe less so but thinks that's why they are separated out. It is for not wasting all that time and energy on something that might not be approved.

Suriano asked what are the typical hours of operation for Sheetz? Miller said they are 24/7. Suriano asked what types of trees will be adjacent to both Morse. He is looking for mainly for height and caliper relative to the tree size adjacent to the road that might screen the property. Miller said the tree calipers listed there are for the tree species that are adjacent to Morse Road and Johnstown Road. Suriano said they are fairly small trees compared with two inches, meaning they don't provide a ton of screening. Suriano asked what is the construction of the fueling station? What's the canopy construction? Miller said it is all painted steel. Suriano asked what is the finish on the underside of the canopy? Miller said it is like a pan decking material.

Suriano said he didn't see it, but is there a view from the street of or rendering or anything of what this would appear? How will it look from Johnstown or Morse? Miller said they do not have a rendering of the street view.

Greenberg said on the back on the left side it shows two dumpsters. Is one of them for recycling any of the cardboard or any of the materials that come into the Sheet, and do you have any plans at Sheetz for sustainability for the users of the facility? Miller said they could follow up with the commission on that answer. Greenberg said it would be good for the corporation to take a look at with how many locations it has. There are a lot in Central Ohio now. Miller said there are 19 just in Central Ohio. Greenberg said they are also across the eastern Pennsylvania and West Virginia and lots of places. They should have a corporate policy on sustainability. He is a customer. It's good to have a plan for sustainability, and he would like to have that be the first one in Gahanna.

Mako asked if the proposed is going to be similar in terms of scope and size similar to the other locations in Central Ohio? Miller said yes, Sheetz uses a prototypical store footprint. Mako asked if it is going to be true for the inside of the store also. Miller said yes, prototypical type stores with not a lot of variation.

Tamarkin said regarding the monument sign, the city is not recommending the various 5-foot setback. Tamarkin asked what the distance was from the curb to the end of the sidewalk? Miller does not know that exact measurement. They took a measurement from the curb to the right of way. He believes the sidewalk on Morse Road is probably close to five feet off the curb. But from Morse Road from the curb to the right of way is approximately

45 feet. Gardener said from the site plan the existing sidewalk appears to be about five feet behind the existing back curb. Their sign is further, much further back. It's behind the right of way. It's at least another 15 feet away from that sidewalk that's on Morse Road. Tamarkin said the sign will be 20 feet off Morse Road. Gardener said roughly, yes. Tamarkin asked for an explanation on the variance. He said they are asking for variance of five feet instead of 10 feet. Gardener said the variance is five from the right of way and not from the street. Blackford said it is not from pavement. It's from the right of way which he believes the thoroughfare plan does call for additional right of way on Morse Road. That's a long-term vision. With the frequency of traffic out there like we heard in testimony, there's a lot of walkers and bikes and he thinks there's increase. It is just a little bit of safety concern but it's not like some other corridors where it's right on the roadway. There is more green space between the actual pavement and the sign. Tamarkin said at some future point the road could get widened. It is not in the plans right now, but then the monument sign becomes within five feet of the roadway. Blackford said it could. He believes part of that long term vision of that throughfare plan is that additional right of way would be necessary with some of the development coming out there. Once the sign is there, it's pretty much there. But they bring up valid points where it's a right in, right out, but he believes that with some of the multifamily in this area that's under construction and some of the uses that there's going to be an increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic. So not all the traffic is going to be on the road. It's going to be in the sidewalk areas as well. Any time there's an obstruction for vision, whether it's a sign or shrubs or something like that, it is just better to be safe than the alternative.

Hicks said of the two side monument signs in question, C1 and C2, which one is the Morse Road sign? Miller said the C1 is the Morse Road sign and C2 is the Johnson Road sign.

Tamarkin said Morse Road today will be 20 feet off the road, 15 feet off the sidewalk, roughly. What happens on Johnstown Rd? He asked if the sign is going to be 20 feet off the road? Gardener said on Johnstown Road the sidewalk is approximately 6 feet behind the back of curb. You've got a 5 foot walk there, so you are at 11 feet and then they are approximately another eight feet behind that, about 19-20 feet. Tamarkin said it is 19 - 20 feet from today's existing pavement. Gardener said correct. Tamarkin asked how tall are the monument signs? Miller said they are 6 1/2 feet tall. Tamarkin said it is tall enough to block the view of a biker, walker, or driver. Blackford said that is correct, in staff's opinion. Blackford believes the access on Johnstown Road is left or right as opposed to Morse Road with a little bit different traffic in and out. Miller said to address the comment previously about Mores Road widening, Sheetz would be willing to move that sign if the right-of- way got extended. Tamarkin said he assumes that would be for both signs.

Hicks asked if it is Sheetz' position that as a wayfinding monument sign, to comply with City code, would it be too far back to serve its purpose? What's the reasoning for requesting the variance to the setback in our code? Miller said there is two reasons; there is a fence proposed out here, and part of this is New Albany companies' development standards. On Johnstown Road, you can see the fence. So that monument sign is right against that. That fence is

keeping in character with the rest of the developments, such as The Barn that's across the street with a very similar fence with the sign out from there. With visibility, the distance they are off of Morse Road, no one would see the Sheetz sign until you were on top of it. Miller referred to the street view of the property and said the sign will not be in front of the fence shown. There will be a new white fence behind that. They are talking about another 15 feet behind the white fence shown. Tamarkin asked if that white fence stays. Miller said yes, it comes across the site East-West and then it curves into the development. Tamarkin said the monument sign will be just in front of the white fence. Gardener referred to the site plan. The dotted line is the new fence line maintaining the existing fence line and warping it back into the site, so they have room to put the sign. On Johnstown Road, the fence is on the adjacent properties, and they have to continue it. They are proposing to bend it in and put the sign in front of it. Tamarkin asked if there was a fence on Johnstown Road also. Gardener said the fence on Johnstown Road stops at the property to the east, and they have been requested to extend that fence across their property. Tamarkin said if the commission did not approve that sign variance, there is no where to put the monument sign. Gardener said they would have to move the fence further back. The owner of the three parcels is not in favor of that. They have a design review over this area.

Greenberg said it was said that they got approval and they've asked Sheetz to extend the fence. Who are "they" and who gave approval? Miller said they are purchasing the property from the New Albany Company, and the site is encumbered by their development standards. Greenberg said they have approved what was presented to the commission tonight. Miller said yes. Tamarkin said they own the land right now. Greenberg said he wanted it to be on the record, so the commission understood where that was coming from.

Motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Shapaka, that the Conditional Use be Approved.

Discussion on the motion: Hicks is in support of the conditional use application and said as he drives out of town heading northeast to his work in Johnstown, he doesn't have an opportunity to get gas until he gets to New Albany. He goes to the Sheetz on Johnstown Road and Smith's Mill. To get gas, he would have to go to either on Hamilton Road and Havens Corners or further up Hamilton Road. Having a gas station at this location fills a need for citizens who travel out of town to the northeast. He will be in support of the use.

Wester is not in support of this application. Wester is upset that the information that the commission received and is going to vote on is inaccurate and incomplete. It's not that he is opposed to a gas station at that location. It's the fact that he doesn't know what he is voting on with reference to a drawing, to the information that was provided. Generally, those drawings will be used for construction. He doesn't know what we're going to build there. He will not be in support of this. He has other reasons written, but for him, the overall application, the incompleteness, the inaccuracy of it is upsetting.

Shapaka is also finding himself not in support of the conditional use. Unlike Mr. Hicks, he thinks that the conditional use is a special need. Everybody that's there now just travels a little further down the road and hits a gas station. It is a

24/7 in that area, being at the border of all the residences. He thinks the sensitivity used with the lighting and all the landscaping is good but just use overall he is not support of.

Suriano is not in support of the conditional use. He does not think a fueling station at this location is compatible. For him, when he looks at the criteria for conditional use, which has to do with a negative impact in this area, he thinks that they will have significant undesirable effects. He knows the traffic engineer referenced capturing existing traffic. Should that be the case, he still thinks that there's going to be an increased amount of ingress and egress out of the site that currently doesn't exist. He is really concerned about the peak hours and just the proximity to the roundabout which already gets backed up at peak hours. He thinks the lighting and signage are related to the type of use that it is, so he doesn't fault the developer or the development or Sheetz for kind of representing their standards in terms of what needs to be there to make the business successful. He just doesn't think those things are compatible with this specific instance. If you look at the character or the development trajectory for the surrounding area, there's no precedent for trying to understand materials because there isn't any. There isn't a steel support canopy. There isn't any of the type of things that we see in this development plan. For that and a number of reasons, he will not be supporting the conditional use.

Tamarkin said he lives very close to here, and when he talked to any of his neighbors, they were adamantly opposed to this. In his mind, it is not the appropriate use for this location. He knows the location has been vacant land for some time. But this is not a location with neon signs, 24-hour business, traffic in and out all hours of the day. He doesn't find that this type of business is appropriate for this parcel land. A mile to the west he thinks would be perfect. He has struggled with it from the day that he heard of the proposal. He will also not be in support.

Wester said one other comment he has written down for himself is it does not fit with the character of the neighborhood. It is residential. There's a school there for residents and thinks at about 11:00 o'clock the streets roll up. A 24/7 operation 365 days per year doesn't happen there.

The motion FAILED with the following vote:

Yes: 1 - Hicks

No: 6 - Tamarkin, Suriano, Wester, Greenberg, Shapaka and Mako

Tamarkin asked with the no vote on the conditional use, should the Commission move forward with the other applications? Blackford said there is no reason to move forward without the conditional use application approved. No action was taken on the remaining applications.

[FDP-0009-2022](#)

To consider a Final Development Plan Application for property located on Johnstown and Morse Roads; Parcel IDs: 025-011244, 025-011243 and 025-011226; Current Zoning NC; Sheetz Gahanna; Sarah Gold,

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.

The application was discussed under CU-0009-2022. See attached staff presentation.

This item did not move forward.

[DR-0019-2022](#)

To consider a Design Review Application for property located on Johnstown and Morse Roads; Parcel IDs: 025-011244, 025-011243 and 025-011226; Current Zoning NC; Sheetz Gahanna; Sarah Gold, 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.

The application was discussed under CU-0009-2022. See attached staff presentation.

This item did not move forward.

[V-0033-2022](#)

To consider a Variance Application to vary Chapter 1167.18(c)(1) Screening Requirements and 1163.08 Interior Landscaping Requirements of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna, for property located on Johnstown and Morse Roads; Parcel IDs: 025-011244, 025-011243 and 025-011226; Current Zoning NC; Sheetz Gahanna; Sarah Gold, 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.

The application was discussed under CU-0009-2022. See attached staff presentation.

This item did not move forward.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

G. NEW BUSINESS - NONE

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Assistant City Attorney - None

Director of Planning - None

Council Liaison - None

Chair - None

Mayor Jadwin shared that this afternoon the Ohio Gastroenterology Group Project that Planning Commission approved at the last meeting appeared in *Columbus Business First* and the Gahanna Middle School East project was in *This Week* newspaper. Mayor Jadwin thanked the Commission for their good work. The mayor said she signed the paperwork for the \$8.5 million note purchase of 825 Tech Center Drive and hopes to be closing on it next week.

Hicks said that CIC meets on 11/15/2022.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS - NONE**J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT**

Suriano said that regarding the Sheetz application that the Commission heard tonight and recognizing Mr. Blackford for the amount of time and effort that goes into reviewing both from our engineering staff, planning staff and development staff, it does not sit lightly when the Commission has to look and make difficult decisions around whether something is compatible, especially in a condition like this. Understanding the great lengths that their development team has gone through; he fundamentally doesn't have any issues with the establishment itself. Just as he noted in the comments around the motion, it doesn't seem compatible. He just wanted to recognize the amount of work that goes into reviewing and let staff know that it's not taken lightly as they review it.

Mako echoed those sentiments to staff. In his day job, he is sitting in their chair and has had many votes go against him. He wanted to recognize staff's hard work on this, the presentation Blackford gave on this, and really anything that the commission sees is always well done and very thorough. This was a tough one. Conditional uses are kind of tricky. It is a balancing act. But knowing that area, and he goes through that area regularly, it was a bit much. That is no reflection on staff and their work.

Shapaka said the conditional use threw him off. He thinks Sheetz does an

excellent job with their product and how they present it. He was pretty much in favor of it with everything that they had presented, except for the side along Johnstown, because he thinks that their product is good.

Tamarkin said that as a former retailer, Sheetz is known as the best gas operator in the nation. They really are. But that does not mean that this location was the best location for a gas station.

Hicks said Mr. Shapaka made a comment during the discussion phase about this would have been a good project for a workshop. This is a great example of why he disagrees, but that's why the Commission discussed these things because to Mr. Tamarkin's point it is a good company. The decision has been made, but this is definitely a situation where future applicants should consider bringing proposed development before the Commission as a workshop to judge the temperature of the Commission before going through the process of the applications.

Wester commended Mr. Blackford, and all of the city staff. He said when you get a submittal of this size, there's considerable work put in to evaluate it. When something comes in at the last minute, this is poor planning on someone's part. Does it create an emergency on his part? He has practiced it for 50 years. Some people learn it, some don't. But he certainly respects the time Mr. Blackford, the city engineer and others put in evaluating this. He referred back to being surprised with a full access signal here being part of that traffic plan. Sheetz may be a good gas operator, but Wester had to look at the professionalism. He said maybe he holds himself to a high standard as a professional engineer. Wester reiterated his thanks to the city and the city staff for doing the work that was required.

Greenberg echoed about the city staff and great amount of work that they had to put on this project. He also thanked colleagues because he thinks hearing the issues discussed from everybody's perspective was very helpful as they moved forward in the discussions tonight.

K. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.