



MEETING MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, April 21, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Call, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the April 21, 2022 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. Remote viewers should submit questions or comments during the meeting by using the form under the streaming video at the website. Their comments would be relayed to the Commission by the meeting moderator. The City is interested in accommodating public participation to the greatest extent possible.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Call led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Commission members present: Rebecca Call, Kim Way, Lance Schneier, Mark Supelak, Warren Fishman, Kathy Harter

Commission members absent: Jamey Chinnock

Staff members present: Jennifer Rauch, Thaddeus Boggs, Tammy Noble, Zachary Hounshell

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACCEPTANCE OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Way moved, Mr. Schneier seconded acceptance of the documents into the record and approval of the April 7, 2022 meeting minutes.

Vote: Mr. Fishman, yes; Mr. Supelak, yes; Mr. Way, yes; Mr. Schneier, yes; Ms. Call, yes; Ms. Harter, 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 swore in members of the audience intending to testify on this evening's cases.

NEW CASES

1. Twins Auto of Dublin at 5035/5067 Post Road, 22-029AFDP/CU, BSD Amended Final Development Plan/Conditional Use

Ms. Call stated that this is a request for approval of a Conditional Use to permit expansion of a Vehicle Sales, Rental, and Repair use including the demolition of an existing building and construction of a parking lot with a Waiver review and Parking Plan. The 2.65-acre site is zoned Bridge Street District, Commercial and is located northwest of the intersection of Post Road with US 33/SR 161.

Staff Presentation

Mr. Hounshell stated this is a request for review and approval of an Amended Final Development Plan with a request for approval of a Conditional Use and Parking Plan. The site is comprised of two parcels: 5035 Post Road (PID: 273-002460) and 5067 Post Road (PID: 273-002459). 5035 Post Road presently operates as Twins Auto of Dublin, which is a continuation of MAG's previously permitted use. 5067 Post Road is presently a vacant site with no active use. It most recently operated as a Bob Evans restaurant, which closed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In May 2021, 5067 Post Road was purchased by Twins Auto of Dublin. 5035 Post Road is developed with an approximately 4,500-square-foot vehicle sales showroom with four service bays, 18 parking spaces, and 43 vehicle display spaces totaling 61 on-site vehicle spaces on 1.28 acres. In addition to the 5,000-square-foot restaurant building, 5067 Post Road is developed with a 93-space parking lot. The parking area is accessed via two curb cuts along a shared access drive. The Twin Autos site has an existing stonewall, approved in 2020, and a 36-square-foot ground sign located at the intersection of Post Road and US 33, approved in March 2021.

The applicant is requesting to expand the existing Vehicle Sales, Rental, and Repair use located on 5035 Post Road onto the adjacent 5067 Post Road parcel, formerly occupied by the restaurant, installing a 112-space parking lot for vehicle storage. A Vehicle Sales, Rental, and Repair use is considered a Conditional Use in both the BSD-C, Commercial and BSD-SCN, Sawmill Center Neighborhood Districts. This use category includes standards limiting the number of full access driveways, which will not be impacted with this proposal, and the location of parking areas between principal frontage streets and principal structures, which will be addressed by the parking plan. The intent is that all operations will be handled on the 5035 Post Road lot and a parking lot will not be the primary use on the 5067 Post Road lot. A lot combination will be pursued in the future. The demolition of the existing restaurant building and parking lot on the vacant 5035 Post Road parcel, as well as 15 parking spaces from the Twins Auto parcel, would occur first. The applicant is requesting approval of a parking plan that would exceed the required parking spaces of two spaces per 1,000 square feet of building area, plus one space per 2,000 square feet of outdoor display space. Per Code, this site would be required to have 10-15 parking spaces. The applicant is proposing 153 spaces; however, 15 of those would be parking spaces currently on the Twins Auto site. The remainder will be storage spaces.

The applicant is proposing landscape modifications to the existing perimeter landscaping as well as interior parking lot landscaping impacted by the alterations. This project will result in the removal of 89 caliper inches of protected trees, most of which are within the current parking islands. The trees will be replaced with 9 new honey locust trees and 29 other deciduous trees within the new landscape islands and around the site. The applicant is proposing to extend the existing 30-inch tall limestone street wall along US 33/SR 161. A circular stonewall feature is proposed south of the new monument sign at the entrance to the site. Grass is proposed within the stone circle; however, staff is recommending the applicant substitute deciduous shrubs. The applicant is proposing a new 36-

square-foot ground sign located in the northwest corner of the site. This will be a second ground sign on the site. There is also a previously approved 36-square-foot ground sign, which is 5 feet – 7 inches in height. The applicant will be required to decrease the size of the proposed ground sign to 30 square feet to meet the total combined area requirement. Additionally, the proposed sign is located 3 feet from the western property line. Ground signs are required to be set back a minimum of 8 feet from all property lines and right-of-way lines. The applicant should work with staff to relocate the sign to meet the minimum setback requirement. The proposed sign will match the existing sign with a painted aluminum sign face with black copy and directional arrow; it will be halo-illuminated. Staff has reviewed the application and recommends approval of the Conditional Use with two conditions, approval of the Parking Plan, and approval of the Amended Final Development Plan with five conditions.

Commission Questions

Mr. Schneier stated that, currently, customer parking exists in front of the building. He requested clarification of the proposed customer parking.

Mr. Hounshell responded that customer parking would be located along the north side of the dealership. The existing parking along the east side will remain. A parking plan will ensure the proposed parking meets Code as closely as possible.

Mr. Fishman inquired if the expanded parking spaces would be used for parking.

Mr. Hounshell responded that they are designated as storage spaces. The site plan provides storage spaces, not visitor parking.

Mr. Supelak stated that auto dealers have spaces for their product, but they also need to provide the standard parking spaces. The plan indicates 15 parking spaces and 26 storage spaces. He requested clarification of the storage spaces.

Mr. Hounshell responded that there is a distinction between parking and display spaces. The current plans do not depict any display spaces, as typically, they are not counted toward the required parking. He believes the storage spaces would count toward the required number of spaces.

Ms. Rauch clarified that 26 storage spaces are allocated on the existing building site, plus there are 112 additional storage spaces; with the additional 15 parking spaces, the total number of spaces is 153. The Code requires that them not to exceed 150% of the maximum. Therefore, only 10-15 spaces are truly required to meet the parking requirement. Because the applicant is exceeding that number extensively, approval of a parking plan is required.

Mr. Supelak requested clarification of the number of display spaces permitted.

Ms. Rauch responded that the Bridge Street Code does not differentiate the display spaces separately, as it is elsewhere in the Code.

Mr. Supelak inquired if 41 spaces were required.

Mr. Hounshell responded that, considering both sites, 10-15 parking spaces are required. In this case, the storage spaces are included.

Mr. Supelak inquired if there are any stipulations or caps involved.

Ms. Rauch responded that based on the square footage of the building, which is almost 5,000 square feet, a minimum of 10 parking spaces or maximum of 15 spaces are required for the entire site. Because another parcel is being added for additional parking, the total number of spaces would exceed the number permitted by Code.

Mr. Supelak requested clarification of the Code criteria for vehicle sales.

Ms. Rauch responded that vehicle sales/rental repair requires two spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Mr. Supelak stated that there is a difference between display and parking spaces. The number of parking spaces is based on the square footage of the building. Historically, the permitted number of display spaces is calculated differently.

Ms. Rauch responded that the applicant has not indicated any display spaces. Perhaps, the applicant can address that during their presentation.

Mr. Supelak stated that a photo was shown of a stonewall and an adjacent chain link fence. Is the chain link fence on this site?

Ms. Rauch responded affirmatively.

Mr. Hounshell stated that he believes the fence provides required separation from the highway. The applicant could also clarify that.

Mr. Supelak inquired the history on the fence separation from the highway.

Ms. Rauch responded that it was an existing element. ART approved the stonewall, not the chain link fence.

Mr. Way stated that he has some knowledge of this area. The entire area between the highway and Frantz Road is ODOT's property. The chain link fence depicts the ODOT right-of-way, and the City has no control over that area. The area behind the fence is within the City's jurisdiction.

Mr. Supelak inquired about the proposed sign. If it is a directional sign, what is the scale criteria?

Mr. Hounshell responded that it would be 4 feet in width by 3 feet in height for a permanent directional sign, which does not require Commission approval.

Ms. Harter inquired the following:

- Are there any concerns about the shared access drive use?
- The KIA dealership is located on the other side; is there a KIA sign?
- Will the sidewalk access be updated?

Mr. Hounshell responded that KIA was approved for a new sign, which is located on the west side of the entrance drive before it splits into the KIA and Twins Auto sites. Engineering staff indicates that access to the KIA site must be provided at all times; it cannot be blocked during Twin Autos' construction.

Ms. Harter inquired about sign cohesiveness between the two sites.

Mr. Hounshell responded that the KIA sign also has a neutral, metallic sign face and a stone base.

Ms. Harter stated that the plan indicates a Sales, Rental and Repair Use, which already exists on the current parcel. Will the applicant be approved to conduct repairs on the site in the future?

Ms. Call indicated that the applicant could respond to that during their presentation.

Mr. Way inquired if there is assurance that the proposed lighting will not negatively impact the area any greater than the current lighting on the site.

Mr. Hounshell responded that any lighting provided would need to meet the Bridge Street Code requirements. If the photometric is not yet provided, it must be provided with the Building Permit. The Code requires that any distance greater than 10 feet from the property line must be unaffected.

Mr. Way stated that he is familiar with the proposed light fixture, and it is the luminary that determines the light. It is important to ensure it is not more than the preferred intensity.

Mr. Fishman stated the City has had previous experiences with other car dealerships concerning issues related to the loading/unloading of cars. Often, the trucks blocked traffic and caused accidents. Assuming the lot will be filled with parked cars, where will the truck unload? If it is on SR 161, that will create a problem.

Mr. Way noted that is what is occurring currently.

Mr. Fishman responded that it is also a problem.

Ms. Harter inquired if there will be assurance that the existing sidewalk access would be maintained.

Ms. Call inquired if this item would be addressed with the Final Development Plan.

Ms. Rauch responded that the sidewalk along Post Road will not be impacted by this development, so it will be maintained.

Mr. Hounshell noted that the sidewalk is within the public right-of-way. The balance of the proposed work will be interior to the access drive. The area between Post Road and the access drive will not be impacted.

Ms. Call inquired if there were an issue with the sidewalk, whose responsibility would it be?

Ms. Rauch responded that it is the City's responsibility.

Ms. Call stated that three questions have been posed for the applicant regarding the parking along US 33, the rental and repair intent of the use, and the loading/unloading area.

Applicant Presentation

Jack Reynolds, Attorney, Smith and Hale, 37 W. Broad Street, Suite 460, Columbus, Ohio, 43215 stated that their firm has been working on this project with City staff since 2021. They have taken their time with the project in order to ensure they were presenting a Dublin-level project. This is an opportunity for Dublin to upgrade an existing automobile dealership. The owners moved into the site in 2019. It is a good, but small site. Currently, there are only 50 parking spaces on the site. With the recent vacation of the adjacent Bob Evans site, the car dealership took advantage of the opportunity presented. In response to the questions asked -- both employees and customers will park at the existing facility; the visitor and staff parking on the existing site will not be changed. The only item changing on the existing site will be the loss of the 15 parking spaces along the western edge of the site. That area will be opened up to extend their curbcut into the new site. The second question was related to display spaces, where vehicles sit on a pad for the purpose of advertisement. The 112 storage spaces will be for vehicles used by the sales team to respond to prospective buyers. Combining the two parcels will provide ancillary parking for the car dealership. In response to the question concerning the sign, the proposed sign will be slightly less than 30 square feet. The sign will be moved back 8 feet and shrubbery included, per staff's request. Auto repairs will not be conducted on site, only car clean-up and detailing. In regard to loading/unloading a vehicle carrier - a truck will be able to access the site via a service road, circle the south side of the building and unload on the side of the site facing SR 161. The service road also will be used for the proposed construction, so public access to the KIA site will not be impacted. No work will occur within the right-of-way, so the ingress/egress will not be disturbed.

Ms. Call inquired if rentals would occur on site.

Mr. Reynolds responded that rentals would not occur; the word is part of the term nomenclature.

Ms. Call stated that 112 proposed parking spaces and 35 of the current parking spaces remaining after 15 are deleted would leave 147 parking spaces; the plan indicates 153. She requested clarification/verification of the total. Additionally, which spaces would be used for staff parking and which for visitor parking?

Nick Elmasian, Elmasian Engineering, Pataskala, OH responded that on the plan, there is designation of the number of parking spaces and type of use. The spaces are also designated either existing or proposed storage. The customer parking is actually customer/employee parking.

Ms. Call inquired if the existing customer parking spaces facing SR 161 would also be future parking spaces.

Mr. Elmasian responded affirmatively.

Mr. Fishman stated that when the Bob Evans building is gone, the site will consist only of blacktop. There are two major road frontages here, US 33 and SR 161, and if vehicle storage is proposed, it will be important to meet or even exceed the Landscape Code on this site. He is concerned that the view upon entering Dublin will be of a sea of cars. Additionally, the greenspace currently on the Bob Evans site will be eliminated, which is more greenspace than the car dealership will be providing. They are proposing to extend blacktop to the edges of the site. There should be abundant evergreen landscaping along these two main roads; otherwise, the view of the site during winter months would be of cars.

Mr. Reynolds clarified that more greenspace is proposed on the site than exists on the Bob Evans site.

Mr. Fishman responded that the indication is that there will be tree islands, which will not hide the vehicles from the two main roads. It will achieve only the look of an OSU parking lot.

Greg Krobot, landscape architect, 231 Buttles Avenue, Columbus, OH, stated that in terms of the two road frontages – on the south side of the chain link fence along SR 161, there is a row of arborvitae planted by the City of Dublin. Those trees will grow to a height of 12 feet. The City is also requiring a 32-inch high stonewall, behind which there will be shrubs, so there will be three layers of screening. The existing shrubs on the exterior of the wall are established. The ones on the interior of the wall will grow to a height of 4-5 feet.

Mr. Fishman inquired how much greenspace would be provided on the interior side of the wall.

Mr. Krobot responded that there would be 8 feet of greenspace between the wall and the curb.

Mr. Fishman inquired if the space would be filled with landscaping.

Mr. Krobot responded that in addition to the existing hedge, shrubs would be added. Some mounding exists there, as well.

Mr. Fishman stated that the shrubs/bushes shown within that eight feet would never hide a car.

Mr. Krobot responded the shrubs he is referring to are on the south side of the fence. On the north side, another hedge is proposed.

Mr. Fishman stated that in the site photo, the existing shrubs do not hide the vehicles.

Mr. Krobot responded that the vehicles are seen due to their distance from the hedge.

Mr. Fishman stated that this is a large lot and there will be many vehicles parked a similar distance from the hedge. He reiterated his concern that a sea of cars will be seen from both US 33 and SR 161; the tree islands will not hide the cars.

Ms. Call inquired about the height of the berm. What is the transition height between SR 161 and this graded parcel?

Ms. Rauch stated that staff would provide that information momentarily. She noted that the Code requires a 36-inch high shrub, and the proposed species will meet that requirement.

Mr. Krobot stated that the existing mound next to the sidewalk on Post Road is approximately 3 feet in height. Their intent is to plant a yew hedge on top of that mound. They are exceeding Code screening requirements on the north side of Post Road.

Ms. Harter inquired if the existing attractive evergreen would be saved and, if so, what precautions would be taken to ensure it is not accidentally removed.

Mr. Krobot responded that the tree on the southeast corner is being saved. Protective tree fencing will be placed around the trees that will be saved.

Ms. Harter inquired if the proposed tree islands would be protected from the construction debris and sufficient soil provided to ensure the plants' ability to thrive.

Mr. Krobot responded that Code requires excavating three feet where a parking lot or building previously existed and that the soil be replaced. That will occur. He is unsure of what steps will be taken to ensure the plants protection from construction debris.

Ms. Call stated that this parcel would be treated no differently than any other in regards to nuisance and Code Enforcement, if needed.

Mr. Fishman inquired about the intended irrigation for the trees, as there will be extensive surrounding blacktop.

Mr. Krobot responded that, currently, no irrigation is planned.

Mr. Reynolds stated that they have agreed to the conditions and features recommended by staff; therefore, they have already met all the conditions for approval. They believe they have provided a Dublin type of development, which they will make as green as possible.

Mr. Fishman inquired how vehicle unloading would be addressed.

Mr. Reynolds responded that a vehicle carrier could enter the site and unload vehicles on the west side of the property facing SR 161. There is adequate room to unload vehicles without impacting any traffic on Post Road or their access road.

Mr. Fishman stated that with all the parking spaces filled, there would be no room for a carrier to make a turn to the west.

Mr. Reynolds responded that there is ability on the existing parcel to make a turn between the south side of the building and the parking that fronts SR161. Once the carrier has unloaded, they would turn north and access the service road.

Mr. Krobot stated that they have confirmed firetruck maneuverability on the site.

Ms. Call inquired if staff had obtained the elevation change on the site.

Mr. Hounshell responded that from the southern edge of the property to the pavement, there is a 2-3 foot grade drop.

Commission Discussion

Mr. Schneier stated that the Commission discourages extensive blacktop; however, the proposed use would be appropriate for this site. The area is comprised of other automobile dealerships. Driving down Post Road, an extensive area of vehicles can be viewed from the street. It is in the City's interest to consolidate the inventory to the extent possible. A view of vehicles for sale would be preferable to an abandoned Bob Evans site. Because staff has provided assurance that the Code

requirements are met, he would be concerned about regulatory overreach. If the applicant has met the City's standards, it is incumbent on the Commission not to force applicants to exceed the standards. He would not be in favor of using discretion for that purpose. He is supportive of the project.

Public Comment

Ms. Rauch stated that the following public comment was received:

Bill Doraty, 5105 Post Road, Dublin, OH:

"The removal of the Bob Evans will no doubt be great for the Twin Auto organization, allowing them a better display and parking. Since we, Celebration KIA, share a common driveway off Post Road with Twin Autos, I would like to ensure that there will not be disruption for our customers or employees during the renovation time, specifically ingress/ingress. Additionally, if the driveway is damaged, we request that it be repaired immediately. Twins Auto has been a good neighbor, and we wish them the best."

Mr. Fishman stated that he is concerned about the aesthetics of the view upon entering Dublin. The other auto dealerships are set back from Post Road. This dealership, however, will be seen from the SR 161/US 33 entrance into Dublin. The adjacent site was previously occupied by ATT. He believes these sites were zoned Office.

Mr. Schneier stated that, pre ATT, the building was built originally for Cellular One. More recently, the site has been occupied by an auto dealership.

Mr. Fishman inquired if the zoning on the site was changed.

Ms. Rauch responded that based on staff's research and previous approvals, the current use can continue here.

Mr. Fishman stated that he would need assurance by the landscape architect, that a sea of cars will not be seen here at the entrance to the City. The site should appear more consistent with Dublin. He continues to be concerned about the unloading of vehicles from the roadway median. He would prefer that unloading be required on the Twin Autos dealership site. He would also recommend requiring heavy landscaping within the available 8-foot space between the wall and the curb. Although there will be some view of the cars, he would like that view to be interrupted to the greatest extent possible by landscaping.

Mr. Supelak stated that the Commission discourages extensive blacktop. He would encourage the applicant to be very sensitive concerning the screening, hedges and stonework, both internal to the site and on its perimeter. In regard to sufficient room to negotiate a turn onsite – because a fire truck maneuverability study has been conducted, he is confident of a vehicle carrier's ability to make the turn, as well. If there is compliance with the setback requirements; appropriate landscaping is added at the corner; and the arrow on the sign face is removed, he has no concerns with the sign. However, he remains concerned with the stonewall. Could the cap be made of cut limestone?

Mr. Way stated that the proposed project is consistent with the area, which is comprised of auto dealerships. Car dealerships require visibility to attract customers. The proposed landscape plan provides more landscaping than typical for car dealerships, so he believes Dublin's Code has worked well in this case. He likes the tree islands and the reduction in curbcuts on the frontage. Concerning

the previous comment about the wall cap, he assumes it will be a traditional Dublin wall, topped with a vertical course of stone.

Ms. Call noted that the existing wall does not have that element.

Ms. Harter stated that the proposed plan is consistent with the existing development, which is cohesive. She likes the proposed limestone wall. The landscaping will be very important on this key site, but she anticipates the proposed landscaping will grow quickly, softening the view from SR 161. She appreciates that the removal of the arrow from the sign and likes the proposed bike rack.

Ms. Call stated that City Code currently requires a bike rack on this site; however, very few people ride bicycles to car dealerships to purchase a car. While this applicant is required to meet Code, perhaps the requirements regarding bike rack locations should be revisited in the future. She likes the pin-mounted, back-illuminated sign; although very simplistic, it matches the other sign. The top of the proposed stonewall is not particularly attractive. Dublin has attractive stonewalls, some with concrete formed caps. She would recommend that a cap be added to the existing wall, as well as the proposed stonewall.

Mr. Reynolds responded that the applicant is agreeable to adding the suggested cap to the new stonewall and continuing it on the existing site, as well. Their intent is to Dublinize the project, making the facility appropriate for Dublin.

Ms. Call stated that the Commission appreciates that their existing business has been successful in Dublin and they would like to further expand their business. The Commission wishes them continuing success.

Mr. Way moved, Mr. Supelak seconded approval of the Conditional Use with two conditions:

- 1) That the applicant not conduct surface parking as a primary use on parcel 273-002459 (5067 Post Road); and
- 2) That the applicant combine parcel 273-002460 and parcel 273-002459, prior to issuance of a permit to perform site improvements.

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

[Motion approved 6-0.]

Ms. Call inquired if there were an error in the number of parking spaces, i.e. there were 147 spaces rather than 153 spaces, would the applicant be required to return to the Commission for approval, or would that be handled administratively.

Mr. Hounshell responded that it would be handled administratively.

Mr. Supelak moved, Mr. Way seconded approval of the Parking Plan with two deviations:

- 1) A 153-space parking lot with 15 visitor/employee spaces and 138 storage spaces.
- 2) Parking forward of the structure along a principal frontage street.

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

[Motion approved 6-0.]

Ms. Rauch recommended an additional condition requiring the extension of the existing stonewall cap.

Mr. Way stated that he would advocate for the traditional, vertical stone cap in this location.

Mr. Reynolds stated that the applicant is willing to add the traditional, soldier stone cap to the stonewall.

Mr. Fishman requested clarification that the cap would add additional height to the proposed stonewall.

Mr. Reynolds responded that the cap would be added to the top of the three-foot wall, as an accoutrement to that wall.

Mr. Schneier moved, Mr. Way seconded approval of the Amended Final Development Plan with 6 conditions:

- 1) That the applicant is required to decrease the size of the new ground sign to not exceed 30 square feet meeting the maximum permitted combined area allowance of 66 square feet, subject to staff approval, prior to submitting a Sign Permit;
- 2) That the applicant work with staff to relocate the new ground sign to meet the minimum required 8-foot setback, subject to staff approval, prior to submitting a Sign Permit;
- 3) That the applicant eliminate all directional sign elements from the new ground sign as the sign exceeds the maximum size for a permanent directional sign, subject to staff approval, prior to submitting a Sign Permit;
- 4) That the landscape plan be updated to substitute deciduous shrubs within the stone circle in lieu of grass, subject to staff approval; and
- 5) That the applicant work with staff to select decorative bicycle racks and site the racks, subject to staff approval.
- 6) The applicant provide a traditional vertical stone cap to the stone street wall, subject to staff approval.

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

[Motion approved 6-0.]

2. OSU Medical Campus at 6700 University Boulevard, 22-032AFDP, Amended Final Development Plan

Ms. Call stated that this is a request for modifications for the OSU Medical Campus, zoned Planned Unit Development District, on a 33.73-acre site located northwest of the intersection of University Boulevard with Shier Rings Road.

Staff Presentation

Mr. Miller stated that this is a 33.73-acre site with a 271,580-square foot medical office building and ambulatory care facility. The site, which is located south of US33 and north of University Boulevard, was rezoned in 2019 from ID-1 to Planned Unit Development (PUD). Because it is a PUD, the plan review has followed the Planned Unit Development process. The Concept Plan was approved in 2019, the rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan were approved late in 2019, and a Final Development Plan was approved in April 2020. This is an Amended Final Development Plan.

Due to some conflicts in the original Final Development Plan, the applicant has requested approval of some minor modifications, which are more consistent with the wayfinding signage on their other sites. The applicant is requesting to increase the number of vehicular directional signs from 4 to 9. The five additional signs are important to promote wayfinding and improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation. All Vehicular Directional Signs are proposed interior to the campus to provide wayfinding at key decision-making locations where drives intersect. The proposed signs are not visible from University Boulevard or U.S. 33. He reviewed the elements of an earlier administrative approval. Staff has reviewed the plan against the applicable criteria and recommends approval with one condition.

Commission Questions

Ms. Harter inquired if the signs will provide families assistance in parking in the correct section of the parking lot. Is the proposed signage compatible with the signage higher on other buildings throughout the campus?

The applicant responded affirmatively.

Mr. Schneier stated that this amendment is based on the applicant's recent experience with their New Albany facility. He requested clarification.

Applicant Presentation

Garth Dotta, 50044 Grassland Drive, Dublin, Facilities & Planning Senior Director, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, stated that with their Outpatient Care Center in New Albany, they recognized there was no need to include the address on the campus signage, as the visitor had already arrived onsite, so the identification was revised to identify the facility only. There are three points of entry to the site, and the signage will direct them to the appropriate patient drop-off area, and from there, to the appropriate parking area.

Mr. Supelak commended the applicant for their continuing wayfinding studies, both exterior and interior. He recognizes that they are thorough and careful. He applauds the verticality and visibility of the vehicular directional signs. Are all of the signs on the campus necessary, or would it be possible to give back four of the secondary entry signs in favor of the vehicular direction signs being added?

Mr. Dotta responded that the earlier plan approved only four secondary entry signs, although their original plan had included 9-10 signs. They are unsure how it occurred that a smaller number was presented to and approved by the Commission, as their goal was always to have signage in the needed areas. The secondary entry signs are smaller, shorter signs, intended primarily for truck deliveries, faculty and staff parking.

Mr. Supelak pointed out that the two signs on the street are essentially monument signs. An additional four signs are proposed internal to the campus at intersections where there are already multiple vehicular directional signs. There will be competing sign language.

Mr. Dotta responded that the language is very specific, intended for people other than patients and families.

Commission Discussion

Ms. Harter stated that she is supportive of adding additional directional signage, which will be helpful to the patients and families, and likes the verticality of the signage.

Mr. Way stated that the signs are attractive and designed well with simple, clear messaging. He supportive of the additional signage.

Mr. Supelak, Mr. Fishman, Mr. Schneier and Ms. Call also expressed support.

Mr. Schneier moved, Mr. Supelak seconded approval of the Amended Final Development Plan with one (1) condition:

- 1) That the applicant obtain sign permit approvals through Building Standards, prior to installation.

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

[Motion approved 6-0.]

3. Solar Panels, 21-151ADMC, Administrative Request – Code Amendment

Ms. Call stated that this is a request for recommendation to City Council of a Code Amendment to provide regulations regarding solar panels for residential and commercial properties within the City of Dublin.

Staff Presentation

Ms. Noble stated that staff has been working on a proposed Code amendment related to sustainability practices within the City of Dublin for both commercial and residential properties. This proposed amendment relates specifically to solar panels. Due to the influx of requests for solar panels, there is a need for Code language to deal with those requests. In 2018, Council approved the Dublin Sustainability Framework Plan, and staff has been working on the Plan's recommendations. Currently, renewable energy solar panels are permitted in only three areas in Dublin, the West innovation District, the Bridge Street District and the Dublin Corporate Area Plan. This amendment would expand that ability to all commercial and residential districts within the City. There are tax incentives available, limited to this year, to residential property owners to install renewable energy equipment. The Commission reviewed an initial Code amendment proposal in October 2021, and based on that feedback, staff has revised the language. The proposed amendments establish a new section within the General Development Standards, permitting renewable energy equipment – solar (i.e. solar panels) in all zoning districts. Regulations are provided for ground-mounted and roof-mounted equipment. The proposed language indicates renewable energy equipment as an accessory use in all zoning districts and ground-mounted renewable energy equipment as a detached accessory structure. Consistent with the BSD, roof-mounted renewable energy is limited to eighteen inches above the roofline of a building and ground-mounted equipment is screened to the extent possible. The proposed Code language allows solar panels to the side and rear of a building with an administrative approval of a Certificate of Zoning Plan Approval. Staff requests Commission review and feedback, and when a final draft is achieved, a recommendation of approval to City Council.

Commission Discussion

Mr. Schneier stated that the Code contains a definition of renewable energy, however, that could include other forms of renewable energy. There may be a need for a separate definition for solar energy.

Mr. Supelak expressed agreement.

Ms. Call stated that there is a need to address the type, as well. Solar shingles are very different from solar panels. She agrees that a definition is needed. A simple description of ground-mounted is also insufficient. One of the most preferential locations would be on top of a pergola, an accessory structure, which is usually taller than 6 feet. Technically, that is ground-mounted, not roof-mounted, because it is not on the roof of the principal structure.

Mr. Way stated that the proposed amendment attempts to combine all districts, but there is a difference between residential and commercial. He is not opposed to ground-mounted equipment, if it located within a campus in some manner. He would prefer to see the commercial and residential districts separated.

Ms. Call stated that she believes there is consensus on the Commission for that suggestion. Many commercial buildings have flat roofs, but not many homes do.

Mr. Supelak stated that there might be merit in refining the proposed language. In this case, the approach is more economical than environmental. Fuel is a commodity, which continues to increase in price over time. Solar is a technology, which decreases in cost over time. Moore's Law which has proven to be accurate for 60-80 years, is a data-driven trajectory that can be used to project the future. There are also data-driven trajectories around solar energy, i.e. the price decreases by 20% and the amount generated increases x10. At some point, we will be able to get all our energy from the sun. Part of this was included in discussions regarding the 2035 Framework Plan. Solar energy is evolving so quickly that we have insufficient case studies to identify agreeable vs. disagreeable elements. Although we might identify a short-term solution for now, there is a long-term trajectory for which the Commission needs to plan.

Mr. Way expressed agreement. There is a need for a short-term solution, as residents currently are installing solar panels on their homes. The City needs to provide guidance for that.

Ms. Call stated that there is a concern with the traditional framed solar panels in residential neighborhoods. There are other alternatives less disagreeable. She is not comfortable deferring all those projects to staff until Code is adopted that will govern it.

Mr. Schneier recalled that there were past issues with satellite dishes during the time where no appropriate regulatory authority had been established. Is there model legislation on the renewable energy topic?

Ms. Call suggested that the Commission confirm the issues that they have already identified, then direct staff to conduct additional research, engaging industry leaders and experts.

Mr. Schneier suggested that staff contact the Governmental Affairs contact from the American Solar Panel Society and learn what they would recommend, which we may or may not accept.

Mr. Fishman suggested a special meeting be scheduled to provide an opportunity for producers of solar panels to present the technology and future of that technology. Education about solar panels is necessary in order to define our long-term process. Learning from the existing issues with old TV antennas remaining on homes, regulations should be included for this newer technology that will address the disposal of the older elements.

Ms. Harter stated that at the Statehouse, the Senate recently passed a bill that would prevent homeowner associations from banning solar energy elements. That bill will now progress to the House, so the legislation will move quickly.

Mr. Fishman stated that the City does not want to ban the technology, but have Code in place that provides protections and addresses the evolution of that technology. 20 years from now, we do not want to have old solar panels attached to roofs. The intent is not to restrict the technology, but intelligently evolve with the technology.

Ms. Call stated that this is an intelligent community interested in making good choices. We have the opportunity to elevate that thinking. For example, if the City Code were to recommend solar shingles, as opposed to solar panels, because they are more aesthetically pleasing, we could educate our community on how to embrace the technology in a way that is as aesthetically pleasing, as well as future thinking. Tonight's discussion has identified the need for definitions in the Code; to separate commercial and residential districts; separate the technologies, addressing the different types, technologies and placement. As future technologies emerge, the Code should require them to follow an approval process.

Mr. Way stated that staff's research should also include costs. Tesla shingles, for instance, cost much more than traditional solar panels, although the product and costs will evolve. We need to understand over the short term what will be attractive to our residents, and that cost will be an issue. Understanding the cost of each technology should be included in our considerations.

Ms. Call stated that costs can be part of our consideration, but we would not provide a preference for one solution based on costs. We can attempt to understand how the economies affect decision-making.

Mr. Way stated that there should be sufficient flexibility, so our residents can adopt affordable technology, or help them find a way to pay for it, such as subsidization.

Mr. Fishman stated that the Commission needs to recommend the appropriate product for the appropriate place, and also address the removal of obsolete structures.

Ms. Call recommended that staff reach out to technology leaders. There probably is an organization, which draws these technologies together. Staff could also contact the sponsor of the Senate legislation, as they have already conducted the research and might also be able to provide useful contacts.

Mr. Schneier inquired how to expedite the process, when the topic requires extensive study. We want to address the topic correctly. Hopefully, Dublin can create model legislation that other communities might want to emulate. Due to the current demand, however, there is also a need to not stall the topic.

Mr. Fishman reiterated the need for the Commission to have a meeting where knowledge experts explain the issues and options.

Mr. Schneier noted that the public might need to know that the Code development process could take some time to complete.

Ms. Call stated that it is important to place a priority on acquiring the needed information to make a good decision, but we want to expedite the gathering of that data. If residents have pertinent information, they are invited to share in the public comment portion of the Commission's meeting discussion.

Ms. Noble requested clarification of Mr. Fishman's comment regarding either the replacement of old technology with current technology or the removal of abandoned technology.

Mr. Fishman responded that he is suggesting that the Code require the removal of obsolete solar structures.

Ms. Call suggested issuing permits valid for a specific period of time, which either must be renewed to retain the structures or said structures must be removed. A permit process would provide the City an opportunity to offer any associated education regarding solar technology, as well.

Mr. Way stated that use of recyclable technologies would be preferable.

Mr. Fishman suggested that an educational presentation be scheduled as soon as possible for a future Commission meeting.

Mr. Supelak that there are products and applications that are more preferable. He would suggest the Commission be provided copies of images of the different products and applications for discussion purposes. The Code must address the current needs and obsolete structures, but it should also be cognizant of anticipated future technology. It should also include a non-prescriptive, "catch all" phrase concerning appearance standards.

Ms. Call stated that if staff should happen to identify a city that has addressed solar technology in a manner that appears to be consistent with the Commission's direction, discussion should be scheduled as soon as possible for an upcoming Commission meeting.

Mr. Fishman noted that it might be easier to address the commercial use, as solar structures could be hidden in the same manner in which other mechanicals are hidden.

Mr. Supelak stated that identifying the definitions, categories and infrastructure will be important.

Ms. Call stated that it will not be possible to future-proof the Code but addressing the general appearance and equipment that is no longer used would be beneficial.

Ms. Noble requested Commission input on the preferred review process. Would the Commission have any hesitations regarding an administrative review component?

Ms. Call responded that it would depend on the Code language. If it is vague, the Commission would prefer Commission approval; if the requirements can be clearly identified, an administrative review component could be considered.

Mr. Supelak stated that in the long term, an administrative review component might be possible.

Ms. Call noted that, ultimately, the preferred review process would be determined by City Council.

Ms. Noble stated that there could be a short-term solution and eventually, a long-term solution. The process can be revised.

Ms. Call stated that with new development, the solar energy component would likely be part of the Preliminary Development Plan review.

Mr. Way stated that the Commission would not be approving plans for individual parcels within neighborhoods.

Ms. Call stated that staff is inquiring if once the Code is established, the Commission would be agreeable to staff administering that Code. Her view is that it would depend on how well that Code is structured.

Mr. Schneier moved, Mr. Supelak seconded tabling the proposed Code Amendment, pending further study.

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

[Motion carried 6-0.]

COMMUNICATIONS

Single-Family Residential Code:

Ms. Rauch reported that at Council's work session Monday, April 18, staff updated Council on the Commission's recent discussion; individual members' input to staff; and their general direction and recommendations regarding Single-Family Residential Development Standards. Council provided additional input and requested that a proposed solution be shared with the Commission for consideration.

Mr. Supelak inquired if individual Commission member-staff discussions would be a desirable process for the solar energy topic, as well.

Ms. Call stated that she believes the needs are different. She would prefer a full discussion on the latter, as the individual members would benefit from hearing other members' perspectives. Individual discussions with staff also are not publicly noticed; therefore, no opportunity is provided for public input.

April 20, 2022 Joint PZC-ARB-Work Session Feedback:

Ms. Call noted that the joint PZC-ARB-BZA work session on April 20 broadened members' perspectives of the respective boards' review processes, specifically, the public's understanding of the board's process.

Tentative Tour of Past Development Projects:

Ms. Rauch reported that PZC members have expressed continued interest in a tour of past development projects, and a tour is tentatively being scheduled for one of PZC's regular June meetings. Members will be invited to share suggestions for the projects they would like to view.

- The next regular meeting of PZC is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 5, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.



Chair, Planning and Zoning Commission



Assistant Clerk of Council