



# City of Gahanna

## Meeting Minutes

### Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

*Krystal Gonchar, Deputy Clerk of Council*

---

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

---

**Call in details: 513-306-4583, Conference ID: 826 306 465#. To speak during the meeting, at least one hour prior to the start of the meeting, you must email [planningcommission@gahanna.gov](mailto:planningcommission@gahanna.gov) and include: subject you wish to speak on, your name, address.**

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

Gahanna Planning Commission met virtually for a Regular Session, on Wednesday, August 26, 2020. The agenda for this meeting was published on August 21, 2020. Chair Michael Suriano called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present** 7 - Thom Shapaka, Michael Suriano, Bobbie Burba, Michael Greenberg, John Hicks, Michael Tamarkin, and Thomas J. Wester

#### **B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.**

#### **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

[2020-135](#)

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for August 12, 2020.

**A motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Greenberg, that the Minutes be Approved.**

**\* Burba was present for the meeting, but unable to voice her vote for the approval of the minutes due to technical issues.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 6 - Shapaka, Suriano, Greenberg, Hicks, Tamarkin and Wester

**Absent:** 1 - Burba

**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**[CC-003-2020](#)

To recommend approval to Council, changes to Part Eleven- Planning and Zoning Code, Chapter 1181- Personal Wireless Service Facilities, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna.

Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth presented the Commission with the attached draft version of the code changes, to be recommended to Council for approval. Roth provided a summary of the changes; this has been through several revisions, involved outside legal counsel, and there were some internal meetings with administrative staff; this has been in the works for some time; took some notes from the City of Dublin's code; a few years ago when the state granted ROW to anyone who wanted to install small cell towers, the city enacted code quickly, and these are more thorough revisions to that; the construction of these towers will begin soon and code needs to be in place ahead of time; due to state law, municipalities have very little control over these small cell towers; if we have reasonable requirements then cell phone companies will work with us; we need basic requirements for how we want these to look; there will be inspections after installation; the need to change the small tower code is what necessitated the changes in the large tower code; before, the small towers were addressed in the large tower code, but there is a distinction in regulations for both; there will be several different styles of poles depending on where they are located throughout the city; will not allow towers to be put on streetlights except for in the area of Creekside; all will be Gahanna Green; can be changed and enacted by Service Director.

Chair called for questions from the public. There were no comments.  
Chair called for questions from the Commission.

Tamarkin: understands that 5G will increase the number of towers; asked has that been projected for this code; the towers are much smaller but the wavelength travels a shorter distance. Roth confirmed that small towers are much closer together and so more will be required; there will still be a need for large towers because the small towers talk to those larger towers; maximum height will be 30' for these. Tamarkin said 5G small towers can only go the approximate distance of one block.

Hicks: Asked about the comments/placeholders listed on the draft; asked if those require anything additional. Roth stated that the draft was provided to the clerk in order to meet deadline requirements for legal advertisements; all comments have been addressed; no further comments or changes from outside counsel were provided.

Greenberg asked about the nonconforming towers and existing towers; asked if those would now be considered conforming when this is passed; is that a grandfather clause; in my line of work we require time limits. Roth said the towers that are up won't require any changes because they were in compliance at the time of construction, but if there would be any modifications to what is existing, then they would be required to follow current code. Blackford added that particular section is not changing; in zoning code, we don't typically require a sunset provision which would force demolition of the current in order to reconstruct under updated code.

**A motion was made by Tamarkin, seconded by Shapaka, that the Code Changes be Recommended to Council for Approval. The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

[V-016-2020](#)

To consider a Variance Application, to vary section 1171.03- Fence Standards, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna; for property located at 81 S. High St.; Parcel ID No. 025-000152-00; Current Zoning OG-1; Jeff Girard, applicant.

City Planner Michael Blackford provided a summary of the application; see attached file labeled *Staff Presentation*. The rear yard of this home is along an alley; the recently approved fence code changes would not have affected this situation; alley appears more like an extension of a parking lot instead of a roadway; adjacent property has a similar fence; staff recommends approval due to similar conditions in the area; seems to be a reasonable request.

Chair opened public comment at 7:27 p.m.

Jeff Girard, applicant: stated that his home was a rental for some time and he and his family decided to remodel the home and remain there instead of renting it out; the family has two large dogs and having a privacy fence would be necessary; tried to align the proposed fence with the neighbor's fence placement; would like maximum use of the yard.

Chair closed public comment at 7:31 p.m. and called on the Commission for questions.

Shapaka: understands the need for privacy, especially since the yard

abuts a public space and walking path; asked the applicant what types of dogs they have. The applicant said they were two very large dogs. Shapaka said having a higher fence would distract the dogs and would provide comfort to people passing by the home.

Greenberg: asked in the future, will the code cover when fences fall in disrepair; can the city do something about that. Blackford said the code does have existing language for maintenance of fences.

**A motion was made by Hicks, seconded by Tamarkin, that the Variance be Approved.**

**Discussion on the motion: Suriano said he would be voting in favor due to what was outlined in the presentation by staff and applicant; happy to see a new build in this area, and happy the applicant can make the home work for his family.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

**F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.**

**G. NEW BUSINESS: None.**

**H. OFFICIAL REPORTS**

**Assistant City Attorney**

No report.

**Planning & Development**

Blackford showed photos of some recently finished development projects that were seen before the commission. Stated that he has had some meetings to change the Design Review code; working on finding an interactive way to work with the public on those so the public can weigh in.

**Council Liaison**

Shapaka said that Council had their 2nd reading on the DORA ordinance; it was passed as an emergency.

**CIC Liaison**

Hicks said that the Supporting Gahanna Together small business

assistance program was launched last week; businesses impacted by COVID19 can apply to receive up to \$2,500; for more information, visit the city website.

**Chair**

No report.

**I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS: None.**

**J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT**

Greenberg thanked Blackford for showing pictures of the completed buildings; was happy to see them and thinks it's important to update the Commission. Suriano thanked Blackford as well and is encouraged to see those developments.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

By Wester at 7:43 p.m.