



MEETING MINUTES

Planning Commission

Tuesday, December 8, 2020 – Virtual Meeting

Mr. David Frea was sworn in by Mayor Richard "Ike" Stage as new coming Planning Commission member, prior to the start of the meeting.

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

Chair Oyster asked for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was taken, and the following members were present: Chair Julie Oyster, Mr. Mike Linder, Mr. Jim Rauck and Mr. David Frea. Mr. Larry Titus joined the meeting at a later time. Other staff members present: Kyle Rauch, Development Director; Kim Shields, Community Development Manager; Kendra Spergel, Development Planner; Jimmy Hoppel, Development Planner; Dash Logan, Development Planner; Hannah White, Development Assistant; Jennifer Readler, Frost Brown Todd; Roby Schottke, City Council Member; Tammi Kelly, City Council Clerk; Chuck Boso, City Administrator; Cindi Fitzpatrick, Public Service Director; and Mike Boso, Chief Building Official. Planning Commission member Mr. Larry Titus joined the meeting during Item #3.

Organizational Items:

Chair Oyster noted a quorum was present and asked for approval of the November 3, 2020, Planning Commission minutes. Mr. Linder moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Rauck seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved 3-0., with Mr. Frea abstaining.

New Items:

ITEM #1 – 2400 Stringtown Road – Lot Split

PID #202011040057

Mrs. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval to split 0.9 acres out of an 8.5-acre parcel at 2400 Stringtown Road, the former Kmart site.

The Lot Split application is being presented today and upon approval from Planning Commission, the Development Department will stamp on the materials, formalizing the approval. The applicant can then file with Franklin County to create the lot.

The area to be split was shown as a future outlot on the approved development plan for the Kmart redevelopment. Plans showed keeping the existing access drives off Stringtown, therefore staff believes the safest access for the site created by this split would be off these drives and not through a new curb cut on Stringtown.

Staff recommended Planning Commission approve the split with the stipulation that no direct access be granted to Stringtown and that an access easement be recorded over the parent parcel.

Mr. David Hodges, Underhill and Hodge LLC, was present to speak to the item.

There being no questions or discussion, Mr. Linder moved to recommend approval of the Lot Split with the following stipulation:

1. No direct access shall be granted to Stringtown Road for the 0.908-acre parcel created by the split. Access shall be from existing drives on the parent parcel (040-005710), formalized through access easements prior to development plan approval for the lot created by the split.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0.

ITEM #2 – Kiddie Academy – Development Plan

PID #202009300052

Mrs. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a Development Plan, to construct a childcare facility, Kiddie Academy, on outlot #44 in Parkway Centre East, south of the Telhio site.

The Special Use Permit, allowing the use of a childcare facility on the site was approved by City Council last night, December 7, 2020. This Development Plan application examines the improvements to the site associated with the use, followed by final engineering and building permits to prepare for construction on the site.

The proposed building will be approximately 9,000 square feet, with a large outdoor play area surrounded by fencing, bollards and landscaping, adjacent to the north of the building. Access to the site will be from the Park Centre East drive aisle, similar to other Park Centre outlots.

The proposed development plan meets the requirements outlined in the Parkway Centre East development standards text, aside from a minor deviation to the number of parking spaces being reduced to 42 from the required 44 spaces. Staff is supportive of the deviation as project materials indicate that the facility will have 25 employees and the remainder of spaces would be for picking up and dropping off children.

The proposed building will be single-story, finished primarily in brick, with EIFS accent and dimensional shingles. In order to comply with the development standards text, the building features an architectural tower feature on the west side of the building to give the appearance of an entrance facing the roadway, though the primary entrance will be on the south elevation. Signage in the form of individual channel letters is proposed on the south and west elevations, in character with the Parkway Centre theme.

Staff believes the site and building have been designed to be compatible with area developments and is in line with the previously approved zoning and development standards for the site.

Additionally, the development generally meets the guiding principles of the GroveCity2050 Community Plan, therefore staff recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council with the one deviation from the parking requirements as noted.

Mr. Andreas Chavalier, EDB International, and Robert Johnson, JH Architects, were present to speak to the item.

Mr. Rauck asked about the connectivity between a property front access sidewalk and a City bike path along Buckeye Parkway, referring to a lack of connectivity illustration found in the site plans.

Mr. Chavalier explained that current plans do not show a connecting point between the two walkways, but it was a possibility to do so.

Mr. Rauck shared that he did consider it necessary to include in future plans, as to avoid a dead-end path and to accommodate certain short cut travel for foot traffic to the building.

Mr. Chavalier questioned if EDB International had the authority to illustrate a connection point, as it would be connecting to City property.

Mrs. Shields addressed the concern by stating this particular issue could be examined during site improvement plans in the final engineering state. She added that the City is eager to promote as much connectivity as possible and believes appropriately integrating that into the area is achievable in this plan.

Mr. Frea expressed a concern regarding Fire Department access, referring to previous review of the site's emergency vehicle access. Mr. Frea also shared his observation of other daycare centers utilizing a drive-thru drop-off and pick-up system. He questioned how this plan would accommodate or exclude this feature.

Mr. Chavalier explained the site did not offer sufficient space to accommodate a drive-thru system, that drop-off would occur at the main entrance where two cars are able to fit alongside each other.

Mr. Johnson spoke to the matter by sharing there was no anticipation of using all 42 spaces of the site parking lot, explaining that there would be ample room for vehicle maneuverability.

There being no further questions or discussion, Mr. Linder moved to recommend approval of the Development Plan to City Council, with the following deviation:

1. A deviation shall be granted to reduce the required number of parking spaces from the 44 parking spaces to 42 parking spaces.

Mr. Rauck seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0.

ITEM #3 –Farmstead Phase 2 – Plat**PID #202011040058**

Mrs. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant was requesting approval of a Plat for the Second Phase of Farmstead, creating additional lots and roadways off those established with Phase 1 of the development west of Jackson Pike.

This Plat will create the next phase of lots and roadways shown on the Development Plan approved by City Council in 2019. As with all plats, the Development Plan established the general layout and development design, which then goes through the detail engineering review process. The plat is the final stage to allow the developer to sell the lots to individual homeowners.

The proposed Plat will create 62 lots and the Right-of-Way for four roadways, three of which will be extensions of roadways previously platted in Phase 1. One reserve is also proposed, to be owned and maintained by the area Homeowners Association.

All lots and roadways are in accordance with the approved zoning text and development plan for Farmstead. Therefore, Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Plat as submitted.

Mr. Troy Cameron, Grand Communities LLC, and Mr. Mark Smith, Civil & Environmental Consultants, were present to speak to the item.

There being questions or concerns, Mr. Rauck moved to recommend approval of the Plat to City Council as submitted.

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

ITEM #4 – K9 Ohio – Special Use Permit**PID# 202011030054**

Mrs. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit to operate a dog training, boarding and daycare facility at 2102 Edwards Road, at the corner of Edwards Road and McDowell Road.

The site of the proposed business was rezoned C-1 (from SF-1) in 2017 to allow for the site to be developed with appropriately scaled commercial development. The proposed facility offers training and boarding services for dogs, where dogs stay on site for three weeks at a time. Daycare service is also offered but only for clients that have completed training packages to ensure that the dogs are well behaved. The applicant has stated that no more than eight dogs are on the premises at a time and that most business is done on an appointment basis.

Dogs are kept in the existing garage on the site, but the applicant is in the process of constructing a new commercial building to house the dogs. The submitted site plan shows that pick-up and drop-off is conducted along Edwards Road. Ms. Shields noted that staff has concerns with the impact to the roadway from this configuration or by utilizing the existing residential driveway off McDowell for pick-up and drop-off, and recommended to the applicant to install a parking area for the business off Edwards Road.

While properties around the site are currently largely vacant or industrial, the area is identified for Mixed Residential on the GroveCity2050 Future Land Use Map, recommended to be primarily residential with

commercial scaled to serve area residents. The area is also seeing redevelopment occur in close proximity ,the Bentley Apartments and Kmart redevelopment, for example. Ms. Shields clarified that staff believes that the proposed use could be appropriate and in line with the intended character of the area, however it will need to be operated in a manner that does not inhibit the potential redevelopment of area properties

Similar to requirements and expectations of other comparable facilities including K9 Ohio's previously approved location on Broadway, Pinnacle Pets on Farm Bank Way, and Dogs Rule on Hoover Road, the primary operations of the facility should be within an indoor setting, and outdoor operations should only be conducted within a fully screened area. Staff recommends screening in the form of either a six-foot fence or wall, or mounding with evergreen trees.

Provided these standards are adhered to, staff believes the proposed use can comply with the required criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of a Special Use Permit on the site, as well as the principles of GroveCity2050. Therefore, after review and consideration and noting past precedent set on other similar dog boarding/training and daycare centers, as well as the need to resolve outstanding issues with the Building Division, staff recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council with the 6 stipulations noted in the staff report.

Mr. Luke Smurthwaite was present to speak to the matter and wished to add that the addition of the commercial building and outdoor enclosure behind it would reduce almost all public visibility, as it would be an isolated yard obstructed from view by passing traffic.

Mr. Linder expressed concern in the contradictory nature of the first stipulation and what is stated in the applicant's materials. The first stipulation being that primary operations would be conducted in an indoor setting, while the applicant has communicated that dogs spend majority of their time outside. Mr. Linder asked if the City could explain the contradiction and how that would be monitored.

Mr. Smurthwaite answered that when weather permitting, the dogs spent most of the day outside, as they enjoy it, and it does not seem problematic to him. He explained that when weather is adverse, the dogs get regular breaks but spend most of the time indoors, otherwise, majority of the time is in an outdoor space.

Mrs. Shields answered Mr. Linder concern by explaining the intent of the stipulation being based off how other similar operations have been improved. Mrs. Shields explained that the contradictory nature of the stipulation and the applicant's materials was to illustrate that the current operation is not in accordance with City expectations.

Mr. Smurthwaite added that K9 Ohio likes to set themselves apart by offering the outdoor time. He added that clients and dogs like the business and have been supportive of it for the last 4 years.

Mr. Linder expressed concern in policing of the outdoor v. indoor time. He questioned if it would be investigated on a complaint basis, since it is such a broad term to adequately handle from an authoritative standpoint.

Mrs. Shields answered that monitoring would primarily come from complaints but that the City does have inspectors that could potentially see any violations. The purpose would be to ensure the K9 Ohio operation is not becoming a nuisance. Mrs. Shields clarified that the department is not opposed to dogs being outside, that the intent of the stipulations is to ensure the dogs are spending time within a screened area, as to not impact surrounding properties.

Mr. Smurthwaite conveyed that he had set up sufficient area by utilizing a deck and fencing, and that the new additions would also achieve that goal.

Mr. Frea spoke to the conflict he recognized between the first two stipulations, saying that the applicant seems to be reinforcing the idea that the animals would be spending a considerable time outside. Mr. Frea questioned how this conflict could be resolved.

Mrs. Shields answered that there was a challenge with a resolution, just because of the nature of the use and keeping in mind the dog's basic needs. She explained that based on the addition of a new commercial grade structure a primarily indoor operated business was achievable. Mrs. Shields added that the purpose behind the stipulations was to safeguard against the possibility of the animals becoming a nuisance to the area.

Mr. Smurthwaite added that there have been no complaints, to his knowledge, for the last 4 years.

There being no additional discussion, Mr. Linder moved to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit to City Council with the following 6 stipulations:

1. The primary operations of the use shall be conducted in an indoor setting.
2. Any operation associated with the proposed use shall be within a fully screened area. Screening shall be in the form of either a six-foot height fence or masonry wall, or a four-foot height mound with evergreen trees spaced to provide full visual screening. If a fence or wall is used for screening, supplemental landscaping shall be installed to break up the visual mass of the fence.
3. A paved parking lot shall be installed, accessed off Edwards Road
4. All signage on the site must comply with the requirements of Chapter 1145 and shall not be hand painted.
5. Permits shall be obtained from the Building Division for all on-site improvements, including those improvements previously installed without proper permits.
6. The Special Use Permit shall be valid for one (1) year from the effective date of approval to allow for the evaluation of the appropriateness of the use on the site.

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

Mr. Rauck recused himself from the following item, due to a conflict of interest.

ITEM #5 – Circular Economy Business Park (SWACO)– Preliminary Development Plan PID# 20200930053

Mrs. Shields presented the Development Department's findings. She stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan to examine general land uses and roadway configurations on the 360+ acres of land owned by SWACO primarily north of SR665 to create a Circular Economy Business Park. This site includes the original limits of the Gateway West industrial subdivision as well as an additional 130 acres controlled by SWACO.

Similar to other industrial subdivision projects, no user has yet been identified, rather this application is the first step in a project that would ultimately result in establishing the roadway network and delineation of pods for prospective building sites. More details will be provided during the rezoning application, which requires a zoning text with specific development standards, and the final development plans, which will be submitted per site and show specific layouts and designs.

The applicant has indicated that a goal of this site is to help SWACO increase their diversion rates by attracting users to the site that will utilize materials that would have gone to the landfill. As such, project materials refer to first, second, and third stage facilities related to the waste stream supply chain. Because many of the uses noted within these descriptions would typically have negative impacts associated with them including odors, noise and/or visual impacts, standards will need to be included in the zoning text to mitigate these potential impacts.

Additionally, while staff understands the importance of having all three stages on the site, it is staff's opinion that any development on the site be appropriately scaled to establish a balance of uses to comply with the community's vision set forth in the GroveCity2050 Community Plan, and that restrictions on percentages of first and second stage facilities be placed in the zoning text to ensure that an appropriate amount of the site is reserved for third stage or other industrial uses.

The site is proposed to be broken down into six subareas. Mrs. Shield added that for the sake of time, she would not be going through each subarea, but wanted to note that while a narrative was submitted describing potential uses for each subarea, this application being reviewed today will not be approving any uses. This review would occur during the rezoning application.

The submitted narrative describes a range of uses across the site, with multiple references to the GroveCity2050 Plan in terms of targeted uses, the scale of development and roadway connections. Generally, proposed uses on the site range from more commercially oriented (including office) closer to I-71, to industrial of various scales in the larger central pods, to wetland and stream corridor preservation zones along the northern edge.

While there are items that will need to be further clarified in the zoning text, the submitted narrative does commit to the prohibition of landfill operations north of London-Groveport Road, and that any recycled organic material composting or digesting activities will be done in an indoor setting.

The property proposed for development as well as the area around it represents a significant opportunity for economic expansion for the City of Grove City. As such, SWACO has committed within project materials to create a set of standards to hold development on the site to strict architectural, landscape and other general design standards that go above and beyond code requirements.

The submitted subarea map also shows future roadways through the site including the extension of Bill Lotz Way and a second connection between Bill Lotz Way and Haughn Road. Other connections include right-of-way easements for future roadways along the west and north property lines. The plans show how these roadways fit into the future area roadway as identified on the approved Thoroughfare Map.

Staff believes that the proposed development has the potential to be an asset to the community by opening markets into attracting a new type of business/industry as well as providing employment opportunities and creating a unique campus development to reduce the waste stream going into the landfill. Conversely, a number of the conceptualized uses have the potential to negatively impact area properties in terms of visual aesthetics, odors, and noise that may detract from future job-creating development. Therefore, it will be critical to ensure that any zoning text includes standards to mitigate potential impacts, given the importance of this property to the future economic growth of the City.

Therefore, noting the importance of setting appropriate standards in the zoning text for the site to eliminate potential negative impacts to area properties, and to ensure that the site is developed with appropriately scaled uses, buildings and sites within each subarea, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission recommend approval to City Council for the preliminary development plan with three stipulations noted in the staff report.

Jeff Wilkins, SWACO, was present to speak to the item. He added that he was appreciate of staff's and Planning Commission's time and would like to take the opportunity to further explain the supply chain illustrated in the materials of this first phase of site development. Mr. Wilkins went into detail to explain the Waste Diversion exhibit, describing how this plan would allow for less waste at the existing SWACO landfill and incorporate research and technology ventures, which meet the GroveCity2050 plan. Mr. Wilkins invited his associates, Ryan Pearson and Drew Russel, to add further details.

Mr. Russell reiterated the concept of the Circular Economy Business Park, explaining that the goal behind the plan was to find a balance between materials and users on site. He went on to say that Exhibit J in the application materials highlighted the types of users that use recycled product in their manufacturing operation.

Mr. Wilkins wished to call attention to the wetland area on the site plan, that illustrated the design to protect environmental features and create connectivity within the City. He explained this plan to balance job growth and environmental conservation, and that SWACO was setting a high standard for themselves in this endeavor. Mr. Wilkins ended with saying this was a unique opportunity for the community and SWACO to grow together.

Mr. Frea expressed his excitement and support for the Circular Economy business plan, and as a technologist was interested in knowing if any subareas of the plan were set aside to target Research and Development (R&D) and Tech. businesses, and if they would be freestanding or inherent to the other clients/manufacturers on site.

Mr. Wilkins answered by explaining that most R&D and Tech. business would be inherent, as to support the users on site. He went on to convey that SWACO was working with Rev1 as a partner to attract companies to this location. He expressed openness to the opportunity to work with Grove City and any Tech. companies that the City may partner with. Mr. Wilkins went on to add that smaller projects would inevitably come first but the goal is to attract a major project that attracts a large job market. He said that there is room in the plan to accommodate these larger ventures.

Mr. Frea questioned if there were any particular sub areas set aside to accommodate the smaller R&D and Tech. companies, or if they would just be supportive of the existing businesses.

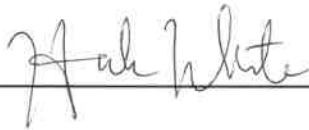
Mr. Wilkins answered by clarifying that most R&D and Tech. would be inherent or supportive of the existing manufacturers and that there was no current strategy to attract smaller businesses, but the plans do have the flexibility to accommodate any partnerships that the City would want to pursue.

There being no additional discussion, Mr. Linder moved to recommend approval of the Preliminary Development Plan to City Council with the following 3 stipulations:

1. Any future rezoning application (and zoning text) shall incorporate a statement that prohibits any landfill operations north of London-Groveport Road and that any recycled organic material composting or digesting activity will be restricted to indoor operations to prevent negatively impacting surrounding properties.
2. Any future rezoning application (and zoning text) shall establish standards to mitigate potential impacts on areas properties in terms of visual aesthetics, odors, and noise.
3. The applicant shall work with the City to establish appropriate percentages across the site, second and third stage facilities to ensure area development incorporates a balance and diversification of uses, to reserve an appropriate amount of the site for third stage or other industrial uses.

Mr. Frea seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0.

Having no additional items, Chair Oyster adjourned the meeting at 2:14 p.m.



Hannah White, Secretary



Julie Oyster, Chair