

CITY OF CHARDON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2020

Members Present:

Andrew Blackley, Chairman
Lene Hill
Dean Peska
Hannah Sekas

Mary Jo Stark, Vice-Chairman
Collin Wantz

Members Absent:

Chris Grau

Also Present:

Ben Chojnacki, Law Director
DD and Mark Cooley
Chris Courtney
Brian Doering
Joe Novak
Rebecca Repasky, Secretary
Tyler Rice

Randy Sharpe, City Manager
Greg and Ryan Sommers, Sommers
Development Group
Ann Wishart, Maple Leaf
Steve Yaney, Community Development
Administrator

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

Mr. Blackley said everyone received copies of the November 16, 2020 meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Peska to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Mrs. Hill. The vote carried 6-0.

Mr. Blackley reminded all that were present to identify themselves for purposes of the video meeting via Zoom. He swore in City Staff.

OLD BUSINESS -

PC Case #20-123/124/125: Mr. Yaney presented the Commission with two (2) additional renderings and more information regarding the Starbucks layout.

Mr. Sommers and Mr. Rice were sworn in.

Mr. Sommers explained he and Mr. Rice analyzed flipping the building as requested by the Commission and believe it does not work. It creates a lack of landscaping and traffic back up on Cherry Street. He explained Mr. Durante requested extra nice features on the building to make it appealing to keep the drive thru on Center Street side. Mr. Rice said this is the best scenario and this does meet the Zoning Code as presented. Mr. Rice said it is preferable to keep the parking behind the building. Mr. Blackley said there are other businesses with parking lots facing the street.

Mr. Courtney suggested Mr. Sommers and Mr. Rice present a couple different site plans with stacking details, setbacks and landscape plans with full details and tabulation information for the Commission to review. Mr. Blackley and Mrs. Stark agreed. Mr. Blackley commented the Commission can grant leeway's on setbacks for the site. Mrs. Hill agreed and suggested moving the patio to the side of the building and reducing the size of the building. Mr. Rice said Starbucks is not open to resizing the building and moving the patio.

Mrs. Sekas commented why is the Commission trying to enforce a rule that is not in the Code. The drive thru will be seen on any side because it is a corner lot. Mr. Blackley commented the Commission is permitted to have an opinion on the layout. Mrs. Sekas said she would want to avoid cars stacking on Cherry Street like what is happening on Center Street at Dunkin' Donuts.

Mr. Rice said Starbucks has requirements for their buildings and changing the layout may cause Starbucks to walk away and not develop the site.

DD and Mark Cooley were sworn in.

Mr. and Mrs. Cooley said they test drive cars for their business and an increase in traffic would hinder their ability to do that.

Joe Novak was sworn in.

Mr. Novak agreed with the Cooleys and suggested not having an entrance on Cherry Street. He commented the site may be too small for a Starbucks.

Ryan Sommers was sworn in.

Mr. Sommers explained they have worked with Starbucks for a year and half on this layout. They and Starbucks are mindful of the community. This will be a great asset to Chardon as it will bring in tax dollars and job creation.

Mr. Wantz requested details for the most effective use of this site and this building. He said he is in favor of the current site layout.

Mrs. Sekas said there has been plenty of research and planning already presented to the Commission. There has been too much back and forth. Traffic flow and preventing cars backing up on Cherry Street is more important than what side the drive thru window is on.

Mrs. Stark requested additional information and details for site layout. Mrs. Hill agreed.

Mr. Peska commented he is good with the current layout.

Mrs. Sekas made a motion to approve the concept plan with requirements from the City Arborist. It was seconded by Mr. Wantz. Mrs. Hill voted no. Mrs. Sekas voted yes. Mr. Peska vote yes. Mr. Blackley voted no. Mrs. Stark voted no. Mr. Wantz voted yes. The vote was 3-3.

Mr. Blackley requested the Developer and Architect on the project return to Planning Commission on December 21st with an additional site plan showing the building with the drive thru not on Center Street. He commented he and the Commission want to work to see this project happen. Mrs. Stark agreed and said they are willing to work with Starbucks and grant any variances needed. Mr. Rice commented an alternative site layout may not happen and they may not be back for the meeting on the 21st.

Mr. Sommers asked the Commission what they are comfortable with and what will work. He said they are willing to pay for more landscaping to shield the drive thru on Center Street.

Mr. Blackley recommended they come back on the 21st showing more effort with a different layout and detail. Mr. Blackley also requested the City Architect attend the meeting on the 21st to give testimony. Mrs. Sekas requested an answer from the Commission on the Developer's question of adding more landscaping to shield the drive thru window. Mr. Blackley said landscaping alone will not do it. Mrs. Stark cautioned additional landscaping may hide the building which may cause people not to see it. Mrs. Hill would like to see more enhancements to the building.

Mr. Blackley commented he does not think any serious attempt was made this time to make it work. He requested they return and try again. Mrs. Sekas said she does not believe the Commission is trying to make this work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none

Mrs. Hill made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark.

Respectfully Submitted:

ANDREW BLACKLEY, CHAIRMAN

Rebecca Repasky, Secretary