CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING **October 7, 2014**

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

Chair Holt began the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with the following members present: Mr. Marv Holt, Chair, Mr. Chuck Boso, Mr. Gary Leasure, Mr. Mike Linder and Ms. Julie Oyster. Others present: Kim Shields, Planning/GIS Specialist; Kyle Rauch, Planning & Development Officer; Stephen Smith, Frost Brown Todd; Bill Vedra, Deputy City Administrator; Lt. Tammy Greene, JTF Inspector; Cpt. Jeff Pearson, Grove City Police; Mike Boso, Chief Building Inspector; Laura Scott, Planning & Zoning Coordinator; Cindi Fitzpatrick, Service Superintendent; and Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council.

Chair Holt noted a quorum was present. There were no changes to the minutes of the September 2, 2014 regular meeting or the September 24, 2014 special meeting. They were both accepted by unanimous consent.

Item #1 –VanTrust Southwest Blvd. - Development Plan **(PID# 201403030008)**

The applicant is proposing to construct an approximately 227,000 square foot speculative industrial building on the north side of Southwest Boulevard, east of Lewis Centre Way. The site is currently vacant and zoned IND-2, and is bordered to the west, east, and south across Southwest Boulevard by other properties zoned IND-2. The property to the north is located in Urbancrest and is zoned industrial.

The site will be accessed by two curb cuts on Southwest Boulevard. The eastern cut will access the truck loading area and the western cut will access the employee and customer parking lot. Although the number of anticipated employees is unknown, as the building is a speculative development, Ms. Shields stated that staff felt the proposed parking is adequate for the site when compared to square footage-to-parking ratios of other industrially zoned sites in the area. Stormwater is proposed to be handled through a dry basin spanning the eastern property boundary. Ms. Shields explained that staff would be supportive of a deviation to the City's Pond Design Standards which require wet ponds, as other large-scale industrial developments have been permitted to develop with dry basins.

The project was granted variances by the BZA earlier this year to exceed the allowable building height and lot coverage. The proposed building is within those granted variances. 20 dock doors are proposed on the east side of the structure with the potential to add 24 dock doors in the future. Due to the site's visibility from Southwest Boulevard and residential areas in Urbancrest to the northeast, Ms. Shields stated that staff has requested that the applicant reconfigure the site to place the dock doors on the west side of the structure. She stated that although the applicant has cited the existing grading on the property as the reasoning for keeping the docks on the east side, staff did not feel the existing grade change was significant enough to prohibit developing the site so that the dock doors were oriented to the west.

Staff recommended that Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. A dry basin shall be permitted in place of a wet pond.

2. The loading dock doors shall be located on the west side of the structure.

Mr. Don Plank was present to represent the applicant. He stated that representatives from VanTrust as well as the architects for the project were available to answer questions. Mr. Plank reviewed the setbacks on the site and the proposed landscaping on the site. He went on to discuss the orientation of the building, stating that the proposed building meets all requirements of the City's zoning code with the exception of the variances granted by the BZA. He stated that staff's request to reorient the dock doors is not a Code requirement; he believes it is an issue of aesthetics. Mr. Plank explained that it was more than just the existing grade for reasoning why the dock doors are on the east side, including marketability of office space. David Efaw with Red Architecture added that buildings are oriented in a way to give trucks a “driver-side backing scenario” to make it easier for trucks to back into the dock doors.

Mr. Leasure confirmed that the applicant wanted the dock doors to remain on the east side of the structure. Mr. Plank confirmed that was correct. Mr. Leasure questioned staff as to why they wanted to dock doors on the west side. Ms. Shields responded that staff’s primary concern was the visibility of the doors from Southwest Boulevard. Chair Holt noted that he has driven around the area and noticed that there are multiple buildings with dock doors oriented to the east. Ms. Shields also stated that staff has received concerns from a resident in Urbancrest to the northeast regarding trucks on the site. Staff felt it was more appropriate for the dock doors to face an industrial area than a residential area.

Mr. Linder stated that he is in commercial real estate, dealing with industrial properties, and that the architect’s statement on truck backing is true. He understands that having the dock doors on the driver’s side is important.

Mr. Linder made a motion to recommend the approval of the development plan to City Council with one stipulation/deviation:

1. A dry basin shall be permitted in place of a wet pond.

Ms. Oyster seconded. Chair Holt clarified that the motion was to approve the plans as shown with dock doors on the east side, removing staff’s recommended stipulation to have them relocated. Vote: Mr. Boso – No, Mr. Leasure – Yes, Chair Holt – Yes, Mr. Linder – Yes, Ms. Oyster – Yes. The motion passed.

Item #2 – Texas Roadhouse – Method of Zoning Change (C-2 to PUD-C) (PID# 201408270043)

The applicant is proposing to rezone the vacant lot east of the Texas Roadhouse site from C-2 to PUD-C in order to expand the Texas Roadhouse parking lot, as parking lots are permitted as a stand-alone use in PUD-C districts but not on C-2 properties.

Ms. Shields stated that staff does not feel the proposed zoning of PUD-C will harm the character of the area or affect the use of adjacent properties, as the parking lot will act as an extension of the existing lot on the Texas Roadhouse site and the property is bordered on all sides by commercial properties.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the rezoning as submitted.

Ms. Emily Bernahl, GreenbergFarrow, was present to speak to the item. She had no further comments to add.

Mr. Leasure asked if there would be an additional curb-cut off Parkway Centre Drive to access the parking lot. Ms. Bernahl responded that there would not be an additional curb-cut and that all access would be from existing drives.

With no further questions, Ms. Oyster made a motion to recommend the approval of the rezoning to City Council as submitted. Mr. Linder seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item #3 – Texas Roadhouse – Development Plan (PID# 201409080050)

The applicant is requesting approval of a development plan to install a parking lot on the vacant lot east of the Texas Roadhouse site. The proposed parking lot would contain 33 parking spaces as well as landscaping and lighting to match that installed on the Texas Roadhouse site. In order to create connectivity between the existing and proposed parking lots, parking lot setbacks are proposed to be eliminated on the north, west, and south sides of the lot. Due to the nature of the development as a parking lot expansion, Ms. Shields stated that staff is supportive of deviations from parking lot setbacks to install the parking lot as shown on plans.

In addition to the parking lot, the applicant is proposing to dedicate 15' of right-of-way along Parkway Centre Drive in order for the city to install a pull-off COTA bus stop to allow buses to stop without impeding traffic on Parkway Centre Drive and to improve visibility on the roadway.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. Parking lot setbacks shall be reduced to 0' from the north, west, and south property lines to allow connectivity to the existing parking lot.

2. Parking lot setbacks shall be reduced to 0' on the east side where the applicant is proposing to dedicate right-of-way for the installation of a COTA pull-off bus stop. The parking setback shall remain 15' from the east property line where the right-of-way is not dedicated.

Ms. Emily Bernahl, GreenbergFarrow, remained at the podium to speak to the item. She had no further comments to add. She was agreeable to the stipulations as noted by staff.

With no further questions, Mr. Leasure made a motion to recommend the approval of the development plan to City Council with the stipulations as noted. Mr. Boso seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item #4 – Grove City Lanes – Certificate of Appropriateness (Portable Sign) (PID# 201408290044)

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to utilize a portable sign for Grove City Lanes at 3940 Broadway. The proposed sign will be 24"x36" with a chalkboard veneer and wood frame. The overall dimensions of the sign with the proposed frame slightly exceeds the permitted height and width; however given that the sign face is within the size requirements, Ms. Shields stated that staff is supportive of a deviation from the size requirement. She also stated that code does not allow for more than half the sign to be chalkboard, but that staff is supportive of a deviation from this requirement in order to create a consistent sign face surface while allowing the sign message to change as the business feels necessary for promotional purposes.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. The overall height of the sign frame shall be permitted to exceed Code requirements by six inches; the overall width of the sign frame shall be permitted to exceed Code requirements by two inches.

2. The sign face shall be permitted to deviate from section 1145.15(c)(4) to allow the entire sign face to be chalkboard.

Mr. JR Rucker was present to speak to the item. He questioned the city's objection to changeable letters and the purposed of this Code regulation. Chair Holt stated that they are just enforcing the Code. Mr. Rucker suggested that there be available options for specific signs for businesses to utilize and if you select one of the pre-selected signs, you don't need to go through the application process. He voiced his frustrations as a small business owner with the city's regulations. Chair Holt stated that his business is located in the Historical Preservation Area and there is a desire for uniformity and consistency in this area.

Mr. Rauch explained that staff is in the process of amending the HPA Sign Code to address the concerns of small businesses. Mr. Rucker stated he was not arguing the necessity of a sign code, he is requesting that the process be made simpler.

Chair Holt noted that staff is endorsing deviations to allow the proposed sign to exceed the permitted height and width. His concern is, where do the granted deviations stop and how much larger of a sign should be permitted?

With no further questions or comments, Mr. Leasure made a motion to recommend the approval of the certificate of appropriateness to City Council with the stipulations and deviations as noted. Ms. Oyster seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item #5 – La Quinta Inn Addition – Development Plan (PID# 201409020046)

The applicant is proposing to construct a three-story, 24 room addition onto the existing La Quinta Inn located 3962 Jackpot Road. The project also includes the expansion of the breakfast and lobby area. The expanded hotel will have a total of 84 rooms. In addition to the building expansion, the parking lot will be expanded to accommodate more guests. The proposed building expansion will meet building setback requirements; however the expanded parking lot will reduce the parking lot setback along Killdeer Drive to approximately eight (8) feet and seven (7) feet along Jackpot Road. Ms. Shields stated that staff is supportive of the deviation from the required 15' setbacks, as both parking lots will remain about 20 feet off the roadways with landscaping to screen. Proposed parking exceeds the number required based on the number of hotel rooms in the expanded building; however staff stated that the proposed spaces are 9'x18', under the required 180 square feet. Ms. Shields stated that staff is supportive of the deviation given the need for more parking spaces to accommodate more guests in the expanded hotel. The proposed expansion will utilize the same architectural elements and exterior finishes as the existing building. Finishes include, brick to match existing and EIFS in a variety of colors.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the development plan with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. The parking setbacks along Killdeer Drive shall be reduced from 15' to 8'.

2. The parking setbacks along Jackpot Road shall be reduced from 15' to 7'.

3. Parking space size shall be reduced from 180 square feet to 162 square feet to allow for 9'x18' parking spaces.

4. All new and replacement curbing shall be 18" straight curbing.

5. Additional lighting fixtures shall be added to the site or outputs increased to ensure that all vehicular and pedestrian areas meet the required 0.5 footcandle minimum lighting levels.

Mr. Keith Schnippel was present to speak to the item. He was agreeable to the stipulation regarding the lighting, but requested Planning Commission reconsider the 18" curbing stipulation due to the additional cost to the project. Chair Holt requested that staff explain the curbing request. Ms. Shields stated that 18" curbing is something that new and redeveloped properties have been required to install, and that it is a better product from a maintenance perspective.

With no further questions or comments, Mr. Linder made a motion to recommend the approval of the development plan to City Council with the stipulations and deviations as noted. Mr. Boso seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item #6 – Repair the Tech – Certificate of Appropriateness (Portable Sign) (PID# 201409020047)

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to utilize a portable sign for Repair the Tech at 3937 Broadway. The proposed sign is 24"x36", displaying the business name, logo, primary use, phone number and website. The sign is permanent, mounted on a plastic A-frame for support. The applicant has stated that colors on the sign are from the historical color palette; however the colors were not specified. The sign has a white background, black text, and a variety of colors in the logo, comparable to "Honey Butter" orange, "Old World" blue, "Kidskin" peach, and "Rose Ash" red. The sign will be placed at least three feet from the roadway but not impeding the sidewalk.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Mr. Ray Dingman was present to speak to the item. He explained that he checked to make sure that the colors selected for his sign were from the HPA color palette.

Chair Holt stated that the responsibility of HPA sign review and approval was back with the Planning Commission, after being reviewed and approved administratively by the Building Division for a few years. He questioned the logo selected for the proposed sign and stated that he did not recall permitting icons in the HPA. Ms. Shields explained that the content of portable signs is not regulated by Code.

Ms. Oyster made a motion to recommend the approval of the certificate of appropriateness to City Council as submitted. Mr. Linder seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item #7 – The Courtyards at Hoover – Preliminary Development Plan (PID# 201409050048)

The applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan for a new residential development at 4883/4885 Hoover Road. A mix of detached, single-family courtyard homes and attached twin-singles are proposed for the project, with a total of 64 units proposed. The proposed preliminary development plan has been submitted with the intent to rezone the site to PUD-R and the applicant has submitted a preliminary zoning and development standards text for review. The proposed development will have one point of access from Hoover Road and all roads within the development will be 24' wide private streets with no on-street parking permitted.

Open space is shown throughout the development, exceeding the amount required based on the proposed number of units. The proposed open space includes a 10' tree preservation area around the perimeter of the site. An 8' bike path is proposed connecting from the Hoover Crossing path at the west property line out to the path along Hoover Road to the east property line. The proposed zoning text states that this path will be conveyed to the City for public use through recorded easements.

Each residential unit will have an attached two-car garage, as well as driveways of adequate length to create two additional parking spaces. Eight (8) parking spaces are shown at the clubhouse, with 14 additional spaces located throughout the site. Three building designs are proposed for the detached single-family structures and a model for attached two-unit buildings. Each detached structure has a standard and an alternate elevation as well as a variety of enhancements such as screened porches and shutter enhancements to add variety to the building elevations. Buildings are shown to be finished in a combination of siding and stone with dimensional architectural shingles.

Ms. Shields stated that staff did not feel the proposed use would be detrimental to surrounding uses as the site is bordered by residential uses and landscaping is proposed around the perimeter of the site to screen the development from adjacent properties.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the preliminary development plan as submitted.

Mr. Joel Rhoades was present to speak to the item. He stated that Epcon is currently developing in Pinnacle, where 43 of the 49 condos are already sold. The proposed detached units in this project would be similar to what is being developed in Pinnacle. The condos in Pinnacle have been selling for around $320,000 and he anticipates a similar price with the detached units in the proposed development, with the duplexes being smaller and more affordably priced.

Mr. Leasure asked if the homes would be built on slabs. Mr. Rhoades responded that there will be a combination of slabs and basements available.

Mr. Linder asked the applicant to describe the existing conditions around the site proposed to be developed. Mr. Rhoades stated that the site currently has two homes as well as trees and a field. He explained that they intend to preserve as many trees as possible during the development of the site and then supplement these trees to buffer the site from adjacent properties as required by Code. Their goal is to have a buffer around the entire site, not just where trees currently exist, and supplement the existing trees with additional landscaping.

Chair Holt asked for comments from the public.

Ms. Belinda Johnson, 2647 Hoover Crossing Court, requested to speak. Ms. Johnson's property is located at the northwest corner of the proposed site for development. She voiced her concern over the proposed 25' building setback and how close that would be to their back deck. She presented the Commission with a variety of pictures of her backyard and the proximity of the future development. She also had concerns regarding the street configuration and the proposed dead-end streets. She requested that mounding be installed with evergreens to further buffer the condos from the adjacent neighbors. She also noted traffic concerns and the existing congestion on Hoover Road, particularly from a safety perspective considering the new Mt. Carmel hospital to the south.

Randy Vansky, 2585 Hoover Crossing Way, voiced his concerns over the small setback between the property line and the buildings. He also had concerns with stormwater, stating that his neighbor sometimes gets water backed up on his property. He is concerned that developing the proposed site will make the problem worse. He also had concerns with traffic on Hoover Road and cited the existing traffic backups.

Mr. Rhoades responded to resident concerns, explaining that the proposed detached homes will be their Courtyard Home, with a private fenced courtyard for each structure. He stated that all proposed homes are single-story and will be condominiums with all exteriors commonly maintained by a professional property manager. He also stated that the setback behind all proposed homes is passive, as the exterior space of each home is within the private outdoor courtyard.

Mr. Rhoades further clarified that the proposed roads that appear to be dead-end streets are driveways to access homes in the corners of the property. He also stated that the submitted tree survey only shows trees greater than

6” because that is all that Code requires. It is their intent when developing the site to preserve all trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the site within the proposed 10’ preservation area.

Mr. Rhoades continued by explaining that stormwater is an important consideration and an issue that they will examine closer as they move forward in the process towards their final development plan and engineering plans. They are confident that the development will comply with all city and state regulations. All of the details regarding stormwater are not yet available as they are still early in the process.

Responding to traffic concerns, based on past experience and studies conducted by their traffic engineers, Mr. Rhoades stated that the proposed homes will have about half as much traffic impact as a traditional single-family home development. He stated that many residents are seniors and retired, so the traffic impact is different than a traditional single-family development and not at the peak morning and afternoon times.

Mr. David Johnson, 2647 Hoover Crossing, emphasized that he is not against condos on the site. He requested that Epcon revise the plans to address resident concerns, particularly in terms of the setback and the road configuration. He also has concerns that the proposed duplexes could be sublet. He asked that the item be tabled. Chair Holt reminded Mr. Johnson that this application is for a preliminary development plan and that Epcon will have to come back for approval of a final development plan.

Mr. Boso stated that a portion of the property is in the floodplain, which will require that a floodplain permit be submitted for review.

Gary Byard, 2553 Hoover Crossing Way, reiterated concerns with 25’ setback, stating that the proposed buildings will be closer to the pool in his backyard than his own house. He also had concerns with stormwater.

With no further questions or comments, Mr. Leasure made a motion to recommend the approval of the preliminary development plan to City Council as submitted. Mr. Boso seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Linder strongly encouraged Epcon to work with the neighborhood residents to work out the discussed issues before coming forward with a final development plan.

Item #8 – City Center Childcare – Special Use Permit (Child Care Facility) (PID# 201409080049)

The applicant is proposing to operate a child care facility at 3721 Broadway. The facility will offer child care services for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children. Proposed hours of operation are from 6:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Parent pick-up and drop-off will utilize the back entrance of the building, with access to the rear parking lot via a public alley running along the rear of the property. The front parking lot has been designated for staff parking to make more spaces available for parents in the rear of the building. The applicant has also indicated that they intend to speak with Mr. Bill Saxton, owner of a commercial property to the north of the site, to potentially utilize to a portion of Mr. Saxton’s property for overflow parking. Materials also indicate that transportation will be provided for families requesting the service, decreasing the number of vehicles coming to the site to pick-up and drop-off. An outdoor play area was initially proposed within the grassy area on the north side of the building, on the adjacent property; however the applicant has decided to eliminate the play area from their proposal at this time.

Ms. Shields stated that staff feels the proposed use will be in harmony with the intended character of the district as the proposed childcare center is within close proximity of other educational and childcare uses including Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and Preschool and is within the 20 MPH school zone for these uses. She further stated that although there is potential for increased traffic during peak pick-up and drop-off times, staff does not believe the proposed use will generate traffic on the right-of-way significantly different from another service commercial use permitted in the C-1 district.

Staff recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Special Use Permit with the following stipulations:

1. The special use permit shall be contingent upon the child care center obtaining proper state approvals and licensing.

2. The applicant shall exercise its best effort to secure a shared parking agreement with the commercial property to the north (Saxton) to utilize a portion of the parking lot for overflow parking.

3. Front parking lot improvements shall be completed according to submitted plans labelled "Front Parking Lot" dated January 23, 1995.

4. If a play area is installed as originally shown on plans received October 2nd, a new easement shall be drafted over this portion of the adjacent property to allow for its use as a play area. Details related to the play area such as fencing and other safety features shall be approved by the Building Division prior to installation.

Mr. Collin Staples was present to speak to the item. He explained that an outdoor area is not required for their license and that an indoor play area will be provided. He provided a copy of ORC Section 5101 outlining the standards for outdoor play requirements for licensed childcare centers. He stated that children can also be transported to public parks for outdoor play.

With no further comments or questions, Ms. Oyster made a motion to recommend the approval of the special use permit to City Council with the stipulations as noted. Mr. Linder seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Having no further business, Chair Holt adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Kim Shields, Secretary	Marv Holt, Chair