



MEETING MINUTES

Planning Commission

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Chair Julie Oyster began the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was taken and the following members were present: Ms. Julie Oyster, Dr. John Dubos and Mr. Jim Rauck. Mr. Mike Linder and Mr. Gary Leasure were not in attendance. Others present: Kyle Rauch, Development Director; Kim Shields, Community Development Manager; Kendra Spergel, Development Planner; Stephen Smith, Frost Brown Todd; Jennifer Stachler, Public Service Superintendent; Mr. Mike Boso, Chief Building Inspector; Ms. Laura Scott, Planning and Zoning Coordinator; Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council; Lt. Jeff Lawless, Grove City Police; and Mary Havener, Development Assistant.

Chair Oyster noted a quorum was present and asked for approval of the August 7, 2018 Planning Commission minutes. Dr. Dubos moved that the minutes be approved. Mr. Rauck seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved 3-0.

At this time, Chair Oyster stated that Item #7 – The Residences/Cottages at Brown's Farm – Rezoning, requested to be postponed to the next Planning Commission meeting on October 2, 2018. Dr. Dubos moved to approve this request. Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

ITEM #1 – Byers Pre-Owned Center - Lot Split

PID #201808010030

Ms. Spergel presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is proposing to split 6.59 acres from the existing 13.78-acre Byers Chevrolet property. The proposed 6.59-acre portion to be split is proposed to be developed as a Byers Pre-Owned dealership that is currently under review. The remaining 7.59 acres in the southern portion of the property will remain as the existing Byers Chevrolet dealership.

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission approve the Lot Split as submitted.

Mr. Brian Reynolds, Architectural Alliance, and Mr. Jeremy Francis, Byers Chevrolet, were present to speak to the item.

Having no discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to approve the Lot Split as submitted. Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

ITEM #2 – Byers Pre-Owned Center – Special Use Permit

PID #201808010031

Ms. Spergel presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting an amendment to the Special Use Permit for automotive sales for Byers Auto. The original Special Use Permit

approved in October 2013 for Byers Auto included a stipulation that pre-owned vehicles could only occur on site in conjunction with a new car dealership. The requested special use permit is only effective for the northern 6.59 acres of the site, proposed to be split through a separate Lot Split application. The portion is proposed as a Byers Pre-Owned facility, which will only sell pre-owned vehicles. The modification to the Special Use Permit will not affect the existing Special Use Permit for the Byers Chevrolet site.

Staff is overall supportive of the pre-owned dealership provided that the site is kept in an organized manner, with all vehicles arranged in designated parking spaces only. Concerns have been raised regarding the current Byers Auto dealership, with vehicles being parked in drive-aisles or located outside of designated parking spaces. The applicant has indicated that 295 parking spaces have been proposed, with 270 of those spaces being for vehicle inventory, and the rest for customers and employees.

The application has also indicated that the pre-owned dealership will only provide automotive sales with no service component proposed.

Therefore, after review and consideration, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Special Use Permit with the one stipulation as noted in the Staff Report.

Mr. Brian Reynolds, Architectural Alliance, and Mr. Jeremy Francis, Byers Chevrolet, were present to speak to the item. Mr. Reynolds stated that a central theme that runs between all four applications is a desire to clean up the disorganized parking on the site. There are an average of approximately 150 pre-owned cars currently on-site. The net gain for these projects is around 200 spaces. This will give them the opportunity for parking of the new inventory and should promote a much-improved parking situation.

There being no further discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit to City Council with the one (1) stipulation as noted in the Staff Report:

1. The site shall be maintained in an organized manner, with all vehicles parked in marked parking spaces in the appropriate designated area.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

ITEM #3 – Byers Pre-Owned Center – Development Plan

PID #201808010032

Ms. Spergel presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a development plan for a Byers Pre-Owned Center located directly adjacent and to the north of the existing Byers Chevrolet dealership.

The 6.59-acre site is proposed to be accessed via two shared drives onto the existing Byers Chevrolet dealership with no new curb cuts onto North Meadows Drive. A shared access agreement has not yet been submitted and is needed to ensure that proper access remains to the proposed site.

The site will contain parking spaces for a variety of uses, either for vehicle display/inventory or for the general parking of customers and employees. A small vehicle display area is proposed along the site's I-71 frontage, similar to the display areas utilized by the adjacent Byers Chevrolet dealership.

295 spaces are proposed with 270 used for vehicle display and the remaining used for employee and customer parking. Staff is supportive of the proposed layout as long as the site is maintained in a neat and orderly manner. The proposed development will appear as an extension of the existing Byers Chevrolet dealership located adjacent and to the south. To provide a more seamless transition between the sites, staff is supportive of proposed deviations to setbacks that will match the existing conditions of the Byers Chevrolet site, including setbacks from North Meadows Drive and I-71 and the side setback where adjacent to the existing Byers Chevrolet facility.

The proposed building will be 6,724 square feet in size and will be one-story in height with a proposed height of 22 feet. The building will be finished primarily in stone veneer, with the upper section of the building to be finished

in metal paneling. A red entrance canopy is proposed over the building's primary entrance to provide additional architectural interest to the structure.

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the seven (7) deviations and stipulations as noted in the Staff Report.

Mr. Brian Reynolds, Architectural Alliance, and Mr. Jeremy Francis, Byers Chevrolet, were present to speak to the item. Mr. Reynolds addressed the seven deviations and stipulations. The first two, related to setbacks, Mr. Reynolds stated that they will be matching what was approved in the original Byers project approximately five years ago. Stipulation #3, requiring six additional trees – Mr. Reynolds stated that this would not be a problem and they will work with the Urban Forester on this. The same will apply to stipulation #4 requiring permanent shrubs. Mr. Reynolds continued to state that they have no problem with item #5 and again, will work with the Urban Forester, on this. For item #6, which relates to parking, one of the main benefits of this, in addition to adding twenty jobs, the addition of 200 parking spaces will allow Byers to clean up the rest of the site and park the cars in an orderly manner. Lastly, on item #7 which pertains to the lighting fixtures, he stated that the site lighting fixtures will all match what is currently there; both the color of the pole and the head, as well as the color temperature of the lighting itself.

Mr. Rauck asked if when car transporters are unloading, if they could pull into the lot instead of unloading on North Meadows Drive. Mr. Jeremy Francis, General Manager for Byers, stated that they can communicate to the drivers that they will now be able to pull up alongside the building. Mr. Rauck asked if there would be a "loop pattern" so that the trucks will not be required to back up onto North Meadows when exiting. Mr. Francis stated that they have two entrances and could set it up for a pull around. Mr. Reynolds added that five years ago, when the original project was developed, it was designed to have a loop pull around; however, with all of the additional vehicles, it has been difficult to utilize. They will verify that with this project, it is maintained.

Mr. Rauck stated that he would like to add an 8th stipulation that the semi-transporters unload the vehicles on the Byers private property and not on North Meadows Drive.

There being no additional discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to recommend approval of the Development Plan to City Council with the following eight stipulations:

1. A deviation shall be granted from the required parking lot setbacks and landscaping along I-71 and North Meadows Drive.
2. A deviation shall be granted from the required parking lot setback along the south property line.
3. Six (6) additional trees shall be planted on the site to meet the requirements of Section 1136.06(b).
4. Permanent shrubs shall be planted around the monument sign per Section 1136.09(a)(4).
5. The applicant shall work with the Urban Forester to provide additional or substitute plantings around the building's perimeter that provide additional color and interest.
6. Each vehicle on the site shall be parked in a designated parking space to ensure the site is maintained in a neat and orderly manner.
7. All site lighting fixtures shall match the fixtures at the existing Byers Chevrolet dealership located adjacent and to the south.
8. All semi-transporters shall unload their vehicles on the Byers private property.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

Ms. Spergel presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a development plan amendment for Byers Chevrolet to add a 2,500 square foot building addition to the service area, with four (4) additional truck bays along the building's North Meadows Drive frontage.

Staff is overall supportive of the proposed expansion but has concerns regarding the organization of the site, with cars and trucks currently being parked in drive aisles. Considerable investment has been made in the area and staff has concerns over the ability to maintain a neat and orderly development to preserve the aesthetics of the area with the proposed truck service expansion.

Typically, truck loading areas are required to be screened from public streets with mounding and three (3) rows of evergreen trees with additional deciduous trees. The applicant has indicated that the proposed expansion does not meet the definition of a truck loading or parking area, as no trucks will be loaded or parked in the area outside the building and that trucks will be located inside the structure where an overhead door will eliminate visibility from the street. The landscape plan shows 34 Sea Green Juniper shrubs at 24" in height proposed along North Meadows Drive. Staff is not supportive of the proposed plantings as an acceptable deviation to the truck parking requirement and believes that more appropriate landscaping can be installed to screen this area.

The proposed building expansion will be one (1) story with a maximum height of 26.5'. The building will be 2,508 square feet in size and contain four (4) additional truck bays. Materials for the new expansion will match those of the existing building with metal paneling primarily proposed with an aluminum accent above the proposed bay doors. Other proposed materials include a stone veneer water table around each of the doors. The doors will be white with the same style as the building's existing bay doors.

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the four (4) stipulations as noted in the Staff Report.

Mr. Brian Reynolds, Architectural Alliance, and Mr. Jeremy Francis, Byers Chevrolet, were present to speak to the item. Mr. Reynolds addressed the stipulations. In regards to item #1 regarding parking, Mr. Reynolds stated that the site plan that they are developing for the pre-owned vehicles has some parking spaces that are 60 feet in length and 9 feet wide which will allow them to park the longer vehicles. Item #2, regarding appropriate plantings for screening, they will be happy to work to develop a better screening using a different type of landscaping. For item #3, they will work with the Urban Forester to add additional caliper trees on the site. Lastly, for item #4 regarding exterior lighting fixtures, Mr. Reynolds stated that they will only be building mounted fixtures and will match what is already on the site.

Mr. Rauck asked for confirmation that the truck bays were for mechanical servicing only and not for collision repair. Mr. Reynolds stated that they were for mechanical servicing only.

There being no further discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to recommend approval of the Development Plan Amendment to City Council with the four (4) stipulations as noted in the Staff Report:

1. The site shall be maintained in an orderly manner with all vehicles parked in designated parking spaces.
2. The applicant shall work with the Development Department to determine appropriate plantings to screen the service area and improve the aesthetics from North Meadows Drive.
3. The applicant shall work with the Urban Forester to locate two (2) additional 2" caliper trees on the site.
4. Exterior lighting fixtures shall match the existing lighting on the site.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

Ms. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a Preliminary Development Plan for a new 11,000 square foot facility for Schoedinger Norris Funeral and Cremation Service at 4242 Hoover Road. The site currently contains a single-family home, zoned R-2 and the applicant is proposing to rezone the site to PUD-C in order to redevelop the site, similar to the sites north on Hoover Road that were converted from single-family home sites to commercial office developments.

The 3.6-acre site is proposed to have one (1) point of access, off Hoover Road, creating the fourth leg of the Kingston/Hoover intersection. This will require a new traffic signal as well as a reconfiguration of the center turn lane on Hoover; however, materials indicate the applicant is willing to participate in these needed public improvements.

The proposed parking lot will be located in the rear/east portion of the site with the building located at the front/west portion of the site. Building and parking setbacks shown on preliminary plans are in line with Code requirements in relation to existing land uses and adjacent zoning districts.

The building is proposed to be approximately 11,000 square feet in size with an additional covered portico at the rear of the building and a covered terrace overlooking the proposed front pond between Hoover Road and the building. The building is proposed to be one-story in height, finished primarily in brick and stone with a character to provide a transition between the commercial offices to the north and the residences to the south.

Staff believes the proposed use and preliminary design of the site is appropriate and will provide a transition between the offices to the north and the residences to the south and east. Additionally, the relocation of the Schoedinger facility from its existing location on Broadway will create a prime redevelopment opportunity in the Town Center.

Therefore, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Preliminary Development Plan as submitted.

Mr. Jack Reynolds, Smith and Hale, and Mr. Randy Schoedinger, Schoedinger Funeral Homes, were present to speak to the item. Mr. Schoedinger stated that there were two specific reasons for wanting to move their facility. First, their current facility is becoming outdated and doesn't have the amenities that people are looking for with these types of services, and the second reason is that they have been approached by the City or a developer on several occasions related to how their existing site could be part of the Town Center redevelopment. Until now, they have been unable to make this work out. They finally found a site that they are pleased with and would like to move forward. He feels they are an excellent buffer between commercial and residential properties. His properties have a residential feel. They are off-peak hours and therefore do not add to rush hour traffic. He continued to state that he is often asked if this is a 24-hour operation. They will not have crematorium or embalming facilities at this location and therefore, they will only be open from approximately 9 a.m. to the early evening hours.

Mr. Reynolds added that zoning wise, they began this process very early on with Staff to make sure that this was an appropriate site. They also reached out to each of the neighbors and had a meeting with them to go over the plan and discuss any questions or concerns.

Mr. Rauck stated that this development will touch eight (8) residential properties and the proximity to the parking lot is 20 feet off of the residents to the south. He asked if it would be possible to move the building a bit further to the north and increase it to an approximately 30 foot offset to the parking lot and if the retention pond could be more of a north-south layout instead of the current plan. This might enable another row of parking to the east. He also stated that the properties to the east show a privacy fence going behind the first two residences; however, there are four residents along there. He thinks the screening could be adjusted a little bit. He also added that he would like to see some type of screening up by the front property, just south of the proposed building, possibly some type of tree that would remain green throughout the year. Mr. Reynolds stated that they have been having conversations with the owner of that property and will work with him to provide some type of adequate screening. He continued that they might be able to move further to the north to increase some of the green space where the parking lot is. The problem with pushing the building north is that there is an existing creek, so they'll need to determine how much further they can move the building.

Having no additional discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to recommend approval of the Preliminary Development Plan to City Council as submitted. Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

ITEM #6 – Homestead Senior Living – Development Plan

PID #201808020035

Ms. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a development plan for Homestead Senior Living, located on the east side of the Orders Road and Hoover Road intersection. The three-story facility is proposed as a senior independent living facility containing 130 units with a mixture of one and two bedroom units. The site received approval of the preliminary development plan in March 2018 and the rezoning to PUD-R with a zoning text in August 2018.

The 5.5-acre site is proposed to have one point of access, at the existing terminus of Orders Road at Hoover Road. This access will be an extension of the existing dead end drive at the signalized intersection and will be improved to include one entrance lane and two exit lanes with a landscaped median. Plans show this drive extending onto the Grove City Church of the Nazarene property to the north for a future connection to the Nazarene's facility.

The proposed development meets the requirements of the approved zoning text in terms of parking and setbacks. Additionally, an embellished entrance feature, as required in the text, is shown on plans with landscaping exceeding the typical requirements of Code to match the character of the Margie's Cove feature.

Based on the number of dwelling units proposed, 5.8 acres of open space is required on the 5.5-acre site, equating to 105 percent of the site. Discounting floodplain located on the site, which is not permitted to be counted toward open space, only 0.77 acres of open space is proposed on the site. Provided no deviations were to be granted to the open space requirement, a payment in lieu of open space totaling approximately \$150,000 would be required.

As noted during the review of the preliminary development plan and rezoning applications, staff is supportive of a deviation to the open space requirement for this development given the context of the site and given that the development will be age-restricted to residents 55 years of age and older. The proposed development, similar to other infill and mixed use developments recently approved including the Stringtown Road Apartments, bring to light the disconnect between current City plans (GroveCity2050) and current City policy (Code). The proposed use and density is in line with the recommendations of GroveCity2050; however, the City's policy (Code) has not been updated to reflect requirements for the desired new development patterns. Because of this, staff is in the process of researching and drafting revised policy on open space to consider the context of a development when determining open space requirements.

The proposed senior living facility will be within a single 110,000 square foot, three-story building. While the design of the building technically meets the requirements of the zoning text in terms or percentage of masonry and decorative shutters used on all elevations, staff does not believe that the proposed architecture is in character with area residences or other recently approved development plans. Features such as balconies, building bump-outs and variation in the roofline are recommended to ensure that the development is in character with homes in area developments including Margie's Cove and the Courtyards at Hoover.

Aside from these issues, staff is supportive of the proposal, as it is in line with the Future Land Use identified for the area in GroveCity2050 and will provide important connections to the transportation network. Therefore, the Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the seven (7) deviations and stipulations as noted in the Staff Report.

Rebecca Mott, Plank Law Firm, was present to speak to the item. She stated that they have reviewed the stipulations and agree with Staff.

Dr. Dubos asked Ms. Shields to address the green space issue. Ms. Shields stated that in taking a strict interpretation of code, the applicant would be required to dedicate 5.8 acres of their 5.5-acre site. Staff believes, the design and use of the site make sense, but if going by code, they would be required to either dedicate the entire site to open space or pay \$150,000. That's to allow the City to acquire park space elsewhere in the City.

Staff believes this is a large fee, so it shows that our policy needs reviewed. Staff has spent quite a bit of time looking at this application to see what we could recommend. In the past, we have typically dealt with assisted living facilities where the residents have mobility issues. In these cases, the residents would not be utilizing the open space and we have waived the fee. Another example is the Stringtown Road Apartments where we stated that being in the commercial mixed-use walkable area, was its open space, so it didn't need to meet the standard open space dedication requirement. This is a very different type of project and we don't currently have policy to address it yet. Consequently, Staff did not make a recommendation of a stipulation in terms of the amount, recognizing that we still need to work with the applicant. This fee is not collected until the pre-construction meeting for the site, so we still have time to work something out or update our policy to make it something that we're all comfortable with. Ms. Mott added that the applicant proposes to provide an easement at the northeast corner of the site for a pedestrian bridge over I-71 to connect the park the City owns to the Hoover Road multi-purpose trail. For that, they were hoping to get a deviation or variance from the section of the code for open space. She continued that they are providing 1.23 acres of open space; however, in lieu of the fee of \$150,000, they feel this pedestrian bridge easement would be an infrastructure improvement that they can provide offsite. She feels that this would constitute a "good-cause" deviation.

Mr. Rauck stated that in looking at the elevations, it appears the main working part of the buildings is in the rear. Ms. Mott stated that the rear area is where the Town Center amenities are located. Mr. Rauck also stated that he wasn't sure what the front area was for since there is limited parking. Mr. Dave Anderson, AB Partners, asked to speak to this item. He stated that the building was designed so that the residents congregate in the back rather than the front entrance. They purposely put the Town Center in the back to create a very walkable, exterior corridor community to bring people out to the center where there is a dog-wash, a chapel, a meditation room, billiards room, a family room with a large screen T.V., a coffee bar, mailroom and a small grocery shopping room. The front entry is simply for new guests or visitors. Guests, however, can also come to the rear entrance.

Ms. Oyster asked if a Traffic Study had been done to account for the 130 ± residents. Ms. Mott stated that a traffic memo was provided with the Preliminary Development Plan which demonstrated that no improvements would be required for the site. Ms. Shields stated that worst case, if the traffic study shows a significant impact to the right-of-way, a signal would be requested at the intersection. In this case, however, the intersection is already signalized, so that will help to disseminate the traffic.

Mr. Roby Schottke, City Council member, asked to speak to the item. In reference to the open space and associated costs, he asked that this be worked out prior to going to City Council for review, because what Council approves is what the final plan will be. He also stated that in regards to the third stipulation related to providing additional architectural features to further break-up the mass of the building, this also needs to be concluded prior to coming before City Council.

Mr. Rauck asked if the current traffic light at the intersection of Hoover Road and Orders Road is already signaled to change when heading from the west. Ms. Shields stated that all the infrastructure is there, however, the timing might need to be adjusted, which would be worked out with the final site-engineering plan.

Dr. Dubos asked staff the best way to address Mr. Schottke's concerns regarding resolving issues prior to City Council. Ms. Shields stated that the wording on the stipulations could be amended to state it must be resolved prior to Council, or if the issues are not addressed prior to Council, Council could choose to postpone the application.

In regards to the open space, Mr. Rauch, Development Director, stated that right now, the code is what it is. Unless changes are approved by Council between now and when the applicant starts to pay fees for construction, the applicant will be responsible for the code requirement. We're looking at proposing some changes to our current policies, but until those are approved, we need to follow the current code. Ms. Shields further stated that the policy change has been drafted, but they can't be enforced until approved by Council.

Having no additional discussion, Dr. Dubos moved to recommend approval of the Development Plan to City Council with the seven deviations and stipulations as noted in the Staff Report:

1. A deviation shall be granted from Section 1136.09(a)(1) to permit a reduction of trees per unit as shown on the final development plan and as approved for preservation by the Urban Forester.
2. Irrigation shall be provided for 100 percent of all entry features.

3. The applicant shall work with the Development Department to provide additional architectural features to further break-up the mass of the building and ensure that the structure is in character with area developments.
4. The dumpster enclosure shall be finished in brick matching that utilized on the primary building, with stained 100 percent opaque wood gates.
5. The exterior site lighting fixtures shall be decorative in nature and approved by the Development Department.
6. The applicant shall work with the Development Department on a design for the monument sign.
7. The two parcels, 040-009225 and 040-009224, making up the site shall be combined prior to construction.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion and it was approved 3-0.

Having no additional items, Chair Oyster adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.



Mary Havener, Secretary



Julie Oyster, Chair