



# 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*

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Wednesday, February 13, 2019

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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#### 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 13, 2019. The agenda for this meeting was published on February 8, 2019. Chair John Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Thom Shapaka.

**Present** 6 - Thom Shapaka, Thomas J. Wester, Michael Suriano, John Hicks, Bobbie Burba, and Rick Duff

**Absent** 1 - Donald R. Shepherd

#### B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0003](#)

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for January 9, 2019 and Workshop Meeting Minutes for January 23, 2019.

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

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

**Absent:** 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-0001-2019](#)

To consider a Design Review application for a building design for property located at 62 Mill Street; Parcel ID No. 025-000084-80; Current Zoning OG-2; The Keating Firm; Brad Keating, applicant.

Michael Blackford, Deputy Director of Planning & Development, provided a summary of the application; showed site and photos of the storefront before and after the changes were made; provided design guidelines for Olde Gahanna; showed a storefront directly across the street which was approved with similar paint colors and style; showed Nth degree store front, for which an application was recently approved.

Chair opened the meeting for public comment at 7:09 p.m.; called on applicant; applicant not present.

Chair called for public comments; there were none; closed public comment at 7:10 p.m.

Chair called for questions from the Commission.

Wester said this is the first he has heard of this; does not recall an application within the last 90 days, but noticed some construction there; seems the applicant is asking for forgiveness instead of permission; said the siding was even changed; noted a very dramatic change.

Suriano asked Blackford if he knows the material of the siding. Blackford said application did not go into detail of siding materials. Suriano said Olde Gahanna is an area of the City that comes under a lot of scrutiny when it comes to Design Review; this puts the Commission in a sticky spot.

Duff said there are certain aspects of this that he likes; lighting is a good choice; however awning and siding were removed; wood trim was installed; this side of the street is predominantly red, tan, green, or brick; this color scheme does not mesh with the other buildings in the area; was surprised about the tenant.

Shapaka does not mind the color but the abandonment of the siding; this is just a color application before them as if the materials were already pre-approved; feels it is an instance of the cart before the horse.

**A Motion was made by Duff, seconded by Suriano, to Approve the Design Review Application.**

**Discussion on the Motion:** Commission asked what recourse they have. Rosan said a new application would need to be filed; should address factors being evaluated when giving vote.

**Suriano:** not in favor; difficult to discern materials which has impact on longevity and appearance as the building ages; facade detail is lacking.

**Duff:** will not support; wants it resubmitted to reflect materials and lighter gray color to see if that would offset and fall more in line with what is in the area.

**Wester:** building design is not compatible; will not be in support.

**Burba:** agrees with colleagues; not in support.

**Shapaka:** not in support, due to design being out of proportion.

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

**Yes:** 0

**No:** 6 - Shapaka, Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba and Duff

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

[DR-0002-2019](#)

To consider a Design Review application for a site plan and building design for property located at 1900 Deffenbaugh Court; Parcel ID No. 025-013006; Current Zoning OCT; Suburban Steel Supply Co.; Donald Weaver, applicant.

Blackford provided a summary of the application; showed site plan; showed images from street view; reviewed DR criteria within OCT district; consistent with code; staff recommends approval.

Chair opened the meeting for public comment at 7:2 p.m.

Applicant, Donald Weaver, 620 Reindeer Ln.; original shop was done in 2003; they have outgrown the building; this is an extension of existing space; functional and matches what is currently out there.

Chair called for public comment; there was none. Chair closed the meeting for public comment at 7:23 p.m.

Chair called for questions from the Commission; there were none.

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

**Discussion on the motion:**

**Suriano:** will be voting in favor; structure matches what's there; is consistent.

**Wester:** also in favor; good to see businesses expanding in Gahanna.

**Duff:** addition tastefully done; happy to addition to business; will be in favor.

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

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

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

[V-0002-2019](#)

To consider a Variance application to vary sections 1171.03(f), 1171.03(g), and 1171.03(h) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna, to allow for the construction of a 6' high privacy fence; for property located at 80 Flint Ridge Drive; Parcel ID No. 025-002985; current zoning SF-3; Robert and Sally Keelen, applicants.  
(Advertised in the RFE on 2/7/2019)

Blackford provided a summary of the application; showed location and zoning; request is for a 6' tall privacy fence along north property line; code only allows for rear yard; SF-3 requires 35' setback; can condition a variance to speak to the style of fence; 3 variances are necessary; fence cannot extend beyond the front building setback line, fence height is limited to no more than 42" in front yard; privacy fences prohibited in side and front yard; staff comments include possible alternatives; site heavily covered with vegetation and/or decorative fence to clarify property line; granting the variance would not be detrimental although no other similar instances of approvals or requests near there.

Chair opened public comments at 7:31 p.m.

Applicant, Rob Keelan, 80 Flint Ridge; when we moved in to this home, the main attraction was privacy; all along that outline of the property, there was vegetation and the apartments could not be seen; home sits on large lot; built an addition on the back of the home for our handicap son; will not be moving; invested into the home due to our son; privacy continues to decrease over time; 42" fence will not give us privacy, especially with vegetation being cut down; fence will match the one that runs along the rest of the line.

Sally Keelan, 80 Flint Ridge; is there any option to take the fence to the front of the house if not allowed to go all the way to the build line; that would at least give privacy to the front of the house.

Blackford said that is an option that Planning Commission has; first variance listed would not be necessary if they chose that option; is a heavily wooded property so not sure how visible this will be anyway.

Keelan said no trees would be cut down if the fence went up. Hicks confirmed a privacy fence in the side yard would require a variance.

Chair closed public comment at 7:37 pm.

Duff asked Blackford if a fence would need a variance if apartments were requesting it be put in because then it would be in their backyard. Blackford said because it was zoned SF-3, there's not a different standard for multi-family; technically the apartment would need a variance too.

Hicks asked if the parcel has 2 front yards. Blackford said no; said is a case of multiple parcels changing from Single family to commercial.

Wester said the aerial view of property shows fence location, highlighted in orange-brown color; asking for clarity; there's a scratched out portion but doesn't see anything with a red portion; image shown tonight was just the area that requires variance approval.

Shapaka asked where the fence is located in relation to tree lines. Applicant showed him. Shapaka asked if there's a change in grade there. Applicant said there's a slight dip down and the fence will follow the contour. Shapaka said it appears the applicant is looking down on apartment and would a 42" fence not do the job. Applicant said no. Shapaka asked how much of tree line will be retained. Applicant said no trees would be cut down.

Suriano asked if trees would be north or south of fence. Applicant said south.

Duff said the house is one of the original homes on Granville; built in 1930s, which is why the front is facing north. Applicant said it was facing Granville. Duff said the home predates the other development there.

Hicks said the applicant mentioned the owners of the apartments trespassed onto property and cut trees down. Applicant said the police department said this is civil not criminal; spoke with an attorney and was told he would lose money for the fight; provided apartments with a quote for replacing trees; nothing happened then and later more trees were cut down; wants privacy.

Shapaka said it appears they are at an impasse; if we split the variance, the fence would go to new front of building; there's a need there; adjacent property has a deck in the back; privacy would have to go to easterly

edge; don't know how to define dimension. Hicks said if applicant withdraws the variance they have that option; can split the motion into 3 separate motions. Suriano said we are talking about a 10' difference; would eliminate a variance to go from 25-35. Duff said the extra 10 is logical; more aesthetically pleasing. Shapaka said dark line showing 25', if first variance is withdrawn, this would go back to the deck. Applicant said there are 2 groups of apartments, each with a deck. Shapaka said coming out 25' would be aggressive.

**A motion was made by Shapaka, Seconded by Burba, to Approve the Variance to Section 1171.03(g).**

**Discussion on the motion:**

**Duff:** initially against this; after discussing, makes sense to go ahead and allow a 6' fence as this appears to be more of a backyard and grading; this is an old house, built circa 1930 and that should be taken into consideration.

**Suriano:** also in support; looking at grade and vegetation, the fence will be well screened.

**Wester:** agreement with Duff and Suriano.

**Duff added:** have taken a look at the building and location and feels confident in what is before them.

**Burba in agreement.**

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

**Yes:** 5 - Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba and Duff

**No:** 1 - Shapaka

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

**A motion was made by Shapaka, Seconded by Burba, to Approve the Variance to Section 1171.03(f).**

**Discussion on the motion:**

**Duff:** in support because the way it would be more aesthetically pleasing; looks more like a rear fence.

**Suriano:** also in support for reasons stated by Duff.

**Wester:** will be in support.

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

**Yes:** 5 - Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba and Duff

**No:** 1 - Shapaka

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

**A motion was made by Shapaka, Seconded by Suriano, to Approve the Variance to Section 1171.03(h).**

**Discussion on the motion:**

**Duff: again in support since this is more like a back yard situation.**

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

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

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

### **TowerCo/Verizon Wireless**

#### [V-0001-2019](#)

To consider a Variance application to vary sections 1181.05(c) to allow for the construction of a new cell tower in a SF-3 zoning district and 1105(d)(3)(f) to allow for an increase to the allowable height, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna; for property located at McCorkle Park, Olde Ridenour Road; Parcel ID No. 025-004341; current zoning SF-3; Robert Ferguson, applicant for Tower Co.  
(Advertised in the RFE on 2/7/2019)

Blackford provided a summary of the application; this land is owned by the city and used as park space; this project started in 2015 at a different site; was an exhaustive search to find a site which would be least impactful; showed site plan; surrounded by fields and creek; nice separation from nearest residential dwelling; when zoning code last changed, a lot of thought was put into where to place cell towers; 360' setback was sought; 2 variances necessary: new towers not permitted in single family, tower height limited to 80' and ask is for 120' with 8' lightening rod and 4 additional feet for top of antenna; unique because PWSF process is a CU process; reviewed CU criteria; development will not have undesirable effect on surrounding area; development will be in keeping with existing land use character and potential use of area; reviewed variance criteria; showed aerial map of 2 recent tower requests; difficult in Gahanna to find any property without some level of impact; this application took so long to come before PC because it was proposed to go on golf course; believed it was too close to roadway there; was first proposed to be a silo; that was too impactful; staff recommends approval; variance is necessary for tower to function properly.

Chair opened the meeting for public comments at 8:13 p.m.

Applicant, Robert Ferguson; thanked Blackford for thorough commentary;

will address the height issue; there's a river bed and sloping land nearby; site at New Life church was also 120 ft.; is high enough above trees to cover the current service gap.

Jason Woodward, 5000 Valleystone Dr., North Carolina; here with applicant; the other reason for height is to ensure the tower will be co-locatable; will be used by as many providers as possible.

Chair called for public comment.

Chris Schuett, 225 Stonegate Circle; reviewed application; would ask that the Commission keep in mind that co-location makes money and compliments surrounding communities; City has a new walking path coming in; is this the best and most appropriate option technology wise; are there any improvements that can be made in regards to tower height, color, design; would the proposed landscaping be grand enough to provide adequate visual screening; do fencing materials compliment the surrounding areas; would the noise be intrusive to surrounding community; is there currently a tower on the Creekside buildings; would the tower here interfere with fireworks launching area.

Kevin Cavener, 3657 Olde Ridenour; lives across from this; tower will go up by brand new walking path by creek; will have a lot of traffic and will be unappealing; sound will scare the dogs; there are other places to put the tower; could go further south; why build a new \$500,000 bridge over the walking path and then build this; why not use 62 Granville Street.

Hans Weisheimer, 3650 Olde Ridenour Rd.; low lying area does not seem ideal; located in flood zone; in event of a flood this would be out of commission for extended period; macro site will have significant capacity; first responders and people impacted by such an event, would lose a large amount of capacity; construction will remove 10,000 sq. ft. of wooded area; don't see the need for that.

Ferguson stated Blackford explained the history of the project goes back quite a few years; looked at tower in Cemetery Park; that location was turned down by the Commission at that time; tower to north up at 62 and Hamilton has co-location; there's a tower south near the bowling alley; still leaves a gap in that area; trying for 10 years to get coverage there; this site will not have a generator so should not be of concern.

Woodward said the site is outside of 100 year floodplain; must abide by FEMA; if ever there is an instance of being in a flood plain, we are required to elevate equipment; basic steel platform raised by 1'; the wooded area allows for more coverage; backup power is required; this



runs on self-power.

Weisheimer stated the drawing shows plan inside of the flood plain. Priestas said flood plain is present. Suriano said applicant must elevate to certain measurements. Priestas said applicant will have to work with flood plain administrator on this; they have built in flood plain before. Woodward said the height would not increase the tower, just the equipment; apologized for misinformation about the flood plain. Priestas said there's a flood way and flood plain; this is located in the flood plain outside of the flood way.

Cavener asked how close the new overpass and tower will be; when you walk over the new walkway, will you see the tower. Priestas said tower located northwest in a heavily wooded area, would have to physically look up when walking on the trail to see it.

Schuett asked if there's currently a tower on Mill Street; seemed like there was a Creekside tower somewhere; asked if something had been installed. Ferguson said that is correct; Creekside rooftop could take an antenna array; looked at that in the past and turned down that location. Schuett asked why that was turned down, why not further explore; understands the business needs places to go; but this is where recreation activities occur; Verizon is the only company that seems to go after 120' towers; maybe they make money off of other companies with co-locating technology.

Woodward said we build from all different varieties; from 300'-400' in areas, to 40' towers; this would normally be a 175' for ultimate coverage but don't want to push too hard; settled on 120' with the city; would not be a negative factor with fireworks, etc.; have spent a lot of time to get this area covered; many people using phones at homes; customers want faster speeds; small cell technology is a small solution for hotspots; can only reach 4-5 meters; is an offload from macro site; macro is the queen and small cells are the pawn; when you have a dense and uncovered area, would need well over 30-40 small cells to cover what a macro could; is more efficient to use this method.

Schuett said his final question is "why was Creekside option turned down." Ferguson; rooftop is underneath the coverage area; that is west of the bubble; RF engineer did the evaluation; Creekside would not be tall enough to cover area; cemetery would have been 190' which would have given better coverage for the area; that height is not well received in cities.

Chair closed the meeting for public comment at 8:34 p.m.

Suriano asked if proposed tower will impact usability and function of park. Priestas said there would be no impact; very minimal impact to the trees there.

Wester asked who will own the tower. Woodward said TowerCo will own it; Verizon is leasing from TowerCo.

Chris Bland, 1165 Forsyth Lane, Galena; owns cell tower company; compensated by city to ensure Verizon and a tower companies are vetted; they ask is it needed and does it fit aesthetically; no liability to city for damaged equipment due to flooding. Wester asked if this is battery powered. Woodward said yes, but generator could be added; generator requires propane. Wester asked if that were to change would they need to come back. Blackford said that would require code review. Woodward said FCC requires 8 hour battery backup.

Shapaka asked for a description of transformer. Woodward said power pulled from ROW in 200 amp service under 20v underground off Ridenour; power pole in ROW goes to underground compound. Shapaka asked to show where that is on the site plan.

Duff asked for any consideration to site at Stoneybrook where old FOP parking lot is; not much housing there and has higher elevation. Ferguson said no discussions there; focus on Olde Ridenour and land adjacent to that; not looked up 62 or Cherry Bottom. Duff said mentioned that because it is a high elevation and across from the creek. Ferguson said lineal distance will make an impact; intention is to fill in a circular area; moving that much farther down, will still have coverage issues.

Duff asked about the distance of enclosure from the soccer field; landscaping looks short; also curious about fence; is a chance soccer balls would fly into or over it. Ferguson said looks 20-25' based on graphic depiction. Duff said most enclosures are 8'. Ferguson said due to proximity, don't believe it will be barbed wire. Woodward said is a decorative fence to better blend; also a wide band of trees between the field; based on scale looks like 40'. Duff said Area Commission comments were on the golf course location not current proposed site. Ferguson said for clarification on the plantings, they are 8' off the fence; did agree to landscape. Duff asked Blackford if underneath the bottom corner, looks like there's a rough dirt path, is that where the current bridge goes now. Priestas said it looks close. Duff asked if 275' offset is off the trail. Priestas said from walking trail.

Hicks asked about sight line if a resident off of Ridenour. Ferguson said

a portion of tower is peaking out over trees; this tower will not be lit at all; no glowing effect in day or night; ran FAA inquiry; not in flight pattern.

Wester asked about antenna, are they directional. Ferguson said omni-direction; covers 360 degrees. Wester asked if antenna will be on one leg or all 3. Ferguson said all 3. Wester asked if strength is equal for all 360 degrees; Ferguson confirmed.

**A motion was made by Wester, seconded by Burba, that the Variance be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

[PWSF-0001-2019](#)  
[9](#)

To consider a Personal Wireless Service Facility application to construct a new cell tower; for property located at McCorkle Park, Olde Ridenour Road; Parcel ID No. 025-004341; Current Zoning SF-3; Robert Ferguson, applicant for Tower Co.  
(Advertised in the RFE on 2/7/2019)

See discussion above, under V-0001-2019.

**A motion was made by Wester, seconded by Suriano, that the Personal Wireless Service Facilities be Approved, with the modification that if in the event a generator is desired, the plans be submitted to the City Engineer for approval. The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

**Absent:** 1 - Shepherd

#### **F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **G. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

#### **H. OFFICIAL REPORTS**

**Assistant City Attorney**

No report.

**City Engineer**

Priestas provided an update on code changes discussed late 2018; currently in legal review. Hope to discuss at the next meeting.

### **Planning & Development**

Blackford stated there will be a lengthy agenda for the next meeting. There will be some re-zoning applications and a few other types.

### **Council Liaison**

Burba stated that Issue 29 will go back to the ballot in May; the 2019 budget passed.

### **CIC Liaison**

Hicks stated the CIC met and elected the same officers as the year prior; next meeting will be next Tuesday morning at 7:30 a.m. here at City Hall in the Committee Room.

### **Chair**

No report.

## **I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS**

None.

## **J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT**

Wester said the Clerk sent an email last week and it mentioned opportunities to attend Ethics Law Training and Sunshine Law Certification; recommends that new members attend; they are very enlightening and educational.

Hicks thanked those in attendance tonight and for the great and lengthy explanation by the applicant and discussion with residents.

## **K. ADJOURNMENT**

By Wester at 8:58 p.m.