

**Meeting Minutes  
Sycamore Township Zoning Commission  
Township Administration Building  
8540 Kenwood Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45236  
Monday, July 27, 2021  
6:00 p.m.**

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

**Item 1. – Meeting called to Order**

Mr. Barrick called the regular meeting of the Zoning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 27, 2021.

**Item 2. – Roll Call of the Board**

Mr. Mees called the roll.

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

**Members Absent:** Mr. Friedmann and Mr. Roos

**Staff Present:** Skylor Miller, Kevin Clark, and Angela Zammert

Mr. Barrick mentioned we will address the approval of minutes later on in the meeting.

**Item 3. – New Business**

Mr. Barrick introduced Case # 2021-10P1

Mr. Miller continued to introduce Case # 2021-10P1 and displayed a PowerPoint presentation on large screen.

Sherwood Forest Properties, LLC  
AKA: Andrew Harvey  
11500 Goldcoast Drive  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Mr. Miller explained Sherwood Forest Properties, LLC is a light industrial manufacturing warehouse that currently produces HVAC units and would like to expand their existing building due to expansion in operation. Mr. Miller displayed an aerial view of the existing building. He explained South of the building is Interstate 71/275 interchange. He also mentioned the surrounding properties are all light industrial.

5:36

Mr. Miller explained the South of the building is an existing parking lot where the applicant is requesting to expand an approximate 12,000 sq. ft. addition. The addition would be 23.6' feet taller than the existing building. There will be a driveway to the West and East allowing access to the new addition. He further commented on an existing detention area that may need to be refined as part of this plan.

Mr. Miller shared an elevation plan of the West, South, and East side of the new addition; The building facing West has a driveway going to an overhead door. The South side faces a heavily wooded property line and the interchange. Lastly, the third building faces East with another driveway going to an overhead door. He shared a photometric plan displaying the brightness at the property lines. Based on the location Mr. Miller had no concerns. 7:25

A current picture of the rear parking lot was displayed showing where demo is expected. Mr. Miller further mentioned based on conversations with the operator of the facility the mechanical equipment located in the rear parking lot will be moved to the West side of the building. All mechanical equipment is required to be screened. A current picture was displayed of heavily wooded trees and vegetation located on the South side of the property next to the highway. Also, the equipment seen in the picture in the rear parking lot is part of another project and is a temporary storage area. 8:18

A picture of the West side of the building showing a pad that will be required to be screened to meet current code. A current picture was displayed of the West side of the property showing a dumpster. He stated there are no permanent outside dumpster areas. The dumpster in the picture is for internal use for one of the bays. They move the dumpster out on Tuesdays to be picked up by Rumpke therefore, no block structure is required. He displayed a current picture of the East side of the property facing South showing a line of trees that is heavily wooded. 9:47

He displayed a current picture of the Southeastern property that is a depressed drainage area and per applicant this drainage area will be maintained. Mr. Miller stated based on conversations with applicant there were no formal landscaping plans submitted with this application. He is requiring part of the Zoning Compliance Plan a landscaping plan be submitted. Also, all mechanical equipment will need to be screened. 11:53

Mr. Miller mentioned comments from outside agencies. Based on what the agencies sent back there were no additional comments other than the standard comments from Hamilton County Planning and Development warranting the standard guidelines. Also, the area being disturbed was not large enough to require any additional permitting from Soil & Water Conservation.

Mr. Miller asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Mees asked what you are requiring to be screened.

Mr. Miller stated the mechanical equipment on the property would need to be screened.

Mr. Barrick asked about the process for following screening guidelines. 14:27

Mr. Miller stated the applicant would complete an application and then an inspection would be required to verify the screening was completed.

Mr. Barrick asked the applicant (Andrew Harvey) if he had anything to add.

Mr. Mees asked the applicant what the business does.

Ms. Mary Jo Lutmer stated they manufacture large HVAC equipment for defense contractors.

Mr. Miller asked the applicants to give their name for the record.

Mr. Andrew Harvey (applicant – representing ECU)

Ms. Mary Jo Lutmer (operator for Sherwood Properties, LLC)

Mr. Mees asked if this is an expansion because business is good.

Ms. Lutmer stated they did well through the pandemic and was considered an essential business. She also stated they have several big contracts in the works and will need to eventually add more employees, therefore, will need more space.

Ms. Flanagan asked how many employees are anticipated being added.

16:59

Ms. Lutmer stated just for the one contract they will need to add 13 additional. She mentioned the potential of adding more employees when the government releases contracts at the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the company is a 24-hour operation or just (8) eight.

Ms. Lutmer stated their shifts are (4) four (10) tens. This helps their employees save on gas by eliminating one day of the week since a lot of them live on the West and East side.

Mr. Barrick asked if they continue to keep the retention pond and if they anticipate removing any trees.

Mr. Harvey stated he would speak with the civil engineer regarding the retention pond. He further mentioned they may have to expand it and add volume.

Mr. Barrick asked about going deeper rather than out.

Mr. Harvey stated most likely going deep however, they must account for the elevation.

19:41

Mr. Miller stated since the area is an impervious surface with the parking lot the ISR barely changed. He does not anticipate any significant modifications.

Ms. Lutmer stated there are a few pine trees that are dead, and they plan on replacing them with trees or bushes.

Mr. Barrick entertained a motion for Case # 2021-10P1.

Ms. Flanagan moved to consider Case # 2021-10P1 with a condition that a compliant landscape plan be submitted.

Mr. Mees second the motion.

Mr. Barrick asked the board if there was in discussion.

Mr. Swanson stated he examined the site and noticed how private it was.

21:31

Mr. Mees called the role.

Ms. Flanagan – AYE

Mr. Barrick – AYE

Mr. Swanson – AYE

Mr. Mees – AYE

Mr. Miller stated Case # 2021-10P1 is a PUD1 and the decision of Board of Zoning Commission is final. He also conveyed the approval will be documented and will be sent to all the board members.

**Item 4. – Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Barrick asked about the December 14, 2020, meeting minutes.

Mr. Miller stated the December 14, 2020, meeting minutes were typed shorthand from a hired court reporter, and it is 150 pages. The reason it wasn't approved is due to typographic errors. Per conversations with Mr. Miller and the court reporter she would be happy to make any changes but with it being so long and so many errors it is taking forever. Mr. Miller stated we are working on them and will have them completed hopefully by the next Zoning Commission meeting.

Mr. Miller stated he would like to go ahead and approve the other meeting minutes, so we don't have a back log. He realizes it is taking our minutes out of order.

Mr. Mees asked who requested the court reporter to be present.

Mr. Miller stated it was our request. He wanted it to be well documented in case it went to court. Also, it wasn't just his decision; he spoke with the township's attorney which was recommended to hire a court reporter.

26:58

Mr. Miller stated in the future if we have a court reporter, we will still take regular meeting minutes.

Mr. Barrick made a motion to approve the April 12, 2021, meeting minutes.

Ms. Flanagan second the motion.

All vote AYE

Mr. Barrick stated he was absent for the May 10, 2021, meeting minutes.

Mr. Mees stated he was present for the May 10, 2021, meeting minutes.

Mr. Mees made a motion to approve the May 10, 2021, meeting minutes.

Ms. Swanson second the motion.

All vote AYE

Ms. Flanagan asked what the requirements or standards are for meeting minutes.

29:08

Mr. Miller stated meeting minutes are a generalization and it doesn't have to be she said this, and he said that. As long as the reader can get a general sense of what took place. He also conveyed if there was something you did not say, or it was interpreted incorrectly then we would need to make corrections.

Ms. Flanagan stated she had some notes on the June 2021, meeting minutes and if she should speak with Ms. Zammert regarding any questions.

Mr. Miller stated if we're not going to pass the June 14, 2021, meeting minutes then yes.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the meeting minute pages can be numbered.

Ms. Zammert stated she began putting numbers on the meeting minutes.

Ms. Flanagan asked if we offered the applicant to speak last time on the LASR case.

Mr. Miller stated the applicant from (Case # 2021-05LASR) did not attend the June 14, 2021, Zoning Commission meeting; we gave them the opportunity to be present. They did attend the public hearing from the Trustees meeting.

Ms. Flanagan stated she could not remember if applicant was there, and it wasn't noted in the meeting minutes.

Mr. Miller stated we should note that the applicant from Case # 2021-05LASR was not present.

Mr. Swanson requested the meeting minutes to be available at least a week prior to the next meeting.

31:03

Mr. Miller stated yes, and it will help stop creating a back log in meeting minutes.

Ms. Flanagan noticed the Pledge of Allegiance was on the agenda and was wondering if it was in or out.

Mr. Miller asked if the Board wanted to do the Pledge.

Mr. Barrick stated it was never done before.

Ms. Flanagan stated she has no preference.

Mr. Miller stated the Pledge is done at the Trustees meetings and BZA. It is up to the direction of the Commission if they would like to do the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board decided not to do the Pledge of Allegiance.

32:31

### **Item 5. – Township Report**

Mr. Miller introduced the Land Use Plan and Text Amendments. He explained within a week all Zoning Commission members will receive separate Land Use maps for the Southern, Northern and Western (little area on Reading Road) areas of the Township. The maps will be presented in “raw” format in order to address any changes or ideas the Board may have. We are doing all our GIS in house.

Mr. Miller conveyed if any of the Board members have any questions or concerns on how it is presented or want to speak about a particular property, he would be happy to address those prior to the next meeting. The pages will be included in the Land Use documents and the maps will be separate.

Ms. Flanagan asked if they would be hard copies or online.

Mr. Miller asked the Board what they preferred. He stated they are big documents and planned on emailing them in a pdf file however, if the Board prefers hard copies of the whole document, he can do that.

Mr. Mees ask approximately how many pages.

Mr. Miller stated 90-100 pages; including the “raw” Land Use Map. He can provide it on a 11”x17”.

Mr. Barrick prefers the hard copies.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the new language would be highlighted so they would be aware.

Mr. Miller stated the Comprehensive Plans is a completely new document and it’s an attempt to simplify and streamline the Land Use Plan and allow a little flexibility. The last update in 2008 & 2009 resulted in locking us into some transition zones. What the map will offer is fewer categories; he described the different categories. 38:04

Mr. Barrick asked if there was a model used to create the Land Use Map.

Mr. Miller stated Jacob’s engineering started the Land Use Plan and it was inherited. With the help of the Land Use Steering Committee; Mr. Miller re-worked its design into what it is now. Mr. Miller stated what it comes down to is a 2-fold approach on future development. He continued to explain how the map was implemented and designed. He stated the properties owned by the Township on Montgomery Road are referenced separately because there is a whole different planning study that is going on. 40:40

Mr. Miller asked the Board to review the Land Use maps and the policy. He also mentioned the 2008-2009 Land Use maps were never adopted by the Trustees. They’re in use by practice.

Mr. Swanson asked if there were any zoning changes due to the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Miller stated there’s been a lot of zoning changes since 2009. This is a guideline; its not something that has to be followed. The helps with planning for the future.

Mr. Barrick mentioned the map could be a reference for them and the applicant.

Mr. Mees asked if the comprehensive plan is broader, and the Land Use Plan is just one segment of that and if the comprehensive plan would be incorporated with the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Miller stated they would not be combined. He further explained why some items would be left off the comprehensive plan because the focus needs to be on the Land Use component.

Mr. Barrick asked once they receive the document what is expected.

Mr. Miller stated Dr. Pete Mallow, from the Land Use Steering Committee has volunteered to be present at the next Zoning Commission meeting. Mr. Miller asked the Board to familiarize themselves with the document and then would like to discuss their thoughts at the next meeting. He would also like to take the Boards recommendation to the Trustees.

48:10

Mr. Miller explained how impressed he is with all our Board members; with their professionalism and expertise they bring to the table. The Land Use Steering Committee are made up of people that have professional backgrounds and have brought a lot of expertise to the table. Mr. Miller stated he would like to move forward with the Land Use Plan and the next step is working with the Zoning Commission Board and getting their recommendation for the Board of Trustee

Ms. Flanagan asked if they would receive the documents and review them by August 9, 2021.

Mr. Miller stated he realizes it's a lot to go over but it's a reference documents and if you're not comfortable signing a recommendation on August 9, 2021, we can sit down and have an work session.

50:00

Ms. Flanagan asked if there was another case on the agenda for next meeting,

Mr. Miller stated, yes, it is a LASR and it is fairly small.

Mr. Barrick asked if it was the same case we heard before.

Mr. Miller replied no and then stated the last LASR for Kenwood Tower was approved by the Trustees.

Mr. Swanson asked once the Land Use Plan gets to the Trustees, can they make changes.

Mr. Miller stated yes.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the public is expected to be at the next meeting commenting and speaking.

Mr. Miller stated its a public meeting, and we will advertise accordingly. He further stated that all Land Use Steering Committee meetings were open to the public. Also, he recommends at the next Zoning Meeting after they hear the LASR Case to move from the dais to round table and discuss the Land Use Map and Text Amendment while still being mindful that their a public body and meeting minutes will still be taken. Mr. Miller is requesting their feedback and then reconvene to the dais, and he will then take direction of the meeting.

53:33

Mr. Swanson asked if Mr. Miller was a consult at the Land Use Steering Meetings or just guiding them.

Mr. Miller stated he treated this project as if he was an equal to other Land Use members; he did facilitate the meetings, but they all worked together. They began looking at the policy areas and started going through them one at a time.

Mr. Mees asked since there are 150 pages is there a particular area he recommends starting with.

Mr. Miller suggest reading the overview, then the introduction to get a feel on how the process went on then look at policy areas and last review the land use maps.

Ms. Flanagan asked if there is any information/comments on the website about the land use plan.

Mr. Miller stated no comments from the public.

Ms. Flanagan asked if there are any summaries of the Land Use Steering Committee meeting.

Mr. Miller stated he knew Jessica Daves took minutes.

Ms. Zammert stated she has meeting minutes for one meeting and has not completed the minutes for the last meeting which was on June 21, 2021.

Mr. Mees asked if there is anything in this plan that the public would consider a major change.

Mr. Miller explained areas on the map that has been shifted to mixed use. Which is the transition zone.

Mr. Barrick asked if it changed zone.

Mr. Miller stated no, it does not change their zone. He also stated the member can look at previous Land Use maps and compare. Mr. Miller examined parcel by parcel.

1:01:31

Mr. Barrick asked if there is text that specifies them on changing from residential to mixed use.

Mr. Miller stated yes, he would have a better answer the next meeting, but it also brings up the fact of how to do plan review.

Mr. Mees stated he hopes it would be in the text.

Mr. Swanson asked about the property on Montgomery Road with 22 units and would they have the power to bring the 22 units to a new destination.

Mr. Miller stated no; that was coded as office.

Mr. Mees asked if any adjoining communities weighed in.

Mr. Miller stated not so much however for certain areas it was referenced. For example, Reading Road was referenced the Reading Rd corridor group. There are some documents on it, and he stated he could provide the board with copies. 1:05:55

Mr. Miller stated one issues is the area were in is it's a well-established area surrounding by mature established communities.

Mr. Miller stated the next topic is the Zoning text amendments. The plan was to take the red line document and review it and red line the red line and get something approved through the Zoning Commission and the Trustees. He mentioned that communities should zone based on a comprehensive plan which is part of the Ohio Revised Code. He also stated he took the text amendments to the Land Use Steering Committee for their review.

Mr. Miller expressed that Hamilton County Zoning is creating a unified zoning project for all the communities that work with Hamilton County. Not to say that we will be on board but standardizing language across the board helps developers that work throughout Hamilton County or just people that work with zoning have a major benefit. One of the reasons to update the plan was to get back into the Hamilton County process. The Land Use Steering Committee suggested to wait and work with Hamilton County to provide input and essentially adopt what we need.

Mr. Miller stated the text amendments that he will present to the board have a minimal change to the code. These codes help Mr. Clark and Mr. Miller with the daily zoning issues.

Mr. Barrick asked Mr. Miller if he is aware, it's the same as Sycamore's code.

Mr. Miller stated yes, and it is the 2008 version. It's been revised and there is a lot of legacy issues.

Mr. Mees asked if a lot of other communities are doing the same thing.

Mr. Miller stated yes, and it is not uncommon. He described how you would edit the documents to collaborate with township's code. 1:12:37

Mr. Mees asked once the County updates their text is there a tie-back.

Mr. Miller stated at the point of adoption you diverge. He also created a scenario of the possibility of the County a year later doing an overhaul and then the community is left with the township's code.

Mr. Barrick reiterated what Mr. Miller said about adopting the same basis of code from the County.

Mr. Miller stated Dr. Mallow which is on the planning commission can talk about this too. Basically, the goal of this project is to create somewhat modular framework that provides that resource to all the communities in Hamilton County. He also mentions the standard language can be used throughout the townships.

Mr. Miller mentioned he would like to update the use categories.

Mr. Mees asked about once the plan is adopted will it be touched up every 2-5years.

Mr. Miller stated based on the Ohio Revised Code it requires communities that have adopted their own zoning to do so in compliance with the comprehensive plan. He also stated it's truly been since 2002 since the township has adopted a comprehensive plan. He mentioned once the plan is adopted, he would like to see it updated every 5 years and then lookover it every other year.

Mr. Miller stated the Land Use Plan and Text Amendments will have case #; 2021-11LU and 2021-12T. He wants to get through the Land Use first.

Mr. Miller stated he would like to update the meaning for a PUD1 and PUD2 to reflect a better name. He said maybe through the Hamilton County process we should. He also mentioned what we call a PUD is not a PUD; not legally speaking. The SPUD is the on true PUD. 1:19:55

Mr. Barrick asked if there is anything else.

Mr. Miller stated right now we are inundated with a lot of property violations, which is keeping Kevin Clark busy with property maintenance issues. He also stated he had to go to court over a case which was the sign at 7292 Kenwood Road; Dr. Sohi sign. Last week the sign was removed but the Township was served with a cease & assist and is expected back in court, however the sign is down. 1:21:26

Mr. Mees asked if there has been a decline in maintenance.

Mr. Miller stated we are seeing those property maintenance issues but there are still people building, tearing down homes and rebuilding.

Mr. Barrick asked if there was anything from the Trustees.

Mr. Miller stated no.

**Item 5. – Date of next meeting**

Mr. Barrick stated the next meeting is August 9, 2021. He also asked if there is just the one case.

Mr. Miller confirmed the one case which we should hear first and then we will discuss the Land Use Plan and the Text Amendments.

Mr. Mees made a motion to adjourn

Ms. Flanagan second.

All vote AYE.