



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

Krystal Gonchar, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, November 20, 2019

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

Gahanna Planning Commission met in Regular Session in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 200 South Hamilton Road, Gahanna, Ohio, on Wednesday, November 20, 2019. The agenda for this meeting was published on November 15, 2019. Chair John Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Suriano.

Present 6 - Thomas J. Wester, Michael Suriano, John Hicks, Bobbie Burba, Michael Greenberg, and Michael Tamarkin

Absent 1 - Thom Shapaka

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0161](#)

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2019.

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

Yes: 6 - Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Greenberg and Tamarkin

Absent: 1 - Shapaka

D. SWEAR IN APPLICANTS & SPEAKERS

City Attorney Shane Ewald administered an oath to those persons wishing to present testimony this evening.

E. APPLICATIONS - PUBLIC COMMENT

[FDP-0007-2019](#) To consider a Final Development Plan application for The Shops at McKenna Creek; a project to include neighborhood service retail, professional and medical offices, restaurant and off-site emergency department; for property located at N. Hamilton Rd. & Beecher Rd.; Parcel ID No. 025-009953; current zoning Planned Commercial Center (PCC); William Schottenstein, applicant.

Interim Director of Planning & Development, Michael Blackford, provided summaries of the Final Development Plan and Design Review applications; he showed images of the site plan and zoning districts as well as surrounding zoning districts; reviewed code requirements for building set back and buffers; showed renderings which were submitted as part of the applications; materials include brick; the overlay text requires a popular design from the 1990s; stated the property is appropriate for 52,000 square feet of retail, but that does not account for the ravine; land use plan proposes a mixed use of retail and residential is permitted; this project is significantly less intense than the recommendations of the land use plan, which is not a bad thing when thinking about the ravine. Blackford provided a history of the area; there was a 2018 approval which had a similar layout; it was appealed later that year to BZBA, which granted the appeal in favor of the appellant; reviewed the criteria for granting approvals for Final Development Plan and Design Review applications; staff recommends approval of both applications; when looking at requests, this is consistent with zoning; the materials and design are consistent with the overlay text; has been zoned for commercial use since the 1990s but has not been developed; Beecher Rd. is designed as a local road.

Chair reviewed rules for public hearings per the commission rules.

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

Glen Dugger, attorney for the applicant; introduced Joe Sugar and Jason Koma, Shital, Ryan Bush; described the location of the property; said for those of you who were here 2 years ago, you know the history; this project does meet all the requirements; this is without variances, is consistent with city plans; has no undesirable effects; Hamilton Rd. from Obetz to New Albany is a commercial street; preservation easement remains in place; would like to have Jason Koma speak. Chair said at this time we will discuss the FDP and then the DR later. Dugger said everything is similar to what was submitted in 2018 as far as the FDP is concerned; asked if Koma can talk a little bit about the Mt. Carmel piece.

Koma stated that the plan is to develop and build an offsite ER department; provided more detail on what that means; we want to be a good neighbor and provide healthcare services at a convenient location close to home; we (Mt. Carmel) see 10,000 patients per year from Gahanna; this will meet their needs and be closer to those patients; these facilities see faster times in the building; may see one ambulance a day, not usual; the ambulances don't run the lights and sirens when at the facility; people needing higher levels of care would be transported to the Mt. Carmel East facility; we want to be a trusted healthcare partner; we feel this will be additive to the community. Dugger said we have additional comments for the Design Review but will wait for that discussion.

Jesse Kanitz, represents the Academy Ridge Community Association; is no stranger to this process; thanked the commission because we know this public comment portion is important; the proposed use does not match and Beecher Rd. is not designed to meet the needs of commercial traffic that will be brought with this project; reviewed FDP criteria; this development fails to meet those requirements; this area should be used for shopping centers; listed other uses that can be approved; said this will be for offices, restaurant; medical facilities; this is not typical to a commercial shopping center; it's hard to see how this development is organized; asked about the theme; it does not match what code requires; said we have a room full of people, from 81 homes and the Columbus Academy schools, who can speak to how it will have an undesirable effect; they all use the local road, Beecher Rd.

Chair asked if there were any objections to allowing the speaker more time. There were no objections to allowing more time. Chair allowed for 3 additional minutes.

Kanitz continued; this road is subject to massive amounts of traffic; said there is nothing proposed to alleviate those concerns; cited code section that relates to traffic.

Tracie Clay, 394 Beecher Rd.; stated that she has a few questions; mentioned that we are only here for the medical office to be approved; part of it is not planned out so it is confusing; said it was a medical building previously, but now they say it is an emergency room; is confused about that; in 2013 a curb cut was approved; things are allowed to change, and we have different opinions now about the area; what happened in 2013 should not make this a done deal; asked can't that change with a new development; wonders if Mt. Carmel's ERs have been built near other neighborhoods, if so, would like to see the impact to those neighbors; why would someone use an ER over an urgent care; we

have so many around us; would rather not see anything developed; also understands there will be a development at some point on those corners; what does that impact; there's only way in and out of that neighborhood; to add more traffic is concerning; last time we were here, the fire department and police departments were here.

Chair asked if there were any objections to allowing the speaker more time. There were no objections to allowing more time. Chair allowed for 3 additional minutes.

Clay said some suggestions she thought of include: another cut in median to enter and exit onto Hamilton Rd.; take out median and have middle turn lane only; widen the entrance to Otterbein and have them share that entrance; allow for U-turns; asked if we can't be more creative to find ways in and out other than Beecher.

Jane Peck, 1010 Ridge Crest Dr.; contiguous property owner to the proposed development; would like to cite section 1153.6 of the Planned Commercial Center code; provided a description of topography in detail; if property is viewed east to west, it appears to be a level, fully wooded lot, but if viewed north to south, you'll notice about 1/3 way back on the lot, the terrain begins to slope toward ravine; at least 35-40 degree angle; in order to accommodate everything planned to put on the property, most trees must be taken down and flattened, and require infill which would need to be retained; the code section says they must provide information on how they will accomplish this; what is the retention of this going to look like; there is a protective waterway; there are a lot of regulations; from when this was proposed last time, nothing changed except the building concept; asked if anything has changed, because the building is very contemporary and Mt. Carmel is traditional; this is not in compliance with PCC zoning; our property touches theirs and we have a preservation zone and we can't do anything except cut down a dead tree.

Ron Stahl, 1022 Ridge Crest Dr.; only recently became aware of this project; has some questions; may have questions about the design review mixed in; was confused about just one building included in the DR; why not all the buildings; asks the commission to deny this project; does not meet standards and it will have undesirable effects; not in favor of an ER next to residents; Beecher Rd. will take quite a hit; will have drainage issues too; appears that trees are effected as part of the development; American Beech should be protected, per landscape requirements; outlets will have erosive force.

Chair asked if there were any objections to allowing the speaker more time. There were no objections to allowing more time. Chair allowed for

additional time.

Stahl continued; reiterated that he believed this would be one plan to review at one time; asked if light timer at Beecher would be changed; the application appears to be incomplete since it does not address these things.

Dugger said he would like to clear up the historical discrepancy; the claim being made is that the street is the property of Academy Ridge, but the street was zoned first and then Academy Ridge was constructed; every person who owns a home there and who came tonight to say that there would be undesirable effects because of traffic on that road, seems to think that the road is part of Academy Ridge; there is also an idea that Beecher Crossing belongs to that neighborhood too; there is an agreement and an easement; there are very few options here for access; stated that Wester has experience and can provide technical details about the curb cut agreed to in 2013; can have a traffic engineer discuss more details if necessary.

Closed the Public Hearing at 7:45 p.m. and called for questions from the commission.

Tamarkin asked Koma if this will be a 24/7 emergency facility. Koma confirmed. Tamarkin asked if there will be physicians headquartered and have offices there. Koma said it will be an emergency department so board certified physicians would be there around the clock. Tamarkin clarified that one could not make a regularly scheduled visit to a doctor there. Koma confirmed the use would be for emergencies only. Tamarkin asked how many staff members would be there. Koma said 45-50, working several shifts.

Burba asked how long the patients will stay in the facility before being transported to a hospital. Koma invited the Vice President of Emergency Services, Jodi Wilson, to approach the commission.

Wilson discussed the type of care that would be available at the facility; stated that the number of staff on any given shift would actually only be 10; insurance companies prefer that patients use urgent care before emergency care, but there are some symptoms, such as cardiac events, which require emergency services.

Greenberg asked if there would be appointment based visits. Wilson said no standing appointments, just emergencies. Burba asked where else these types of facilities are located. Wilson said Lewis Center and Mount Carmel West is now an offsite emergency department in

Franklinton; the Grove City hospital started out as an offsite emergency department. Tamarkin asked if people would stay the night. Wilson said no. Greenberg asked if someone were injured, would they be transferred out. Wilson said they would be transferred out and not admitted; you could get diagnosed much quicker with acute needs. Koma provided a real world example, of someone having chest pains; the option of going to this facility would mean that a person could get treated with the highest level of care in a faster time, close to home. Greenberg asked if there has been any discussion about erosion and stormwater, and how that will be handled. Dugger said they will comply with all requirements; as part of the review process, we must continue to provide more information and we will continue to comply.

Wester said that nearly 8 months ago, he suffered from chest pains and went to his family doctor who provided a ventilator and was sent home; the next day he was picked by ambulance and taken to St. Anne's and went through a triple bypass surgery; if the emergency center were available then he would have gone there over his family doctor; is in support of this; as a mechanical engineer, has worked on cruise missiles and glass furnaces, among other things; for 20 years, have been involved in public service such as this; learned to appreciate access management, public and private streets; would guess that the streets in academy ridge are public and maintained by the city; we pothole patch and snow plow; not a traffic engineer but can appreciate the importance of traffic impact studies.

Suriano asked about grading around the site; is there any retainage on the back of the site; the amount of setback is around 100'; could the applicant clarify. Dugger said the application refers to the preservation easement that was put in place in 2013. Suriano asked Blackford if it is possible to approve an FDP and a partial DR for a single building. Blackford confirmed. Suriano asked how we zone ER departments. Blackford said that each zoning district is different in the codes they site; PCC does not list specific uses other than shopping centers; a memo was provided by the Planning & Zoning Administrator that defines what a shopping center is; common signage is one thing that defines a shopping center.

Hicks asked the City Attorney if it is in the purview of Planning Commission to alter the curb cut agreement from 2013. Ewald said that is outside the scope of their authority, it was approved in 2013 by Council. Hicks said we will not be considering a curb cut as part of the FDP. Kanitz stated that the 2013 agreement for the curb cut is nowhere

in the record for tonight, but does have a copy; cited that document; disagrees that the commission does not have authority. Hicks said the FDP is under the purview but that the curb cut is not. Kanitz wanted to simply state that it is not set in stone; disagrees with assessment that the commission cannot add conditions for the curb cut.

Peck stated that the curb cut was put in place to have Otterbein extend the road; they would have their own access to their development; that was part of that agreement; it does not continue on into 2019; cannot have commercial development on a local street; local means residential and it is not open to commercial use. Dugger said at the time Otterbein was being discussed, the Mayor wanted to discuss preservation, but this was not part of Otterbein; we cannot wish away the agreement; it was negotiated and approved by Council; there was a quid pro quo.

Hicks asked about the PCC code, and overlay; wants to clear up if this is a permitted use; asked Blackford if the memo was included in the application packet. Blackford said no, that it was provided to the property owner to the north. Hicks asked if proposed uses are permitted by the PCC code. Blackford confirmed. Hicks asked if the overlay supersedes that code, related to use. Blackford said it does not refer to allowed uses, just uses that are not permitted.

Ewald said the way the overlay works is that the overlay has additional restrictions that go above and beyond.

A motion was made by Wester, seconded by Tamarkin, that the Final Development Plan be Approved.

Discussion on the motion: Wester stated that he is in support because he believes the plan meets the applicable development standards; the plan compliments the area; this is a medical facility and there are others around the area; this has a positive effect on the surrounding area; it is not a restaurant, it is not a bar, and there will not be a lot of night life; it serves the community in a positive way; it will bring high paying jobs to that area; is a key component to development.

Suriano said he agrees with Wester; will be voting in support for many of the same reasons outlined; from a commission stand point, we look at context and fit and Wester outlined that eloquently; believes this is appropriate for the area when looking at the Land Use Plan.

Hicks said he likes the uses, but argues that it is the best and highest use; does not meet his understanding of permitted uses; appreciates the memo but has not been privy to it; does not believe the plan meets the uses outlined in 1153.06.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Wester, Suriano, Burba, Greenberg and Tamarkin

No: 1 - Hicks

Absent: 1 - Shapaka

[DR-0022-2019](#)

To consider a Design Review application for a site plan, landscaping plan, and building design, for The Shops at McKenna Creek; located at N. Hamilton Rd. & Beecher Rd.; Parcel ID No. 025-009953-00; current zoning Planned Commercial Center (PCC); Shital Galani, applicant.

See comments above, under FDP-0007-2019, for the Design Review summary.

Chair opened the Public Hearing at 8:12 p.m.

Shital Galani, applicant; wanted to break up the facade so as to not look like a shopping center; looked at window sizing; shrunk windows due to the nature of use; wouldn't want huge windows in exam rooms; but wants to allow for natural light; explored varying roof line; allows for more interesting look; materials can be trendy but in 5-10 years they look dated; the selected materials are traditional and brick is timeless; the light gray in image is stone material and is a natural fit; all 4 sides have the same architecture; detailing wraps around the entire building; to give pedestrian scale, this is not a tall building, at its highest point, is only around 25'; this is not a flashy material; the overall Mt. Carmel system matches this building's design.

Peck asked where the photos of the other buildings are; asked if those buildings are similarly designed. Stahl said we have only seen the one building; if approved, how far down the road do the others come in.

Dugger said he is unaware that there's a requirement that all buildings in PCC must be zoned the same; north and west buildings have been submitted to Blackford and we will be before you in the future for those; Mt. Carmel is on a fast timeline and so the buildings are out of sequence.

Chair closed the Public Hearing at 8:19 p.m. and called for questions from the commission.

Burba asked how many sq. ft. the building will be. Galani said 9,000. Tamarkin asked if ground will be broken on this building first before the

other two; called on Maggie Bornhorst, with Mt. Carmel, Project Manager for design and construction, who said yes; want to break ground before 2020. Tamarkin asked if they can break ground before other design review applications come before the commission. Bornhorst said she is unsure. Blackford said that is allowable and not abnormal. Tamarkin said this is the farthest building away from road, will there still be access issues. Blackford said the FDP was for the whole site, the DR was for most of the site, and included landscaping and lighting for the entire site; the only vertical element is this building; Beecher and Hamilton roads are accessible from the site.

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

Discussion on the motion: Wester said he is in support for many of the reasons he stated moments ago; the development is in accordance with Land Use Plan, it complements the overall area, is a positive development for the city and the area; the plan meets applicable development standards; stated that he understands phase construction.

Hicks said when reviewing design review district standard number 3, finds the proposed design meets those requirements and will be in support; understands that as additional buildings are proposed, they will be brought back before the commission.

Suriano stated that we are only able to look at what is in front of us, and we cannot form an opinion on something that is not in front of us; there will be some consistency with the rest of the buildings that will come forward in the future.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Wester, Suriano, Hicks, Burba, Greenberg and Tamarkin

Absent: 1 - Shapaka

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

G. NEW BUSINESS: None.

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS

Assistant City Attorney

City Attorney Ewald informed the Commission that the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals would be meeting tomorrow in order to determine

a new fee schedule for appeals.

Planning & Development

Blackford stated that at the next meeting, the schools will have applications on the agenda for the new elementary school; said the meetings in December will be lengthy.

Council Liaison

No report.

CIC Liaison

Hicks stated that the 2020 Groundhog Day event is canceled.

Chair

No report.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS: None.

J. POLL MEMBERS FOR COMMENT

No additional comments.

K. ADJOURNMENT

at 8:27 p.m.