

**Meeting Minutes
Sycamore Township Zoning Commission
Township Administration Building
8540 Kenwood Road
Monday, March 8, 2021
Remote Meeting-6:00 p.m.**

March 8, 2021

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

Item 1. – Meeting called to Order

Mr. Friedmann called the regular meeting of the Zoning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 8, 2021.

Item 2. – Roll Call of the Board

Mr. Mees called the roll.

Members Present: Ms. Flanagan, Mr. Swanson, Mr. Barrick, Mr. Friedmann, Mr. Roos, and Mr. Mees

Staff Present: Skylor Miller, Kevin Clark, and Jessica Daves

Item 4. – Approval of Meeting Minutes

There was discussion about the draft meeting minutes from the December 14, 2020 and errors on the transcript.

The December 14, 2020 meeting minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

Item 3.-Electronic Signature

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion to authorize electronic signatures.

Mr. Mees made a motion to authorize electronic signatures, seconded by Ms. Flanagan.

All voted Aye.

Mr. Friedman asked if any apposed.

No response.

Item 5.-Old Business

2019-20MA (Continued to TBD)
Molly Ironmonger
4777 East Galbraith Road
Major Adjustment to a PUD

Item 6.-New Business

2021-02MA

Kugler Mill Square LLC

8495 Vorhees Lane (The Oaks of Kenwood)

Major Adjustment to a PUD

Mr. Miller presented the case in a PowerPoint.

Mr. Miller said this is case number 2021-02MA. The applicant is Kugler Mill Square LLC for the Oaks of Kenwood. He said this is a multifamily development. This is a major adjustment to a PUD. There has been an S-PUD on this site that was approved back in 1967. The site has been operating under that original PUD since that time with no modifications needed to the PUD itself. It is 7.0476 acres with frontage on Vorhees Lane and Beach Avenue. The applicant is requesting a major adjustment to this S-PUD to improve and expand an existing multifamily development from 68 units to 118 in this proposal.

Mr. Miller discussed the existing site, the zoning of the surrounding properties, the proposed plan, and the increasing density of the property.

Mr. Miller said there are five existing multifamily 2 and 2 1/2 story units that are being kept. There is a townhouse building that is going to be razed and with this proposed expansion they are getting five additional buildings. He said this is significantly increasing the density of this property, they are going from the current 9.36 dwelling units per acre up to 16.74.

Mr. Miller discussed the proposed principal structures are going to be setback a minimum of 40 feet from all property lines, the applicant providing 232 parking spaces, two amenity areas and trash encloser areas.

Mr. Miller discussed the proposed landscaping plans and elevations of the proposed buildings.

Mr. Miller said there is no issue with height provisions.

Mr. Miller discussed outside agency comments from Greater Cincinnati Water Works concerns about the additional water service compacity and the fire department.

Mr. Miller said there is currently a drive that extends out to Vorhees, but it is gated. They are proposing to maintain a gated access for emergency access only and it is certainly something the fire department has indicated they want to keep.

Mr. Miller discussed the following staff recommendation:

1. Applicant shall prepare and submit a photometric lighting plan for all exterior building and parking lot lights indicating compliance with the Sycamore Township Zoning Resolution in advance of Board of Trustee review.
2. Applicant shall prepare and submit a response to comment from the Greater Cincinnati Water Works and Sycamore Township Fire Department in advance of Board of Trustee review.
3. The Applicant proposes a density of 16.74 DU/A. The increase in density must be approved by the Board of Trustees.
4. Development shall be subject to Section 10-5 Dumpster and Trash Handling Areas for Non-Single-Family Districts of the Sycamore Township Zoning Resolution, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Friedman asked if any members of the commission had any questions for Mr. Miller.

Mr. Mees asked Mr. Miller about the access to Vorhees and the fire departments desire to keep that open. Would that mean the fence would need to remain open all the time or is it a crash fence for emergencies access.

Mr. Miller answered having it gated and lock is perfectly fine. They will require a Knox Box be accessible to them so they can unlock the gate.

Mr. Roos asked Mr. Miller if it was already set up that way.

Mr. Miller answered that he has not looked at the gate.

Mr. Mees asked if there was any signage proposed.

Mr. Miller answered there was not a new sign plan attached to this plan.

Alex Betsch, Bayer Becker, 1404 Race Street, Suite 204 Cincinnati, OH 45202, addressed the board.

Mr. Betsch said he does not believe they are proposing any new signage for this submittal. He said he thinks the existing signage will stay in place.

Mr. Kirk Koppenhoefer addressed the board.

Mr. Koppenhoefer said no additional signage is planned.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone else had questions for Mr. Miller.

Mr. Roos asked Mr. Miller if MSD had comments.

Mr. Miller said we have not received comments from MSD.

There was discussion about the existing pool being removed and storm water being reviewed by Hamilton County.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone was there for the applicant if they would state their name and affiliation with the applicant and any additional comments to make.

Mr. Betsch with Bayer Becker said he is representing the client on this project doing the planning and civil engineering.

Mr. Koppenhoefer said they just purchased the property about a year ago. This expansion project isn't necessarily something they are considering in order to upgrade the project in order to flip it or anything like that.

Mr. Koppenhoefer said what they are really aiming to do this upgrade the property that has significant potential and increase the supply of competitively priced rental units. He said since they purchased the property last year, they have made a lot of upgrades already. They have also been able to upgrade some units and frankly they were in desperate need of it.

Mr. Friedmann asked Mr. Betsch about the staff comments on the staff report if the applicant had any issue with any of the items that are set forth.
Mr. Betsch answered no.

Mr. Betsch discussed the staff comments on the staff report.

There was discussion about a ruminant parcel on the eastside of the development, the future plan for that parcel and was that parcel taken into account for the total acreage.

Mr. Barrick said the normal "DD" district would allow up to 14.5 units which is a rather dense number. He said they are proposing to go above that, and he is curious why and if so what are they doing to offset the additional density as far as any other setbacks, additional landscaping or something that makes higher density more acceptable for the neighborhood.

Mr. Betsch said as they were looking at the site it was laid out very inefficiently, so they wanted to make sure it was being utilized fully. He said if you look at the plan there is still a lot of greenspace the impervious surface ratio is around 44 or 45 percent. They wanted to keep that number down to make sure the impact isn't felt too much. He said they wanted to make sure that they maintained that 40-foot perimeter setback and provide a nice landscape plan that would enhance the current landscape elements that are on the site. One thing they do want to do as they progress further into the process is take a closer look at the existing vegetation and figure out how they can incorporate that as much as possible.

Ms. Flanagan asked why it ended up at the density that it is at.

Mr. Koppenhoefer answered they were trying to use the space more efficiently.

Mr. Friedmann opened up public comments.

Mr. Dominguez, 4315 Williams Avenue, Sycamore Township, OH 45236, addressed the board.

Mr. Dominguez discussed concerns about the lighting and the water runoff behind the parking area.

Mr. Betsch said in terms of the runoff he thinks the site will drain to the northwestern corner of the site and then there will be an outlet there. He said he thinks with the improvements to the site the drainage will also improve with that. He said everything should drain to the west and to the proposed basin and there is an existing outlet that would release the water to the west.

Mr. Betsch said in terms of the lighting they will prepare a photometric plan.

Mr. Koppenhoefer discussed being the least disruptive as possible with the lighting and they can work with the Township and community to try to figure out the best way to attack that.

Mr. Dominguez said he currently has an 8-foot fence on his property, and he knows that over time when trees or bushes start to grow, they will start to push on his fence. He asked what is the plan for that.

Mr. Kenneth Morgann, property manager of the existing location, addressed the board.

Mr. Morgann answered those trees he believes would be pulled far away enough from your current trees so it shouldn't have any discrepancy or issue with your current landscaping and current fence.

Mr. Miller discussed the zoning resolution concerning density.

Ms. Judy Giese, 8481 Vorhees lane, Sycamore Township, OH 45236, address the board.

Ms. Giese discussed her concerns about water runoff, noise, sewer issues and the smell.

Mr. Betsch said he can assure her the sanitary sewers will be designed per the guidelines and they have to go through a review process. He said they will make sure as a part of that process and the approval process that everything is sized properly and there won't be any issues there.

There was discussion about the current remodeling at the site, the dumpsters picked up, the address and noise level.

Mr. Dominguez asked about the water run off next to the basin.

Mr. Betsch said he thinks most water issues should be improved with the improvements that happen to the site. The basin should make water run off better for the residents that are adjacent to there.

Mr. Dominguez discussed a concern with the proposed plan only having two dumpsters.

Mr. Morgann said there are currently 4 dumpsters on site and those are small dumpsters compared to what he believes will be added.

Mr. Betsch said the goal is to minimize the amount of locations of dumpsters but to increase the amount of dumpster space and to make it more accessible to the community. He said they will be looking at potentially relocating or shifting the dumpster that is to the west.

Ms. Giese asked when they add more units is that going to change their water pressure.

Mr. Betsch answered he does not believe that it should. He said there will be improvement for this type of increase in density.

Mr. Swanson asked if the nature in character and monthly rents of the units being added be consistent with what is there today.

Mr. Koppenhoefer answered the current units in terms of aesthetics are siding and brick kind of facade. He said they are going to stick with that, so it is consistent with what is currently there. In terms of the rental prices, they will be consistent they might be slightly higher than the existing units.

Mr. Barrick said the street address needs to be cleared up.

There was discussion about the property address.

Mr. Roos made a motion to consider Case 2021-02MA which would include the staff comments.

Mr. Mees seconded.

Ms. Flanagan discussed concerns about the density.

Ms. Flanagan said on the whole the project looks very nice and does preserve landscaping and greenspaces. She said as long as the other conditions are met and taken into account, she does not have a problem with it, but she would rather see them keep the density down.

There was continued discussion about density.

Mr. Mees said as he looks at this plan it doesn't feel like to him that is too dense.

Mr. Roos said the sewage situation would be his major concern because they are doubling the size but hopefully MSD will tackle that problem. He said otherwise he has no problem with the plan.

Mr. Roos said any kind of improvement that they can make in that apartment situation would be great because he knows it's been run down for a number of years. He said he is all for this plan.

There was continued discussion about density.

Mr. Barrick discussed his concerns about the proposed density, the layout and positioning of the larger buildings, the proposed parking lot and noise issues.

Mr. Barrick said he does not object to additional units he would just like to be smart about how they are planned and where they go. He is not sure he can see where it is justified going above 14.5. He said he would prefer to see no more than two story units around the perimeter where they are coming up closer to existing homes.

Mr. Barrick said overall he is not in favor of the plan as it is presented.

Mr. Friedmann said the concept of the plan is a good improvement to the property, but he does agree with Mr. Barrick.

There was continued discussion about the density and unit numbers.

Mr. Betsch discussed the reason for the proposed layout.

Mr. Swanson discussed infrastructure capacity increases and a fence or barrier along the neighbor property.

Mr. Koppenhoefer said they are committed to the area. He said they would work with the existing neighbors to limit any kind of disruptions to their lives.

There was continued discussion about proposed density.

There was discussion about the process of the Major Adjustments and the case going before the Trustees.

Mr. Mees proposed that they would amend the motion so that item three of the recommended conditions is that it be 14.5 dwelling units per acre.

Mr. Roos said that is fine with him.

There was discussion about changing condition number 3 from remain to reduce.

Mr. Barrick said he thinks there are enough issues here that he is hesitant to give any kind of approval. He said he would like to see what changes they are proposing to alleviate some of the noise and light problems along the rear lot lines of those single-family homes.

There was discussion about lights and noise.

Mr. Miller explained the Zoning Commission had the ability to approve, approve with conditions, deny, or table until an opportunity is presented for the commission to review the documents.

Mr. Koppenhoefer requested to table Case 2021-02MA to the next meeting.

Mr. Friedmann asked the Zoning Commission if there were any objections to tabling Case 2021-02MA to the next meeting.

All responded no.

Mr. Friedmann tabled Case 2021-02MA to the next meeting.

Item 7. – Trustees Report

Mr. Miller discussed the Montgomery Road properties owned by the Township being considered for potential development.

There was discussion about the Case 2020-07Z going before the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Miller discussed taking a final draft of Land Use Plan to the steering committee and the text amendments.

Mr. Miller discussed the new maintenance and storage facility building at 8540 Kenwood.

Item 8.-Date of next meeting

Monday, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 9. –Scheduled Public Hearings and Miscellaneous business

Mr. Miller discussed getting a resolution on the Jewish Hospital proposal and the text amendment.

Item 10. – Adjournment

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Mees moved to adjourn.

Mr. Barrick seconded.

All voted AYE.

Meeting adjourned 7:38 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by: Jessica Daves

Planning & Zoning Assistant