



MEETING MINUTES

Planning Commission

June 6, 2023 – Lower-Level Conference Room

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

Roll was taken, and the following members were present: Mr. Jim Rauck, Mr. David Frea, Chair Julie Oyster, Mr. Michael Farnsworth, and Mr. Larry Titus. Staff members present: Kyle Rauch, Development Director; Kim Shields, Community Development Manager; Dash Logan, Development Planner; Terry Barr, Development Planner; Terry Ellis, Development Assistant; Josie Stiver, Development Intern; Jesse Shamp, Frost Brown Todd; Kevin Teaford, Safety Director; Kevin Koesters, Public Service Deputy Director; and Scott Shaffer, EMH&T.

Chair Oyster asked for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Organizational Items:

Chair Oyster asked for approval of the May 2, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes. Mr. Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Titus seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved 5-0.

New Items:

ITEM #1 – 3472 Grant Avenue – Rezoning

PID # 202212130070

Mr. Barr presented the Development Department's findings. He stated the proposal is to rezone +/- 0.5 acres at 3472 Grant Avenue from R-2 (Single-Family Residential) and C-2 (Retail Commercial) to PUD-C with a zoning text.

Mr. Barr stated the applicant submitted a preliminary development plan that was denied by City Council on April 17th. This application is to rezone the property at 3472 Grant Avenue from C-2 and R-2 to PUD-C. After the rezoning, a Final Development Plan will be submitted to ensure that the proposed structure and other improvements proposed for the site are compatible with the proposed zoning text.

The site to be rezoned is bordered by a variety of zoning districts, from R-2 to the north and west, PUD-C to the south, and IND-1 to the east across the railroad tracks. It should be noted that the R-2 zoned property to the north is currently under consideration for a Preliminary Development Plan to rezone the property to PUD-C in association with the Beulah Park development to the north. The GroveCity2050 Future Land Use map shows this site as a transition from the commercial character of the Town Center to the residential character of the historic Beulah subdivision.

The proposed zoning text permits one single residential unit and specialized businesses or repair services that operate entirely within structures and require no outdoor storage.

Proposed building setbacks for the site were drafted to match existing conditions along Grant Avenue and Front Street and to allow adequate spacing for screening from adjacent residences to the west. The zoning text also sets standards regarding building architecture and materials, which are required to be compatible with existing structures within the Town Center and Beulah Park areas, emphasizing high-quality design. Landscape requirements for the site are to meet standards required in Chapter 1136 for all new development on the site, and screening in the form of an 80% opaque landscaped hedge, fence, wall, or combination is required to be installed along the west property line, adjacent to existing residential properties.

Mr. Barr indicated that staff believes the proposed zoning text will result in a development that meets all applicable GroveCity2050 principles, and concluded by noting that after review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Rezoning as submitted.

Mr. Chris Zelich, The Laser Foundry LLC, 3472 Grant Ave., Grove City, OH, spoke on the item.

Mr. Frea asked if it was rezoning to residential on the middle lot only, and if an owner of the lot in the future could be able to develop commercial all the way across all three parcels. Mr. Zelich replied they were bringing all the lots together as one, and that they could under the PUD-C.

Mr. Frea is concerned that the change from residential to commercial could put development deeper into that neighborhood, putting it right against some homes. He's also concerned that a Wendy's could come in the future. Mr. Zelich replied that the reason for the rezoning is that it's for the expansion of his business, it's his goal along with renting the existing house once renovations are complete. He needs a space to expand the equipment used at his business located at 3466 Front St.

Mr. Barr clarified that uses proposed for this site are single-family residential structures, specialized business services, and repair shops, so fast food or gas station types of businesses would require zoning amendments to this text to be located on the property.

Ms. Kim Shields, Community Development Manager, added that this zoning would be expanding the boundaries for which commercial zoning is currently. When staff was working with the applicant to draft this text, they did so to reflect the conditions in the preliminary plans and will still have to go through a final development plan. Right now, it's drafted to allow the single-family home and business on the site. It would allow him to expand his business in the future. At the same time, there are other requirements in terms of lot coverage, required setback from the adjacent residential area, and screening in the text to ensure that, should the business be expanded from its current footprint, it would still be compatible with the area.

Mr. Rauck asked what the required screening per code is on a commercial property located adjacent to residential properties. Ms. Shields replied that the screening requirement in this text is 80% opaque screening, that is the non-compatible land use screening per code. If the three lots were to be developed individually, the required setbacks for screening would render one of those parcels unusable and make it more challenging for the owner to expand his business. In terms of screening requirements, the standards in this text are not reducing what that would be per standard code in terms of the 80% opaque screening.

Mr. Zelich added his neighbor does not have a problem with this.

Chair Oyster asked to clarify; she knows it's one location now, but if it were still the three parcels separate, would the parcel to the west be either mounded or trees. Ms. Shields responded, the landscape requirements per this text still revert to code. They have all the bases covered in terms of ensuring that appropriate screenings are installed.

Mr. Rauck asked if the building structure, design, and dimensions on the preliminary development plan that came a month ago would be off the site now and he would have to start over again and present a new design. With the preliminary being turned down at Council, did it make the plan basically non-existing until he would re-present. Ms. Shields responded that there is no elevation tied to this zoning text. The standards used to craft the zoning text were based on the feedback from going through the Planning Commission and City Council for the preliminary plan, but in acting on the zoning text, you're not approving any building elevations. The next step would be the final development plan.

Mr. Frea asked to clarify on the agenda that he hoped was a typo. He said the header says rezoning PUD-R but we're here for PUD-C. Ms. Shields responded it is for PUD-C.

Ms. Nancy Pennell, 3490 Grant Ave., stated she's one lot away from Mr. Zelich and knows he wants his business but he's going to turn one industrial lot into three, and it's going to be six because Beulah is going to get three commercial/industrial lots on Cleveland Avenue. That's six commercial lots on the 10-lot half block, and she lives there. She states that Mr. Zelich is only there to make money and the residents have invested money in their homes for years. It's a lovely neighborhood, but when you put six industrial lots at the end of the block with all the traffic, noise, and litter, the charm is gone. She doesn't know that any of them would've bought into that neighborhood if they knew this was going to happen. Grant is already closed and was given to a developer, now they're going to close Front and Cleveland and give that to a developer. There are only four streets surrounding the block, and they're taking away three of them. Cutting down the trees is the only buffer they have from Beulah, even 80% obscure isn't very much when it's 48 feet away from you. Her house has been standing for 128 years.

Mr. Zelich responded that it is not industrial, it's a commercial business that employs 10 people to feed their families. He provides a service that pays them, they pay taxes, he pays taxes, he pays a mortgage. Grove City is growing. He mentioned that Councilmember Mr. Schottke said at last month's Council meeting very clearly that the city is growing. It's no secret and it's coming and expanding downtown.

Ms. Shields reiterated the text standards were drafted to ensure that the character of the development on the site is reflective of the goals of the future land use map of 2050. It shows a transition from commercial to residential and that's the permitted uses and development patterns that would be instilled with this zoning text.

Mr. Frea sees that Mr. Zelich wants to put a garage in, not given any indication that he wants to increase the size of the footprint of the business or change the house, which is all good for him. He asked the staff if we really have to rezone from residential to commercial in order to accomplish the garage. Ms. Shields responded yes, because the garage is on a parcel that is currently zoned R-2, and he will be using it for his commercial business. The garage size will also exceed what our current garage square footage would be and not require the screening that would be implemented with this text.

Mr. Frea asked if the alternative is to change the entire three parcels to commercial. Ms. Shields replied that the original request was to rezone that parcel to C-2 but the applicant worked with staff to draft this text to design something more in character with the area under a PUD zoning.

Mr. Rauck asked if the difference in 80% screening being considered and what is truly required, would eat up how much of the third lot. If it would be 30% or something like that. Ms. Shields replied that it would depend on how the site is configured; if the parking lot was adjacent to it, then the setbacks might be different from what the building setback would be, and the screening required between the two. This was drafted based on code, in terms of screening. But this is not taking any requirements out of what would still be required to be implemented with the development plan in terms of screening and setbacks.

Mr. Rauck continued that there's still a tremendous control point there on how we differentiate on this last commercial parcel and where it abuts the next residence. A lot of leeway for us to create tremendous screening.

Mr. Titus stated he had been to the site, and that this business is bulging at the seams. The building is completely full to the point that all the storage is actually outside. He likes the idea that he's willing to put a building up and store the stuff inside rather than store it outside. No one wants to see it stored outside next to residential.

Hearing no questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Titus moved to recommend approval of the Rezoning to City Council as submitted. Mr. Farnsworth seconded the motion, and the item was approved 4-1, Mr. Frea- no.

ITEM #2 –Grove City Church of the Nazarene Phase 1 – Final Development Plan

PID # 202305020014

Mr. Barr presented the Development Department's findings. He stated the applicant is requesting a development plan for various recreational improvements behind the Grove City Church of the Nazarene at 4770 Hoover Road, including new parking lots, a new drive aisle, sports fields, and a shelter house.

The proposed area behind the Church and school currently includes a variety of buildings, drive aisles and athletic fields. The proposed development plan would relocate the drive aisles and parking lot and shelter house for the proposed athletic fields. The new parking lot will provide 48 additional parking spaces, 4 of which are handicap accessible. The landscape plan provided shows compliance with standards required by code section 1136 including parking lot island landscaping, perimeter landscaping around the proposed shelter house, and landscaping along the eastern property line to screen the detention basin and athletic fields from adjacent residences.

The proposed shelter house is approximately 2,850 square feet and 21 feet in height and is located south of the baseball diamond. The proposed building will be constructed of vertical white metal panels and the roof will be brown/bronze to match other existing buildings on the site.

Mr. Barr concluded after review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Final Development Plan as submitted.

Mr. Eric Walsh, Korda Nemeth Engineering, Inc., 1650 Watermark Dr., Columbus, OH 43215, spoke on the item.

Mr. Frea noted that he felt the plan has a lot of good features. He asked if there were any plans for changes on the other parcels for the two ball diamonds and football field that are there.

Mr. David McKnight, McKnight Group 3351 McDowell Rd. Grove City, OH, responded that there are multiple phases. There are two parcels, one in Grove City, and one in Jackson Township. There is a long-range plan, this is the first phase. Some are immediate needs as our school has grown. The baseball field was put in the initial design as a recreational field, so it wasn't optimized for high school athletics. It points in the wrong direction, so they want to relocate that for a better baseball field for the school as well as other community events like little league. The playground is outdated and it's between the building and a road, so they want to move it, with new equipment. They want to move the road back, so kids aren't crossing that road to get to the playground from the school, and replacing this ball field will allow them to do all of that in the first phase. It came about when they added a building to the school last year and Grove City asked them to look into the master retention and master stormwater system for any future developments. In Jackson Township they are planning and have had many discussions with Grove City Engineering about this. They're putting a larger retention basin on the Jackson Township site for the stormwater south of the church that flows into that, and some of the reason they're moving the ball field is that the storm lines will go through the current ball field. They want to get this ball field in and planted this summer so that the grass can grow and by the end of next ball season, they can play on the existing field. This field will then be ready the following year.

Mr. Frea asked if there are any plans to make the practice field a football field; a stadium field with bleachers and lights, and everything else- the new one you're proposing in this plan. Mr. McKnight replied that there are no plans to make a stadium, it's just an open field for the practice of all kinds that currently go on there now for younger kids for soccer, football, and baseball. They don't plan to put lines, no stadium.

Mr. Frea stated that moving the roadway further away from and behind the existing structures looks like a good idea, and wanted to ensure the fire department has looked at it and that it's still servicing the building and getting around. Mr. McKnight responded that part of that is that they have a water line that follows that road, so they're also relocating part of the water line and the fire hydrants as well.

Mr. Frea feels it's a great opportunity to upgrade the dumpster. It's a beautiful campus. Something other than a chain link fence around the sides of it. The city strives for a better look, they're trying to match the dumpster enclosures to the buildings that they're approximate to. A similar suggestion of design to the concession stand, at least to the west face of it, could still be seen from Hoover Road. He thinks it should be a brick face, just an upgrade. He also asked if the grass area to the east of the relocated road and baseball field is going to be a parking area.

Mr. McKnight responded that it is not a parking area and that they wanted to leave quite a bit of green space, the Department of Youth uses it for activities. The school uses it, they want it to be as open as they can.

Mr. Frea feels there should be trees in that area to provide a better canopy for students to gather and do lessons outside, and explicitly to keep from parking on the grass. Mr. McKnight replied that they've taken measures to prevent that by putting barriers off the track so they can't drive in the grass. Also, they really feel we want to leave it open for school, as the youth department has events out there in open fields and that would take away from their ability to do those types of things.

Mr. Rauck asked if their retention pond bottom surface was constructed with an open-core type of block that is mobile. He hates it when a retention pond is never fully dry enough for maintenance. A lot of times an open-core type concrete block can be installed so that you can mow over the top when it's still moist.

Mr. Walsh responded that they're grading the bottom to make sure there's sufficient positive drainage and water's not sitting in there, but it's just a seeded bottom. There's no concrete channel or anything proposed for the bottom of that now. Mr. Rauck asked if that was something he could look into and if he was familiar with what he was talking about. It's

like an open-core paver. Mr. Walsh asked if he was referring to grass pavers. Mr. Rauck responded yes, in the bottom that will support a small type of mower so that even with moisture, you can still get in there and do a great job of cleaning it out. It makes maintenance of the dry basin very efficient. Mr. Walsh replied that it's something they can look into, but it's not typical. He said they have to look into how it affects the infiltration of the water getting into the ground from a quality standpoint. Mr. Rauck responded it makes maintenance of the dry basin very efficient instead of just muck.

Hearing no questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Frea moved to add two stipulations to the Final Development Plan.

1. The dumpster enclosure shall be finished in materials matching the primary structures on the site.
2. A brick façade shall be utilized on the west elevation of the shelter building.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion, and the motion was approved 5-0.

Hearing no questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Frea moved to recommend approval of the Final Development Plan with the following two stipulations to City Council.

1. The dumpster enclosure shall be finished in materials matching the primary structures on the site.
2. A brick façade shall be utilized on the west elevation of the shelter building.

Mr. Farnsworth seconded the motion, and the item was approved 5-0.

ITEM #3 – Beulah Crossing – Preliminary Development Plan

PID # 202305030017

Mr. Barr presented the Development Department's findings. He stated this preliminary development plan is for a mixed-use development consisting of residential, retail, restaurant, and office space located along the north and south side of Columbus Street at the southeast entrance to Beulah Park from the Town Center. This application is for the preliminary development plan for the mixed-use development. Following the preliminary development plan the applicant will be submitting a rezoning and final development plan.

The 3.407-acre development is broken into 2 areas along the north and south sides of Columbus Street that will work together to create the overall mixed-use atmosphere of the development. The northern section has one proposed building, located along Columbus Street, with a covered patio area between the building and the property line. One access drive is proposed off Columbus Street along the east side of the building that wraps around and leads to a parking area located behind and to the side. The southern section has two proposed buildings, one located near Columbus Street, west of the railroad tracks, and another located at the corner of Columbus and Lincoln Avenue on the west side of the site. Two access drives are proposed, one from Front Street providing access to the site from the south and one from Cleveland Avenue providing access from the west side of the site. The Beulah Park Zoning Text requires that parking lots in Subarea B be designed to reduce the impact on nearby residences. Staff has concerns regarding the proximity of the parking lot drive aisle to the adjacent parcel to the west, as little room is available for the installation of landscaping and screening; however, staff will work with the applicant to resolve this issue during the review of the zoning and final development plan.

The applicant did not provide elevations as part of the submission but did provide conceptual building photos and material examples. Information provided with the application shows concepts for the building materials and color palette for the development.

While this plan is preliminary and further review will take place during the rezoning and final development plan when additional information is provided, staff believes that the elevations and landscaping provided can meet the intent of all PUD and GroveCity2050 principles.

Mr. Barr concluded after review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Preliminary Development Plan as submitted.

Ms. Rebecca Mott, Plank Law Firm, LPA, 411 East Town Street, Floor 2, Columbus, OH, 43215, spoke on the item. She gave an overview of the project area and intent as well as layout the next steps after the preliminary development plan.

Mr. Titus asked what kind of businesses she is envisioning. The small building to the west has a small footprint. Ms. Mott responded the two front buildings are the gateway in, being two to three stories, commercial, retail, and restaurants on the first and second floors, or just retail commercial on the first floor with multi-family residential on at least two stories or one story depending on how high they are. The maximum height proposed in the zoning text is 50 feet for those two buildings. The building to the west would have a smaller footprint and be shorter in height to be compatible with the residential and would most likely be a restaurant.

Mr. Rauck commented that the south building on the west side of the drive aisle gets really close to the property to the west. He sees it as problematic, that a potential solution could be reshaping of that bump out on the southern building to allow the drive aisle to move over away from the property line. He recommended some reconfiguration when the project goes into the final development plan.

Ms. Mott responded that the reason they are setback, with the drive aisle more towards the property line, is because of the railroad and utility clearance needed. They will work with staff to create more of a buffer from the other properties.

Mr. Frea feels it's not just close to, but on top of residents. Plus, the road network is not clear, making it difficult to get into the development. He is concerned with closing off Front Street and how to still manage the intersection at Columbus. With an entrance/exit off the northern section of Columbus Street, he would prefer to have kept Front Street running through without closing it off. He also questions if there will be enough parking to support three-story buildings noting everything else that's going on in this quadrant of the Town Center.

Ms. Mott agreed there's no direct access onto Columbus Street. She stated it was the best efficiency for circulation purposes in this type of development with the two historical-looking buildings out front. She noted that the project far exceeded the parking requirements based on uses and explains the breakdown for the parking calculations. It's in line with your code and is nearly 100 over required.

Mr. Rauck asked about moving the parking lot apron on the north parcel to the west and if the south access point aligns with it, if they could do away with the access on Front Street to keep some of the commercial activity traffic out of the residential neighborhood.

Mr. Mike Reeves, Kimley Horn and Associates 7965 N. High St., Ste 200, responded that they had safety concerns with creating a left-hand turn movement immediately crossing the railroad tracks, in that if anyone stops to turn left and there's opposing oncoming traffic you've immediately stacked cars into a railroad crossing. He would not want to allow the left turn movement immediately crossing the railroad tracks because it's a safety hazard.

Mr. Frea asked what if both entrances were moved west, how far west he'd have to go before he's no longer concerned. Mr. Reeves replied he is not certain, it's more of a part of a traffic study or analysis but he can work with city staff and city engineers to analyze what kind of stacking would be needed.

Mr. Frea stated that it would mean almost no changes to the northern property if moved to the west, and it would change the little restaurant located on the south property but thinks it would solve a whole lot of traffic flow problems, especially where it abuts the residence .

Mr. Tom Vogel, 3514 Grant Ave., noted that he built his house knowing about the development. He liked it a lot until he saw these plans. The only talk he's hearing is about Grant and Front, but there's an alleyway that runs behind their houses that's barely wide enough for one car, and it will become a traffic nightmare. He loves how the Beulah development is with the nice pond, parks, and fountain, but he's getting a parking lot and removing the beautiful trees to put it in. Grove City is quaint and beautiful, they love it. He feels they're going to overdevelop the downtown atmosphere. He has no problem with the north part, only the south part next to his neighborhood.

Mr. Michael Marinangli, 3520 Grant Ave., is curious about how the amount of parking space was calculated with the square footage of the buildings going in. He's asking Planning Commission to consider the alleyway as the beginning point of the residential area and create more of a buffer. He heard there would be work to ensure buffer space between them, but there's a dumpster configured there in that alley. He's right up against the alley as it exists. It looks like it's coming, there's no stopping what's in process here, but maybe just some consistency and some consideration with what's existing and what we're trying to do in our community. The neighborhood is a quaint, beautiful little area, with some people living there for years. Please consider what's important to the residents: keeping the traffic flow away and the buffer space in between.

Mr. Titus stated he agrees. He is excited about having some nice restaurants in the Beulah and Town Center area and not having to leave town to go to similar restaurants. The buffering is important to him as well.

Ms. Nancy Pennell, 3490 Grant Ave., is upset over closing two more streets, losing the mature, over 100-year-old Osage orange trees, and getting a parking lot with 200 spaces, a dumpster, and lots of traffic in the alleyway.

Mr. Pat Kelly, 250 E. Broad St., redeveloper of Beulah Park, is very sensitive to the appearance of the buildings. He's very proud of the project, and that he sees this project as the gateway to Beulah Park. He mentioned that Beulah Park was planned out and is a unique development in central Ohio with the large park and rear loaded garages. He continued that Beulah Park prides itself on being good neighbors and they are working to create the best development. He says that the restaurants in these locations will be high quality restaurants. The vision for the building is to make the appearance like the old train station and the size will be appropriately scaled to the area.

Mr. Frea asked what the plan for the property on the south side of Subarea B was going to be before the additional property was acquired. Mr. Kelly responded that he would've just had a bigger building at the west end. He mentioned that the focus is on the two matching buildings along Columbus Street first.

Mr. Rauck clarified with Mr. Reeves if there was only one apron to access the north parcel, and if there were two for the southern parcel. He feels strongly about not turning the alleyway into a traffic thoroughfare from the Front Street entrance. He feels it gives more respect to the neighborhood by doing away with it. He wants to do away with the Front and Cleveland entranceways to use Columbus and Lincoln. Mr. Reeves responded that he would definitely evaluate it and look into it.

Mr. Frea concurs with Mr. Rauck's suggestion about the south parcel access points. It needs to be reconfigured and would love to see renderings or drawings of the buildings. He would like to see elevations.

Ms. Mott asked if they received sample renderings of the concepts. They submitted a materials detail sheet with specifications of the shingle and stone materials they're going with.

Mr. Kelly interjected that they wanted to wait until they knew the plan was going to be accepted before spending the money on an architect for elevations. They didn't want to waste money.

Ms. Shields reminded everyone that this is the preliminary development plan, so the feedback that the Commission is giving now will be key to drafting the zoning text to ensure that the concerns are being addressed at the next step of the zoning and final development plans.

Mr. Rauck asked if it was not appropriate to add a stipulation about the aprons on the south parcel. Ms. Shields replied that the Commission could add stipulations, but that in terms of tabling she didn't know if it was necessary when they can make sure their concerns are noted to be incorporated into the zoning and final development plans.

Mr. Frea commented that they'd heard a lot. He asked if they were going to go back and alter the plans accordingly to address the concerns. Ms. Mott replied that they'd heard the concerns, and they'd taken notes. They mostly are the traffic patterns in the south parcel, the drive aisle, the closeness of the dumpster, and an additional landscape buffer with that drive aisle. She feels like they can do that as part of the final development plan. They will address everything as part of the verbiage in the zoning text which will become the zoning regulations for the entirety of the property, plus the final development plan. They are committed to that.

Hearing no further questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Rauck moved to recommend approval of the Preliminary Development Plan to City Council with the following stipulation.

1. Access to the south parcel shall be from Columbus Street and Lincoln Avenue.

Mr. Titus seconded the motion, and the item was approved 4-1, Mr. Frea- no.

There being no additional discussion, Chair Oyster adjourned the meeting at 2:46 pm.



Terry Ellis, Development Assistant



Chair Julie Oyster