



MEETING MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, April 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Call, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the April 6, 2023 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. She stated that the meeting also could be accessed at the City's website. Public comments on the cases were welcome from meeting attendees and from those viewing at the City's website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Call led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Commission members present: Rebecca Call, Warren Fishman, Lance Schneier, Kathy Harter, Mark Supelak, Kim Way
Commission members absent: Jamey Chinnock
Staff members present: Jennifer Rauch, Thaddeus Boggs, Taylor Mullinax, Zachary Hounshell, Michael Hendershot

ACCEPTANCE OF DOCUMENTS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Supelak moved, Mr. Way seconded acceptance of the documents into the record and approval of the 03-02-2023 and 03-16-2023 meeting minutes.

Vote: Mr. Fishman, yes; Mr. Schneier, yes; Ms. Harter, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Mr. Supelak, yes; Mr. Way, yes.

[Motion approved 6-0.]

Ms. Call stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission is an advisory board to City Council when rezoning and platting of property are under consideration. In such cases, City Council will receive recommendations from the Commission. In other cases, the Commission has the final decision-making responsibility. Anyone who intends to address the Commission on administrative cases must be sworn in.

Ms. Call stated that there are two cases eligible for the Consent Agenda, Towns on the Parkway, Section 2, Preliminary Plat and Towns on the Parkway, Section 2, Final Plat. Public comment has been received on one of the cases.

Public Comment

Staff read the following public comment into the record:

Monica Gacka, 4413 Zachary Court, Dublin, OH:

“Thank you for the opportunity to share concerns with the Planning and Zoning Commission. I appreciate the time and energy you put into your roles on the Commission. Thank you for hearing citizen concerns and fostering positive engagement. Everywhere you look in the Bridge Street District, there is new development in process. It seems these developments are happening at a rapid pace with several projects in-flight concurrently. I understand that development proposals to the Planning and Zoning Commission must be evaluated solely on the contents of that given proposal. However, the changes that new developments specifically involving increased density bring do not live in a vacuum in real life. There are real impacts to residents and despite best planning efforts by developers and City staff, not every outcome can be predicted. I am concerned that too many projects are happening all at once and in doing so, visibility of future impacts is blurred with nearby residents to deal with the fallout.”

Ms. Call asked if any Commission member wished to move the cases to the regular agenda for discussion. No member requested the cases be moved.

- **Towns on the Parkway, Section 2 at PID: 273-013211, 23-023PP, Preliminary Plat**

A Preliminary Plat to create a 49-unit, single-family, attached residential development on a 3.41-acre site located southwest of the intersection of Tuller Road and Village Parkway and zoned Bridge Street District, Sawmill Center Neighborhood.

- **Towns on the Parkway, Section 2 at PID: 273-013211 , 23-024FP, Final Plat**

A Final Plat to create a 49-unit, single-family, attached residential development on a 3.41-acre site located southwest of the intersection of Tuller Road and Village Parkway and zoned Bridge Street District, Sawmill Center Neighborhood.

Mr. Way moved, Mr. Supelak seconded approval of the Consent Agenda cases to recommend City Council approval of the Preliminary and Final Plats with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant make any minor technical adjustments to the plats prior to submission for acceptance to City Council; and
- 2) The applicant dedicates necessary easements on the Tuller Flats PL 1, LLC property to the west of the Towns on the Parkway development to the City no later than conditional acceptance of the Section 2 public improvements to the satisfaction of the City Engineer.

Vote: Ms. Harter, yes; Mr. Supelak, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Mr. Schneier, yes; Mr. Fishman, yes.

[Motion approved 6-0.]

Ms. Call swore in meeting attendees intending to provide testimony on the cases on the agenda.

NEW CASE

- **Ashland Multi-Family Development, PIDs: 273-012284 & 273-002453, 23-016INF, Informal Review**

A multi-family development consisting of 300 residential units and a freestanding residential clubhouse on a ±19-acre site located north of the intersection of Blazer Parkway with the Ashland Service Road and zoned Office Laboratory and Research District.

Case Presentation

Mr. Hounshell stated that this is a request for an Informal Review. An Informal Review is an optional first step in a Planned Unit Development process. An Informal Review provides the applicant the opportunity to receive non-binding feedback from the Commission at the formative stage of a project. Following an Informal Review, the applicant may submit a formal Rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) application for a formal recommendation by PZC to City Council. The 19-acre site is zoned Office Laboratory and Research District and is located north of the intersection of Blazer Parkway and Ashland Service Road. The flat site is currently vacant and has ±510 feet of frontage on Blazer Parkway and is located ±810 feet from I-270. The Cosgray Ditch and a FEMA regulated Special Flood Hazard Area run through the northern portion of the site, and there is a tree corridor along the eastern edge of the site. The site is located within the boundaries of the Dublin Corporate Area Plan (DCAP), which is a Special Area Plan approved by City Council in 2018 and updated in 2022. The DCAP area extends from West Bridge Street to the southern border of the City, is to encourage a variety of uses and amenities for business employees, hotel visitors and residents on the east side of Frantz Road, utilizing new open spaces as focal points and usable amenities and to support new infill residential development at key locations within the area. The purpose of the DCAP was to update a legacy office district, which was lacking in amenities. This particular site is located in the MUR1 – Metro/Blazer subdistrict of the area plan. The area plan outlines a number of vacant sites with the District; this site is labeled as Site 6 in the plan. The recommended uses for this site are office and tech uses and residential as a subordinate use to office. This site will have additional use opportunities if a proposed north-south connector road links Metro Center to Blazer Parkway. This would create additional connectivity and provide some relief to the traffic on Frantz Road. This interior site should have a minimum height of 4 stories and a maximum height of 6 stories. With this application, the applicant is proposing a multi-family development, consisting of 7 residential structures and 300 residential units, which is an approximate density of 16 units/acre. Approximately 450 parking spaces are provided, which is 1.5 spaces per unit. In the proposed site plan, the parking area will be a buffer between existing development to the east and southwest, which is primarily flex office, office and industrial uses with large surface parking areas. A central park open space area will be located between 5 of the centrally located buildings on the site. This open space area will be connected to adjacent areas by a number of shared-use paths. The development includes the extension of a north-south public street connection to the northern property line between Blazer Parkway and Metro Place S. At this point, the layout is conceptual only. The applicant has provided conceptual elevations, which propose a modern architectural style and materials. The building heights vary between 3 and 4 stories, although the recommended building height for this area is 4-6 stories.

The following questions have been provided to guide the Commission's discussion:

- 1) Does the Commission find the proposed use meets the Special Area Plan and Future Land Use recommendations within the Community Plan?
- 2) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the proposed layout of the site?
- 3) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the height and massing of the residential buildings?
- 4) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the design and layout of open space throughout the site?
- 5) Additional considerations by the Commission.

Questions for Staff

Mr. Way inquired the rationale for the proposed entrance location.

Mr. Hendershot responded that the proposed location has not been finalized. A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) will analyze where the public street should tie into Blazer Parkway, as well as the intersection control. The location is flexible at this point.

Mr. Way stated that it appears that the connector street would need to connect through private property to the north. Is this the ideal location, or are there other alternatives that might have less impact on private property, or a better alignment?

Mr. Hendershot responded that at this stage in the project, they have looked only at the conceptual connection between Blazer Parkway and Metro Place South that is shown on the DCAP. The public street location and details will need to be studied further. They will attempt to minimize impacts to the properties to the north.

Ms. Harter inquired if the proposed park area reflects the applicant's interest or the City's. The applicant can clarify their intent with that space.

Mr. Supelak inquired how the unit density aligns with the DCAP.

Mr. Hounshell responded that the Area Plan does not identify a minimum or maximum unit per acre for residential. That is currently at the discretion of the Commission and City Council. This development would be the first residential product in this area, so it would set a precedent for what will be seen in the future.

Mr. Schneier requested clarification of the number of required parking spaces.

Mr. Hounshell responded that item is also not identified in the Area Plan. A planned district allows some flexibility. Whatever happens with that planned district will be reflected in the area rezoning for MUR-1. At this point, there are only recommendations regarding appropriate parking.

Ms. Call requested clarification of the residential infill expectations of the approved DCAP specific to the Blazer Parkway area.

Mr. Hounshell responded that the DCAP recommends residential as infill development subordinate to a separate use. The DCAP identifies office as the primary use with residential use as an appropriate subordinate use within the District.

Ms. Call inquired if there are any caveats in regard to location of the residential use within the DCAP area.

Mr. Hounshell responded that the Plan indicates that residential should not be located along I-270. This site is not located adjacent to I-270.

Applicant Presentation

Aaron Underhill, attorney for the applicant, 8000 Walton Parkway, Suite 260, New Albany, OH stated that other representatives are present to speak more specifically to the design. The DCAP reflects the City's vision to turn what is primarily a single-use neighborhood into a mixed-use environment. The question is whether the mixed use should be in each proposed project, or if a single use can be proposed as a catalyst for future projects. What they have proposed reflects the latter. Having a core residential area will be important in attracting other uses. They believe this development, which is not in the Bridge Street District, will complement the DCAP area. The Pizutti

Company built two buildings north of this property many years ago, so they are familiar with this area.

Eric Buck, V. President of Development, Pizutti Companies, 629 North High Street, Columbus, OH stated that they are familiar with this area and are looking forward to working with the City on this project. They have met with staff several times and are aware of the importance of a north-south connection for the City. Their site plan has been laid out accordingly. The Cosgray Corridor is a great amenity feature for their project, as is the existing tree lined perimeter and shared-use trail. Some of the site constraints are its narrow frontage on Blazer Parkway and the awkward radius in the southwest portion of the site. Additionally, the Cosgray Corridor contains the floodplain and a utilities easement. There is also a utilities easement along the northern border of the site. Consequently, the development had to be located to the south of the Cosgray Corridor. The buildable portion of the 19-acre site is closer to 14-15 acres, resulting in a density of 20 to 22 units/acre. The focal point of their site plan is the greenspace, which is important to the City. A future north-south public street runs through the site, as well as a future potential connection north of the site. The site also reflects future potential pedestrian trails connecting to the existing shared-use trail on the northeast.

Jeffrey Pongonis, Principal, Landscape Architecture & Planning, MKSK, 712 Park Street, Columbus, OH reviewed the walkability and scale of the site plan. Several of the buildings will front the proposed public street, so it has been emphasized as a street, not a drive. There may be some on-street parking, similar to what exists in Bridge Park. In regard to the earlier question about the open space – approximately 2.5 acres will exist centrally, with a few more acres scattered around the site. They will leverage the Cosgray Corridor with a connection to Smiley Park. There is limited frontage along Blazer Parkway, and the geometry is awkward; however, the intent is to locate the clubhouse along Blazer Parkway, identifying this as a residential neighborhood.

Mr. Buck stated that the proposed architectural massing is characterized by a simple, modern block form. The material palette is a dark masonry brick as the primary material, mixed with a lighter fiber cement and wood accents.

Commission Questions for the Applicant

Mr. Schneier inquired if the pedestrian pathways within the development were intended for non residents.

Mr. Buck responded that the paths would be intended for the residents in the development; however, a connection will be provided to the existing public shared-use path on the northeast.

Mr. Schneier inquired the reason for a proposal for seven buildings versus fewer taller buildings.

Mr. Buck responded that it was based upon the parking needs of the units. The intent was that the parking be located as close as possible to the residents' front doors. With taller buildings, residents would have to walk a greater distance with their groceries, etc.

Mr. Schneier stated that 1.5 parking spaces per unit is proposed. Could they be satisfied with fewer parking spaces?

Mr. Buck responded that they would not be able to limit that number by much. He believes 1.5 spaces is appropriate for this development. With a product like this, there are potentially more 2-bedroom units, which will likely mean two cars. On weekends, the site could be stressed with a lower number of parking spaces.

Mr. Schneier inquired if they have conducted recent studies about density and parking spaces.

Mr. Buck responded that they have not with this site, specifically, but it would be included in their process when the TIS is conducted. He understands the Commission's interest in limiting the hard surfaces, but they believe 1.5 spaces for this site is appropriate. They will continue to look into that as the process proceeds.

Mr. Way requested that he identify the location of the two existing Pizutti buildings.

Mr. Buck stated that they developed two 4-story office buildings north of this site and one further to the east. They no longer own the buildings.

Mr. Way inquired what uses are anticipated for the ground stories of the buildings located along the public street.

Mr. Buck responded that they would be residential units.

Mr. Way inquired if they considered any other type of uses for the ground level units, such as workspaces, creating a live/work type of environment. It would start to change the character of the street.

Mr. Buck responded that their intent is to provide those type of uses in the clubhouse. It will be a central gathering place for residents and an opportunity for a co-working, lounge space.

Mr. Way inquired if the clubhouse would be a private facility.

Mr. Buck responded affirmatively. It would be an amenity for the residents.

Mr. Fishman inquired if the applicant had considered providing parking under the buildings.

Mr. Buck responded that they looked at various ways to provide parking, and they believe the way the site has been laid out is the best use of the space. The appropriate amount of parking per building is provided.

Mr. Fishman inquired the number of bedrooms and what would be the ratio.

Mr. Buck responded that the units would be a mix of one and two bedrooms, with a ratio of 50-50.

Mr. Fishman stated that experience has shown that with even a 1-bedroom unit, there are two occupants, and typically, two cars. With only 1.5 parking spaces per unit, where will the overflow parking be accommodated? Will there be on-street parking?

Mr. Buck responded that what they have been seeing with some of their other developments is that not every unit has two vehicles. Some residents are sharing vehicles, using ride-share services, walking to work, or using scooters and bicycles. With this location, they believe a lower parking ratio would be acceptable.

Mr. Fishman responded that in Bridge Park, that has not been the case. Many of the one-bedroom units have two residents and two vehicles, and there is a demand for onstreet parking there. The parking situation concerns him.

Mr. Underhill noted that Mr. Schneier's comments seem to have reflected an opposite view, a need for fewer parking spaces.

Mr. Schneier responded that he is interested in reducing the amount of asphalt, and he was taking into mind changing mobility trends.

Ms. Call stated that this is the Informal Review stage. If this project proceeds, there will be a future opportunity to look at the planned unit development text.

Mr. Pongonis noted that their experience with multi-family developments in the Midwest indicates a typical ratio of one vehicle per bedroom, even in suburban areas. The reason that number works is that on any given night or weekend, only 90 percent of the residents are at home. The parking balance of one space per bedroom works well in central Ohio.

Mr. Supelak inquired if the applicant knows that anecdotally, or if there is available data reflecting that information.

Mr. Pongonis responded that the data generally tracks in that manner. Another trend impacting this is the fact that more people are working from home.

Mr. Supelak stated that any available data they have would be beneficial to the City on an ongoing basis. We need to partner in understanding that data.

Ms. Rauch responded that as this project moves forward, staff would make sure that data is provided.

Mr. Supelak stated that in a district such as this, the City could benefit from the applicant sharing their resources that guide their design choices.

Mr. Underhill responded that at the next stage, they would attempt to provide that information.

Ms. Harter stated that it would be helpful to have data regarding garages for residential developments, as well.

Ms. Call stated that this parcel is 19 acres. There is abutting single-story development on one side and an empty lot between this parcel and I-270. Was there any investigation into expanding the site to include more property with a mixed-use nature?

Michael Chivini, Ex. V. President, Pizutti Companies, 629 N. High Street, Columbus, OH stated that Pizutti has considered that potential, and they have been in contact with the property owner. Unfortunately, they are not in a position to move forward with anything at this time. They have considered that site as a potential for a Phase 2. However, because of easements and Cosgray Ditch, it is a very complicated parcel.

Mr. Way stated that Pizutti previously brought forward a proposal for another project in Metro Place.

Mr. Chivini responded that they did bring it forward as an Informal Review, as well; however, they are not focusing on the Metro Place site at this time..

Mr. Way stated that a power line defines the Metro Place site.

Mr. Chivini responded they own the property that extends from the power easement to the north.

Mr. Way inquired if the property to the south is owned by Rock Hill Associates.

Mr. Chivini responded affirmatively.

Mr. Way inquired if this particular parcel is owned by Ashland.

Mr. Chivini responded affirmatively.

Commission Discussion

Ms. Call requested the Commissioners to respond to the discussion questions that were provided:

- 1) Does the Commission find the proposed use meets the Special Area Plan and Future Land Use recommendations within the Community Plan?
- 2) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the proposed layout of the site?
- 3) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the height and massing of the residential buildings?
- 4) If the Commission is supportive of the use, does the Commission support the design and layout of open space throughout the site?

Mr. Schneier stated that he is supportive of the proposed use and the conceptual development, understanding that at a future review, the parking issue will be looked at in greater detail. He would provide a qualified “yes” to all the questions.

Ms. Harter responded that she is also supportive of the use and proposed layout. She is interested in seeing how the opportunity for a work/live use could be incorporated in the project. She is also supportive of the proposed height and massing, although she believes the opportunity for garages or carports should be considered further. She likes the open space opportunities. She would like to see the balconies be usable spaces, enhanced mailbox designs, and rooftop solar opportunities be considered.

Mr. Way stated that as Mr. Underhill stated, the question is if the projects should be mixed use on each parcel or a single use as a complement to the overall development. He believes there should be mixed use throughout the development, although he does not know if it should be on each parcel. Mixed use should be integrated into everything. Currently, we are looking at only one parcel, but there is surrounding vacant land. We are interested in repositioning a 1980s office park, so it is important to think bigger. Every investment in the area going forward needs to contribute to that repositioning. The question he would ask is if this is the last move of the old way of doing things, or the first move in a new way of doing things; he hopes it is the latter. He is very supportive of a mix of uses, and this area needs a residential use to bring some life into it. Some creativity is needed regarding what other uses in a live/work environment might be possible. The goal should be if people live and work within this area, they should be able to walk to work. The challenge is how to integrate the residential so that it is not necessary to drive to work. He believes the proposed density is too low. He believes the proposed site plan is a 1980s approach to housing. The Cosgray open space opportunities are critical. They could be the start of something unique in this area. The Cosgray area should have buildings, not parking. The open space in the center of the development should not be keeping people out; it should be contributing to the entire area. There may be more than one option with the roadway connection, perhaps not all vehicular. He understands the challenge of introducing mixed use in this area, which is not on a major road. However, the uses could be destination uses, such as a restaurant with a pickleball court.

Mr. Supelak stated that he is supportive of the proposed residential use. It is the first step toward revitalization of the area. What complementary amenities could work here? The Goat House is a good example of a destination that would not be just for residents. A public gym facility might be another option. The question is how to tether the proposed use to the surrounding community. He is supportive of the proposed height and massing, although there is opportunity for it to be different. He is not opposed to the density. The parking along the perimeter is unfortunate. He likes the central greenspace. Although it is sequestered, there are adequate openings into and out of it. Perhaps the pedestrian pathways could be connected with the intent of drawing in the public. The layout of the public roadway will drive the way this site is developed. There are at least four road layouts that could work with this site. He is less concerned about having mixed use on this site. Mixed use done well could be fruitful, but the wrong mixed use in this area will die a slow death due to ability to serve only the immediate area. Even if this site is residential, surrounding mixed use developments can follow later. The conceptual architecture is agreeable, but it needs to change from building to building to add differentiation.

Mr. Fishman stated that the original intention of the Community Plan for this area was for it to be a revenue generator for the City, not residential, but that did not happen. The residential here should be special. He would like to see the parking addressed underground, as it would eliminate the need for much of the blacktop. The Asherton apartment community on Brand Road is one of the most successful in this area. It has water ponds around its perimeter and is a beautiful project. He would encourage them to consider something similar.

Ms. Call stated that she agrees with many of Mr. Way's comments. The Code for this subdistrict in the DCAP calls for residential use supporting not only office but other uses, including personal services, retail, restaurant, etc. Ancillary uses to residential are needed in this area. We are in a post pandemic environment, and many people now are working from home or have flexible work schedules. It is important not to let the pendulum swing too far the other direction, however, and end up with only residential. Because there is no longer a demand for what was originally the plan, the intent is to be flexible with what can be developed here, as long as it is done well. The Commission is tenuously supportive of the residential use. This is a PUD, so there is flexibility in the plan; ideally, the area would be larger.

Mr. Underhill thanked the Commission for their feedback. The applicant will work on some creative ideas to bring back for the next review stage.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Rauch reminded Commissioners of the following upcoming meeting dates:

1. The Board and Commission recognition and swearing-in ceremony will be held on Monday, April 10 at 6:00 pm in Council Chamber.
2. The Community Plan Update Work Session is scheduled for 6-8 pm, Monday, April 17 in Council Chamber. City Council, Planning & Zoning Commissioners and Architectural Review Board members will participate.
3. The Community Plan Update Public Meeting is scheduled for 6-8 pm, Tuesday, April 18 in Council Chamber.
4. The next regular meeting of PZC is scheduled for 6:30 pm, Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Ms. Call stated that she attended the American Planning Association (APA) conference in Philadelphia this past weekend. Many of the sessions were very good. She encouraged fellow Commissioners to access some of the sessions when they become available online.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Rebecca Call
Chair, Planning and Zoning Commission

Judith K. Beal
Assistant Clerk of Council