

Meeting Minutes
Sycamore Township Zoning Commission
Township Administration Building
8540 Kenwood Road
Monday August 9, 2021
6:00 p.m.

August 9, 2021

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. Friedmann called the regular meeting of the Zoning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 9, 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: Mr. Skylor Miller, Mr. Kevin Clark, and Ms. Angela Zammert

Item 3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion to approve the Monday, June 14, 2021 and Tuesday, July 27, 2021, meeting minutes and asked if anyone had any corrections to the minutes.

Mr. Barrick advised the Board to address the June 14, 2021, meeting minutes first.

Ms. Flanagan made a motion to approve the Monday, June 14, 2021, meeting minutes.

Mr. Roos second the motion.

Mr. Friedmann said all in favor.

All voted AYE.

Mr. Friedmann asked any oppose.

Mr. Friedmann said the motion passes.

Mr. Friedmann asked the Board if there were any corrections for the July 27, 2021, meeting minutes.

Mr. Barrick mentioned some errors on the July 27, 2021 meeting minutes which will be corrected and approved.

Mr. Friedmann asked to approve the July 27, 2021, meeting minutes with the noted corrections.

Mr. Barrick stated yes.

Mr. Friedmann made a motion to approve the July 27, 2021, meeting minutes.

Mr. Mees second the motion

All vote AYE.

Mr. Friedmann stated the June 14, 2021 and the July 27, 2021, meeting minutes are approved with corrections.

Item 4. – Old Business

Mr. Friedmann stated there is no old business to discuss.

Item 5. – New Business

Mr. Friedmann introduced Case # 2021-13LASR

Case:	2021-13LASR
Applicant:	7715 Montgomery Road A, LLC. 7715 Montgomery Road B, LLC.
Location:	7715 Montgomery Road
Request:	LASR – Localized Alternative Sign Regulation

Mr. Miller noted the applicant is not Onsite Retail Group, LLC, in fact it is 7715 Montgomery Road A, LLC & 7715 Montgomery Road B, LLC., location is 7715 Montgomery Road. It is referred to as the Kenwood Medical Office Building, originally built in the 1960's. The property is currently zoned "O" office and located in the SPI Overlay district. Property owners are remodeling/updating the building. The surrounding area: North: "C" Single Family Residential, South: "EE" Planned Retail w/ SPI Overlay, East: "O" Office w/ SPI Overlay, and West: "EE" Planned Retail w/ SPI Overlay. There is no case history on the building and to date all the improvements have been approved administratively as-of-right. They have been consistent with current codes. There have been some new signs put on the new building which have been within code. As the applicant is finishing out the exterior of the building, they are now requesting a LASR to address some of their perceived deficiencies in the signage.

Mr. Miller read the Zoning Resolution 13-12.4 Building Signs: “Any property or business shall be permitted (.5) square foot of building sign surface area for each foot of building frontage facing the public street on which the principal access is located. No more than two (2) signs per building or structure are allowed with the maximum total sign surface area not to exceed 150’ square feet per building or structure.” Mr. Miller described the differences in signage for store fronts vs. office buildings. The building frontage for 7715 Montgomery Road is 87’ feet and on Chetbert Street is 88.5’ feet.

Mr. Miller read Chapter 13-5.2 Height – (b) “Height of Freestanding Signs: Three (3) Freestanding signs in the “O” Office districts are permitted a maximum height of six (6’) feet. One (1) additional foot of height is permitted for every five (5’) feet beyond the required setback up to a maximum sign height of 15’ feet.” He stated the proposed freestanding sign is approximately 7’1” tall.

Mr. Miller read Chapter 13-5.3 Minimum Setback: “All signs shall be a minimum of 10’ feet (5’ feet for directional signs) from the right-of-way, easement of access, or of pavement, whichever is the greater setback, and 5’ feet from all other property lines. A side lot setback adjoining a residential district shall be setback a minimum of 50’ feet from the adjoining residential district. With the exception of directional signs, all signs must be located outside of any site triangle as described in Section 13-3.”

11:44

Mr. Miller the building consists of an updated façade and new brick accent. He displayed a plan of where the signs would be placed. The Antonio Violin sign would be a traditional wall sign above their unit space and in lieu of the multi-unit marque the Kenwood Building sign and Love Sugaring would still be in the center on the southeastern façade despite Love Sugaring’s entrance is to the rear of the building. Mr. Miller stated due to Love Sugaring’s location which is on the north side of the building they would like a sign above their unit. He displayed the freestanding sign that stands an approximately seven (7’) feet tall and three (3) placements for Antonio Violin, Onsite Retail Group, and Love Sugaring. Mr. Miller mentioned, if approved he would provide a better site plan than the current one. He also mentioned Antonio Violin would like to keep their violin graphic located in their unit space front window. Mr. Miller noted this would duplicate signage on their building. He will discuss this later in the meeting.

16:49

Mr. Miller stated his recommendations:

If the Zoning Commission Board is inclined to recommend approval of the LASR request, the following condition(s) should be applied:

1. Freestanding sign shall be placed so as to provide for safe movement of traffic and not impede visibility at the Montgomery Road/Chebert Drive intersection and be located at minimum setbacks.
2. Any future signs at the four (4) approved locations shall have a maximum area prescribed in the applicant’s submittal. (Mr. Miller stated the size of the signs: Onsite Retail Group sign 43.41 sq. ft., Antonio Violin 31.67 sq. ft, and both Love Sugaring signs are 28.5 sq. ft.) this is an approximate of 132 sq. ft for the building total.
3. The Antonio’s Violin logo affixed to the window shall be removed and future signage shall be prohibited. This does not say they have to get rid of the violin graphic, but they must get rid of the logo.

Mr. Miller opened the floor for any questions.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone has any questions for Mr. Miller.

Mr. Barrick requested if the Board approves Case 2021-13LASR that the total square footage be included in the motion.

Mr. Miller stated he can incorporate the square footage into the motion.

Mr. Barrick asked for confirmation that the two Love Sugaring signs are 132 sq. ft.

Mr. Miller confirmed the two Love Sugaring signs are 132 sq. ft.

Mr. Barrick asked if the sign for Love Sugaring faces the street. He further mentioned the one sign for Love Sugaring should not be included in the LASR because it does not face the street and should be excluded from the map.

Mr. Miller stated he still considers it a building sign.

Mr. Barrick stated the Board should consider the 105 sq. ft. of frontage signage. This does not include the rear signage for Love Sugaring. 22:19

Mr. Miller and Mr. Barrick discussed location of the monument sign and access points for traffic.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Mees asked if Mr. Miller could elaborate on the violin logo.

Mr. Miller stated the violin logo in the window could remain however, the name "Antonio Violin" located in the window would need to be removed.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone had any more questions.

Mr. Friedmann stated anyone from the public who wished to speak should step up to the podium and state their name. 26:55

Mr. Scott Saddlemire stepped up to the podium and stated he is one of the four (4) principals of the company.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anything he would like to add to the presentation.

Mr. Saddlemire stated Love Sugaring has customers coming from all over the area and often stop at their location looking for the Love Sugaring's front door. He thinks the signage identification is very important. Regarding the monument sign, they are willing to work with the Board as far as placement. As for the violin logo in the window, it needs updated due to peeling.

Mr. Miller asked if they would update the violin graphic since it is peeling.

Mr. Saddlemire explained the importance of the violin graphic but due to its condition they will remove it.

Mr. Friedmann asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Friedmann stated the curb cut on Montgomery Road is in front of violin shop; and asked if there is any parking available in the parking lot near Montgomery Road.

Mr. Eric Abrams (applicant) stated they do not allow it. We marked "No Parking" in two spots.

Mr. Friedmann mentioned eliminating the driveway on Montgomery Road for the purpose of noticing signage. 30:35

Mr. Friedmann asked if there were any other questions or comments.

Mr. Abrams stated there is no plan to do anything with the pavement that is in front of the building.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anyone else that wished to speak.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there were any motions or comments from the Board.

Ms. Flanagan mentioned a similar case in the past that was not approved due to the signage. She recommended the signage should stick with one (1) illuminated sign. She also recommended keeping the sign as it is and not have the sign on the building. Ms. Flanagan also agreed with Mr. Friedmann's recommendation to remove the driveway on the Montgomery Road. 32:24

Mr. Miller asked the Board if they recommend removing the decal entirely from the Antonio Violin's window.

There was discussion between the Board and the applicant about the curb cut in front of Antonio Violins on Montgomery Road.

Mr. Friedmann mentioned in order for the recommended placement of the monument sign, one of the parking spots would need to be removed.

There was open discussion between the applicant and the Board regarding the entrances to Love Sugaring and Antonio Violins. 36:18

Mr. Anthony Maier (applicant) stated the monument sign has a 14' setback from the front property line and is in line with the Skyline sign down the road.

Mr. Miller stated he couldn't confirm the distances from property to the sign on the neighboring businesses. He further stated a condition can be added as part as the recommendation prior to the

Trustees' review. Also, a revised site plan must be submitted showing the proper placement of the free-standing sign.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there were any more comments or questions.

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion.

Mr. Barrick made a motion to consider Case 2021-13LASR as submitted.

Mr. Mees second.

Mr. Miller asked with conditions.

Mr. Barrick stated they will add conditions after the motion.

Ms. Flanagan second the motion.

Mr. Friedmann asked if there were any further comments, questions or conditions that may want to be added.

Ms. Flanagan requested on number one (1) for the conditions that a revised site plan be added. She also recommended for the fourth (4) condition that the applicant shall eliminate the drive lane parallel to Montgomery Road.

There was further discussion regarding the entrance on Montgomery Road. There was also a recommendation to add landscaping or a big rock to barricade traffic into the entrance into parking lot from Montgomery Road.

44:40

Mr. Clark suggested putting up signage on each side of the building to direct flow of traffic instead of installing landscaping.

Ms. Flanagan asked if there would be any kind of emergency service issues.

Mr. Miller stated no, the emergency services would have easy access.

Mr. Barrick stated his recommendation regarding the signage and revising access locations.

Mr. Miller asked the applicant if the rear sign is internally lit.

Mr. Maier stated yes, rear sign is lit.

48:08

Mr. Miller stated the rear sign cannot be lit since it is facing a residential area. In order to be compliant with code, the sign would need to be no more than 50-candles. It needs to be reduced in intensity or turned off by a certain time. His concern is not in the placement of the sign, but in the brightness.

Mr. Friedmann asked the applicant if he knew what the normal hours are for Love Sugaring.

Mr. Maier stated the hours varies.

There was further discussion amongst the Board and applicant regarding the illuminated Love Sugaring sign.

Mr. Miller recommended to just reduce intensity at 25-candles.

Mr. Friedmann requested to add Love Sugaring's illuminated sign and its brightness to the list of conditions. Also, to add the sign may not be illuminated past 9:00 p.m.

There was further discussion regarding the curb cut on Montgomery Road and the free-standing sign. Also, to eliminate traffic from entering in the driveway on Montgomery Road and continue to drive on the east side of the building.

Mr. Miller stated the Board is trying to decide based on limited information since they are not clear on the exact location of the free-standing sign, and they don't know if there will be a drive lane that will be available to traffic. Mr. Miller further stated they are requiring a site plan and remedy for surface lane traffic be provided to the Board of Trustees. This will allow the applicant time to review their site and come up with a solution.

56:42

Ms. Flanagan stated some revisions are needed to #3 of the staff recommended conditions and she listed the conditions:

1. Freestanding sign shall be placed so as to provide for safe movement of traffic and not impede visibility at the Montgomery Road/Chetbert Drive intersection. A site plan shall be submitted for review by the Board of Trustees for proposed placement of freestanding sign and elevation of service lane parallel to Montgomery Road.
2. Any future signs at the four (4) approved locations shall have a maximum area as prescribed in the applicants' submittal.
3. The Antonio's Violin logo affixed to the window shall be removed and future window signage shall be prohibited. The violin graphic shall be renewed/replaced or removed in its entirety.
4. The northwest facing sign shall have a maximum intensity of 25-foot candles and shall not be illuminated after 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Friedmann entertained a motion.

Ms. Flanagan made a motion to considered Case # 2021-13LASR with four (4) conditions which are under staff comments.

Mr. Barrick second the motion.

Mr. Friedmann requested Mr. Mees to take a vote.

Ms. Flanagan AYE
 Mr. Barrick NO
 Mr. Friedmann AYE
 Mr. Roos AYE
 Mr. Mees AYE

1:03:01

Mr. Friedmann stated Case # 2021-13LASR will go before the Trustees on September 7, 2021.

Mr. Friedmann introduced Case # 2021-11LU – Land Use Plan

Mr. Miller explained the history of the “new” revised Land Use Plan, tentatively called 2030. He also explained the Land Use Steering Committee was created prior to his arrival. It’s made up off five (5) professionals, who reside in the community. The discussion would consist of different aspects of the Land Use Plan and the Land Use maps. The Committee met several times between November 2019 through April 2020. Due to Covid, the meetings stopped but started back up in March of 2021 and they continued to meet in April, and May 2021. They recently finalized the Land Use maps and Land Use Plan that are now ready to submit to the Zoning Commission for review.

1:08:33

Mr. Miller mentioned Chapter 3 (Policy Areas) in the Land Use Plan,

Ms. Flanagan stated there are several phrasings in the Land Use Plan that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Barrick also mentioned some areas of concern that he would like to discuss.

Mr. Miller acknowledged and agreed to go through the Land Use Plan page by page. He also mentioned this is a raw document.

Mr. Friedmann asked what the objective for tonight’s meeting is. He didn’t have the opportunity to review the documents.

Mr. Miller recommended he meet with each of the Board members one on one to address their individual concerns/ideas about the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps. He further stated there can be no emails back and forth with this Board outside of these chambers, which would be an open meeting violation, however, he will accept a list of any errors via email.

There was discussion among the board about the best way to go through the Land Use Plan/Land Use Map documents. They decided to do an overview of the Land Use Plan first, page by page.

1:17:46

Mr. Miller began on page 3-9 section 3.4 of the Land Use Plan. He stated the Land Use Plan is a simplified map. He described the meaning of Suburban Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Office, Light Industrial, and Commercial. He did try to split out Parks and Recreation away from public spaces. He noted the utility property since the Township does own a lot of the property. Vacant land is basically a buffer zone.

There was discussion about the area near Fields Ertel Road and Conrey Road and what policies they should fall under.

Mr. Miller mentioned the area near Kemper Road is Light Industrial and Office. He also mentioned the area near Grooms Road is Office and Mixed Use. Also, the 12 acres near Grooms Road were cleared and are currently up for sale. The developers are looking for high retail sales or Mixed Office use. These maps are used to try to help the Township get the highest return investment. They are just used for guideline purposes. 1:34:5

Mr. Miller pointed out some of the Parks and Recreation are located on the Land Use map. He also displayed the section of the map where the interchange of Montgomery Road and 275. There is a small development to the North that ties into Montgomery Road. He continued to describe the established areas within the interchange area. Mr. Miller showed the Board a small area of Sharon Woods that resides in Sycamore Township. A map was displayed of Sycamore South and Kenwood. He stated they got rid of all the transitional districts and were replaced with Mixed Use. There was discussion about the Blue Ash Road area. He further stated he would like to get the Land Use Plan implemented and then continuously improve it every 3-5 years.

Mr. Barrick asked about the Heavy Industrial use district on page 2-12, the South Sycamore map.

Mr. Miller stated the Township no longer has a Heavy Industrial use district and is aware of it being on the map. He also stated he wants the Board to look at the existing Land Use map from 2016 and advise how it should be updated or their vision.

There was discussion about the policy areas and their dates.

Mr. Miller stated the maps he is currently making right now are the Land Use maps and zoning maps. He stated he uses GIS software to design the maps which allows him to go through each parcel.

There was discussion about the policy areas.

Mr. Barrick suggested keeping a running list of ideas/comments of the Land Use Plan/Land Use maps to share with Mr. Miller. 2:02:24

Mr. Miller stated to comply with Ohio Law you have to conform under a comprehensive plan. He also mentioned the longest a document should go without review is five years.

Mr. Barrick stated on the South Sycamore Future Land Use map that is currently displayed; the parcels on the east side of Montgomery Road across from the Mercedes dealer have no policy areas. His concern is a developer could come in and put a seven-story building there.

Mr. Miller answered Mr. Barrick stating it is not currently on the map, but it is protected through zoning to stop anybody from coming in to develop.

There was discussion about the Kenwood area and its expansion.

2:08:15

Mr. Miller mentioned St. Vincent and the possibility of their property being up for sale. He also stated he heard the Archdiocese was reducing their properties by 40%. He said he is not for sure if St. Vincent is on that list or not. It would be a good opportunity for Mixed Use.

There was discussion about the Township's property on the corner of Montgomery Road and Kenwood Road and the opportunity for the right development partner to design this correctly.

There was discussion about which properties the Township owned along Kenwood Road.

2:10:54

Mr. Miller stated there is an independent planning study that should be close to completion; the name of the study is called Montgomery Road Township Property Study. Jay Stuart is an independent planning consultant that was hired to conduct the study. He is currently working with developers, residents, and business owners in the area. Once the study is completed, it will be incorporated into the Land Use Plan. Mr. Miller mentioned another study that is ongoing called the Kenwood/Montgomery Road Corridor Study, which is a traffic study. It is being reviewed by Hamilton County and State of Ohio and will eventually go out for bid.

There was discussion about Galbraith Road and the permitted use being Office and Mixed Use.

Mr. Swanson asked what the big white block located on the lower left section on the Future Land Use map was.

Mr. Miller stated it was Deer Park High School.

Mr. Miller displayed the West Sycamore Land Use map. It shows Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway, Reading Road, Galbraith Road, and I-75. He also mentioned Drake Inn and the Carrousel Hotel. He also pointed out the two Township properties. Mr. Miller displayed the burrow pit for the Cross County Highway. He stated it is a blue line stream and regulated by the Army Corp. of Engineers. It's a disturbed blue line stream. It can be opened for Industrial Uses or buffer area. It is 28 acres of Township land and could become an economic asset to the Township. There is communication with the courts to try to obtain the Drake Inn and Carrousel Motel's property through a foreclosure process. The Sycamore Township CIC (Community Improvement Corporation) owns the 28 acres.

There was further discussion about who owns the Carrousel Inn and the Drake Motel. The owners had tried to rehab them into apartments for Veterans.

2:25:26

There was discussion about policy areas on the West Sycamore Land Use map.

Mr. Miller displayed the policy areas on page 3-18; 3.3 North Sycamore, Grooms Road/Kemper Road. He mentioned key points on what the policy states and the vision.

Ms. Flanagan mentioned on page 3-19, (Land Use Plan) there is a typo in the last paragraph.

Mr. Barrick mentioned on page 3-20, (Land Use Plan) the phrasing needs revised in the top paragraph.

Ms. Flanagan mentioned on page 3-20, (Land Use Plan) the right paragraph needs rephrased.

Mr. Miller stated in the past, the Township has zoned properties with double letters so developers would have to do a PUD. 2:35:15

There was discussion about Village Green and the (80) mobile home park dwelling in Sycamore Township. The Township does not see value in any type of preservation for this type of use. It is zoned "F" light industrial for Land Use. Eventually there will be enough value in the property where it will move into that higher intensity direction.

Mr. Miller stated Reed Hartman/Fields Ertel the primary future land use for these areas is high density residential, west of Reed Hartman Highway and Office/Institutional east of Reed Hartman Highway. South Sycamore, Kenwood Towne Centre/Sycamore Plaza is zoned "E" retail, "OO" planned office and "EE" planned retail. The vision for this area is to continue to grow.

Mr. Barrick stated on chapter 4, 4.2.4 Live, Work and Play needs rephrased.

Mr. Miller stated he tried to take traffic counts in the Kenwood area and is waiting on those results. 2:43:16

Mr. Barrick stated on page 3-26 under Implementation needs rephrased.

Mr. Miller mentioned Jewish Hospital has seen significant growth over its lifetime. The zoning district will remain "OO" Office.

Mr. Miller mentioned the Redstone Center and what the visions are for that area.

There was discussion regarding Montgomery Road, East of Galbraith Road. The vision is to continue to grow. It is zoned "O" Office and "R" Retail.

Mr. Miller mentioned Reading Road and Galbraith Road which was discussed earlier in the meeting. He also spoke about purchasing and land banking property in that area.

Mr. Miller mentioned he is working with Reading Road Corridor Group. It includes several community representatives throughout the City of Cincinnati. Their goal is to create a corridor plan throughout the entire Reading Road area. The issue with Reading Road is the many districts it passes through, and it makes it hard to consolidate. 2:55:14

Ms. Flanagan stated on page 4-1, (Land Use Plan) right column needs rephrased.

Mr. Barrick stated in chapter 4, (Land Use Plan) again, needs rephrased.

There was discussion regarding page 4-3, (Land Use Plan) and the property not being in the Township.

Mr. Miller stated he will edit the Land Use Plan, so it is uniform and flows together.

Mr. Barrick stated on page 4-3, (Land Use Plan) needs rephrased.

There was discussion regarding the Kenwood Progress Plans that are mentioned on page 4-4. The economic JEDD program was also mentioned and discussed.

There was discussion regarding sidewalks on Galbraith Road.

Ms. Flanagan stated under the ES - Executive Summary under Vision needs to be rephrased. She also stated she could provide the errors she found in the Land Use Plan in an email.

Mr. Miller requested to send all errors/comments to him in an email.

Ms. Flanagan asked if the Board would continue discussion on the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps for the next meeting or are we voting tonight.

Mr. Miller stated we will table the discussion.

There was discussion to adopt a motion to review the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps every 3-5 years.

Mr. Miller stated the color coding of the Land Use Maps will be addressed. He is aware they don't match. He also mentioned the maps are in raw form and once completed they will be easier to read.

Item 6. – Township Report

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anything the Trustees wanted to report to the Zoning Commission Board.

Mr. Miller stated some of the Trustees want the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps approved tonight however, he will report to them they are not ready yet.

Item 7. – Date of next meeting

Mr. Friedmann stated the next Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2021.

Mr. Barrick asked if we should make a motion to table the Zoning Text.

Mr. Miller stated there is an opportunity to incorporate the Township's zoning code with Hamilton County Planning Commission's zoning code. They are putting an RFQ to upgrade their zoning code and all the Township's in Hamilton County can choose. This would allow everyone to be consistent with their zoning codes. We are waiting for Hamilton County to complete their upgrade. Mr. Miller is working with Hamilton County to become part of that process. He suggested to get the Land Use Plan adopted and then tackle the Text Amendments.

Ms. Flanagan made a motion to table the Text Amendments

Mr. Friedmann second

All Voted AYE

Mr. Friedmann asked if there was anything else except for the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps

Mr. Miller stated other than the Land Use Plan/Land Use Maps there are no other cases

Mr. Friedmann made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Mees second.

All voted AYE.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.