

CITY OF CHARDON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2019

Members Present:

Andrew Blackley, Vice-Chairman
Al Hunziker
Chris Grau
Kenneth Miller, Chairman

Dean Peska
Hannah Sekas
Mary Jo Stark

Members Absent:

Also Present:

Doug Courtney, City Engineer
Jim Gillette, Law Director
Joe Koziol, Times Courier

Rebecca Repasky, Secretary

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Roll was called.

Mr. Miller asked for a motion to amend the agenda to move the informal discussion from Geauga Faith Mission to the first item on the agenda. Mr. Blackley made the motion. It was seconded by Mr. Grau. The vote carried 7-0.

Mr. Miller explained due to the emergency absence of Steve Yaney, Community Development Administrator, the Commission will table the informal discussion until the next meeting (May 20, 2019). He explained Mr. Yaney has some issues that he would like to discuss with the Commission before allowing Geauga Faith Mission to proceed. Mr. Miller said there will still be a public meeting to allow for public input.

There was a question from the audience on the allotted time frame. Mr. Gillette explained there is no time frame because it is only an informal discussion not formal proposal and it will allow for a reaction from Planning Commission to express any needed changes or revisions to avoid repeated appearances before the Commission.

Mr. Grau made a motion to postpone the informal discussion until May 20, 2019. It was seconded by Mr. Blackley. The vote carried 7-0.

Mr. Miller said everyone received copies of the February 19, 2019 meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Grau to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Mrs. Sekas. The vote carried 6-0. Mr. Blackley abstained from the vote.

Mr. Miller reminded all that were present to sign in for the meeting. Mr. Miller explained the procedure of the meeting and swore in City staff.

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

PC Case #19-042 – The applicant, Wecall Inc. is requesting Concept Plan approval for lot grading, expansion of the storm water retention area and expansion of the parking lot in anticipation of a future building expansion on the property.

(Mr. Blackley took over the meeting.)

Mr. Courtney explained the company will be doing bridge bolt fabrication.

Mr. Paul Daugherty was sworn in. He is the owner of Wecall Inc.

Mr. Daugherty explained the company has outgrown the facility in Orwell. He said they would like to extend the driveway to the loading docks of the new building, rebuild the detention basin (only once) and eventually in the future add an addition to the building.

Mr. Courtney said the plans presented go into greater detail than required. He said Staff has no issues and recommends approval.

Mr. Grau made a motion to approve the Concept Plan. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. The vote carried 7-0.

PC Case #19-045 & 19-046 – The applicant Tractor Supply Company is requesting a total of five (5) variances to install an outdoor open air garden center to sell items. It will be enclosed by a screen fence and will be built at the south end of the property into the parking lot.

Mr. Paul was sworn in.

Mr. Paul explained it will be a 15,000 sq. ft. garden center with a screened fence and chain link fence, access for a fire lane and some landscaping to shield the fence.

Mrs. Stark asked what the screening per the Code is. Mr. Gillette said it is supposed to be opaque screening, and this is not opaque.

Mr. Gillette asked why the garden center is not behind the building. Mr. Paul said because it is too small back there. Mr. Gillette asked if there is anywhere else the garden center can go. Mr. Paul said no.

Mr. Miller said he recommends an arborvitae tree with a minimum of six (6) ft. height.

Mr. Gillette shared that in 1994 there was an outdoor fence proposal but was unsure if it was ever constructed. Ms. DeBenedictis said it was.

Mrs. Stark said the width of the planters should accommodate for a shrub and would like to see the screening per the Code.

Mr. Dean was sworn in.

Mr. Dean said Tractor Supply plans to keep the trailers in the outdoor location where they are now. Mr. Blackley expressed concern of the parking lot conditions and no stripping for parking spaces. He said he would like to see DeBartalo make these improvements because it is a safety concern. Ms. DeBenedictis said she would ask him.

Ms. Tammy Eggleston was sworn in.

Ms. Eggleston shared concern that local retail is being destroyed by big companies and online sales. She said she would like to keep stores like Tractor Supply in business and for them to be granted what they are asking. She asked for minimal screening so that people can see what is being offered to buy. Ms. Eggleston also encouraged the Commission to think of businesses beyond the Square.

Mr. Miller agreed and said he suggests the Planning Commission be flexible so that small stores can be competitive.

Mr. Phil Smith was sworn in.

Mr. Smith asked if the variance could include a condition where the applicant will put in trees to screen the trailers from his property – Thistle House. Ms. DeBenedictis said she would ask the property owner.

Mr. Courtney commented that Mr. Yaney could send the property owner a citation for violations of the municipal property maintenance code in regards to the poor parking lot conditions.

Mr. Blackley reviewed Mr. Yaney's Staff's Recommendations for Approval:

1. Add additional brick piers along the east elevation to have them separated 24-28' instead of the proposed 48-56'.
2. Add additional brick piers on each side of the driveway on the north and south elevations.
3. Add additional evergreen trees (*Mr. Miller recommended abbreviates*) along the east side at the minimum of 6ft height.
4. All outdoor sales of items shall be conducted within the outdoor display/sales area.

Mr. Blackley asked if this is acceptable to Tractor Supply. Mr. Dean said they will not be able to move the trailers inside the area. Planning Commission collectively agreed to allow the trailers to be excluded from items to be contained in the area.

Mrs. Stark asked if the trailers are out there year round. Mr. Dean said yes, but the inventory goes down to about fifteen (15) trailers in the winter and about forty (40) during spring/summer months.

Mr. Blackley asked if the cashier area is only inside. Mr. Dean said no, there is a mobile checkout area inside the garden center.

Mr. Courtney asked if there is any current variances for the sales of the trailers. Mr. Gillette there has not been any complaints in regards to a variance for selling the trailers in that area or any general conditions. Mr. Gillette said to make it very clear, Planning Commission should make a motion for this Announcement of Decision that it states the sale of trailers is permitted in that area.

1. Mr. Grau made a motion to allow a black coated chain link fence in the front yard. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. The vote carried 7-0.

2. Mrs. Sekas made a motion to increase the maximum height for a fence from 3' to 8' in the front yard. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. The vote carried 7-0.

3. Mr. Peska made a motion to increase the maximum floor area for an outdoor display area from 15% to 30%. It was seconded by Mrs. Sekas. The vote carried 7-0.

4. Mrs. Sekas made a motion to increase the maximum fence height from 6' to 8' for outdoor storage of goods and materials and to waive the requirement of an opaque fence. It was seconded by Mr. Grau. The vote carried 7-0.

5. Mrs. Stark made a motion to allow the outdoor storage area in the front yard instead of the required rear yard. It was seconded by Mrs. Sekas. The vote carried 7-0.

6. Mr. Grau made a motion to authorize Tractor Supply Company to sell trailers on the east side of the parking lot for only Tractor Supply Company. It was seconded by Mr. Peska. The vote carried 7-0.

7. Mr. Peska made a motion to approve the Concept Plan. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. The vote carried 7-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none

Mr. Grau made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mrs. Sekas. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

KENNETH MILLER, CHAIRMAN

Rebecca Repasky, Secretary