



**Oberlin Planning Commission
Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 4:45 p.m.
City Hall Conference Room #2
85 South Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio**

Members

Present: Peter Crowley, Bryan Stubbs and Ellen Mavrigh.

Members

Absent: Tony Scott and Matt Adelman.

Others

Present: Annette Andrews; Jia Wei; Steve Varelmann; Brad Burrer; Dan Neff; Elizabeth Rumics and Valerie Urbanik

The meeting was called to order at 4:45 p.m.

1. Approval of the April 16, 2014 Meeting Minutes.

Stubbs made a motion to approve the April 16, 2014 meeting minutes as submitted. Mavrigh seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Application to Amend the Zoning Map, "R-1A" District to "R-2" District, Sacred Heart Church, Diocese of Cleveland, 440 West Lorain Street.

Boyle advised that this application seeks approval from City Council for an amendment to the Zoning Map for the above-noted property. He indicated that the applicant seeks a change in zoning from the "R-1B"/Single-Family Dwelling District to the "R-2" Dwelling District. Boyle stated that according to the applicant's submittal, the requested change in zoning will provide for the future use of the rectory for offices and support services by Family Promise of Lorain County, Inc. That organization attempts to meet the needs of homeless families for shelter, food and support services in Lorain County.

Boyle noted that the City's Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject property and surrounding properties for future "Medium/High Density Residential" use.

Boyle indicated that City Council, at its meeting on May 5, 2014, moved to refer this petition to amend the Zoning Map to the Planning Commission for a report and recommendation. He

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advised that City departments are reviewing this application and a detailed staff report on this request will be provided for the Commission's consideration.

The Commission received this report for its information. No action was taken on this matter at this time.

3. Application for Sign Permit, Proposed Window Sign, E-Cig Emporium, 11 South Main Street.

Boyle indicated that this application seeks approval for the installation of window signage in one window facing South Main Street. He stated that the proposed sign is neon-illuminated and identifies the business name and has a surface area of about six (6) sq. ft. ±.

Boyle noted that the "C-1" District, the Sign Code permits a total sign surface area of up to two (2) square feet per lineal foot of the front wall of the building (Section 1351.06(b)(3)(A)). He advised that since this business occupies a frontage of fifteen (15) feet ± along South Main Street, a maximum sign surface area of thirty (30) sq. ft. is permitted. Boyle indicated that the proposed sign size is well below what is permitted by the Code.

Boyle advised that the proposed sign had already been installed in the window, but when staff contacted the applicant to advise that they needed a Sign Permit, the applicant removed the sign and promptly filed a Sign Permit Application. He noted that the applicant was unaware that a Sign Permit was needed for the proposed sign since the sign was installed inside of the window.

Boyle stated that the Design Review Subcommittee considered this application at its meeting on May 7, 2014 and unanimously moved to recommend approval of the sign to the Planning Commission as submitted.

Annette Andrews of E-Cig Emporium was present to represent this application.

The Commission considered this application. Mavrich made a motion to accept the Design Review Subcommittee's recommendation and to approve the sign as submitted.

4. Application for Sign Permit, Proposed Window Sign, Weia Teia, Jia Wei, 9 South Main Street.

Boyle stated that this application seeks approval for the installation of window signage that spans the width of both windows facing South Main Street. He advised that each of the proposed decal signs is about 1.5 feet (18 inches) in height, approximately 5.5 feet (66 inches) in length, and has a sign surface area of about 8.25 sq. ft. ± (16.5 sq. ft. ± total area). Boyle indicated that the proposed signage would be used to identify the restaurant on the first floor of this business building. He stated that because the signs are decals, they are not permanent markings on the windows.

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Boyle also noted that this building is in the "C-1" District. Since this business occupies a frontage of twenty (20) feet \pm along South Main Street, a maximum sign surface area of forty (40) sq. ft. is permitted. This signage would be much less than the maximum amount permitted by the Code.

Boyle indicated that the Design Review Subcommittee considered this sign at its meeting on May 7, 2013 and unanimously moved to recommend its approval to the Planning Commission as submitted.

Jia Wei, owner of the Weia Teia, was present to represent this application.

The Commission considered this application and Mavrich made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Design Review Subcommittee and to approve the signs as submitted. Stubbs seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Application Site Plan Approval, Parking Lot Reconfiguration, Knowlton Stadium Complex, Oberlin College, 200 - 212 Woodland Street.

Boyle noted that this application was filed in response to the Planning Commission's requirements when this stadium project was approved in November, 2013. He indicated that this site plan application illustrates proposed improvements to the layout and function of the parking area in question for the Planning Commission's review in an effort to comply with the Commission's earlier approval. Boyle stated that the current design of this parking lot provides a total of two hundred and six (206) parking spaces including six (6) handicap accessible spaces. He advised that the current parking lot design does not facilitate or ease traffic movements within it, and the parking spaces for the most part do not comply with the Zoning Code's minimum design standards (i.e. 9.0 feet by 18.0 feet).

Boyle reported that the "revised" parking design now proposed would provide for enhanced motor vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian movements. He noted that the design of spaces fully complies with the Code's minimum standards as do all circulation aisles with the exception of the east-west aisle in the southwest portion of the parking area. Boyle stated that the aisle is shown with a width of 23.2 feet whereas the Code requires a minimum width of 24.0 feet for standard 90 degree parking spaces. Sufficient space, however, exists on-site to accommodate that required slightly wider aisle. Boyle advised that the proposed reconfiguration would result in two hundred and four (204) parking spaces being available including ten (10) accessible parking spaces (an increase of 4 such spaces). He indicated that the proposed design also includes landscape islands and curbing which will serve to better channelize motor vehicle traffic and clearly demarcate parking rows. Those landscaped areas will also serve to improve the aesthetic appearance of this parking area as well as function as bio-retention areas thereby aiding in water quality. Boyle further advised that in addition to the previously mentioned improvements, the applicant plans to install four (4) bicycle shelters and also provide a more defined pedestrian pathway through the parking lot, and across the access driveway to the parking area from Union Street.

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Boyle indicated that the applicant's "revised" plans have been reviewed by various City departments and have been found to be generally acceptable.

Steve Varelmann and Brad Burrer of Oberlin College's Facilities Planning and Construction office along with Daniel Neff of Neff and Associates were present to represent this application.

Varelmann advised that the current parking lot is not efficient and is not Code compliant. The reconfiguration of the parking lot that they are proposing will have a drop off area which is needed for the athletic center. The traffic circulation of the parking lot will flow much better and the College's Long-Term Master Plan will have a walkway that will start at the College's Service Building on West Lorain Street and will connect with the tennis courts and eventually to the baseball fields to the north. He noted that a portion of that walkway will travel through the parking lot and it is depicted on the plans that were submitted.

Neff indicated that there will be three (3) bioswales installed in the parking lot. He noted that all of the aisle widths will be designed to comply with the Code requirements and they can simply widen the undersized aisle noted by staff. Neff advised that the bioretention areas will be landscaped.

Varelmann stated that the existing light poles in this parking lot will be used, however, they propose to replace the heads of those fixtures with full cut-off LED fixtures. He indicated that the dumpster will be enclosed with the same type of wood fence enclosure that has been used all over the College's campus and that there are four (4) bicycle racks proposed that would be located north of the parking lot near the Alumni Club building.

Stubbs asked what type of surface material would be used for the parking lot? Varelmann indicated that the parking lot would be constructed of asphalt.

Varelmann noted that the bioretention areas are different shapes and sizes. Neff stated that these bioretention areas are low areas that will help to cleanse the storm water before it is released into the storm sewers. He advised that this design meets Ohio EPA standards. Neff indicated that the bioswales will have landscaping that is tolerant to flooding. He stated that there would be various species of grasses used and these plants would also be tolerant to salt. Neff advised that the plantings would be layered within the bioswales to create an environment. He noted that the taller plantings would be installed in the middle of the bioswales and the lower plantings would be installed on the outside edge. Neff stated that they would be using trees, such as River Birch and Sunset Maples in the bioswales as well. He noted that the bioswale plantings would be easy to maintain and the bioswale design meets all of the storm water requirements.

Crowley asked what the OEPA's requirements are for capture storm water run-off for a parking lot. Neff stated that the EPA requires twenty percent (20%) of the storm water to be captured and the system that they are proposing will exceed that amount and will actually capture about thirty-eight percent (38%). He noted that this is the storm water capture rate for a reconfigured parking lot, not a new parking lot. Stubbs asked what the requirements would be if this was a

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new parking lot? Neff indicated that it would be a balance of what is there and a twenty percent (20%) reduction in impervious surface along with bioretention areas. He noted that the College is committed to addressing storm water issues for the stadium. Neff advised that the new stadium will have underground storm water storage and the College has found blockages in the storm sewer in this area and they will be addressing that issue. He indicated that those improvements will help the neighborhood to the west with some of the storm water problems that they have been experiencing in the past.

Mavrigh advised that if the College used a pervious surface for the parking lot, the bioretention basins would not be needed in the parking lot. Neff indicated that a pervious parking lot would need to be twenty-four inches (24") to thirty-eight inches (38") deep and this would be very expensive. He noted that in the past, the EPA would not allow pervious surfaced parking lots to be installed without bioswales, however, that requirement was recently changed in 2013. Varelmann advised that pervious pavement would be twice as costly as the asphalt surface.

Crowley asked how much storm water would be filtered by the bioswales? Neff advised that around one-half of the storm water would be filtered. He noted that they are trying to balance parking needs with the need for storm water management.

Crowley asked if there would be any landscape plantings in the interior of the parking lot? Neff advised that there would be on the edge of the parking lot, in the bioswales and the along the walkway in the middle of the parking lot? Varelmann stated that the City required marked parking rows and this will accomplish that. He further indicated that the College has reduced the number of seats in the new stadium by 1,000, however, the existing parking is not compliant with the Code.

Mavrigh asked about the plant materials that are being proposed for this project. Crowley advised that the OEPA has recommended all of these species for this particular application. Neff stated that these plants are similar to what they have been using all over the College's campus and have been found to be very hardy. He indicated that these plants are native to this area.

Varelmann explained that the lighting for the parking lot would consist of the current poles and the existing heads would be replaced by LED lighting that is if the latest technology. He indicated that these types of fixtures were used in the Grey Gables parking lot and they have used them for retrofitting other parking lots on campus. Varelmann stated that the light fixtures would be full cut-off and with LED lighting, there would be no light spillage onto neighboring properties. He reiterated that the dumpster enclosure by Phillips Gym would be the same type of board on board enclosure that is used all over the College's campus.

Varelmann stated that the proposed bicycle rack shelters would be the modular covered racks that have been used in many locations on campus. He noted that these shelters were designed with input of students, they have been well received and they have proven to be very durable. Varelmann indicated that the exact location of the bicycle shelters may need to be adjusted if

Oberlin High School football games are played at the College's stadium because the area where the bicycle shelters are to be located may need to be used in the future for overflow parking.

Stubbs advised that he likes the design of the bioswales in the parking lot. Mavrigh stated that she had recently observed solar panels powering lighting in a parking lot in Ithaca, New York and asked if the College would consider this for its parking lot(s)? Varelmann indicated that the College has no plans at this time to use solar panels to power parking lot lighting. Neff advised that LED lights only use about ten percent (10%) of the power of regular lighting. Varelmann stated that the use of the solar panels in New York may have been an experiment and indicated that there would be an issue with the need for storage of solar energy to power parking lot lighting. Stubbs agreed. He then asked if the existing light poles and new light fixture heads would be the same color? Varelmann advised that they would be painted to match.

Stubbs made a motion to approve the parking lot reconfiguration, bicycle shelters, lighting, landscaping, etc. as presented. Mavrigh seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Discussion – Mobile Vending Operations.

Boyle indicated that the issue of mobile food vending has been discussed by the Commission a number of times in the past. He stated that these operations have increased considerably in the past few years throughout the country and particularly in urbanized areas such as larger cities. In the past, mobile food vending often constituted ice cream trucks, hot dog carts, and lunch or sandwich trucks at large-scale construction or industrial locations. It still includes those types of vending operations but has expanded to larger scale trucks that may include high-tech cooking equipment.

Boyle advised that the City presently accommodates mobile food vending operations at City or community events such as Vintage Days and the Outdoor Basketball Festival, etc. through "Special Event Permits." The Zoning Code also potentially provides for mobile food vendors associated with a permitted use to operate in a commercial zoning district if a Conditional Use Permit is granted by the Planning Commission.

Boyle noted that the City received a "preliminary" inquiry in 2013 related to the proposed operation of a mobile food vending trailer and that the Planning Commission had been previously advised of that request, and has directed staff to further research such operations. Given that direction, staff has conducted research related to mobile food vending uses which research has also led to the preparation of this report outlining issues related to the same and a suggested policy framework.

Boyle stated that the Planning Commission has also raised questions concerning other types of mobile businesses or vendors, and has asked staff to also consider policy implications related to such operations. He noted that mobile business operations have also occurred in other communities and may include barber shops, bookstores, shoe stores, etc. Such operations may not offer community benefits in the same manner that mobile food vending operations may. An

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area of real concern with mobile business operations is their potential to negatively impact established “bricks and mortar businesses.”

Crowley asked if ice cream trucks were permitted in the City currently? Boyle advised that ice cream trucks need to apply to the Police Department as there are background checks that the Police need to conduct regarding the individual(s) operating these trucks.

Crowley asked if mobile food vendors are currently permitted? Boyle stated that the City has allowed mobile food vendors to operate during special City-wide events but a Special Event Permit Application needs to be completed and reviewed by City departments and any food vendors must have a Health Department Permit too. He advised that any proposed new regulations would be for mobile food vendors outside of these special events.

Crowley stated that his daughter’s class at Oberlin High School has been working with College students to explore the possibility of having a food trailer operation in the parking lot by Ace Hardware and CVS. He noted that this proposed operation would be stationary as it would remain in that parking lot. Boyle indicated that this type of operation may be able to be accommodated by a Conditional Use Permit as “outside sales” since it would not be moveable. He noted that most “mobile” food trucks operate in the City’s right-of-way. Stubbs stated that he feels that the Commission should be ready to take the hard line and only allow mobile food operations and not mobile businesses. Boyle agreed that allowing all types of mobile businesses could create unfair competition for the existing bricks and mortar businesses. He noted that there was a request a few years ago to operate a mobile bookstore in the public right-of-way near Ben Franklin/Mind Fair. Mavrich asked if a private property owner could lease space to a mobile business on its own property and obtain a Conditional Use Permit to operate? Boyle indicated that potentially that could be done and that any negative impacts such as amplified music, hours/days of operation, trash, etc. could be addressed in the Conditional Use Permit.

Boyle advised that staff considered draft regulations and suggested that may be supplemental regulations would need to be developed and added to the general Conditional Use Permit regulations like the special regulations that have been created for Farmers’ Markets, bed and breakfast inns, etc. He stated that some of the regulations would be contained in the Zoning Code and others for these operations would be contained in a Business Regulations chapter of the Code.

The Commission directed staff to continue its research and to develop draft regulations for mobile food vendors. The Commission also indicated that it did not support the concept of permitting mobile businesses.

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5. Application for Amendment to Approved Planned Development District Plan and Site Plan Approval, Proposed Building Exterior Building Changes/Garage Doors on Carports, etc., Kendal at Oberlin, 600 Kendal Drive.

Boyle advised that this application seeks the approval of an amendment to the Final Development Plan for Kendal at Oberlin in order to accommodate the proposed conversion of carports to garages, the installation of man doors, exterior lighting, roof ridge vents, etc.

Boyle indicated that the applicant proposes to convert carports found in twenty (20) detached structures to enclosed garages which calls for the installation of individual garage doors at each carport space, the installation of man doors at the "side" or "end" elevations of the carport structures. Also, this project would include the replacement of siding around the new man doors, installation of new roof ridge vents on all structures, installation of exterior lighting fixtures on the "front" and "side" elevations of the carport structures, etc.

Boyle stated that the proposed change of carport parking spaces to enclosed garage parking is seen as an improvement to the development that will address the needs of residents by providing some protected parking areas. He noted that the proposed building renovations or alterations to the carport structures will not change the number of approved parking spaces within this Planned Development. Boyle also advised that the materials and colors to be used for this proposed project will be compatible with those of the existing buildings in the Kendal complex.

Boyle indicated that the City departments have no objections to this proposal subject to compliance with requirements and that the Design Review Subcommittee considered this application at its meeting on May 7, 2014 and unanimously moved to recommend its approval to the Planning Commission as submitted.

Stubbs stated that his only concern was to ensure that the colors/materials matched or complemented the existing buildings. Boyle stated that the applicant has indicated that they do intend to match colors/materials as closely as possible.

Mavrich made a motion to determine that the requested amendment to Kendal's Final Development Plan is substantially in conformance with the form, nature and intent of the approved Development Plan for Kendal, to approve this requested amendment, and to accept the recommendation of the Design Review Subcommittee and to approve the site plan application as submitted. Stubbs seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Other Business.

Boyle advised that it anticipates receipt of additional plans, etc. for the Gateway Hotel project within the next week, and suggested that the Commission's next meeting be scheduled for May 28, 2014 to accommodate the review of any such submittal. The Commission agreed to meet on that date.

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Boyle also noted that a report will be provided in the near future on the Design Review function as a follow-up to the Commission's past discussion on that subject.

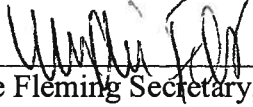
Boyle also indicated that it is preparing a Commission orientation report to assist new members in the future with understanding the role, function, etc. of the Commission. The Commission thought that such a report and outline would be useful for new members.

7. Adjournment.

There being no further business at this time, Mavrich made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Stubbs seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.



Peter Crowley, Chair, Oberlin Planning Commission



Wendie Fleming Secretary, Oberlin Planning Commission

