



MEETING MINUTES

Planning Commission

October 7, 2025 – City Council Chambers

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

Roll was taken, and the following members were present: Mr. Chris Roach, Ms. Kim Wemlinger, Chair Julie Oyster, and Vice-Chair Michael Farnsworth. Mr. Larry Titus was absent. Staff members present: Kyle Rauch, Development Director, Kim Shields, Community Development Manager, Dash Logan, Senior Planner; Jesse Shamp Frost Brown Todd; and Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council.

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

Organizational Items:

Chair Oyster asked for approval of the September 2nd, 2025, Planning Commission meeting minutes. Mr. Farnsworth moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Wemlinger seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved 4-0.

New Items:

ITEM #1 - ACT Investment Jackpot Road - Special Use Permit

PID# 202508180026

Mr. Logan presented the Development Department's findings. He stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a special use permit to operate a recreational cannabis dispensary at 3989 Jackpot Road. City Council passed Ordinance C-32-24 in August 2024, establishing the special use permit process for evaluating and reviewing proposed dispensary uses. Additions and modifications to these regulations were approved in 2025 with C-08-25 instating an annual review by the Safety Director for all retail marijuana sales locations against State and City rules and regulations, and C-31-25 modifying how the distance is measured between dispensary locations and sensitive land uses noted in code. The site is zoned C-2 (Retail Commercial), which allows for the retail dispensing of marijuana with an approved special use permit.

Mr. Logan continued stating that the use requirements outlined in code state that no medical and/or recreational marijuana retailer shall be located within 500 feet, measured from the shortest distance between the parcel line of the prohibited facility and the physical structure under the control of the marijuana facility, of an opioid treatment center, residential use, church, public library, public playground, public park, school, or child care

facility. The proposed site is located near a treatment facility, and the applicant has provided an exhibit stamped by a registered surveyor verifying that the proposed dispensary complies with the 500-foot requirement by code, with 508 feet between the building of the proposed dispensary and the property line of the treatment facility. Proposed hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday, with peak hours anticipated to be between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. The project materials state that no more than 740 customers and no more than 673 cars are expected daily. Materials state that no more than 20 customers will be allowed to enter the building at once, and customers are expected to spend between 12 and 17 minutes inside the building.

Mr. Logan stated the proposed use will occupy the existing 4,284 square foot building and will undergo renovations to conform with the Division of Cannabis Control safety and security requirements, including mechanical and electrical repairs and building security enhancements, including new locks and surveillance systems. Section 1136.05 (c) of code requires that sites be brought into compliance with the provisions of the landscaping code when a change of use occurs. Since the proposed application will establish a new use for the property, all existing structures must be brought into compliance with the applicable sections of Chapter 1136. Additionally, several other landscaping issues were noted during an inspection of the site, including overgrown shrubs, dead branches in trees that require pruning, and exposed weed fabric in mulch beds. In addition to the site landscaping issues, the Building Division issued a notice of property maintenance violation on August 22nd. The violation noted the accumulation of rubbish and garbage on the site and broken curbs around the site, creating a hazard. Staff believe that, in order to create a safe and appealing site, all outstanding property maintenance violations should be addressed before the proposed dispensary begins operation. Code Section 1145.20 indicates that any sign that is nonconforming to the requirements of Chapter 1145 (Signs) shall be brought into compliance when there is a change in use of the business. The existing pole sign along the west edge of the property does not meet the required 10-foot setback from the lot line. As such, the Building Division issued a violation for this sign and noted that the sign must be removed.

Mr. Logan concluded by stating that the proposed use has been reviewed against the criteria established by City Council for reviewing and evaluating proposed dispensary uses, and the applicant has provided materials that comply with or can demonstrate compliance with the requirements established in Ordinance C-32-24 and modified by C-31-25, and therefore after review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the special use permit with the stipulations noted in the staff report.

Chair Oyster noted that two letters were received regarding this application, both in opposition to the use.

Mr. Chris Welsh, 3560 Dolson Court, Carroll OH, was present to speak to the item. He stated that the State of Ohio Department of Commerce has created and enforce very strict rules and regulations, which dispensaries must follow to maintain their licenses, and Grove City has adopted similar rules at the local level. He provided an example of these regulations by outlining security recording measures and footage retention. He stated that they are going to be responsible operators and need to follow State and Local rules to continue to operate.

Mr. Farnsworth noted traffic congestion in the area, stated he believed a traffic light would help, and asked if there was one planned. Ms. Kimberly Shields, Community Development Manager, stated that a traffic study was not required, but the estimated traffic volume for the use was compared to the traffic anticipated to be generated

by other uses permitted in the C-2 zoning district. Based on the traffic generation manual, traffic estimated for the proposed use is higher than some uses permitted in the C-2 district, but less than other uses that would require a special use permit. Based on these estimates, staff did not feel a traffic study was warranted for this application. She noted that there is additional public roadway access to the east, in addition to Jackpot Road.

Mr. Farnsworth asked if the City would look at if a traffic light is necessary at this intersection. Ms. Shields responded that a city-wide traffic study is in progress as part of the City's thoroughfare plan update. Mr. Kyle Rauch, Development Director, stated that ODOT has jurisdiction over a certain distance from the interstate, which may mean the City could not install a traffic light.

Ms. Kim Wemlinger asked how far the proposed site is from the addiction center. Ms. Shields responded that materials state a distance of 508 feet. Ms. Wemlinger noted that she believes that the use is so close to the addiction center and noted efforts the community has made to support addiction recovery and public health, and fears this would undermine those efforts. She also noted that this area is the tourist hub of Grove City and is concerned about impacts the use may have on the surrounding hotels.

Chair Oyster noted a personal experience at a hotel in an area where marijuana is legal, where it had been smoked in the hotel, and echoed Ms. Wemlinger's concerns about impacts upon the hotels and stated she would not be voting in favor of this application.

Mr. Roach asked if patrons were allowed to smoke products on property. Mr. Welsh responded that state law does not allow for the consumption of products inside or outside of the premises.

Mr. Roach noted that the signage for the site on Jackpot Road is overgrown and hoped it would be improved by the applicant.

Mr. Welsh responded that he understands the concerns expressed by Planning Commission. He noted that since there is not currently a dispensary within Grove City, he understands concerns related to safety and what it would look like. He noted that dispensaries in the State of Ohio are heavily regulated and do not look like smoke shops and are more clinical looking. He stated that all transactions are heavily regulated to ensure no minors are purchasing products, and while he recognizes that people may use products in a hotel, there are over 20 dispensaries currently in Franklin County where they can purchase products. He noted that he understands the traffic concerns, and as a business, they would want traffic to function smoothly and safely, but a light here is outside of their control.

Mr. Jim Haninger, 2755 Woods Crescent, Grove City OH, stated that residents have shown up to City Council meetings earlier this year in opposition to previous dispensary applications and noted signed petitions that were distributed to City Council. He stated that although marijuana is legal in Ohio, residents did not vote in favor of a dispensary and stated there are plenty of other dispensaries in Franklin County. He cited a recent study from Wright State University regarding marijuana usage and deadly accidents and noted that it is possible to get high and drive impaired before leaving the parking lot of a dispensary.

Mr. John Matera, 6469 Portage Path Court, Grove City OH, noted he shares concerns regarding proposed traffic, noting that the numbers provided indicate an average of one car per minute, and impacts on the adjacent hotels.

He questioned information provided by the applicant regarding transaction times, noting that the transaction times would indicate that there would be more people on site than could be served, and questioned if they would be loitering. He also questioned if there was any control outside the facility, and what would prevent people from consuming products outside the building.

Mr. Welch responded that the business is not a law enforcement agency but is required to have cameras on the exterior of the building to capture clear, defined video and images of people outside, and would work with law enforcement agencies to ensure that rules are followed. He stated that the traffic and customer estimates provided are what they anticipate being extreme maximums, which they do not anticipate.

Hearing no additional questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Roach moved to recommend approval of the special use permit to City Council with the following stipulations:

1. All outstanding property maintenance violations shall be addressed prior to the dispensary opening.
2. The site shall be brought into compliance with the landscaping requirements outlined in Chapter 1136 of code.
3. The existing nonconforming sign at the western edge of the property shall be removed.

Ms. Wemlinger seconded the motion, and the item was disapproved 1-3. Chair Oyster - No, Farnsworth - No, Mr. Roach - Yes, Ms. Wemlinger - No.

ITEM #2 - Patrick Property -Preliminary Development Plan

PID# 202507310024

Mr. Logan presented the Development Department's findings. He stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan for a new residential development consisting of 93 single-family homes and 50 paired patio homes on 39.4 acres south of Grove City Road and west of Demorest Road. The application was postponed at the September 2nd Planning Commission meeting at the request of the applicant. Since that time, the applicant has revised the plans to reflect feedback received by Planning Commission and Staff, including reducing the number of units and reconfiguring the open space on site to make it more accessible and usable open space.

Mr Logan continued stating that the development is proposed to offer two types of housing - single-family and attached (paired) patio homes for a total of 143 homes on the site. Each home will be on its own lot, and proposed lot widths are 52 feet for the single-family homes and 34 feet for the paired patio homes. Staff believe the proposed lot widths and housing options are appropriate, noting that many recent residential developments have included a mix of housing styles as well as smaller lot sizes, which reflect changing housing preferences. Materials state that all roadways will be public and measure 28 feet in width, allowing on-street parking on one side. An emergency access drive is proposed off Grove City Road to provide secondary access in the event of an emergency. Sample elevations were submitted for both the detached single-family housing units as well as the paired patio homes for preliminary review. Staff believe modifications should be made or new elevations

should be proposed to de-emphasize the garages on the single-story paired patio elevation. While architectural standards and requirements will be established during the rezoning process, staff expect the proposed development to have similar architectural requirements to other recent developments within Grove City.

Mr. Logan stated that the development exceeds the amount of open space required per code, based on the number of lots. Materials state that Reserve "D" will be a centralized community park that includes a picnic shelter, tot lot, activity lawn, and off-street parking spaces. Plans show 5-foot-wide sidewalks are proposed throughout the open space areas, which loop back to the internal roadways on site. Staff have recommended the applicant discuss the possibility of a trail easement with the Cemetery association to the east, which would allow for a trail to connect though to the Tanglebrook subdivision, and the applicant has indicated that they are in continuing discussions regarding an easement to allow for this trail connection. Landscaping standards will be established during the rezoning process to address landscaping for each unit, buffering requirements, street trees, entry features and other landscaping associated with the development. Preliminary landscaping details show street trees along the roadways, throughout reserve areas and the proposed basins, and an evergreen buffer within Reserve "C" to screen the proposed development from the existing homes along Grove City Road. However, this is the only area where such screening is shown, and further discussion is needed to establish tree preservation and screening areas along the other property lines.

Mr. Logan concluded stating that as the proposed development aligns with the residential intent for the area and will bring additional residences into the community to help meet the increasing need for housing in the Central Ohio region, and has been designed to maximize accessible and usable open space which will provide a community benefit, 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.

Chair Oyster noted that a letter was received by a neighboring resident with concerns regarding the proposed application.

Ms. Hillary Laffin, Grand Communities by Fischer Homes, 3940 Olympic Boulevard, Erlanger KY, was present to speak to the item. She stated that Fischer Homes has been active in the Columbus market since 2008, and noted their existing community in Grove City, Farmstead. She provided a presentation of the proposed project, highlighting the context of the area, and discussing the existing site conditions and proposed site plan. She stated that the property is in Jackson Township, and is proposed to be annexed into Grove City and zoned PUD-R. She stated since the plan was before Planning Commission in September, they worked with staff to address concerns related to open space and density. She noted that the plan exceeds open space requirements of code, and noted two different home types are proposed, single family residential and paired patio homes, similar to townhomes. She highlighted amenities in the open space areas and noted that the goal was to create open space to act as a community benefit and there is a 2- acre park central to the community, which is an asset for all, regardless of if they live in the development. She ran through elevations for each proposed home type, including square footages for each type. She noted that the typical buyers for the paired patio homes do not typically generate a lot of families and are typically young professionals or move-down buyers. She addressed perceived safety issues raised at the previous meeting and stated that they have engaged with the fire department on the proposed development, who stated they have no issues as long as building and fire codes are followed. She stated they are still in process of conducting a traffic study in coordination with the city, which will inform improvements. She noted the future land use classification for the site, which likely did not consider

that these parcels could be assembled, and noted that there are higher intensity land uses to the west, further from the Town Center area, and noted this community could serve as a transition between these land uses.

Mr. Farnsworth asked for clarification on if the park would be open to non-residents and how that would be managed, and whether there were bike paths. Ms. Shields responded that there are currently no bike paths down Grove City Road, which is why the City is working with Fischer Homes to try to establish a regional trail connection through the cemetery. Ms. Laffin responded that her understanding is that parks within developments such as this are typically owned by the communities, but accessible to all city residents. The park would not restrict access but could be owned and maintained by the HOA.

Ms. Wemlinger asked if there will be a walking path along the front pond. Ms. Laffin responded that there is a path around the pond.

Ms. Wemlinger stated she agreed with the letter received from an area resident regarding the need for perimeter landscaping and asked when this would be addressed. Mr. Logan responded that standards related to screening would be established during the rezoning process, and the city noted the need for screening in the staff report to ensure that these standards would be established with future application to ensure adequate screening and buffering.

Chair Oyster noted the report mentioned discussion regarding de-emphasizing the garage doors on the paired patio homes and asked if this would be an issue. Ms. Laffin responded that she does not believe this will be an issue and stated that some methods that could be used include implementation of carriage-style garage doors, adding hardware, and addition of windows to doors. She stated they will continue to work with staff to address this.

Ms. Kristina Murcdock, 4577 Grove City Road, stated she is the property owner to the west of the site. She thanked the city for addressing public notice sign, which was previously hard to see. She also stated she appreciated the acknowledgement for the need for appropriate screening between the development and her property.

Mr. Charles Johnson, 2715 Lori's Way, stated concerns with the number of proposed units between new development in Grove City and their impact on fire and police services. He stated that he sent a letter to City Council about tax abatements and that we should not be giving abatements as they harm our infrastructure and services. He noted that City Council meetings have discussed the City's flat income tax levels and questioned who will be responsible for infrastructure to serve new developments and is concerned about emergency response times.

Mr. Kyle Rauch clarified that there have been no discussions about tax abatements or a TIF for this project and stated that the county's property tax establishes levies at the rate necessary to provide and cover the costs of services. He noted that while there will be additional costs, there will also be additional revenue to offset the increased costs. He stated that the flat income tax withholdings levels are likely due to post-COVID versus pre-COVID changes, and the City is looking at Economic Development projects to boost income tax withholding. The city is aware of how incentives affect taxing jurisdictions, and the city converses with these jurisdictions throughout the process.

Hearing no further questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Mr. Farnsworth moved to recommend approval of the preliminary development plan to City Council as submitted.

Ms. Wemlinger seconded the motion, and the item was approved 4-0.

ITEM #3 - Green Oaks of Grove City - Preliminary Development Plan

PID# 202507020022

Mr. Logan presented the Development Department's findings. He stated that the applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan for a new 120-unit assisted living community at 4745 Big Run South Road. The site will be accessed from a curb cut on Holt Road, and the proposed 3 story building will total 96,000 square feet, with 120 units. 68 studio and 52 one- bedroom units are proposed. Materials state that the building will provide a range of amenities for residents, including a large dining room, commercial kitchen, fitness room, beauty salon, game room, activity room, computer stations, a library, art spaces and multiple community rooms and lounges. Parking is located between the building and residential property to the south and is set back to allow for screening to be planted. 70 parking spaces are provided. While the amount of parking provided is less than 1 space per unit, the applicant has indicated that the amount of parking provided is similar to other existing facilities operated by the development and is in line with other assisted living facilities. An outdoor area for resident recreation is shown at the rear of the building, and plans show an 8-foot wide path running from Lake Lanier Drive across the southern portion of the property to Holt Road, where the path runs across the site's frontage to act as an extension to the City's trail network and provide safer access to the Holt Road trail and schools north of Big Run South Road.

Mr. Logan continued stating that the proposed building will be a maximum of 44 feet from grade to peak of the roof, and the exterior will be finished in a combination of materials, including fiber cement lap siding, board siding and batten siding. Further discussion and review of architecture will be conducted with future application to ensure the architecture is appropriate and compatible with other area development, including the amount of masonry on the structure where visible from the public right-of-way. The submitted plans show the intent to meet the requirements of city code; however, there are a few items which will need to be addressed with future applications including supplemental landscaping around the dumpster enclosure, parking lot perimeter screening planting, and perimeter plantings to provide screening from adjacent residential properties.

Mr. Logan concluded stating that staff believe the proposed facility is in character with the land use intent for the area and acts as an appropriate transitional use between the single-family residential to the east and other area development including the South-Western Career Academy, and the apartment complex across Hot Road in the City of Columbus. Therefore, after review and consideration, the Development department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the preliminary development plan with the stipulations noted in the staff report.

Mr. Jared Isenthal, Evergreen Realty. 566 W Lake Street, Chicago IL, was present to speak to the item. He stated they believe this site is a great site and noted that the senior population is the fastest growing and most underserved population in Ohio, and there will be more than 3 million seniors in Ohio by 2030, but not enough appropriate care options available. He stated they believe this project aligns well with GroveCity2050, noting focused growth and infill development, and stated that 100 construction jobs and 50 full time jobs will be created by the proposed development. He clarified that they are not nursing homes, and they do not provide memory

care, and the facility is a low acuity care facility that provides seniors with activities of daily living support. While each resident will have their own unit, the idea is to have places available to get seniors out and about the facility. He noted the location across from a church and school and noted they typically collaborate with churches and partner with schools for programs. He provided visual renderings showing the building will not be invasive along Holt Road and are continuing to work on landscaping buffering to reduce any impacts on adjacent neighbors.

Hearing no questions or discussion from Planning Commission or the public, Ms. Wemlinger moved to recommend approval of the preliminary development plan to City Council with the following stipulations:

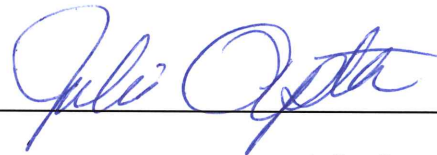
1. Supplemental landscaping shall be provided around all exposed sides of the perimeter of the dumpster enclosure, in the form of 36" height minimum plantings at a maximum spacing of 5'0".
2. An evergreen hedgerow, 3 feet minimum in height, shall be installed along the east side of the parking area.
3. The species of evergreen trees along the east property line shall be reevaluated to ensure the plantings will achieve the appropriate level of screening from the adjacent residential area.

Mr. Roach seconded the motion, and the item was approved 4-0.

There being no additional discussion, Chair Oyster adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.



Kim Shields, Community Development Manager



Julie Oyster, Chair