

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ROLL CALL:

Present were members Frank Toth, Vice-Chairman Paul Schumann, Council Liaison Bruce Abens and Chairman James Smolik.

Member Steve Ali was excused.

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

ELECTION OF OFFICER

Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any nominations for the Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals.

Moved by Abens and seconded by Schumann to nominate Frank Toth to the position of Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 4 No – 0

MINUTES:

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked if the members had a chance to review the minutes of the regular meeting on July 9, 2024. He asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Administrative Approvals & Zoning Certificates

1. PPZ2024-0282 White Box Alterations, 35423 Center Ridge Rd
Administrative approval of Planning Commission application for exterior building alterations and site improvements for new business and office space.
2. PPZ2024-0292 Smokin City, LLC, 39257 Center Ridge Rd
Approval of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance for a smoke shop.

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

Director Lieber explained that there was one Administrative approval for a Planning Commission application and that was for the Pulp project that was in the former bank at the corner of Root Rd and Center Ridge Road. She stated that it was listed as White Box Alterations, but that was the property owner's sphere of work for Pulp and then Pulp came in later with their tenant work. She stated that there was a certificate of zoning compliance for Smokin City, LLC, down on the west end in a retail plaza near Elyria for a smoke shop.

3. Planning Updates

- o Zoning Code Diagnosis
- o Active Transportation Plan
- o Traffic Studies

Director Lieber stated that she wanted to provide a couple Planning updates. She mentioned that, as they were aware, they were underway with the zoning code update and subdivision regulation diagnosis phase of the zoning code review, and that it was coming along well. She said that a draft would be presented to the staff steering committee this month and then she anticipated during the October/November time frame they would be presenting the recommendations to Planning Commission and Council hopefully at a Planning Commission meeting or a joint work session, to ensure that everyone was in agreement with the code updates before they started writing the new text. She discussed the active transportation plan safe routes to school project was coming close to a conclusion on September 24th, which was Tuesday, at 6:00 p.m. at the NRAC Community room and they would be having the third and final public meeting for that project and the consultant would be making a presentation on the priority recommendations for new sidewalks, trails, multi-use paths and other code updates in support of connectivity in North Ridgeville. She stated that that would provide a basis for potential future grant applications for some of those projects. She said that previously she had mentioned that they had two traffic studies that were underway or complete, with one at Route 83, Avon Belden Rd and Bainbridge and then another at the Lorain Rd and Lear Nagel Rd intersection. She explained that they engaged Woolpert, an engineering firm, to evaluate traffic efficiency and safety in those areas as they were two areas of town with high levels of traffic and high levels of accidents. She mentioned that they were looking at ways and counter measures that they could reduce accidents and still promote traffic efficiency. She stated that the Route 83 and Bainbridge study was done and they were evaluating the recommendations and how to secure funding for some of those. She added that they would see a draft later this month for the Lorain Rd and Lear Nagle Rd and then they would be providing the draft to the public for their review and input into those counter measures.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Century Tavern, 33312 Center Ridge Rd, PPN 07-00-008-114-008

Owner: Thomas Kelly, 33256 Center Ridge Rd, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of site improvements for the bar/tavern. Property is zoned B-3 Highway Commercial.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber for findings of fact.

Director Lieber stated that the proposal consisted of site improvements for Century Tavern. She explained that the business was last in operation over five years ago and the current owner acquired the property in 2019 and had spent a lot of time and effort in restoring the building since then. She discussed that last year the City and owner had a conversation about vacating a portion of Pleasant Avenue which abutted Century Tavern to the west in order to allow for expansion of the parking lot. She said that they discussed at the time that if the land were vacated and turned into commercial parking, that it would need to follow the requirements of the zoning code. She mentioned that earlier this year, Council did vacate a portion of Pleasant Avenue adjacent to that site, which created an additional .14 acre of commercial property and that the current proposal was to reopen the tavern and to make improvements to include a parking lot and outdoor patio. She stated that there would be a paver patio fenced in on the east side of the building and the plan showed a potential future deck, as well as some accessibility improvements at the front entrance. She discussed that the property was zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District as were the parcels to the north and the east, however, the property to the west was zoned RS-2 General Residence District. She explained that bars and taverns were a conditional use in the B-3 District, so part of Planning Commission's approval should be for a conditional use permit for that use. She stated that the building was legal non-conforming and predated the zoning code by a lot as the building was built in the early 1800's and zoning in North Ridgeville might have been over 100 years away. She discussed that the new parking lot would be a great improvement to the site and would provide defined access and egress, which it was currently lacking, along with striped parking spaces and would provide 18 parking spaces, which would be required based upon the square footage, and included accessible parking, a new sidewalk along the frontage as shown and a new trash enclosure on the rear of the property. She stated that regarding the buffer strip, as the Commission was aware, anywhere a commercial property abutted a residential district, a buffer strip of a minimum of 10 foot of depth shall be provided, which was shown on the plan, just on the portion of the property that did abut that RS-2 district. She stated that the Planning Commission could determine the sufficiency of the landscape plantings to provide screenings in that area. She mentioned that the property owner of Century Tavern was also the property owner of that residential property. She added that they provided fence detail for the new fencing south of the patio and remarked that it was worth mentioning that the intent of the property owner was to consider and propose future rezoning of that vacant parcel to the west to further expand the commercial parking available for Century Tavern but it was not part of their consideration currently and that it would be under separate application but was something that they would expect to see at a future date.

City Engineer Eavenson stated that in the initial review of the proposed site plan, it wasn't clear where the existing property lines were that made up the proposed project site and that it appeared five parcels made up the proposed site but unfortunately that information wasn't on the preliminary plan, so she asked that during final review, that they include that information so that it could be reviewed if any lot splits or consolidations were warranted for the site. She explained that the proposed tavern site was also serviced by an existing sanitary lateral coming off of McKinley and ran along the rear of the property. She stated that the existing water main ran north to south along the vacated portion of Pleasant Avenue. She said that the applicant had been made aware that a water main easement shall be executed and recorded for the City to maintain rights over the water main and the existing tap location shall be reviewed during final engineering, to ensure that additional easements were not warranted. She added that because the site was considered a redevelopment area and encompassed about 4/10ths of an acre, they asked the applicant to address storm water by implementing a water quality measure. She stated that the applicant had also been made aware that the proposed parking lot area shall be a hardscape

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surface with curbing and be in compliance with the new parking chapter 1285. She stated that the applicant had adhered to the sidewalk requirement along Center Ridge Road and was proposing a four-foot-wide sidewalk along the entire frontage.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was a representative for the application.

Thomas Kelly, 33256 Center Ridge Road, North Ridgeville, OH 44039.

Jeff Byers, 4304 Clague Road, North Olmsted, OH, 44070.

Mr. Kelly explained that he owned the auto body shop next to it, Caliber Collision for 40 years and that for many years Century Tavern was a real sore spot for him, and he didn't like the place, but his wife, before she passed away, always wanted to own it. He discussed that eventually once he added onto his building, he had to make a decision, and he bought it, and he has brought it back to life. He stated that he was really proud of what he had accomplished and wanted to do it for the City. He explained that he was always proud of North Ridgeville and really wanted the project to look good. He mentioned that he wasn't a developer but bought it and fell in love with it and saved it and was passing it on to his son-in-law.

Mr. Byers stated that his father-in-law had done a lot of work and he and his wife would be doing all of the leg work for Mr. Kelly and that she had a lot of experience in the service industry and he had a lot of experience being a grunt and together they wanted to make Century Tavern a very inclusive, welcoming bar compared to what it used to be. He mentioned that they would be offering adult beverages as well as non-alcoholic offerings and cocktails for people that didn't drink. He stated that they wanted it to be a place where people could gather with their friends and not to be turned into a punch palace getting into fights at two in the morning. He indicated that they wanted to be a part of the community.

Mr. Kelly stated that his love was the beams, the wood, the cherry, the bricks and stated that he was possessed by the place.

Mr. Byers stated that shown was the future plan and that they did want a deck and to have music and be the Whiskey Island of the west side. He added that they wanted to have bands, families, touch-a-truck events, a place to watch the games and really wanted to be a part of the community. Mr. Byers stated that they were looking to start fresh and create a good reputation for it.

Chairman Smolik asked if anyone from the general audience had any questions or comments for the project.

None were given.

Chairman Smolik asked regarding the deck area, if there would be enough parking to facilitate the needs for the tavern or if it would be more beneficial to have that as additional parking where that deck was proposed.

Mr. Kelly stated that currently they were going to keep it as parking because he owned the house next door. He said that he did have future plans to go further, but for now that was taken off and moved the patio to the side. He stated that there was a garage there that he wanted to remove and turn into parking.

He commented that currently he didn't think that deck could go up, but it was a non-factor now because they weren't building it.

Chairman Smolik asked the Administration if there was enough parking to meet the needs for the development plan.

Director Lieber stated that as proposed, the optional future deck would drive additional parking but again they had discussed with the owner the potential pursuit of rezoning for the property next door and the expansion of parking, which would then more than account for all of the parking needed for that additional seating space.

Chairman Smolik stated that there was a comment regarding storm water quality and asked if since it was a renovation, was storm volume required for renovations.

City Engineer Eavenson explained that the code currently left it up to the Engineer if the property was over 15,000 square feet and what they typically had been doing was anything that was in a redevelopment situation that was less than an acre, they had been just asking for a water quality measure that would meet the current NPDES permit. She stated that that had been working out well because often they didn't have enough room to really do a full storm water management without a complete rehab burden.

Chairman Smolik stated that perhaps once they acquired that additional land, then that question could come back up.

City Engineer Evanson stated that they could revisit that.

Chairman Smolik stated that they saw some landscaping along the buffering and asked if there was anything proposed for that.

Mr. Byers stated that it was a mixture of Norway and Blue Spruce and there were a few Red Oaks but that basically it would be a raised bed that would be mulched. He explained that the evergreens didn't lose their foliage, so all year round it would be a buffer and would block headlights from the house, but again the owner of Century Tavern did own the house next door.

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked Director Lieber regarding the buffering, if she had a copy of the plan.

Director Lieber stated that it was on the site plan. She explained that looking at the note just to the left of the buffer strip, it actually broke it down.

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

None were given.

Motion made by Schumann and seconded by Toth to approve the conditional use permit for Century Tavern, 33312 Center Ridge Rd.

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A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 4 No – 0

Motion made by Schumann and seconded by Toth to accept the development plan for Century Tavern, subject to the inclusion of lot lines and water easements in the plan and potential lot consolidations.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 4 No – 0

Elmer Ave Street Vacation, PPN 07-00-045-109-007

Applicant: Cynthia Perry, 7313 Dyke Ave, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of vacating a portion of Elmer Ave. Property is zoned R-1 Residence District.

Application was read.

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

Director Lieber stated that her only comment on the street vacation would be her request that the resulting lot be consolidated with the applicant's parcel so that it didn't remain a separate parcel in the future.

City Engineer Eavenson stated that engineering had requested utilities to be located through OUPS and found no utilities in the proposed Elmer Avenue vacation area. She stated that they also field visited the proposed vacation area and noted a small drainage swale was upon the site and as long as the parties agreed to maintain the existing drainage pattern, engineering had no objections to the vacation.

Cynthia Perry, 7313 Dyke Ave, North Ridgeville, OH 44039.

Mrs. Perry stated that she was requesting the paper street next to her home be vacated. She explained that for over 60 years, her grandfather, husband and herself had maintained the property. She discussed that they did have standing water, so they recently put in an irrigation system, had the ground leveled and had an entire new lawn put in, so that there were no water issues at all. She mentioned that they were looking to put up a privacy fence. She said that she submitted a petition, a scaled description of the paper street, as well as legal documents that she and her neighbor Tim Gibbons had given that were signed and were an understanding that they would each be granted 50 percent of the street upon vacation, requesting that all parcels be unified having the residential and the paper street be one parcel, which they would be willing to do and then also submit a final survey of the combined property.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was anyone from the audience that wished to speak on the matter.

Jessica Kordos, 7344 Dyke Ave, North Ridgeville, OH 44039.

Ms. Kordos stated that she was her neighbor right across the street on Elmer Avenue and they had a similar problem with it. She discussed that in looking at the photo, her house was technically

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encroaching that street. She stated that they had an addition put on prior to her purchasing the home and it was authorized by the City of North Ridgeville but upon looking at her roof line she was encroaching that street. She stated that she seconded her motion to separate the property between the property owners.

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

None were given.

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

None were given.

Motion made by Schumann and seconded by Toth to recommend vacating a portion of Elmer Avenue subject to lot consolidation and the applicants agreeing to maintain the existing drainage on the property.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

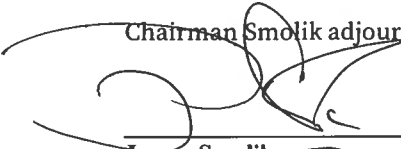
Yes – 4 No – 0

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any further business to come before the Commission.

None was given.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Smolik adjourned the meeting at 7:26 PM.


James Smolik
Chairman


Paul Schumann


Tina Wieber
Deputy Clerk of Council

Tuesday, October 8, 2024
Date Approved