

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Smolik called the Planning Commission meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Present were members Steve Ali, Paul Graupmann, Council Liaison Bruce Abens, Vice-Chairman Paul Schumann and Chairman James Smolik.

Also present were City Engineer Christina Eavenson, Planning and Development Director Kimberly Lieber and Deputy Clerk of Council Tina Wieber.

MINUTES:

Chairman Smolik asked if the members had a chance to review the minutes of the regular meeting on March 12, 2024. He asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Administrative Approvals & Zoning Certificates

1. PPZ2024-0251: Fujisan, 35085 Center Ridge Rd
Approval of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance for a restaurant.
2. PPZ2024-0255: Tacos Del Pueblo, 34173 Center Ridge Rd
Approval of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance for a restaurant.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber if she would review the Administrative approvals.

Director Lieber stated that there had been two zoning certificate approvals since the last meeting with the first being Fujisan, taking over where Main Wok was located and that they were adding hibachi. She discussed that the second was Tacos Del Pueblo, which had been open for a while, but it took them a while to hunt them down to file their required paperwork, and that was why it was a little bit late coming to the Commission.

Planning Project Updates

1. Ridgeville Ready Master Plan

Director Lieber discussed that the Ridgeville Ready Master Plan was before Council and would be on third reading and up for adoption at the April 15th City Council meeting. She stated that there would be a 30-day effective date, but she thought they would be ready to wrap up the plan and make it publicly available and to really promote it widely in the community and to begin the work of implementation.

2. Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulation Update

Director Lieber explained that they had already begun the process of conducting a comprehensive audit of the zoning code and subdivision regulations. She stated that they had engaged the firm McBride, Dale, Clarion, the same firm that did the Planning Commission training last December and in their capacity as zoning experts, were going to be in the first phase of work taking a deep dive into the code and working with staff and other stakeholders to understand what areas of weakness they had in the code, what they were hoping to change and add, and then would be creating a diagnosis document that would then lead to future code updates that they could also assist with. She mentioned that the first step was always listening and learning and there would be two days' worth of meetings, focus groups and other activities starting next Monday and Tuesday, April 15th & 16th. She stated that on the 15th, they would be meeting with the steering committee conducting a city tour and then there would be a Council workshop that evening. She discussed that on the next day there would be four focus groups, a board and commission one that the Commission had been invited to, there was a staff one, a design professional and then a developer focus group. She stated that they were trying to get a cross-section of people that interacted with the City's codes and ordinances, to provide some initial feedback to the consultant and then they would go from there.

3. Active Transportation Plan

Director Lieber explained that the active transportation plan continued but that they had rather poorly attended meeting on March 25th, which was mostly just attended by steering committee members and other supporters. She said that they had been getting good response to the survey, which was posted on the website and mentioned that they had over 500 responses so far. She remarked that it would be nice in a city of 36,000 to get more, especially when they heard how much people were invested in connectivity and bikeability and walkability and that those were the topics that the survey covered. She stated that they were trying to promote that between then and the 15th and the next steering committee meeting for that project was May 16th. She stated that they would be having a second public meeting probably around the late June or early July timeframe.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that he read something about a NOACA grant that the City received for road resurfacing and asked if that was correct.

Director Lieber stated that was correct.

Vice-Chairman Schuman asked where that was and if she would tell them about it.

Director Lieber explained that NOACA had applied on behalf of the City of North Ridgeville for funds through the congressional earmark process for rehabilitation of a segment of Sugar Ridge Road, which was between Waterbury and the Bender intersection. She stated that it was a \$2 million dollar award and that NOACA was the applicant for the project but had contacted the City in order to collaborate on making the funding request. She mentioned that it was about a year ago and they found out at the end of March this year that they were successful. She discussed that that project would replace the roadway and would also add some bike and pedestrian facilities that it currently didn't have in that area by Shady Drive Complex and that with Waterbury there, it seemed like a nice amenity to add.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

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PPZ2024-0252: RUF Briquetting Systems, 38778 Taylor Pkwy, PPN 07-00-047-000-096

Applicant: Brandon Kline/Geis Construction, 10020 Aurora-Hudson Rd, Streetsboro, OH 44241. Proposal consists of a new manufacturing facility. Property zoned I-3 Heavy Industrial District.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber to discuss her findings of fact.

Director Lieber stated that she would leave it to the applicant to discuss their business model but was excited that they were bringing in a very sustainable manufacturing business to North Ridgeville. She discussed that the project would include an office and a distribution and manufacturing component on one of the last vacant pieces of property on Taylor Parkway. She stated that it was a ten-and-a-half-acre piece located just west of Dayton Freight. She explained that the ultimate long term build out would be a facility of about 100,000 square feet, but currently RUF was seeking approval for a 25,000 square foot facility, with future phases for both building and parking improvements. She added that only the first phase was before them for approval. She mentioned that regarding zoning, the building met all setbacks, height and lot coverage requirements and noted that there was one curb cut proposed onto Taylor Parkway, but they would be looking to potentially be adding a second one later on, once the building was expanded to accommodate truck traffic and circulation. She stated that they had responded to all of the requests for additional information, including being asked to show future parking along with the future building and had asked for them to submit additional lighting information regarding the light fixtures, which was provided and were compliant and they had cleaned up the photometric plan and exhibit, which was zoning compliant as well. She stated that she thought they did a nice job with the building architecture and also with the landscape plan that had a combination of preservation of existing trees with some new ornamental landscaping and thought it would be a very nice addition to Taylor Parkway.

Chairman Smolik asked the applicant to state their name and address for the record and explain the project.

Brandon Kline, Vice-President of Design, Geis Companies, 10020 Aurora-Hudson Rd, Streetsboro, Ohio.

Mr. Kline stated that also with him was Jim Weist, who was president of RUF's North American Division. He mentioned that it was exciting to have a manufacturing client that was so important to sustainability. He explained that their business core was basically reprocessing scraps from other manufacturing users, reclaiming them and then compounding them into briquettes that could repurpose metal scraps, wood scraps and plastic scraps, which would be able to be repurposed and reused, so that they would end up with a net zero waste. He stated that in that building they would have a few operations with one being creating and manufacturing the machines that did that work, so that they could sell those machines to other clients and then also collecting scraps from clients with contracts to compound it and process other manufacturers scraps that may not need the machine itself. He discussed that the project was located on Taylor Parkway and that the initial build was a 25,000 square foot footprint and was 5,000 square feet of office for two floors for a total of 10,000 square foot of office, and would be a 30,000 square

foot building in phase one. He mentioned that shown in the site plan, one of the beauties of that site and why it enticed the client was the ability to expand as they continued to grow and produce and sell. He stated that their hope was to be able to fit the max buildout, so the site allowed them to meet their future expansion needs. He stated that from a site plan perspective, they were trying to maintain the foliage that was along the streetscape shown in the green areas on the plan. He added that there was a front patio to the office space as an amenity and be well landscaped. He stated that one of the big items was that the site would be graded to allow for drainage to naturally flow back to its current discharge point to the rear of the site. He mentioned that currently there was a natural ditch that ran in a drainage easement that kind of meandered, but the project would be able to collect and push all that water to a storm retention pond, maintain all of the water on site and then discharge slowly to current standards that would hopefully improve the adjacent properties and adjacent areas because currently it was a naturally farmed land that allowed for some puddling and swelling from that. He discussed that from an architectural standpoint, it was a pre-engineered metal building with an enhanced front façade, emphasizing the look of the wood. He stated that with the core roots of the company RUF and that obviously nature was an important feature to sustainability, they created that wood and metal front as the core of the building with the green canopy that was their branded color. He explained that one tweak that they submitted to the Commission was material number six, that was shown in the slide, they originally proposed that the three sides of the building, both sides and the rear, to be a white pre-engineered metal siding but was changed to a light gray, so that it didn't show dirt as much.

Chairman Smolik asked if anyone from the general public had any questions or comments regarding the project, to come up to the podium and state their name and address for the record.

None were given.

Chairman Smolik asked if the retention basin was going to be phased accordingly, or if would be a full buildout.

Mr. Kline stated that they would be installing a full size for the entire build and hardscape, so that it was sized appropriately for max build.

Chairman Smolik asked if that would be right from the beginning.

Mr. Kline stated yes, right from the beginning.

Chairman Smolik asked if the second curb cut would be introduced possibly for the future buildings.

Mr. Kline stated that was correct. He explained that the current Phase 1 footprint didn't meet the needs in order to have a fire lane or fire loop around the building for fire truck access. He mentioned that as soon as they expanded to where they couldn't get 150-foot hose length from the spot that a fire truck would be parked, they would need to loop that road around. He explained that because of that, eventually there would be two-phased fire loops that would get changed and pointed to the dashed line

on the slide that sliced through the big production, which would be when they built phase two and would be an office expansion and a manufacturing expansion to the east. He stated that phase three, would be the large manufacturing expansion and the loop road would extend to the rear of the property.

Chairman Smolik stated that as the expansion happened, there would be more truck bays.

Mr. Kline commented not many. He stated that they might end up doubling to six total at full build. He explained that it wouldn't turn into a big distribution hub. He added that currently there were two docks and one drive-in and could potentially see two more and another drive-in in the future.

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Commission.

Member Ali asked if it would be a smelting plant with recycling where they would be bringing in other particles from other companies.

Mr. Kline stated that it wouldn't be particles, but metal scraps or shrapnel, loose chippings, wood chippings, and then it would get put into a machine, like a hopper, and would get ram compacted into a cylinder or briquette.

Member Ali asked if it would be metal, steel or wood.

Mr. Kline stated that it would be all of those, metal, steel, plastic, wood.

Jim Weist, President RUF Briquetting Systems, 860 Weybridge Dr, Springfield, OH 45503.

Mr. Weist explained that they weren't smelting but made machines that would do that. He stated that they would on occasion, run tests if a customer wanted to send a couple hundred pounds of material, they would put it in their test lab, but it was all done so that they could make the machine for them and ship it to their location in North America.

Member Ali asked if there would be burning or furnaces or EPA.

Mr. Weist stated no.

Mr. Kline explained that it was all a dry process and there wouldn't be any smells, or fire or smoke.

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Commission.

Council Liaison Abens stated that he was the Councilman for that area and hoped that all of their truck drivers would be told that they had to use Route 57 as their exit and entrance point into the plant. He asked if there was anything that they could do on their driveway to encourage the drivers to use 57.

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Mr. Kline stated they could put up a sign.

Council Liaison Abens commented that that would help.

Mr. Kline explained that there really wouldn't be much truck traffic in that facility and thought they talked about three to four trucks a day, if that, and that would be at full build.

Mr. Weist stated that they were big machines that sold for \$200,000 to \$300,000 each and the plan was to make one or two a week, so it wouldn't be a lot of trucks going in and out.

Mr. Abens remarked that just as long as he didn't hear about trucks using Sugar Ridge Road.

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Commission.

None were given.

Moved by Schumann and seconded by Ali to approve the application.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 5 No – 0

Root Road Park, 8949 Root Rd, PPN 07-00-011-103-058

Owner: City of North Ridgeville, 7307 Avon Belden Rd, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of park pavement and site improvements. Property zoned R-1 Residence District.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber to discuss her findings of facts.

Director Lieber stated that she wanted to point out that under the charter there was a mandatory referral section that any street and other types of public improvements had to be referred to Planning Commission for review and recommendation and that particular project met that particular threshold for Planning Commission review. She explained that the project still had to go through public bidding processes and also, they were in conversation with the Ridgefield Homeowners Association, upon which a portion of the parking lot would currently exist and would be improved upon, so they were working on those details. She stated the site plan and design was for the Commission's review.

Chairman Smolik asked the representative for the application to state their name and address for the record.

Rich Fredrickson, Rafter ALTD, 42653 Oberlin-Elyria Rd, Oberlin, OH 44074.

Mr. Fredrickson stated that they had an improvement set of drawings for Root Road Park, which mostly consisted of improving the existing gravel area into an asphalt paved area. He explained that they would have 204 parking spaces available and eight of which would be ADA accessible. He stated that they had a master retention pond that was in the north area of the site that would control all of the storm water coming off of the site and would actually improve the storm water leaving the site into the Dixon Ditch that was shown on the drawing in the northwest corner. He discussed that there would be a fence at the beginning of the site entrance going in and there would be asphalt improvement all the way around. He mentioned that the driveway access would be improved, as well as a dumpster pad.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was anyone from the general public that had a question or comment regarding that project to come to the podium and state their name and address for the record.

Tom Newman, 34129 Harvest Pointe Drive, North Ridgeville, OH 44039.

Mr. Newman asked regarding the retention pond going into the ditch, how much of it would be going into the ditch. He stated that he believed it was the same ditch that ran from the back of his neighborhood. He commented that he assumed that ditch would be able to handle whatever additional water would be going into that area there and if that had been accounted for.

Chairman Smolik asked Mr. Fredrickson if he would explain the outlet for the basin and the existing capacity at Dixon Ditch.

Mr. Fredrickson explained that with all of the storm events, they would have actually less water going into the ditch than before and was basically by code or State regulations that they had to do that. He stated that it was shown on page 6.1. that for the 100-year storm event, the pre-developed flow, which would be the flow before the development, was 40.09 cubic feet per second and afterwards, they would have 10.9 cubic feet per second, so that would be a substantial reduction.

Chairman Smolik asked if any Commission members had any questions or comments.

Council Liaison Abens remarked that he heard that part of the parking lot was on Ridgefield property and asked if they had consulted with Ridgefield officials regarding that. He stated that he had some experience with them in the past on things similar to that and it was difficult.

Director Lieber stated that yes, they were currently in dialogue, and they had been aware of the project. She explained that the City currently had a lease with Ridgefield, dating back to 2013 and they were basically proposing to pave the same area that was currently part of that lease arrangement and were proposing to both improve the surface and the stormwater. She stated that they were in discussion with the HOA about the best way to move forward. She added that there was a legislative approval in 2019 that would have been an addendum to that agreement to allow for paving, but they couldn't seem to find any indication that the addendum was created or executed. She discussed that they had been down a few

rabbit holes looking for historical information but were in communication with the HOA leadership as to how they could potentially move forward with the project.

Council Liaison Abens asked if thus far they seemed to be agreeable.

Director Lieber stated that she believed so.

Chairman Smolik asked about the master plan for the park, because it was a lot of money to invest in that parking lot, if there were any changes on the proposed athletic fields and what was the final master plan for that facility.

Kevin Fougrousse, Park and Recreation Director, City of North Ridgeville, 29940 Westminster Dr, North Olmsted, OH 44070.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that the overall goal of Root Road Park was to make it more of a pocket park in the community. He explained that the City and the park system owned 22 additional acres of Shady Drive and the goal was to develop Shady Drive Complex into more of a sports complex hub for the community and turn Root Road Park and Frontier Park into pocket parks to provide more bikeability and walkability, and to alleviate some of the stress off of South Central Park as well.

Chairman Smolik asked regarding the 204 parking spots, how it was determined and if it was based on the players and turnaround per games.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that unfortunately, they didn't have much parking data because it had always just been a grindings and stone parking lot. He mentioned that a lot of their higher usage points were coming in in the morning with the younger kids. He stated that they shrank the parking lot down by about 60 spots and made it about 204 spots for the program. He commented that they didn't have any true data to physically sit there and say how many of the spots they truly needed.

Chairman Smolik remarked that they knew how many fields were striped.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that that was correct.

Chairman Smolik indicated that they could determine it from the field striping based on players and use the proportion of 1.2 cars per player.

Mr. Fougrousse explained that the soccer program was run by the NRSL and not by the City of North Ridgeville. He stated that they weren't physically up there on a day to day basis to see how many cars were there or know how many kids, parents or grandparents would be in and out of it.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was any possible location for future expansion if that parking lot was deemed too small.

Mr. Fredrickson commented that maybe a very limited amount of parking space but that there wouldn't be a whole lot of room left after the project. He stated that they had an area where they were going to stockpile spoils and there would be a mound area there that would kind of buffer on the southeast side, so not at that moment, there wasn't a lot.

Chairman Smolik asked regarding the five or six residents that lived up against the park, would the six-foot privacy fence be adequate for their needs and if the Administration had heard anything otherwise, like maybe additional mounding or plantings.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that he had gone out there on a couple of occasions to try and speak to those residents last year to try to let them know what the plans were, but unfortunately, probably because of the time of day he was going there, he wasn't able to get ahold of anyone. He stated that letters were sent to those residents as well to let them know what was going on. He explained that the 6.5-foot fence was the City's that was going up to the north.

Chairman Smolik asked if any of the Commission members had any questions or comments.

None were given.

Moved by Graupmann and seconded by Ali to recommend approval of application.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 5 No – 0

Shady Drive Complex, 37077 Shady Drive, PPN 07-00-035-102-041

Owner: City of North Ridgeville, 7307 Avon Belden Rd, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of constructing a new playground. Property zoned R-1 Residence District.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber for her findings of fact.

Director Lieber explained that the project was also a mandatory referral to Planning Commission due to it being a park improvement. She stated that there really weren't any Planning issues.

Chairman Smolik asked the applicant to state their name and address for the record.

Kevin Fougrousse, Park and Recreation Director, City of North Ridgeville, 29940 Westminster Dr, North Olmsted, OH 44070.

Mr. Fougrousse explained that the project was at Shady Drive Complex, home of their 13 baseball/softball diamonds and indoor multi-purpose facility that held batting cages and a lot of their programming, a .75 mile, six-foot-wide trail system that was completed in the spring of 2020. He stated

that the goal was to add a brand-new playground to Shady Drive Complex in between diamonds six and seven. He discussed that there was currently a Little Tikes playground at the back end of the parking lot that was installed roughly around 20 years ago. He mentioned that he understood the idea behind installing the playground in that area 20 years ago, because diamonds 10 through 13 housed the t-ball coach pitch programs, which were younger age groups, but with the growth and additional amenities added to the park system over the past 6 to 8 years and having the interloping trail system, it made sense to have a more centralized playground for the residents and park users. He stated that they worked with Snyder Recreation for a playground to be added to that location and that there was plenty of parking. He mentioned that it had slides, swings, climbing features and would be for the ages of 5 to 12. He stated that there would be plastic boarder that would go around to keep the mulch in place. He explained that the public works department would tear down and remove the existing playground in the back and then topsoil and seed it.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was anyone from the general public that had a question or comment on the project.

None were given.

Chairman Smolik asked if any of the Commission members had any questions or comments regarding the project.

Member Ali asked about the ground covering and if it was rubber or wood chips.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that it was wood fiber chips.

Council Liaison Abens stated that having used the one at South Central Park, he found it very advantageous that there was shade and asked if there would be any shade planned there.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that there wasn't other than what was shown on the playground on top of the slide.

Council Liaison Abens commented that in the summertime it would get hot and that they might want to think about some trees.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that he would think about it.

Chairman Smolik asked that as far as the layout went, based on the programming and those fields, he asked if there was any way if a home run happened that it would go to that area.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that the age groups that played there were 7 and 8 and he didn't think that would be an issue. He stated that the only time he had ever seen anything go over that fence was when they help the USA National Softball Qualifier up there, but that was 16-year-old girls out there with talent scouts out there scouting them and the balls would go flying, but other than that, no.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was any planned seating for the parents around that playground.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that he didn't believe they had any seating in that area currently.

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Chairman Smolik asked if that was something that could be a possibility.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that it was.

Council Liaison Abens stated that the biggest problem that he saw was the coaches keeping their kids' minds on the game rather than that playground.

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any further questions or comments.

None were given.

Moved by Schumann and seconded by Ali to approve the application.

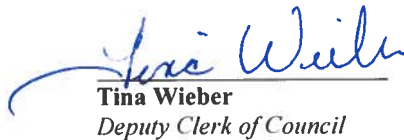
A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 5 No – 0

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Smolik adjourned the meeting at 7:36 PM.


James Smolik
Chairman


Tina Wieber
Deputy Clerk of Council

Tuesday, May 14, 2024
Date Approved