

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION**

March 26, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Weaver, Ron Rehm, Gil Ning, Heather Kobilarcsik, Wanda Christopher-Finn, Jean Boen and Fred Seling

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jackie Middleton

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Dutton and Jonathan Millea

I. MINUTES

Ron Rehm moved, Wanda Christopher-Finn seconded, to approve the Minutes of February 18, 2014 as received. Motion carried.

Gil Ning moved, Ron Rehm seconded, to approve the Minutes of February 26, 2014 as received. Motion carried.

II. CONDITIONAL USE (PUBLIC HEARING)

Application CU-368. Patrick Teague of the Hartley Company is requesting conditional use approval for a gas station at 310 South Market Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District.

Patrick Teague, Cambridge, Ohio stated the proposal was to reopen the gas station and convenience store. Mr. Teague indicated that they would open the gas station “tomorrow” (March 27) but were still waiting the branding for the gas station (Gulf station); the site was formerly a BP station. Mr. Teague noted there were no plans to change the site/building, other than to rebrand it.

Public hearing was closed.

Mr. Dutton noted that the reason the request was before the Commission was because the gas station had not operated/was vacant for over a year. Mr. Dutton noted that the Board of Zoning Appeals would hear a variance request at its April 3rd meeting.

Gil Ning moved, Mark Weaver seconded, to grant the request of the Hartley Company for conditional use approval for a gas station at 310 South Market Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District contingent upon the applicant receiving a variance from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals from Chapter 1147 regarding site size and street frontage.

Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Application CU-369. Jonathan Millea of the City of Wooster requesting conditional use approval for a public parking lot at 331 - 341 East North Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District.

Jonathan Millea, City of Wooster, stated a new public parking lot was proposed on East North Street to serve the future development of the East Liberty Street corridor. Mr. Millea stated the City would extend the parking exemption district with the hope of opening up development opportunities for real estate along East Liberty Street. Mr. Millea stated two of the parcels were

already being used for parking, and two parcels were being used for community gardens. Mr. Millea stated the parking would be open to the public. Mr. Millea stated initially, the parking lot would be gravel; landscaping was also planned. Mr. Millea stated there was a need for parking in the area, and some of the funding for the project would be utilized through the Community Development Block Grant program. Initially, not all of the property would be used for parking; some would continue to remain as a community garden. In the long term, though, Mr. Millea stated the entire property would be made available as a public parking area. Mr. Millea stated by implementing landscaping elements, which would include a hedge row along the sides and trees along the front of the property, the area would be beautified.

Ms. Christopher-Finn questioned if any of the spaces would be leased spaces. Mr. Millea stated in the short term, there would be leased spaces. Mr. Millea stated once the parking exemption district was expanded to include the area in question, the spaces would no longer be leased spaces. Mr. Millea stated the City had agreed with the property owners to provide 17 spaces available for lease free of charge because they had been using the area for parking for their businesses (7 spaces leased to Troyer Bakery and 7 spaces leased to MaraVee LLC). The agreements with those two businesses expired once the parking exemption district was changed to include the area. Once the agreements expired, 3-hour public parking would be permitted.

Mr. Millea noted that the project would be presented to the Board of Zoning Appeals because the parking lot would be graveled. A 1' setback variance was also needed. A variance was also needed to use a vegetated hedge row to the rear and into the sides of the property in lieu of building a masonry fence.

Mr. Rehm questioned if the trees proposed would be along the street. Mr. Millea stated yes.

Mr. Rehm questioned if the community gardens would be relocated. Mr. Rehm stated he felt the community gardens were much more needed in the area than parking was. Mr. Millea stated the grant to create the parking lot did call for some of that to be preserved, but the hope was that the landscaping being proposed would "take that place".

Ms. Maxwell questioned if the parking area would be illuminated. Mr. Millea stated at this time, there were no plans for lighting, although there was street lighting currently in place. Mr. Millea stated in the long term, it was the goal of the City to at least pave the front portion and, at that time, lighting would again be revisited.

Mr. Ning questioned if overnight parking would be permitted. Mr. Millea stated no, with the exception of there being a downtown residential parking permit. Those residents would technically be permitted to park overnight in the lot.

Mr. Rehm questioned plowing of the parking lot in the winter. Mr. Millea stated gravel would make it more difficult, but he imagined the City would make an attempt to plow the lot.

Mr. Rehm questioned the lack of lighting and the liability issue. Mr. Millea stated he did not believe so, given that there was existing street lighting.

Public hearing was closed.

Mr. Dutton noted that the gravel would actually be a base layer so that paving could be placed right over it.

Wanda Christopher-Finn moved, Mark Weaver seconded, to grant the request of the City of Wooster for conditional use approval of a public parking lot at 331 - 341 East North Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District on the condition that the applicant obtain approval of variances from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals regarding property setback from a public street and the installation of a masonry knee wall.

Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

III. FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Application SP-566. John Long of Shaffer, Johnston, Lichtenwalter & Associates, Inc. representing Chesterland Estates is requesting final development plan approval for a 12,000-sq. ft. retail and warehouse building on the east side of Akron Road, across from Vinton Woods Drive, in an M-1 (Office/Limited Manufacturing) District.

Jerry Baker, Chesterland Estates, indicated a 12,000-sq. ft. building was proposed.

Mr. Weaver read into the record the Staff recommendations: That a variance was needed from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals regarding the front parking setback; That if any point in the future, the site appears to generate greater or equal to 100 vehicle trip ends during the highest peak hour as determined by the City Engineer or if the City Engineer identifies the access point on Akron Road as a safety problem or accident location, a traffic study shall be conducted per Section 1181.07(c). Any recommendations from the traffic study shall be implemented on the site at the discretion of the City Engineer; Truck traffic on the site shall only exit onto Enterprise Drive and shall not exit onto Akron Road; A sidewalk shall be constructed along the north side of the future Enterprise Drive cul-de-sac; A revised landscaping plan shall be submitted indicating the quantities, size and species of landscaping and be updated to include the following: A 3' high evergreen row between the entire parking area and the public right-of-way of Akron Road; screening of the loading area on each side of the site; and landscaping integrated around the west side of the detention basin; and finally a lighting plan shall be submitted indicating the location, height, style and coverage of exterior lights.

Mr. Baker indicated he had no problem with any of the Staff recommendations.

Mr. Ning stated the application noted the building was to be used for retail/warehousing. Mr. Ning stated along Akron Road in the immediate area, there was only one other retail operation (water softener business) which was not high volume. Mr. Baker stated the occupant would be light volume—one side was a warehouse that had a sales counter for a pick-up/will call area. Mr. Baker stated the other side was not leased yet, but that he was working with a company that would be an art department for that industry plus warehousing.

Mark Weaver moved, Ron Rehm seconded, to grant the request of Chesterland Estates for final development plan approval for a 12,000-sq. ft. retail and warehouse building on the east side of Akron Road, across from Vinton Woods Drive, in an M-1 (Office/Limited Manufacturing) District, subject to the following conditions: (1) That a variance be obtained from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals regarding the front parking setback; (2) That if any point in the future, the site appears to generate greater or equal to 100 vehicle trip ends during the highest peak hour as determined by the City Engineer or if the City Engineer identifies the access point on Akron Road as a safety problem or accident location, a traffic study shall be conducted per Section 1181.07(c). Any recommendations from the traffic study shall be implemented on the site at the discretion of the City Engineer; (3) Truck traffic on the site shall only exit onto Enterprise Drive and shall not

exit onto Akron Road; (4) A sidewalk shall be constructed along the north side of the future Enterprise Drive cul-de-sac; (5) A revised landscaping plan shall be submitted indicating the quantities, size and species of landscaping and be updated to include the following: A 3' high evergreen row between the entire parking area and the public right-of-way of Akron Road; Screening of the loading area on each side of the site; and landscaping integrated around the west side of the detention basin; and (6) A lighting plan shall be submitted indicating the location, height, style and coverage of exterior lights.

Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Application SP-567. Mike Sommers of Stark Development, representing WWM Properties Ltd., is requesting final development plan approval for a 4,750-sq. ft. professional office building at 3582 Cleveland Road in a C-5 (General Commercial) District.

Mike Sommers, Stark Development, stated Dr. Safarutn Aranmolate had entered into a purchase agreement with WWM Properties, current owner of the property. Mr. Sommers stated the parcel in question was 2.4 acres and was bounded on the north, south and east sides with C-5 development; to the west was undeveloped/wooded land zoned R-1. Mr. Sommers noted that currently on the property was a vacant house and garage which would be removed. Mr. Sommers stated a 4,750-sq. ft. building was proposed to be used as a pediatric dental office. Mr. Sommers noted the site would contain 28 parking spaces (asphalt) with an additional two handicapped parking spaces for a total of 30 spaces; 23 parking spaces were required. Mr. Sommers stated access would be in the same general location as the current residential drive on the south side of the property. Mr. Sommers stated the driveway would be expanded/widened and constructed to commercial standards. Mr. Sommers stated the land sloped approximately 26' from east to west; from south to north, there was an approximate 20' difference. Retaining walls would be added (north/south) as shown on the site plan. Mr. Sommers stated there was an existing sanitary sewer lateral and water service to the property which would be used. Mr. Sommers stated with respect to stormwater, they would be disturbing more than one acre. A detention basin would be provided to the front; three bio swales were also proposed—one on each side of the property and one between the parking area and the retention basin. Mr. Sommers stated a variance was being requested which required landscaping from parking areas which abutted the public right-of-way. Mr. Sommers stated the swales which had been incorporated in the plan would not support the type of planting which was required to meet the buffering requirement. The alternative to the plantings was a vinyl fence, and it was felt that the fence would unduly screen the building from view since the parking area was about 10' above the road. Mr. Sommers noted there were plantings that were proposed to create buffering, but they were not hedge plantings. Mr. Sommers showed the Commission a rendering of the building which included stone, vinyl siding, cedar shakes, aluminum and dormers to the front and rear. Mr. Sommers noted that the lighting plan was nearing completion, but stated that site lighting to the front would be done with 20-25' pole lights; on the sides and rear of the building would be building-mounted, LED lighting.

Mr. Selig questioned if he was aware of the Planning Staff's recommendations. Mr. Sommers stated yes, and they were acceptable.

Ron Rehm moved, Jean Boen seconded, to grant the request of Stark Development for final development plan approval of a 4,750-sq. ft. professional office building at 3582 Cleveland Road in a C-5 (General Commercial) District, subject to the applicant receiving approval of a variance from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals regarding the screening of the front parking area from the right-of-way and submitting a lighting plan to the Planning Department.

Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Application SP-568. Jonathan Millea of the City of Wooster requesting final development plan approval for a public parking lot at 331 - 341 East North Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District.

Mr. Millea stated if the variance were approved from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals, the parking lot would include a hedge row in lieu of a wall and a reduced setback of 9' as opposed to the required 10' along the front. Mr. Millea again reiterated that initially, a graveled parking lot would be installed on all four parcels in question which would also serve as a base for a future paved lot. Mr. Millea stated for clarification, the development plan did provide for trees to the rear of the parcel as opposed to the front, but Mr. Millea stated the trees could be moved to the front of the parcel or provide them at both the front and rear.

Mr. Ning questioned if sidewalks would be added as there were areas which were grass where the sidewalks stopped (along North Street). Mr. Millea stated he thought sidewalks were beyond the realm of this project.

Mr. Ning questioned if lighting could be added to the rear of the lot because there was no existing lighting there. Mr. Millea stated yes. Mr. Rehm stated the City should look into the liability issue in not providing lighting as he was concerned with not providing adequate lighting in a public parking lot. Mr. Rehm stated he felt one light would be adequate to illuminate the area properly. Ms. Boen stated she felt the parking lot would be used by the Brewery and its customers late at night, and she felt lighting would not be a bad idea because of that.

Ms. Boen questioned if the CDBG money would be sufficient to cover sidewalks and lighting of the lot. Mr. Millea stated he was not certain, but felt that it likely would not.

Jean Boen moved, Gil Ning seconded, to grant the request of the City of Wooster for final development plan approval for a public parking lot at 331 - 341 East North Street in a C-4 (Central Business) District, contingent upon the applicant obtaining a variance from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals regarding parking lot setback from a public street, the installation of a masonry knee wall and the surface of the parking spaces and drive. The Commission recommends to the applicant that a lighting plan also be included.

Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Fred Seling, Chairman

Laurie Hart, Administrative Assistant