

October 10, 2017

Mr. Roger Friedmann – Chairman
Mr. Rich Barrick – Vice-Chairman
Mr. Tom Kronenberger – Member
Ms. Anne Flanagan – Member
Mr. Bill Mees – Secretary
Mr. Steve Roos – Alternate

Item 1. – Meeting called to Order

Mr. Friedmann called the regular meeting of the Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2017.

Item 2. – Roll Call of the Board

Ms. Flanagan called the roll.

Members Present: Ms. Flanagan, Mr. Friedmann and Mr. Kronenberger

Members Absent: Mr. Mees, Mr. Barrick and Mr. Roos

Staff Present: Harry Holbert

Also Present: Attorney Rob Butler

Item 3. – Approval of Minutes

Mr. Friedmann suggested continuing approval of the minutes until the next Zoning Commission meeting when more members would be present to approve them.

Item 4. – New Business

2017-10MA

Joe Linz

8480 New England Court

Major Adjustment to a PUD

Mr. Holbert presented the case and case history in a Power Point presentation. Mr. Holbert explained the applicant is requesting a variance to construct an addition to a single family dwelling in the New England Court Condominium development. He pointed out the adjacent zoning districts. He showed photographs of the existing conditions noting the location of the proposed addition. He noted the proposed setbacks for the addition and showed the elevation and architectural plans for the addition.

The Board asked questions of Mr. Holbert.

Mr. Kronenberger asked for clarification on the current setbacks.

Mr. Holbert explained noting they are currently zero lot lines and discussed the side setback requirements for residential districts and patio dwellings.

Mr. Friedmann asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Mr. Joe Linz, of 8480 New England Court, Cincinnati, OH 45236, addressed the Board. Mr. Linz stated he had done research and adhered to the ten foot setback requirement for zero lot line

dwellings when planning for the addition. He pointed out he had obtained unanimous approval from the New England Court Condominium Home Owners' Association for the proposed addition. He submitted the HOA approval documents to the Board for the record, noting all 26 homeowners in the HOA had approved of the proposed addition.

Mr. Linz said once he knew the addition would have to be approved as a major adjustment to a PUD he had the property surveyed and submitted the required paperwork.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anyone present from the public who wished to comment on the case.

The applicant's next door neighbor, Mr. Tom Donnellon, of 8470 New England Court, Sycamore Township, OH 45236, addressed the Board In support of Mr. Linz's request.

There was some discussion regarding the record of the condominium Board's vote of approval for the proposed addition which would be emailed to Mr. Holbert for the record.

Mr. Friedmann closed the floor to comments from the public and the Board discussed the issues brought before them.

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion.

Mr. Kronenberger made a motion to consider Case 2017-10MA as submitted.

Ms. Flanagan seconded.

Ms. Flanagan called roll.

Mr. Kronenberger – AYE
Mr. Friedmann - AYE
Ms. Flanagan – AYE

Mr. Holbert said the case will be heard by the Board of Trustees at a date and time to be determined.

Item 5. – Old Business

2017-09Z

Anthony Ravagnani
8109 Reading Road
Zone change

Mr. Holbert presented the case and case history in a Power Point presentation. Mr. Holbert advised the Board that 8109 Reading Road is the correct address, noting the address was wrong on the architectural plans. He said the request is for a zone change from "E" Retail District to "DD" Planned Multi Family Residential District. He said the proposal includes renovation of the former Drake Motel building into 67 separate housing units for use as apartments/halfway house for veterans. The apartments would be available to anyone who meets the requirements as put forth by the owner/management group, Department of Justice, Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Fair Housing Act.

Mr. Holbert pointed out that after listening to the applicant regarding how the developers plan to help people with this project and reviewing the Zoning Resolution, staff feels that it falls under the

definition of a halfway house. He then described the adjacent zoning districts and properties as well as the site characteristics. Mr. Holbert showed photos of the existing conditions on the property in question and of surrounding properties. He noted the building in question has been blighted for some time. He described the Township's efforts to attempt to get the building condemned and torn down.

Mr. Holbert explained staff's reasoning in putting the request before the Board as a zone change to "DD" Multi Family Residential District as opposed to the S-PUD process for an institutional use such as a halfway house. Mr. Holbert then showed the elevation drawings, site plan showing landscaping and parking plan submitted by the applicant. He said the apartments would have kitchenettes. He pointed out the parking requirements for both apartments and a halfway house. He noted the parking plan is short spaces for both uses. Mr. Holbert pointed out the proposed sign and the dumpster which he said is properly screened but is located in the front yard.

The Board asked questions of Mr. Holbert.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the applicant's intent was for long or shorter term residency. She asked if the development would be a half-way house or apartments.

Mr. Holbert answered based on conversations with the applicant the intent would be to offer training and other assistance to help veterans get back on their feet. He would defer to the applicant for further details.

Mr. Friedmann asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

Mr. Doug Pelfrey, of 812 Russell St., Covington, KY 41011, addressed the Board. Mr. Pelfrey said he is one of the owners of the group proposing to purchase the property in order to develop it into the apartments for veterans. He noted the attorney for the current owner and others who were present to answer questions.

Mr. Pelfrey said he has met with some of the people who had been in opposition to the project to address some of their concerns.

Mr. Pelfrey said in no way is their intent to use the property for a half-way house noting there would be no drug or alcohol rehab, no treatment for mental or emotional problems nor any parolees or former prisoners. He stated the intended use is housing for handicapped veterans with physical disabilities, noting there is a tremendous need for this type of housing.

Mr. Pelfrey said they have a contract to purchase this property and the former Carousel property and a verbal agreement to purchase the office building next door. He then cited some examples of the work his company has done redeveloping blighted properties.

Ms. Flanagan asked for details on how the hotel rooms would be converted to apartments.

Mr. Pelfrey explained.

Ms. Flanagan commented it seemed like it would be difficult to transform a transitory space such as a hotel room to something roomy enough to accommodate a wheelchair. She asked if the property next door was already owned by the applicants.

Mr. Pelfrey answered no stating he has a verbal agreement to purchase it with a contract set to be prepared this week for the purchase of that property.

Ms. Flanagan asked about the intended use for that property and if there was a plan to use it for additional parking for the property in question.

Mr. Pelfrey said it would remain an office use noting there may be an easement to the back part of the property.

Mr. Kronenberger asked if the applicant had seen the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission's recommended conditions.

Mr. Pelfrey said he did not have any problems with those conditions.

Mr. Friedmann asked how many parking spaces would be available.

Mr. Pelfrey said he did not know the exact number.

Mr. Friedmann asked if he had considered a smaller number of apartments to allow for more space to meet ADA requirements.

Mr. Pelfrey said it will be ADA compliant with 67 units.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone else present with the applicant wished to comment.

Mr. Joe Spade, the contractor, of 3591 California Road, Okeana, OH 45053 addressed the Board. Mr. Spade explained the units are more efficiencies than standard apartment units intended for one individual. He said the structural components of the building had been checked by a structural engineer and are in good shape.

Mr. Kronenberger asked Mr. Spade what he meant when he said he's done this before.

Mr. Spade said he has worked with Mr. Pelfrey to turn similar type buildings into efficiency apartments per code. He said this particular building will have every unit 100% ADA compliant.

Mr. Friedmann asked what kitchen appliances would be like.

Mr. Spade said the kitchenettes will have compact appliances including a refrigerator, microwave and stove.

Mr. Friedmann asked the average size of the units.

Mr. Spade answered 240 to 250 square feet with some larger units at the ends.

Mr. Tony Ravagnani, of 1641 Pinebluff Lane, Cincinnati, Oh 45255 addressed the Board in regards to the parking.

Mr. Friedmann stated the current plan has 45 parking spaces which is not compliant with zoning requirements.

Mr. Ravagnani said that is correct because the 14 additional spaces he referred to are contingent upon the purchase of the adjacent property. He then addressed some of the other concerns brought up by staff.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anyone present from the public who wished to comment on the case.

Ms. Carol Smith, President of the Roselawn Community Council, of 1825 Sunnybrook Drive, Cincinnati, OH addressed the Board in opposition of the project. Ms. Smith was concerned about the impact on the neighborhood. She expressed concerns about the small size of the units, management of the building and lack of services to address the long term needs of the occupants. She noted Roselawn has been working with Sycamore Township and Hamilton County trying to do something to redevelop the Reading Road corridor as a business district.

Ms. Merle Green Burse, of 7629 Greenland Place, Cincinnati, OH 45237, addressed the Board in opposition of the project expressing the same concerns as Ms. Smith. She also asked about the applicant's intentions for the Carousel property.

Ms. Kimberly O'Bryant, of 7914 Glen Orchard Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45237, addressed the Board in opposition to the project stating she is concerned if this idea fails, the building may return to use as a hotel with similar problems to those that were present when the Drake Motel was in operation.

Mr. Scot Lahrmer, Village Manager of Amberley Village, 7149 Ridge Road, Amberley Village OH 45237, addressed the Board. Mr. Lahrmer stated said the Village had not taken an official position on the rezone but noted the Village had taken an interest in the Reading Road corridor study because businesses in the Village had complained about the area. Mr. Lahrmer said while the Village has not taken an official position on the proposed rezone, it does not appear to fit with the corridor study results stating business as the recommended land use. He informed the Board the Port Authority of greater Cincinnati had purchased and invested a lot of money to improve the Gibson Greeting Card property. He said he believes this will be a catalyst that will help spur business interest along the Reading Road corridor as well. Mr. Lahrmer encouraged the Board to consider if this is the kind of development the Township would like to see for this property.

Ms. Elida Kamine, Amberley Village Council Member, of 3245 N. Whitetree Circle, Cincinnati, OH 45236, addressed the Board reiterating what Mr. Lahrmer had said about the proposed use not meeting the findings of the corridor study.

Mr. Pelfrey addressed the concerns of the public. He stated that Reverend Lynch of Roselawn has been a major supporter of the project. He noted they would not be providing services for the residents, those would come from outside agencies. Mr. Pelfrey said there would be property management on site. He said they are still looking at options for the Carousel property noting that is not the purpose of the hearing and he would be willing to meet with those concerned about that property when the time comes.

Mr. Frank O'Bryant, of 7914 Glen Orchard Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45237, addressed the Board in opposition to the project stating this is not a good use for the property and noting that the element that left the Drake has come into Roselawn and he does not want that to happen again.

Ms. Smith spoke up and said that reverend Lynch does not support it.

Mr. Friedmann closed the floor to comments from the public and the Board discussed the issues brought before them.

Mr. Kronenberger asked Mr. Holbert about the reading Road Corridor Study/Revival Plan.

Mr. Holbert said the study has been going on for about a year and a half.

Mr. Kronenberger asked if it had been concluded.

Mr. Holbert said many different municipalities have been involved in trying to come up into how to revive this area. He said this conversation was initiated by Hamilton County but then the meetings just stopped. He noted he has reached out to the County with no response. He noted Hamilton County Regional Planning approved this rezone with a unanimous vote.

Mr. Kronenberger asked what the land use plan is for this property.

Mr. Holbert answered retail. He said this has been a distressed property for some time noting under the direction of the Board of Trustees, the Township and these other municipalities want to improve the area.

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion.

Ms. Flanagan made a motion to consider Case 2017-09Z as submitted.

Mr. Kronenberger seconded.

Mr. Kronenberger said he is concerned about the lack of parking but also would like to see less units and more compliance with the zoning requirements. He expressed concern about going against the Land Use Plan considering the fact that there are a lot of parties working to try to create a more comprehensive plan for the area.

Ms. Flanagan said that just because the property has been a problem property for a while, doesn't mean it doesn't have the potential to be developed in such a way to benefit the community. She said she thinks this is going backward and it is time to move forward with the redevelopment of the area.

Ms. Flanagan also expressed concern about the small size of the units and the lack of parking. She commented that Hamilton County Regional Planning may have let emotion influence their decision because the idea of helping disabled veterans is something we all want but she is not convinced this will actually help them. She said some may think because the property is in such bad shape it is better to approve this plan than do nothing, however, it is better to wait for a better plan than to sacrifice the potential the Reading Road corridor may have.

Mr. Friedmann agreed with the comments made by the other Board members. He applauded Mr. Pelfrey with the attempt to provide veteran housing however, he is trying to do too much with too little space.

Ms. Flanagan called roll.

Mr. Kronenberger – NEA

Mr. Friedmann – NEA

Ms. Flanagan – NEA

Mr. Holbert said the case will be heard by the Board of Trustees at a date and time to be determined.

