



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

John Hicks, Chair
Michael Suriano, Vice Chair
Bobbie Burba
Rick Duff
Thomas Shapaka
Donald R. Shepherd
Thomas J. Wester

Krystal Gonchar, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, February 27, 2019

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

Gahanna Planning Commission met for a Regular Meeting in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 200 South Hamilton Road, Gahanna, Ohio, on Wednesday, February 27, 2019. The agenda for this meeting was published on February 22, 2019. Chair John Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Bobbie Burba.

Present 7 - Thom Shapaka, Thomas J. Wester, Michael Suriano, John Hicks, Bobbie Burba, Donald R. Shepherd, and Rick Duff

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0028](#)

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for February 13, 2019.

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

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

Abstain: 1 - Shepherd

D. SWEAR IN APPLICANTS & SPEAKERS

Assistant City Attorney, Kristin Rosan, administered an oath to those persons wishing to present testimony this evening. Rosan stated the

rules for the public comment portion of the meeting.

E. APPLICATIONS - PUBLIC COMMENT

[DR-0003-2019](#)

To consider a Design Review application for a site plan for the installation of an 8' high ornamental iron fence, for property located at 909 Taylor Station Road; Parcel ID No. 025-006726-00; current zoning Office, Commerce & Technology (OCT); Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities; Larry Rancour, applicant.

Blackford provided a summary of the application: showed location and zoning map; surrounding properties are either in Jefferson Twp. or city of Columbus; request to install an 8' ornamental iron fence to secure Franklin County transportation vans; allowable by code; showed image of the style of fence the applicant is proposing to install; reviewed staff comments in the application; consistent with code, improvement to site, higher quality fence than typically found in the area.

Chair opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Applicant, Larry Rancour, with Shore Architects; not much to add; submitted photos with application; this is 165'-175' off the road, so not much will be seen from the roadway; county purchased new vans and wants to secure as soon as possible.

No public comments. Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:08 p.m.

Burba said it is beautiful and will be an improvement to area. Shapaka said the application shows a swinging gate; confirmed; said site plan does not match existing condition; the site plan shows one way access; asked why does the fence need to come out into the parking lot. Rancour said it's to secure the vans. Shapaka asked about stacking the vans near the lights. Rancour said there is a loading dock that interferes. Duff asked if they are still planning on having the fence contractor get the Knox box. Rancour confirmed. Duff said the fence looks good.

A motion was made by Duff, seconded by Suriano, that the Design Review be Approved.

Discussion on the motion: Hicks thanked the applicant for working with staff to be in line with the City Code.

The motion carried by the following vote:**Yes:** 6 - Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Shepherd and Duff**No:** 1 - Shapaka[DR-0004-2019](#)

To consider a Design Review application for a site plan for the installation of a fence, for property located at Gahanna Grove Condominiums; unit numbers and Parcel ID Nos. listed in the application and referenced in EXHIBIT A; current zoning Multi-family Residential District (AR); Karen Murphy, applicant.

Blackford provided a summary of the application; showed image of the black 6' chain link fence; approved one similar in style recently; purpose is to prevent trespassing; showed location on a map; did site visit; there's some vegetation but not much, could be due to weather; reviewed design review criteria; code encourages use of natural elements but does not prohibit fencing.

Chair opened the Public Hearing at 7:14 p.m.

Sandra Viers, Board President; stated the applicant was not available; proposal is based on an increased amount of break-ins and trespassing on that northern side; effects 26 units; residents have requested privacy and protection.

Closed at Public Hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Duff asked about the kind of problems they are having. Applicant said there were multiple police reports; someone in a hoodie wiggles the door knobs to see if the unit is secured; break-ins where tvs and all sneakers were stolen; fence would be on their property only; natural barriers have been broken down because of the trespassing. Duff confirmed that the fence will only go up on Wilkes Dr.

Hicks asked if 6' high chain link fence would deter trespassing. Applicant said it won't completely prevent trespassing but will decrease it; Board voted, only one wanted 8'; many attempted break-ins; people come up to the patio doors to look in; between 5-15 attempts reported.

Wester asked if those streets are private. Priestas confirmed. Wester asked if Gahanna PD patrols there. Priestas said he cannot confirm that.

A motion was made by Suriano, seconded by Duff, that the Design Review be Approved.

Discussion on the motion: Suriano stated that due to security issues, the applicant is within their rights by code to have the fence installed; will be voting in favor. Duff said he had initial concerns, but property owners have a right to protection. Hicks said he was also torn due to the dual concerns; for the criteria, the first 4 were not met, but the security issue speaks to him and will be in support.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Shapaka, Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Shepherd and Duff

[FDP-0001-2019](#)

To consider a Final Development Plan, for a retention pond, for property located at Tech Center Drive; Parcel ID No. 025-013631, current zoning Office, Commerce & Technology (OCT), Robert LeVeck, applicant.

Blackford said there was an approved site plan in November 2018; there has been a change in site plan; there's a need for above ground retention; meets code without a need for variances; is a substantial change from what was already approved, so an additional approval is required; reviewed FDP criteria; approved several different office buildings and three-fourths of them have above ground retention ponds; is consistent with surrounding area.

Chair opened the Public Hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Applicant, Robert LeVeck; stated that he's here to answer any questions.

Chair called for public comments, there were none. Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Duff noticed that the Soil Conservation District was concerned with discharge; this would lead to channel erosion; what was the response to that. Priestas said that may be evaluated during final engineering plans; sheet flow would eliminate that possibility.

A motion was made by Burba, seconded by Shepherd, that the Final Development Plan be Approved.

Discussion on the motion: Duff stated that he looked at the property and this seems the logical place for the pond.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Shapaka, Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Shepherd and Duff

4297 & 4301 Johnstown Rd.- Underhill & Hodge

[Z-0001-2019](#)

To recommend approval to Council, a Zoning application for 2.87 +/-

acres of property located at 4297 & 4301 Johnstown Rd.; Parcel ID No. 027-000142 & 027-000098; current zoning ER-2, Estate Residential; requested zoning SO, Suburban Office & Institutional; Michael Fleitz, applicant.

Blackford showed current location and zoning; parcel to the south was annexed in back in 2017; community commercial and CC Modified surround the parcel; when annexing in, the parcel is either estate residential or ER-2; always have anticipated medical offices here; the CU would allow 3 specific uses: medical and dental labs, health and allied services, not elsewhere classified; all SO uses are permissible; other applications that will be needed include an FDP for site layout, buffers, DR for architecture, color scheme and landscaping; SO allows for 27 uses; showed site plan which is informational at this point; not finalized until it comes back to Planning Commission; land use plans don't mandate uses but this is consistent with land use that is in review; located within north triangle TIF; will be a revenue stream for 30 years for the TIF; revenue could pay for sidewalks, widening of Morse Rd.; reviewed Zoning and Conditional Use criteria; consistent with land use; compatible with surrounding uses; this zoning is more restrictive with what would be allowed for current zoning; staff comments indicate it meets conditions for approval.

Chair opened Public Hearing at 7:36 p.m.

Applicant, Aaron Underhill; appreciates the opportunity to come out and speak; Dr. Fleitz is a long time member of the community; they practice north of Beecher Rd, not too far from here; office space is usually desired due to increased revenue; in the process of evaluating site plan and design; 10,000 sq. ft., 5,000 of which will be used by Dr. Fleitz and the other leased out; could be split into 2 buildings but market will determine that; still many details to work out; Dr. Fleitz wanted full access to site; originally was further north but that caused conflict; in agreement that this one will work; everything else is conceptual in nature.

Chair closed Public Hearing at 7:39 p.m.

Wester said he knows this is for the zoning but asked if there will be sidewalks. Priestas confirmed. Wester asked if this is full access. Priestas said study will be submitted with the FDP.

Duff said these 2 properties will be into one; one is in Mifflin Twp. and one is in Jefferson Twp.; along this whole corridor, referring to that southern property, it is the only one on that side of Johnstown Rd.

serviced by Jefferson Twp.; asked if there is any consideration as far as that goes, anything that could be done; any agreements with fire and safety.

Applicant said when annexed in, assumed Jefferson Twp. would have an obligation to go in since they are getting paid; perhaps there's a mutual aid agreement.

Suriano asked if SO is more restrictive than CC. Blackford said from a use standpoint, yes; includes 90+ uses.

A motion was made by Shepherd, seconded by Suriano, that the Zoning be recommended to Council for approval.

Discussion on the motion: Suriano said this is consistent with the surrounding area; will be in support. Hicks said ER zoning would be out of place; conditions have been met. Duff said he agrees; fits perfectly; is a nice addition. Suriano said grading is an issue; prefers the building go east towards Johnstown Rd.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Shapaka, Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Shepherd and Duff

[CU-0001-2019](#)

To consider a Conditional Use application to allow for the following uses to operate on the property under the Suburban Office classification: medical & dental, health & allied services, not elsewhere classified and services not elsewhere classified; for property located at 4297 and 4301 Johnstown Rd.; Parcel ID No. 027-000142 & 027-000098; current zoning ER-2, Estate Residential, proposed zoning SO, Suburban Office & Institutional; Michael Fleitz, applicant.

See discussion above, under Z-0001-2019.

A motion was made by Shepherd, seconded by Burba, that the Conditional Use be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Shapaka, Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Shepherd and Duff

4574 N. Hamilton Rd.- Blue Horseshoe Development, LLC

[Z-0002-2019](#)

To recommend approval to Council, a Zoning application for 1.78 +/- acres of property located at 4574 North Hamilton Rd.; Parcel ID No. 025-011245-00; current zoning CC-2, Community Commercial Modified District; requested zoning CX-1, Neighborhood Commercial, Mixed Use District; David Glimcher, applicant.

Blackford provided a summary of the applications; rezoning from CC-2 to CX-1; site plan is for a 4 story, 120 key hotel; showed site plan; reviewed

summary of table located in application, comparing the 2 zonings; located within 3 different land use plans; property designed as mixed use; located in North Triangle TIF; could bring in \$61 thousand annually in TIF revenue; could pay for sidewalks, widening of Morse Rd., intersection improvements at E. Johnstown and Riva Ridge; reviewed rezoning criteria; this is a newer zoning designation; two other similar sites, Clark Hall is one of them; economic development strategy analyzed lodging in the market; looking at areas like the airport and Easton, it was determined that 1,000 rooms needed but not all filled in Gahanna; 3 facilities could be built in the city; different classes identified as efficient are luxury, midscale, and economy; anticipated hotels go in the southern portion of the city like the Buckles Tract or Central Park area due to proximity of the airport; development will not have undesirable effect on surrounding area, is consistent with character and development potential of the area; don't know size and height yet since those come during FDP stage; CU does allow approval with conditions to limit intensity of development; staff comments include concerns about the scale of the project since it would be going in next to a residential area; overlay text may be appropriate to run with rezoning; can place conditions on the CU.

Chair reviewed rules of the Public Hearing; opened at 8:00 p.m.

Applicant David Glimcher, 101 E. West St., Columbus; we have spent a number of months reviewing this parcel; wanted to be considerate of the uses the city felt would be most appropriate; at the top of the list were hotels and collaborative offices; there's only room for one project in the space so a boutique hotel was chosen; exceeds a lot of currently existing development; a DR will incorporate landscaping, setbacks, etc.; this land and parcel south have been undeveloped for 30-50 years; homes on those properties were converted to offices; property fronting on Hamilton Rd. will naturally have some type of commercial attribute; the parcel is sitting at the rear end of a Giant Eagle; feels we are able to enhance the entire area; many new businesses are coming into the area; all those businesses have a need for hotel rooms; corporate offices such as Big Lots have a need for hotels near their offices; asks Commission to favorably consider our application.

Bill Miller, 1198 Sanctuary Pl; I'm a retired architect and former partner in a large firm; have over 40 years' experience in planning & design; CX-1 is not appropriate for the site; city has only approved 2 CX-1 areas in the past; Shops at Rocky Fork are one and Clark Hall Commons but those are radically different circumstances; this doesn't provide mixed use, not pedestrian oriented, doesn't encourage physical activity; not appropriate

for the space because the property is too small; needs at least 80 parking spaces for a 120 key hotel; there's a deficit of 40 spaces; can't turn left out of the site and there's difficulty at times to turn right; sometimes we have to sit through multiple cycles of the light to turn right onto Hamilton from Giant Eagle; does not meet goals of North Triangle plan because that calls for single story offices with access roads; 4 story hotel is too tall; not an ideal transition to condos; building looms over the complex; all vegetation would have to be removed; plan shows only a 15' buffer to the east; site is not convenient to the freeway; would worsen traffic congestion; concerned about property values; issues with security; there are 4 other hotels in Gahanna; 8 near south end and 10 in Easton; what happens when this goes bankrupt in a few years.

Dr. Allen Nichol 1217 Shagbark Rd.; stated that he agrees with everything Mr. Miller stated but wants to reiterate his concern over decreased property values.

George Mrus, 1217 Sanctuary Pl.; have lived with his wife for 13 years in Woods at Shagbark; active in hospice and so quality of life is important to him, wife, and neighbors, for today and future generations; ask members to think about quality of life on macro and micro levels; vote no for the Zoning and CU; over the years there have been conversations about trail system and shift in importance of walkability; that area is problematic; multiple times of day EMS and PD go through; traffic impact study is not needed but that only addresses right turn traffic; that touches on northbound only traffic going out of development; people will be making illegal turns out of there; recent Area Commission feedback included a rating as not desirable; applicant states traffic study not warranted; traffic should be part of this; have the study done; regarding location, this is Gahanna; have spent 30 years in hospitality; this is a commodity like Holiday Inn Express; city eluded to Buckles Tract and Crescent; that's a more appropriate location; closer to freeways, downtown Columbus and airport; vote no on Zoning and CU.

Joe Yurasek, 1244 Villa Oaks Ct.; although there have been some revisions to original plan submitted in July 2018, there were corrections but also some new errors; the size of development is too big for the property; material mistakes in submitted application include 7, 11, 12, 13; there are deficiencies; City of Gahanna recommends site should be developed as a hotel, city has not recommended; point 4 says no impact to surrounding properties; to the west is 100 percent residential, 100 units; can't turn left now; having no traffic study required makes it a public safety issue for us; planning is future looking, not short term issues; vision

of Commission is to look down the road; land use plans in place in 2003, 2012; new plan discusses what this will look like in 20-30 years; please look forward on those plans.

Christy King, 362 Villa Oaks Ln.; have been a resident there for 15 years; reiterated what neighbor Joe said; previous traffic study was paid for by the proposed developer; there's already a safety issue turning left going North of Villa Oaks; to include more traffic would be even more of a problem; not sure why a hotel in this area is needed when there are so many hotels to south and west of the city; not sure what kind of quality of life this will provide; vote no on both applications.

Keith Webster, 1223 Sanctuary Pl.; won't rehash everything that's already been said; a resident spent 5 minutes trying to get to Morse Rd. from our intersection; that's something you might expect in London or Chicago where I've lived, but not Gahanna; cars fill intersection despite everything that has been done; Dottie Franey has helped by putting signs up; people don't pay attention to those signs; traffic arrow adds to the gridlock; please leave zoning as is; average departure if hotel built at 50 percent occupancy would amount to 60 more vehicles; which is 60 more than the area can stand.

Louis Santos, 1166 Shagbark Rd.; recently moved to the area 6 months ago; concerned with security in the area; there's a COTA bus stop on Hamilton Rd. right outside of the entrance to Shagbark; there's a school bus stop too; people already try to cut through property; when kids are playing, have a concern with their safety; with traffic backing up, people try to pull through property to turn around; have even seen people drive through grass; this needs a traffic study; I used to work in hotels; concerned with number of employees and salaries compared to a regular office building and the amount of taxes; seems from a lay person perspective that there would be less tax revenue, would be interested to know; encourages to no vote on zoning.

Glimcher responded: I've been a developer for over 35 years; in 500 cities across the country; have had an enjoyable process so far in working with city staff; when new development comes in, people don't want it; if asked the residents what they would want they would say a park; can't encumber individuals and property owners to build a park; have conformed with requirements of city based on known uses and traffic; may not be 120, but up to that amount, a traffic study is not required; provided traffic count; no matter what is brought here it will cause a lot more traffic than this hotel; current uses allow for more traffic;

when there is a lot of development in an area, one cannot shut down more development to suit one's own concerns; north side of Shagbark abuts the rear of Giant Eagle; concerns will be more significant there than what's behind a hotel; not in a residential zone; have been back and forth on this; would be one of the uses that the city would like to see, as indicated by Blackford; cannot do what everyone wants, but can do what most people want; hotel industry has changed dramatically; luxury is different now compared to what was there 20 years ago; it is already tough to make a right hand and left hand turn; should not stop development; approve zoning request and CU.

Linda Thompson, 276 Villa Oaks Ln.; asked what is a boutique hotel; asked for clarification.

Glimcher stated examples like A loft, Cambria, Moxy; limits service hotels; small business service area, may serve breakfast, and may have happy hour; geared towards business and hotels for family events like graduations, weddings, etc.

Nicol reiterated that this could have negative impact on property value in area; would diminish tax base.

Santos: Giant eagle closes at midnight; traffic decreases around 7pm; hotel is 24 hour business so increase in traffic; already zoned for commercial use, knew a park wouldn't go in; can ONLY make a right turn onto Hamilton; if servicing airport and southern Gahanna, those people can only drive north out of area.

Yurasek: regarding parks, open spaces are thoroughly integrated into urban areas; green space can be smaller like plaza areas; review new urbanism as suggested in forthcoming land use plan; don't negate the idea of a park; currently there are none close; stated he had served on the Warren County Planning Commission.

King: if facility would be rented out for events; don't believe this property has enough parking to sustain that; overflow would go to Villas of Gahanna.

Glimcher reiterated the customer base for the hotel, not that the hotel would be rented out for those events; not an event planning space; more traffic generated by Giant Eagle employees than hotel guests; customer arrives between 12-6, some may go till 8 or 9; check out will be 5-9 a.m.; not many hotel employees; could be discussing this during the Design

Review.

Miller: thinks the main issues are size and height, makes a big difference on perception and increases density; 120 keys is really high for the site.

Brian Shaw, legal representation for residents at Woods at Shagbark; asks Commission to consider areas that would be more appropriate for hotels; applicant cites the convenience to 270; if reaching intended goal then majority of traffic will go south; everyone must try to turn left; if goal is to encourage people to come to Gahanna and spend money in Gahanna and build in Gahanna, is that 120 key hotel the best for the area.

Chair closed the Public Hearing at 8:43 p.m.

Shepherd asked Priestas about stacking on Hamilton Rd.; spend lots of time in the area; have lived here for over 40 years; is stacking caused going north; is Columbus going to widen the road. Priestas said primarily due to lack of capacity north of Morse Rd.; goes from 2 lanes to 1; project scheduled to begin this year. Shepherd asked if traffic going east has an impact. Priestas said does not believe so, it's mostly north bound; already have a right turn only lane.

Shapaka said site plan showed continuation of property to the south. Glimcher said not in control of that property.

Burba concerned about that one way turn, people will miss the turn; people will be turning into Vistas and making u-turns; will be a lot of problems; thinks there needs to be a traffic study. Wester said in the past we have had studies going from 1 intersection to another, is that a viable option in this situation. Priestas said 100 trips in peak hour or 1,000 in day; submitted to outside consultant; nothing this development could do could help this traffic; trouble is with city of Columbus up north. Suriano asked if in CC-2, if the height is regulated by airport. Blackford said north of 150', closer to Buckles Tract is 50'. Duff asked what the lot depth is. Blackford said 43' in rear yard setback.

Shepherd asked if desire of city is to have 3 parcels developed as one. Blackford said would minimize entrance points to one; can't require that though. Suriano asked what the city requires for a parking lot for a hotel. Blackford said 1 space per room, 1 space per employee per shift.

A motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Zoning be Recommended to Council for Approval.

Discussion on the motion:

The motion failed by the following vote:

Wester: not supporting because the Commission should consider the following elements: consistent with goals, plan for the area; how this impacts residents, site plan mentions significant landscaping; does not think there's enough space for landscaping; this is too big for the space; compatibility in items 2 and 4, how is it compatible with the current traffic situation and environment in the area; traffic can be great for or kill a business; demand for types of uses, better sites in Gahanna would be more compatible for hotel traffic; may be a plans up where Hamilton and 161 meets, near Easton.

Duff concerned with proposed development and rezoning to CX-1, side yard of 0 feet is a concern especially with building of the lot to the south; can 120 rooms fit in there; Dr. Fleitz has 109 parking spaces and that's on over an acre of property and has adequate landscaping and buffering; from city perspective wants to welcome people to the city; only being able to access from one direction, it takes 20 minutes during rush hour to get down Morse Rd.; traffic is not welcoming.

Suriano will be supporting because he does believe as outlined with staff, this is consistent with city goals, mixed use for land use; won't comment on site plan or those items that will be reviewed in the FDP process; too many variable to speculate; what is proposed can be comparable with site; regarding other sites zoned CX-1, only 2 other sites; concerned that CC-2 uses could be more intense in terms of height.

Shepherd will be supporting; agrees with zoning for this property would be better served as CX-1; traffic concerns will be fixed in the next few months so by the time a hotel is built traffic, will not be an issue.

Hicks trying to distinguish between potential use and zoning request before us; must evaluate potential use not proposed use; like Suriano and Shepherd, a lot of negative effects are existing and asked should that interfere with property rights; agrees with public comments, there could be better uses; will be supporting zoning request.

Yes: 3 - Suriano, Hicks and Shepherd

No: 4 - Shapaka, Wester, Burba and Duff

[CU-0002-2019](#)

To consider a Conditional Use application to allow for the construction of a hotel with 17+ rooms; for property located at 4574 North Hamilton Rd.; Parcel ID No. 025-011245-00; current zoning CC-2, Community Commercial Modified District, proposed zoning CX-1, Neighborhood Commercial, Mixed Use District; David Glimcher, applicant.

See discussion above, under Z-0002-2019.

A motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Conditional Use be Approved. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Suriano and Shepherd

No: 5 - Shapaka, Wester, Hicks, Burba and Duff

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

G. NEW BUSINESS

None.

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Assistant City Attorney

No report.

City Engineer

Priestas said he will be postponing the code changes to March.

Planning & Development

Blackford said we are in the final stages of the Land Use Plan; will have a public engagement meeting on 3/20/19 at City Hall; visit the website gahannalanduseplan.com.

Council Liaison

Burba said that Council voted to approve the Paulina Place Zoning and Variance.

CIC Liaison

No report.

Chair

No report.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS

None.

J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

Shapaka said that he enjoyed the public participation this evening.
Suriano thanked staff for working with the applicants; knows it is a lot of work.

K. ADJOURNMENT

By Wester at 9:06 p.m.