



MEETING MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, June 11, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Way at 6:30 PM at 5555 Perimeter Drive. He welcomed attendees and noted that the meeting could be joined in person or accessed via livestream on the City's website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Way led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Commission members present: Gary Alexander, Jamey Chinnock, Dan Garvin, Hilary Damaser, Victoria Newell, Kim Way
Commission Members absent: Kathy Harter
Staff members present: Bassem Bitar, Thaddeus Boggs, Zachary Hounshell, Sarah Holt

ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING DOCUMENTS

Ms. Newell moved, Mr. Alexander seconded acceptance of the documents into the record and approval of the May 21 Regular Meeting minutes.

Vote: Mr. Chinnock, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Ms. Damaser, yes; Mr. Alexander, yes; Mr. Garvin, yes; Ms. Newell, yes.

[Motion carried 6-0.]

Mr. Way explained the Commission's advisory role to City Council on rezoning and platting matters, while noting the Commission holds final decision-making authority in certain other cases. He outlined the evening's procedural format: applicants would present first, followed by staff analysis and recommendation, then Commission questions, and finally public comment prior to deliberation. Members of the public wishing to comment were reminded to keep remarks to three minutes or fewer, to state their name and address for the record, and to refrain from repeating previously shared information. Mr. Way also noted that all written comments submitted in advance had been received and reviewed by the Commission.

Mr. Way administered the oath to all individuals intending to address the Commission or provide public comment on any administrative cases, asking them to stand, raise their right hands, and affirm that they would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Case #25-047CP

St. John's Memorial Preserve

Request for review and non-binding feedback for a new memorial preserve, residence, and associated site improvements. The two 5-acre sites are zoned R-2, Limited Suburban Residential District and R-1B, Limited Suburban Residential District (WTWP) and are located at 6041/6001 Rings Road.

Staff Presentation

Ms. Holt presented the Concept Plan, noting that this is a required step for all Planned Unit Developments and that the focus at this stage is compliance with the community plan rather than project details. The site consists of two parcels currently zoned R-2 and R-1B. Staff confirmed that the Envision Dublin future land use designation of residential low density is met, as a cemetery is a traditional use associated with a church and places of worship are recognized as secondary uses in that designation.

Ms. Holt summarized the history of the project, including an informal review conducted in April 2024, at which time the Commission expressed overall support while raising concerns about traffic and screening. She noted that the current application addresses those concerns by incorporating the entire property into the plan, limiting access points on Rings Road, and reorienting the primary access through the existing church parking lot.

Commission Questions

There were no questions from the Commission.

Commission Discussion

Mr. Alexander stated that, in fairness to the applicant and out of respect for the prior commission's process, this Commission should honor the feedback already given and not relitigate that earlier discussion with a substantially changed membership. Mr. Garvin, Ms. Newell, and Mr. Chinnock concurred. Mr. Chinnock, who was present for the original informal review, stated that the applicant had responded appropriately and adequately to the previous comments.

Case #25-046Z-PDP

St. John's Memorial Preserve

Request for review and recommendation of approval of a Preliminary Development Plan and a Rezoning for a new memorial preserve, residence, and associated new site improvements. The two 5-acre sites are zoned R-2, Limited Suburban Residential District and R-1B, Limited Suburban District (WTWP) and are located at 6001/6041 Rings Road.

Applicant Presentation

Adam Steinbrenner, 5526 Carra Court, Dublin, addressed the Commission on behalf of the more than 450 members of St. John Lutheran Church. He described the congregation's mission of providing cradle-to-grave ministry and expressed the church's desire to offer burial services to its members on the church's own property. The congregation has existed for over 170 years and has been at its current site for more than 100 years.

Dave Guaponne, G2 Planning and Design, 720 East Board Street, Columbus, presented the project in detail. He described the memorial preserve as a nature-oriented, park-like setting rather than a

conventional cemetery, with an organized design approach grouping memorial elements such as headstones, flush markers, and columbariums together in a cohesive aesthetic. He emphasized that the project is driven by the congregation's spiritual mission and is not a commercial operation. Mr. Guaponne outlined the following key elements of the proposal:

Community Engagement: The project began internally within the congregation in 2023, followed by three neighborhood meetings held between 2024 and 2026. Individual meetings were also held with adjacent property owners on two separate occasions.

Site Framework: Approximately 90 percent of the existing trees on site would be preserved. The floodplain associated with Kramer Ditch would be left undisturbed. An existing driveway on the eastern edge of the property would be reused to preserve the floodplain crossing and avoid new regulatory submittals.

Traffic and Access: The primary access for memorial services would be directed through the existing church parking lot off Avery Road, effectively removing funeral traffic from Rings Road. Existing curb cuts on Rings Road would be converted to one-way, gated access only. Memorial services would be restricted to non-peak hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays and to weekends that do not conflict with worship services.

Capacity and Phasing: The project is organized into three phases. Phases 1 and 2 are located north of Kramer Ditch and include all infrastructure, buffers, and initial memorial spaces. Phase 3, located to the south, would not be developed until Phases 1 and 2 reach full capacity. The maximum number of ground plots across all phases is 2,850, with a maximum of 120 columbariums. Phase 3 accounts for approximately 68 percent of plots and 58 percent of columbariums. At the congregation's current rate of 10 to 12 funerals per year, full development of the site was described as decades to over a century away.

Setbacks and Buffers: A 75-foot raised marker setback is maintained along Rings Road, consistent with residential building setbacks across the street. A 40-foot raised marker setback is provided along the eastern property line, representing five times the standard residential setback. An evergreen and naturalized buffer ranging from 7 to 50 feet in width is provided along the eastern boundary.

Open-Air Chapel: The plan includes a proposed open-air chapel, the construction of which is contingent on available funding and is not tied to a specific phase.

Public Access: While memorial and burial services are restricted exclusively to St. John's congregation members, the preserve is intended to be open to the general public during daylight hours as a park-like amenity.

Staff Presentation

Ms. Holt presented staff's analysis of the Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) and Rezoning request. She confirmed that the Envision Dublin future land use intent is met and that staff attended all three neighborhood meetings. The most recent neighborhood meeting, held on May 20, resulted in changes to both the development text and the PDP. Staff confirmed that all public comments, both supportive and opposed, were included in the Commission's packet.

Ms. Holt described the sub-area structure of the proposed PUD, noting that each sub-area carries its own permitted uses, setbacks, height limits, and definitions. Key sub-areas include Sub-area A for the existing residence, Sub-area B for burial locations, Sub-area C for Kramer Ditch and its floodplain, Sub-area D for the east and south buffers, Sub-area E for preserved green space and limited small-scale columbariums, and Sub-area F for stormwater facilities. She confirmed that all development is private and that no public utilities or roads are required.

Staff identified a recommended condition of approval to correct a vicinity map error on one sheet of the submitted materials that incorrectly identified an additional property as being part of the

rezoning. Staff also noted that the east buffer width in its narrowest section was a subject of a recommended condition to increase that width for greater compatibility with the immediately adjacent neighbor to the east. An additional condition would require the east driveway to be relocated to the maximum extent possible away from the eastern property line. A final condition would remove art, religious markers, and sculpture from the list of items eligible for administrative approval, requiring instead that such items come before the Commission through a public process. Ms. Holt reiterated that a Final Development Plan will be required as a subsequent public step before the Commission, at which time project details will be solidified.

Commission Questions

Mr. Alexander asked whether the count of 120 columbariums referred to individual structures or individual niches. Ms. Holt confirmed the figure refers to structures. Mr. Alexander also inquired about the design review process for the chapel and how administrative approval and Final Development Plan review would interact. Ms. Holt explained that the development text establishes maximum envelope dimensions, materials, and configurations, and that the Final Development Plan review would apply those standards. Changes falling outside approved parameters would require an amendment and a return to public process. Mr. Alexander also asked whether mausoleums would be permitted under the development text; staff and legal counsel confirmed they are not described in the text and would therefore not be permitted without an amended Final Development Plan. He further asked about the maximum columbarium dimensions and the rationale for the 20-foot maximum length, and whether the chapel walls could be used for interment. Legal counsel Thaddeus Boggs referenced the development text language describing the chapel's permitted uses as memorial services, personal reflections, and celebrations of life, and stated that language would not be read to include interment in the chapel walls themselves.

Mr. Garvin requested clarification on the number of interment sites in the northern phases and the anticipated capacity of individual columbariums. Mr. Guaponne explained that columbarium configurations vary widely, from structures holding only two niches to those holding many more, and that the church anticipates smaller, more personal columbariums will be most common. Mr. Garvin inquired about how staff would track phasing capacity thresholds before Phase 3 could be activated. Ms. Holt confirmed that the Final Development Plan would establish more specific numerical benchmarks for each sub-area and that staff would monitor compliance over time. Mr. Garvin also asked about the rationale for seeking approval of Phase 3 at this stage. Ms. Holt explained that the City required the entire property to be incorporated into the application to avoid creating landlocked, nonconforming remnant parcels. Mr. Garvin expressed general support for the use and noted that traffic from memorial visitors to individual graves would likely be minimal, similar to or less than Sunday church traffic.

Ms. Newell noted that at 10 to 12 internments per year, it would take approximately 161 years to fill the northern sections alone, placing the overall scale of the proposal in perspective. She confirmed she had no objection to the phased approach given those projections.

Mr. Chinnock asked for clarification on the phasing of infrastructure, specifically whether roads and detention would be built in Phase 1 before any burials occurred. Mr. Guaponne confirmed that all vehicular circulation, detention, and buffer plantings would be installed in Phase 1. Phase 2 would introduce the northern memorial spaces, and Phase 3 would not be developed until Phases 1 and 2 are at capacity. He confirmed that the Phase 3 area would remain as a seeded or manicured open field in the interim. Mr. Boggs confirmed that the development text requires open field spaces

in Sub-area B to be maintained as either manicured lawn, a native seed mix, or a combination of both, applicable even before burial development occurs. Mr. Chinnock expressed general support but encouraged the applicant to consider scaling back the overall numbers and providing greater specificity on columbarium sizes.

Ms. Damaser asked about the gating and security of the Rings Road access points, and was told those details would be addressed at the Final Development Plan stage. She asked whether the preserve would be open to the public and was confirmed that it would be accessible from sunrise to sunset. She noted that she appreciated the preservation of the existing tree canopy and asked for clarification on the narrowest portion of the east buffer, which staff confirmed at approximately 7 feet with a recommended condition to increase it. She asked Mr. Steinbrenner about the demographics and growth trajectory of the congregation. He described St. John's as having a healthy mix of all generations and confirmed that membership is growing. He also noted that not every funeral results in an immediate burial, as some families hold remains until they can be interred together.

Mr. Way asked Mr. Guaponne to clarify the statement that the Rings Road frontage would be enhanced. Mr. Guaponne explained that existing entry columns would be cleaned up, the deteriorating four-rail split fence would be rehabilitated, and a public sidewalk would be added. Mr. Way asked about the character and height of the Rings Road buffer in relation to potential columbarium visibility, and Mr. Guaponne confirmed the buffer plantings would be at minimum as tall as whatever memorial elements they are screening. Mr. Way asked about management of Cramer Ditch and received confirmation that invasive species would be cleared and replaced with floodplain-appropriate plant material. He also confirmed the rationale for reusing the existing eastern driveway was to avoid regulatory submittals associated with a new floodplain crossing, and that the applicant was willing to explore relocating that driveway further from the eastern property line as a condition of approval.

Public Comment

Mr. Way opened the floor for public comment.

Ed Ostrowski, 6159 Turvey Loop West, Dublin, stated that as president of his condominium association, he had engaged with the church and found them to be responsive. He expressed support for the proposal and noted the changes incorporated to address traffic concerns. He clarified at the close of public comment that he was speaking as an individual and that his condominium board had not taken an official position.

Javed Iqbal, 5797 Clearfield Lane, Dublin, spoke in opposition, citing concerns about property devaluation, quality of life impacts, and the psychological burden of living adjacent to a cemetery. He questioned why the City was entertaining the proposal at all.

Iram Ali, 5797 Clearfield Lane, Dublin, spoke in opposition, citing concerns about daily reminders of mortality, uncontrolled traffic through the neighborhood, potential environmental contamination from embalming chemicals leaching into the soil and water table, and the impact on property values representing years of personal investment.

Bill Yoder, 5661 Wilcox Road, Dublin, spoke in opposition and presented materials compiled by area residents. He referenced a 1990 Southwest Area Plan and land use commitment made by

Dublin City Council at the time of annexation, asserting that the area was designated for single-family residential use and that the City made commitments to neighboring property owners in exchange for their cooperation with annexation.

Judy Yoder, 5661 Wilcox Road, Dublin, expanded on the history of the neighborhood's development partnership with Dublin, stating that the integrity of the residential designation east of a specific boundary must be maintained and that approval of the cemetery would undermine the unified character of the neighborhood.

Michael Tung, 5807 Castleknock Road, Dublin, spoke in opposition and raised concerns about the objectivity of the staff recommendation, citing emails he stated were obtained through a public records request. He alleged that the planner's communications reflected a bias in favor of the applicant, including characterizing resident opposition as misinformation and taking steps to ensure the applicant's satisfaction.

Kathy McLain, 3823 Queen Anne Place, Grove City, a 47-year member of St. John Lutheran Church, spoke in support of the project. She referenced her parents' desire to be buried at the church, noted that Dublin maintains six active cemeteries embedded within residential neighborhoods, and cited research indicating that proximity to a cemetery does not necessarily diminish property values.

Shannon Stevenson, 5680 Wilcox Road, Dublin, expressed concern about the scale of the approval, suggesting that authorizing all three phases at once was premature given the projected timeline of over 100 years to reach capacity. She requested that Phase 3 be returned for a separate approval at the appropriate time.

Steve Martin, 5685 Rings Road, Dublin, a longtime resident, spoke in opposition, stating that cemeteries do not belong in neighborhoods. He expressed frustration at not having been informed of the process sooner.

Molly Garrido, 5965 Rings Road, Dublin, whose family property shares approximately 1,000 feet of property line with the proposed development, spoke in opposition. She noted that her family had initially approached the process with an open and collaborative mindset but ultimately could not support the rezoning due to property value impacts, inadequate visual screening, floodplain and water quality concerns, and what she described as an unpermitted use under Dublin's own code. She stated she would not be providing written approval pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code.

Dan Laughlin 5955 Hathaway Avenue, Dublin, spoke in opposition, citing property value studies suggesting impacts of 10 to 12 percent, environmental contamination risks from embalming fluids, disruptions from funeral processions and maintenance, and increased potential for trespassing and vandalism. He also questioned the stated timeline for connecting the southern portion of the site to the adjacent park.

Ron Herre, 6106 Turvey Loop East, Dublin, spoke in support of the proposal, describing the proposed use as the most innocuous, peaceful, and non-invasive use to which the land could be put.

Rob Braatz, 5939 Glen Village Drive, Dublin, head elder at St. John Lutheran Church, spoke in support. He noted the church's long history of service to the community and emphasized that the memorial preserve would be small in scale, private in nature, and comparable to the existing historic cemetery already on the church's property at Avery and Rings Road, which has not generated complaints in over 100 years.

Christine Minton 5690 Wilcox Road, Dublin, spoke in opposition, stating she had not been informed of the project until approximately six weeks prior through the efforts of neighboring residents rather than the church. She raised concerns about construction traffic, the safety of children in the neighborhood, and the inability to guarantee that funeral processions would not travel through Rings Road.

Donna Bowman, 5699 Wilcox Road, Dublin, spoke in opposition, stating she had received no communication from the City or the church. She questioned the rationale for a church cemetery of this scale given the congregation's size, raised concerns about future membership growth, and expressed frustration at the widespread lack of awareness in surrounding neighborhoods.

Linda Garrido, 5965 Rings Road, Dublin, the direct adjacent property owner whose land borders the entire eastern edge of the proposed development, spoke in strong opposition. She described her family's nearly 50 years of history with the property and expressed that it was fundamentally unfair to impose a change of this character on her permanently. She stated that she would not have purchased the property had she known a cemetery would be placed directly adjacent.

Ajoy Kumar, 5701 Clearfield Lane, Dublin, spoke in opposition, expressing concern that the scale of the long-term development plan reflected commercial intent rather than pastoral ministry, and objecting to the placement of a memorial park adjacent to neighborhood parks and residential areas.

Heather Weise, 5658 Wilcox Road, Dublin, spoke in opposition, expressing that the scale and complexity of the proposal, particularly the number and size of columbariums, made the project feel more like a commercial endeavor than a small congregational memorial garden. She noted this was the third commercial-type project she was aware of the church pursuing on the property.

Gene Bostic, 7143 Coffman Road, Dublin, a member of the church's planning committee for the project, spoke in support. He described the four years of process, staff engagement, neighborhood meetings, and responsive revisions the committee had undertaken, and expressed confidence that the project would be a positive addition to the neighborhood.

Mark Blevins, 5765 Clearfield Lane, Dublin, spoke in opposition, noting that any rezoning from residential to another use would generate strong community opposition regardless of the specific proposed use. He questioned why the relatively small number of annual burials justified a rezoning of this magnitude and scale.

David Shell, 5582 Baybrook Lane, Dublin, spoke in opposition, expressing concern about the permanent nature of the change and the extent of an approval covering over 150 years of potential development.

Darcy Mossman, 5682 Wilcox Road, Dublin, expressed concern about the lack of community outreach to neighborhoods beyond the immediately adjacent condominiums, noted the absence of three-dimensional renderings of the columbariums, and commented that earlier commissioners' stated deference to the prior board's feedback could be interpreted as inconsistent when the 1990 City Council's designation of the area as single-family residential was also a prior commitment worth honoring.

Genevieve Hagerty 5685 Wilcox Road, Dublin, expressed personal appreciation for the cradle-to-grave ministry concept but stated that the size of the proposal, particularly the columbarium component, gave the appearance of a commercial enterprise rather than a modest congregational service.

Lisa Cook, 5534 Kinvarra Lane, Dublin, a member of St. John Lutheran Church, read a letter into the record expressing support for the application. She noted the church planning committee's thoughtful approach and her personal connection to the church through her father's installation of the original organ.

Sherri Lancia 5773 Clearfield Lane, Dublin, expressed concern about the church's ongoing efforts to develop or monetize its property, questioned why the phasing plan did not start development at the rear of the site rather than near Rings Road, and asked what would happen to the land if the application were denied.

Susan Jacoby, 8738 Shillington Drive, Powell, a 40-year member of St. John Lutheran Church, read a letter into the record expressing support, describing the church's stewardship of its property, its history of serving the broader community, and the personal desire of long-term members to have a meaningful final resting place at their home congregation.

David Patch, 1 Miranova Place, Columbus, a 64-year member of St. John's and former land use committee member, spoke in support. He acknowledged the opposition, noted that many historic churches have long maintained cemeteries, and affirmed the congregation's desire to find a meaningful location for its members.

With no additional members of the public wishing to comment, Mr. Way closed the public comment period.

Commission Discussion

Mr. Alexander stated general support for the proposal, finding it difficult to deny on zoning grounds given that a church is a permitted use in a residential district and that the memorial preserve represents an extension of the church's established function. He noted the project is consistent with Envision Dublin and the applicable planning documents. He observed that the landscape and natural features of the site, including Cramer Ditch and the preserved tree canopy, would prevent the preserve from resembling a large commercial cemetery. He also noted that the traffic impact would likely be less than that generated by equivalent residential development.

Mr. Garvin expressed support for the use, describing it as appropriate and not anachronistic to the neighborhood. He expressed a desire for greater specificity on columbarium numbers and sizes at the Final Development Plan stage, noting that the columbarium capacity is the most

variable element in the proposal. He also suggested that if traditional burials with embalming chemicals were planned, appropriate environmental studies might be warranted. He expressed support for enhancing screening on the eastern boundary and asked that parking and circulation for the northern phases be considered in perpetuity in the event Phase 3 is never developed.

Ms. Newell expressed support for the project. She noted that Dublin Community Cemetery is at or near capacity and that there is a genuine need for additional burial options in the community. She affirmed that the use is consistent with the residential area and predates much of the surrounding neighborhood development. She clarified for the public record that the earlier informal review was a nonbinding step with no vote taken, and that the Commission did not repeat that step not to circumvent process, but because the relevant procedural requirement had already been fulfilled. She expressed a desire to see the chapel material specifications tightened in the development text but ultimately did not press for a condition on that point after commissioners indicated a preference to leave materials more flexible.

Mr. Chinnock thanked Ms. Holt for her extensive work on the case. He expressed general support but reiterated a desire to explore scaling back the overall capacity numbers and columbarium specifications, and suggested that limiting or eliminating columbariums in favor of flush markers could make the project feel more authentically park-like. He noted that the numbers, taken at face value, represent several hundred years of development and called for greater specificity and tighter guidelines before the Final Development Plan stage. He acknowledged, however, that time and low annual internment rates would naturally govern the pace of development.

Ms. Damaser expressed support for the use, noting that 10 to 12 annual funerals currently generate traffic that goes off-site; the preserve would simply retain that traffic on the church's own property. She stated support for preserving the natural lands and described the use as compatible with the area. She expressed a desire for greater specificity on the columbariums and noted that she would like them kept short enough to remain visually unobtrusive to adjacent properties.

Mr. Way expressed strong support for the project, noting that it represents a well-planned, long-range use of the property covering all 10-plus acres, with only approximately 4 acres dedicated to memorial purposes. He affirmed that the engagement process with neighbors was substantial and reflected in the plan's evolution. He described the preserve as a potential community asset and contemplative open space, and noted that the traffic impact would be less than that of equivalent residential development. He acknowledged that as a planning body, it is appropriate to plan for long-range horizons even when full build-out is many decades away.

Mr. Alexander and Mr. Garvin indicated support for reducing the maximum permitted height of columbariums from 8 feet to 5 feet. Mr. Way and other commissioners noted difficulty in establishing an alternative number without a clear technical basis. Discussion did not result in a formal condition on height, with the understanding that the Final Development Plan process would allow for greater scrutiny of columbarium design details.

Ms. Newell raised concern about the broad list of permitted materials for the open-air chapel, specifically the inclusion of concrete masonry units, which she noted are susceptible to efflorescence in exposed conditions. She suggested materials complementary to the existing

historic church building would be preferable. Mr. Alexander cautioned against over-prescribing materials, noting that certain CMU products such as rock face or ground face are architecturally appropriate. The majority of commissioners expressed a preference to leave the material list as written rather than add a restrictive condition. Ms. Newell accepted the outcome while noting her preference on the record.

Ms. Damaser moved, Ms. Newell seconded a recommendation to City Council to approve the the rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan with the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the City Council Rezoning/PDP hearing, the applicant shall correct the Vicinity Map, Sheet C 1.0, to reflect the correct rezoning request.
- 2) Prior to the City Council Rezoning/PDP hearing, the applicant shall make the following changes to all documents:
 - a. Increase the east landscape buffer to 20' wide, with continuous evergreen elements that are 6'-tall at installation, to be installed during Phase 1;
 - b. Subsequently move the easternmost driveway location away from the buffer, more interior to the site to the greatest extent possible; and
 - c. Remove the Development Text statement that administrative approvals are required for all art, religious markers, and sculpture in G of Subarea B.

Vote: Ms. Newell, yes; Mr. Alexander, yes; Mr. Chinnock, yes; Ms. Damaser, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Mr. Garvin, yes.

[Motion carried 6-0.]

At 9:38 p.m., with no objection from the Commission, Mr. Way called for a 5 minute break.

Mr. Alexander moved, Ms. Damaser seconded to amend the agenda to consider Case #26-033 AFDP next.

Vote: Ms. Damaser, yes; Mr. Garvin, abstain; Mr. Alexander, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Mr. Chinnock, yes; Ms. Newell, yes.

[Motion carried 5-0-1].

Case #26-033AFDP

Dublin Presbyterian Church - Farmers Market

Request for review and approval of a text amendment to allow a farmers market as an accessory use at an existing church. The 5.00-acre site is zoned PUD, Planned Unit Development District - Earlington-Brandon and is located at 5775 Dublinshire Drive.

The applicant's representative, Nikki Hogarth, formally requested a postponement of the case to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Ms. Newell moved, Mr. Garvin seconded to postpone Case #26-033AFDP to the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting (scheduled for July 18, 2026).

Vote: Ms. Newell, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Mr. Garvin, yes; Ms. Damaser, yes; Mr. Alexander, yes; Mr. Chinnock, yes.

[Motion carried 6-0].

Case #26-025INF

Rings Road Mixed Residential

Request for informal review and non-binding feedback for a future mixed-residential development. The approximately 137-acre site is zoned R, Rural District and is located at 7495 Rings Road and PID 274-001311.

Applicant Presentation

Aaron Underhill, Underhill and Hodge, 8000 Walton Parkway, New Albany, introduced the project on behalf of the applicant, Saxum Real Estate. He described the proposal as a mixed-residential development with a limited retail component, noting that the project represents an opportunity to plan in coordination with the city's ongoing Phase 3 study of the Tuttle Crossing Boulevard extension west of Cosgray Road. He noted that the density proposed, at approximately 4.29 units per acre, is well below the lower end of the 3-to-12-unit range called for in the community plan and significantly less dense than adjacent development in the City of Columbus.

Daniel Servideo, Saxum Real Estate, 359 Springfield Avenue, Summit, New Jersey, briefly introduced his firm, describing it as a national developer with approximately 13 million square feet of completed projects across multiple asset classes. He emphasized a partnership-based approach with municipalities and communities.

Blythe Price, landscape architect with MKSK, 462 South Ludlow Street, Columbus, presented the site context. The approximately 136-acre site is located in the emerging Cosgray corridor, with frontage on Rings Road to the north and Cosgray Road to the east. The site is within the Hilliard City School District. The site contains an existing overhead power line easement that bisects it, a FAA beacon in the northwest corner associated with Don Scott Field, and Hayden Run running through the northern portion and along the eastern edge. The proposed land use is residential mixed density, transitioning from higher density multifamily at the northern end of the site to lower-density single-family residential toward the south, with the intent to transition compatibly to adjacent Columbus development to the west and south and to existing residential properties along Cosgray to the east.

Tony Murry, MKSK, 462 South Ludlow Street, Columbus, presented the planning and design elements of the proposal. He noted that the city is currently undertaking a study of the Tuttle Crossing Boulevard extension alignment, which directly impacts how this site is planned. The applicant has been coordinating with city staff, including multiple desktop reviews, and has attempted to plan around the likely future alignment while acknowledging that it remains conceptual and subject to change. The plan as presented organizes the site with garden apartments at the northern end adjacent to the future commuter boulevard, transitioning through townhomes and condominiums to single-family residential lots of varying sizes in the southern portion. Over 30 percent of the site is proposed as open space, including areas along Hayden Run intended to function as a riparian corridor and potential trail connection. The plan proposes two primary connections to the adjacent Jameson Estates development to the south and west, as well as access to Rings Road and Cosgray Road. Neighborhood retail is proposed as a secondary supporting use but has not yet been fully defined or located within the plan.

Staff Presentation

Mr. Hounshell presented the staff analysis, emphasizing that this is a voluntary informal review with no binding decision. He noted that the site is currently zoned rural and that the Envision Dublin

future land use designation is residential mixed density, which contemplates a range of attached and detached residential building types at densities of 3 to 12 units per acre. The Southwest Area Plan, one of six special area plans within the city, identifies this area as primarily residential with a transition from the anticipated Amlan development to the west.

Mr. Hounshell highlighted the Tuttle Crossing Boulevard extension as a critical variable. While shown conceptually through the site on city plans, the alignment has not been thoroughly vetted and will continue to evolve as the city undertakes its study. The right-of-way for Tuttle Crossing is expected to be 180 feet. He noted that adjacent Columbus developments, Jameson Estates at approximately 7.5 units per acre and Hayden Place at approximately 8.5 units per acre, represent a significantly higher density than what Envision Dublin had originally contemplated for this area, creating a transition challenge that will need to be addressed as the site is planned. Staff identified four questions for Commission feedback: whether the proposal aligns with community plan recommendations in light of surrounding context, whether the residential mix is appropriate and integrated as called for in the mixed-density designation, whether open space is appropriately located and connected, and any additional considerations the Commission wished to raise.

Commission Questions

Mr. Chinnock asked about the vision for the neighborhood retail component and whether it was intended to serve only the development or the broader area. Mr. Murry acknowledged the question was still being worked through with staff and indicated a preference for retail integrated into the broader area context. Mr. Chinnock also asked why single-family homes were placed adjacent to the higher-density Columbus development to the south rather than using multifamily as a transition buffer. Mr. Murry explained that the design team used the east-west internal street as a dividing line, with multifamily to the north and single-family to the south, based in part on the character of the adjacent Columbus development, which includes some built-to-rent product that will present as lower-scale homes rather than apartment buildings. He confirmed the proposed apartment height at the northern end is four stories.

Ms. Damaser asked whether there was a single farmhouse across Rings Road to the north, which Mr. Hounshell confirmed. She asked whether consideration had been given to inverting the density layout, placing single-family homes along Rings Road and transitioning to higher density toward the Columbus development to the south. Mr. Murry indicated the Commission's feedback was welcome on that point and the applicant would consider it. Mr. Servideo noted that the multifamily at the northern end was intended in part to buffer future residents from the Tuttle Crossing commuter boulevard rather than placing single-family homes adjacent to that roadway.

Mr. Alexander asked about the triangular remnant parcels that would be created by the Tuttle Crossing extension as shown, and what land use those parcels carried in the future land use plan. Mr. Hounshell confirmed they are shown as medium-density residential in the plan and are within the city of Dublin, though no development contact has occurred with those property owners. Mr. Alexander asked the applicant whether they had reviewed the plans for Jameson Estates, specifically regarding the edge treatment where that development abuts the proposed site. The applicant confirmed they had seen a version of Jameson's plans but not the most recent, and noted that the most prominent multifamily buildings in that development are on the western edge. Mr. Alexander asked whether the location of stormwater retention ponds had been selected based on topography or with the intent to create amenity features. The applicant confirmed that civil engineering drove initial placement based on topography, with the landscape architect subsequently locating them near Hayden Run to support a future trail and riparian corridor.

Mr. Garvin asked about the intent to mix housing types at a finer grain rather than separating them into distinct zones, and whether that would pose a marketability challenge. Mr. Servideo indicated it may be possible to integrate townhomes more organically with smaller single-family lots and committed to considering that internally. Mr. Garvin noted his concern that a large block of townhomes in the center of the site could make the development feel like a continuation of the Columbus properties rather than a distinctively Dublin neighborhood. He also asked about the Tuttle Crossing alignment and whether a portion would run through Columbus jurisdiction; Mr. Hounshell noted that much of the shown alignment runs through city-owned land in Dublin, with coordination with Columbus and other jurisdictions to follow as part of the study.

Ms. Newell asked whether the city had acquired any land along the Tuttle Crossing alignment; Mr. Hounshell confirmed no acquisitions have been made. She noted it was difficult to provide meaningful feedback on the site layout without knowing the resolution of the Tuttle question. She confirmed the townhomes are envisioned as for-sale condominiums with shared walls.

Mr. Way asked about the possibility of aligning the Dublin Signature Trail through the site as a way of differentiating the development from surrounding Columbus properties. Mr. Hounshell noted that the current Signature Trail study does not contemplate extending the trail this far south, but acknowledged it was a worthy long-term consideration. Mr. Way also suggested that the neighborhood boulevard running east-west through the site presented an opportunity for place-making and activated street design, and that the community amenity space might be more effectively located along that corridor rather than at the northern end adjacent to the future commuter boulevard and industrial land across the street. He observed that the power line easement, while providing acreage toward the open space calculation, does not function as usable park space and should not be substituted for thoughtfully designed open space. He encouraged the applicant to think creatively and avoid replicating the rigid grid patterns seen in the surrounding Columbus developments.

Mr. Chinnock added that the Commission would likely face significant traffic concerns from future residents and encouraged the applicant to consider a truly walkable neighborhood retail component, such as a small grocery or community facility, that could reduce automobile dependence and serve as a defining amenity.

Ms. Newell noted Dublin's tradition of incorporating and celebrating historic farmsteads into new developments and suggested that the existing farmstead on the site could become a focal point and neighborhood park feature.

Public Comment

Mr. Way opened the floor for public comment.

Brian Gentile, 5275 Cosgray Road, Dublin, stated that his property abuts the proposed development and that a 60-foot-wide strip of land at the southeastern corner of the site, currently used as a farm access lane, is proposed as the location of the Cosgray access road. He expressed concern that a neighborhood boulevard with sidewalks and a multi-use path could not physically fit within 60 feet without eliminating all setbacks from his property line. He questioned why the access point needed to be located in that position given that other access points already exist on the plan, and suggested that an alternate southern connection through the Jameson Estates development might be more appropriate.

Jeff Briner, 7393 Rings Road, Dublin, stated that his family had owned a historic farmstead directly adjacent to the property for 25 years and had chosen the location specifically because it offered protection from high-density development. He expressed disappointment that industrial uses were now being proposed across the street and that multifamily residential was now being proposed immediately to his west. He noted that the illustrated alignment of Tuttle Crossing appeared to run through his farmhouse and stated that any such alignment would be unacceptable.

Todd Hemmert, 5824 Houchard Road, Dublin, raised concerns about the safety and health implications of placing residential development in proximity to proposed industrial uses across the road and adjacent to high-tension power line infrastructure. He questioned the overall density calculation and the market basis for additional multifamily units given the volume of similar development already under construction in the surrounding area. He also raised concerns about the 100-year versus 500-year floodplain standards and the adequacy of traffic access prior to the construction of Tuttle Crossing, noting that with only two access points, the traffic impact on Cosgray and Houchard roads would be severe.

Nate Watkins, 5237 Cosgray Road, Dublin, reiterated traffic concerns on Cosgray Road, noting that the Rings Road and Cosgray Road intersection is already identified as high risk by the City and that left turns from Cosgray Road are already significantly delayed. He expressed concern that the proposed Cosgray Road access point would create similar congestion.

Mr. Way closed the public comment period.

Commission Discussion

Mr. Alexander stated general support for the proposal at this conceptual stage.

Mr. Garvin noted that the proposal aligns somewhat more closely with the density of surrounding Columbus development than with the community plan's intent. He expressed a desire to see the development differentiated from adjacent Columbus properties through lower overall density and more integrated housing types. He noted concern that a significant portion of the open space is located under power lines, which limits its usability and attractiveness. He encouraged the applicant to continue communicating with adjacent residents throughout the process.

Ms. Newell agreed with Mr. Garvin's comments, stating that the density of surrounding Columbus development does not obligate Dublin to replicate it, and that she did not believe the proposal as presented fully aligns with the community plan. She reiterated that the Tuttle Crossing alignment makes it premature to render a firm opinion on the site layout.

Mr. Chinnock expressed that the general direction of the project is acceptable and heading in the right direction, but encouraged the applicant to think more creatively about street activation, place-making, and uniquely Dublin design elements rather than simply continuing the development patterns occurring across the property line. He acknowledged the difficulty of providing specific direction given the unresolved Tuttle Crossing alignment.

Ms. Damaser expressed that the presentation felt too preliminary and that both the applicant and the City needed to provide greater definition before meaningful feedback could be given. She

agreed the layout was as considered as it could be given current uncertainties but described it as too early for substantive direction.

Mr. Way encouraged the applicant to rethink the arrangement of the development to create something uniquely Dublin rather than a continuation of surrounding Columbus development. He identified specific concerns including the length and rigidity of the townhome rows, the distribution of open space, and the placement of the community amenity. He suggested the neighborhood boulevard could serve as a more central organizing and place-making element. He reiterated the opportunity to incorporate the existing farmstead as a neighborhood focal point and to connect the open space network along Hayden Run to Dublin's broader trail system in a meaningful way.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Bitar reminded commissioners of a joint work session with City Council scheduled for the following Monday evening. The session would address the City's code audit and the Bridge Street Corridor. He encouraged commissioners who had not yet done so to watch a Jeff Speck presentation on walkability in advance of the work session to make the most of the two-hour session. The presentation had been posted to the OnBoard platform.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 pm.


Chair, Planning and Zoning Commission


Deputy Clerk of Council