



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Sarah Pollyea, Chair
Michael Suriano, Vice Chair
Michael Greenberg
Elizabeth Laser
James Mako
Thomas Shapaka
Michael Tamarkin

Sophia McGuire, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

6:30 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

Gahanna Planning Commission met in regular session on May 13, 2026. The agenda for this meeting was published on May 8, 2026. Chair Sarah Pollyea called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Michael Greenberg.

Present 7 - James Mako, Chair Sarah Pollyea, Vice Chair Michael Suriano, Thomas W. Shapaka, Michael Greenberg, Elizabeth Laser, and Michael Tamarkin

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2026-0090](#)

Planning Commission workshop minutes 4.8.2026

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

Yes: 6 - Mako, Chair Pollyea, Vice Chair Suriano, Greenberg, Laser and Tamarkin

Abstain: 1 - Shapaka

[2026-0091](#)

Planning Commission meeting minutes 4.8.2026

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

Yes: 6 - Mako, Chair Pollyea, Vice Chair Suriano, Greenberg, Laser and Tamarkin

Abstain: 1 - Shapaka

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-0003-2026](#)

To consider a Development Plan application for property located at 349 Shady Spring Drive; Parcel ID 025-008749; Current Zoning RI - Restricted Institutional; Middle School South Addition; Carrie Smith, Schorr Architects, applicant.

City Planner Maddie Capka introduced the application; see the attached staff presentation for details. The application is for a Major Development Plan at Gahanna Middle School South for an addition of 6,235 square feet, at a height of 17 feet. The addition includes four new classrooms and associated hallways.

Capka described the planned building exterior, which will be brick with limestone accents. Existing parking requirements of 286 spaces will continue to be met, with 300 spaces provided.

Gahanna Codified Ordinances Chapter 914 provides planting requirements for new impervious surfaces. Eight caliper inches, or four trees, will be planted. No additional landscape is required, as the parking lot will not be modified.

Capka shared a site plan of the addition, outlined in purple. She described the addition as being approximately 224 feet from the east property line, which runs along Shady Spring Drive. Additional sides of the addition are 360 feet and 443 feet from their respective property lines.

Capka then shared an aerial photo of the site as it currently sits, with the addition rendered in purple. She then provided a portion of the submitted landscape plan, which outlined the location of the proposed trees in green.

Capka provided elevations of the addition. She drew attention to the fact that at 17 feet high, the addition is shorter than the rest of the school building.

She then provided the Major Development 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.

The development is in accord with appropriate plans for the area.

The development would not have undesirable effects on the surrounding area.

The development would be in keeping with the existing land use character and physical development potential of the area.

Staff recommended approval of the Major Development Plan as submitted. Capka explained that the project is similar to the Gahanna Middle School West application, approved the prior month by the Planning Commission. The Middle School South application met all zoning requirements and is intended to be an expansion of an existing permitted use. The proposed exterior building materials will match the existing materials. The addition is shorter than the existing structure. Capka closed her comments by noting the addition is located primarily to the rear of the building.

Chair Pollyea opened Public Comment at 6:37 p.m. With no members of the public wishing to speak, Chair Pollyea closed Public Comment at 6:38 p.m.

Carrie Smith, Project Manager at Schorr Architects, introduced herself to the commission. She explained the addition would consist of four classrooms and would help the school with growth in the coming years.

She opened the floor to questions from commissioners.

Mr. Mako noted the site plan includes a proposed 10-foot water line easement. He inquired whether it is for a new service or if the existing water line would be moved. Smith explained that the location of the proposed addition is where the existing water line runs, so it would need to be moved. Mr. Mako then inquired about application notes indicating the addition would comply with Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). Ms. Smith explained that the project included reworking the bus loop curb-cut, in order to meet accessibility standards.

Mr. Greenberg asked about the schedule for the project. Ms. Smith replied that construction was anticipated to start in summer of 2026, pending civil engineering permit approval. Building permit approval was already complete. Construction would continue for approximately one year, with the addition completion anticipated in time for the 2028-2029 school year.

Chair Pollyea inquired about the circulation space shown on the plan. Ms.

Smith explained the layout, including placement of hallways, a new exterior door, and egress. Smith also confirmed the addition would connect to the existing structure.

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

Discussion:

Mr. Shapaka commended the architect for keeping in line with the design of the existing structure, stating his support for the application.

Mr. Mako expressed his appreciation that the addition was presented with no variances. He also indicated his support for the application.

Commissioners Suriano, Laser, and Pollyea also expressed support for the application.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Mako, Chair Pollyea, Vice Chair Suriano, Shapaka, Greenberg, Laser and Tamarkin

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

G. NEW BUSINESS - None

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Assistant City Attorney

Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth reported on the Charter Review Commission as it relates to the Planning Commission. He noted that the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals (BZBA) is being considered for elimination. Reasons include the opportunity to appeal decisions to court and infrequent meetings. He also remarked on members of the City Attorney's Office being put in precarious circumstances, due to representing different parties.

Chair Pollyea inquired whether there were any additional proposals related to the Planning Commission; Mr. Roth did not recall.

Director of Planning

Director Blackford expressed his support for the abolition of the BZBA. He noted certain functions would occasionally go to the Planning Commission if the BZBA were eliminated. Director Blackford also shared that zoning code changes were under review by the City Council.

He reported on upcoming applications, including a possible Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Conditional Use application.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS

J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

Mr. Tamarkin stated he would not be present at the next meeting.

K. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.