

NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

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, Frank Toth, 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.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson.

Moved by Smolik and seconded by Ali to nominate James Smolik for the position of Chairperson.

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Chairperson. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

Moved by Paul Schumann and seconded by Smolik to nominate Paul Schumann for the position of Vice-Chairperson.

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Vice-Chairperson. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Secretary.

Moved by Smolik and seconded by Toth to nominate Tina Wieber for the position of Secretary.

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Secretary. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals.

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

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Alternate Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals.

Moved by Smolik and seconded by Toth to nominate Steve Ali for the position of Alternate Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals.

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Alternate Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

Member Smolik opened the floor for nominations for Planning Commission appointment to Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council.

Moved by Smolik and seconded by Toth to nominate James Smolik for the position of Planning Commission appointee to Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council.

Member Smolik asked if there were any other nominations for Planning Commission appointment to Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council. No further discussion was offered and nominations were declared closed.

A roll call vote was taken to elect James Smolik to the position of Chairman, Paul Schumann to the position of Vice-Chairman, Tina Wieber to the position of Secretary, Frank Toth to the position of Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals, Steve Ali to the position of Alternate Liaison to the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals and James Smolik to the position of Planning Commission appointee to Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council.

Yes – 5 No – 0

MINUTES:

Chairman Smolik asked if the members had a chance to review the minutes of the regular meeting on December 10, 2024. He asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Administrative Approvals & Zoning Certificates

1. PPZ2024-0328 Modern Massage and Spa LLC, 35439 Center Ridge Rd

Administrative Approval of Registration Certificate and Certificate of Zoning Compliance for massage establishment.

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

Director Lieber stated there was one Administrative Approval of a zoning certificates since the last meeting for Modern Massage and Spa which would be going into the building share with Pulp.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

PPZ2024-0318 City Limits, 39462 Center Ridge Rd, PPN 07-00-046-101-006

Owner: Stephen Joseph, 36821 Sugar Ridge Rd, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of site

improvements for restaurant and lounge. Property is zoned I-3 Heavy Industrial District. Note: Ordinance 2024-136, Rezoning to B-3 Highway Commercial District is pending approval by City Council.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber for findings of fact.

Director Lieber stated Because council had approved the rezoning, even though it hadn't taken effect yet, she advised the Planning Commission to consider as if this property were rezoned for the purpose of their review and recommendation that evening. She explained that the applicant was proposing to open a restaurant and lounge in the existing building on the property and that additionally, the proposal included the construction of a new patio on the west side of the building. She discussed that restaurants were a permitted use in the district, while bars and Taverns were conditional uses in the B-3 Highway Commercial District, so she recommended that in addition to their approval of the development plan, that they issue a conditional use permit for the bar/tavern component since it appeared to be a significant portion of that particular business. She stated that the existing business building was non-conforming in that it did not meet the current front or side setback requirements although it had been there a long time. She mentioned that the parking lot area was formerly striped in a manner that did not meet code requirements, which had been updated recently and also failed to meet the required 10-foot yard setback from the right-of-way line in the front. She said that the submittal showed some changes to the south elevation of the building and in the staff review meeting with the applicant, it was indicated to the applicant that the elevations needed more detail as to materials and construction details, but to date, those changes had not been additionally provided at the time of her report or at the time of the meeting. She explained that the patio itself would involve the removal of two sets of existing stairs and some of the landscaped area outside the building and the construction of the patio would be about 6 feet above grade with an ADA ramp installed and new stairs. She said that the applicant was showing a small flower bed area that would separate the ADA ramp from the right-of-way area which would help to create some definition in the front of the building and there was a dumpster enclosure shown towards the rear of the property which was required by code and that the details had been provided. She said that one of the challenges of the current site was that the ingress and egress was not well defined and that even in the past there were parking spaces that actually encroached into the City's right-of-way along the front of the building, so the current project had the opportunity to address some of those previous problems. She stated that the parking was going to be reconfigured to provide the required set back from the right-of-way and that the proposed plan showed the use of paint striping to delineate one way in and one way out. She mentioned that the ingress would be on the west and the egress would be closer to the building on the east side. She stated that the parking spaces did meet the code requirements for size. She discussed that the plan did include ADA spaces and that based upon the proposed seating provided by the applicant, the parking would be adequate with a total of 50 spaces is shown in the plan, and that would satisfy the 39 required by the bar restaurants and then also the salon. She stated that she did recommend that the parking lot be patched, sealed and restriped as it wasn't in the best condition and could use a little bit of refurbishment before this restriping happened. She mentioned that some landscaping had been provided and that the applicant had proposed landscape planters both along the south face of the building and then also in that area to the west of the entrance drive where he was showing a raised bed around the ground sign and also that planter box along the ADA ramp. She said that the applicant provided some additional details since the staff review meeting about how the remainder of the site would be treated. She discussed that currently there were weeds and it was ill maintained along that west property line in that point in the back area and now they were showing some better notes about the treatment of those areas. She stated that they continued to require more detail on the elevations to include proposed colors, materials and construction detail of any exterior changes. She said that they had also talked in the staff review about making sure that any railing around the patio went all the way around so that there weren't any exposed edges where patrons could fall off and also that the City required a photometric plan but the light fixture information provided did not meet the code requirements

and still needed a photometric plan that showed illumination levels and what was submitted was a little vague on what kind of pole fixtures were going to be provided and whether or not they met code requirements, so that was still an outstanding issue as of the meeting. She added that there was also a letter that was submitted by the Ohio Turnpike and their request to provide a fence along the shared property line with the Turnpike.

City Engineer Eavenson stated that the prepared site plan did show parking striping in accordance with the new parking standards, including the drive aisle and parking stall sizes and that the drive aisle did appear to be traversable for emergency services, but that would be reviewed with the fire department during final plan review. She explained that since it was an area that they were not necessarily targeting to improve the active transportation plan for pedestrian activity, they did not specifically ask for a dedicated sidewalk, however, most of the entire tree lawn area in front of the property is asphalt. She stated that she would recommend that the applicant include that area of pavement to be resealed and adjusted for maintenance so that any pedestrian could traverse across the property safely. She added that because there is no major site renovation being done to the project, engineering did not ask for any stormwater management measures but they did ask the applicant to reduce the amount of hardscape surfaces and he had done that with additional landscape features that were shown on the site plan.

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

Stephen Joseph, 36821 Sugar Ridge Rd, North Ridgeville, OH 44039.

Geoffrey Smith, 124 Middle Ave, Suite 800, Elyria, OH 44035.

Mr. Joseph stated that they had restriped and took back the striped berm because it was encroaching towards the right-of-way, so they moved that back and added some planters and added the section that was going to be grass where the telephone pole was. He stated that there was tall grass from the railroad and that they were going to mow that down and then keep that as a maintained grassed area to at the edge of the parking lot. He discussed that regarding the back triangle, they were going to just leave stone in and put evergreens back across there or winter gems across the back parking lot there and then just maintain the weed free stone triangle out back. He discussed that he didn't want anyone back there because of the telephone poles from the railroad tracks. He commented that the one thing that he wanted to put a facade on the front of the building and stated that those were on architectural drawings.

Mr. Smith stated it was a tough property to deal with based on its configuration and that Steve had put a lot of time and effort into it. He mentioned that the facade was something that was a work in progress, but that the parking had been corrected according to what the City wanted in terms of the ingress and egress, and he certainly would pave the front of it. He remarked that he was a little surprised at the letter from the Turnpike, as he very rarely had seen where a neighbor came in and said that they wanted them to put up a fence to protect their property. He explained that there was probably close to a 15-foot embankment there with the Turnpike already and that they certainly would be able to put their own fence in if they wanted to. He stated that Mr. Joseph was going to try and clean the property up and see what he could do, but a requirement to install a fence as far as he was aware would only be required when a pool was put in the backyard to keep people out of the yard. He indicated that he was surprised by that fence request, and he didn't think that was something that the Commission should concern itself with.

Mr. Joseph stated that regarding the lighting, he was going to have to get another drawing or get an engineer to do the drawing on the lighting, but the lighting was all existing currently and that the whole property is only 1 1/4 acres and there were five LED lights around the building plus the sign that was out front of the parking lot. He mentioned that regarding the Turnpike, it was a six-story hill up there. He added that if

anyone had ever gone to the property, the building was only two stories, and the hill was three times the size of the building. He stated that there was a fence there that the Ohio Turnpike had and that it had barbed wire on it already, so that no one could cross into the Turnpike. He added that there was a four-foot ditch right after that fence that was a drainage ditch from the hill, and it went north over into Elyria.

Chairman Smolik asked if there were any member of the audience who wished to speak regarding the project.

No one came forward.

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

Mr. Schumann asked regarding the fence that was currently there, if it was a four-foot fence.

Mr. Joseph stated that it was.

Mr. Schumann asked if ran the length of the property.

Mr. Joseph stated that it did.

Mr. Schumann asked if there was barbed wire on top of it.

Mr. Joseph stated that there was, and he did not put that there himself.

Mr. Schumann asked if that was all the way down.

Mr. Joseph stated that it was from Center Ridge and across Center Ridge all the way to underneath the overpass.

Council Liaison Abens stated that pertaining to their lighting, the other suggestion he would have would be to make sure that the Ohio Turnpike reviewed the lighting plan as well. He mentioned that he knew from experience that they could be a hassle in that regard too, because they had gotten an easement that went 40 or 50 feet away from the Turnpike.

Member Ali stated that he was getting it cleaned up and that the property had been an eyesore. He mentioned that he was his neighbor and that it looked good what they were doing so far. He added that he thought the fence was probably a little bit overkill. He stated that he had no problem with the way it is.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that the Director brought up a couple other things and asked if he had any problem with the recommendation about patching and sealing the parking lot before he striped?

Mr. Joseph stated that he did not.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that he wanted to add that as a recommendation and commented that the Administration would like some more detail on the facade material wise, and that was for the elevation all the way around the building.

Director Lieber stated that the submittal was basically a kind of artistic representation of an idea, but it did not contain enough data to approve and then issue a permit by, so it might show the Commission the

direction that the applicant was going, but it didn't have materials, measurements, colors or any construction detail that they would normally require for any building changes. She added that she would treat it as a conceptual at that point rather than something that the Commission could act on.

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked if it would be appropriate for the Commission to have that be a recommendation that the details be given to the City to their satisfaction.

Director Lieber commented that if the Commission wanted to do that, that was certainly within their authority to delegate her review of building changes, so long as the Commission was happy with what they had seen in the package and the direction it was going. She stated that if they were not happy, to let her know because that would be what she would base her future approval on.

Mr. Smith stated that they were happy to do that to provide architectural drawing measurements more at the side that you know what the materials are, etcetera, whatever Kim would like.

Member Toth asked if there would be a sign package coming to them for the refurbishment of the main sign and commented that he also noticed that he was going to have directional signs there like Do not enter, Enter and asked if there was a requirement for a sign package to be coming through for approval.

Director Lieber stated that any new sign would require a permit. She explained that the code did allow for driveway signs where there were limited access drives like there being one way in or one way out, the code made an allowance for some additional signage that would otherwise not be permitted, so long as it didn't exceed a certain height. She said that they would need to see that, and it would need to be submitted for permit and would be reviewed at that time. She mentioned that the applicant hadn't indicated any signage other than the notes on the plan at that point intended, so they hadn't seen that yet.

Member Toth asked regarding the fence that was currently there, if that was his fence on his property or was that Turnpike property that they had fenced off.

Mr. Joseph stated that it was the Turnpike's and that the Turnpike fenced that off because it went all the way from the underpass and with the Turnpike underpass, it went all the way to the corner and all the way straight down the Turnpike.

Member Toth remarked that they had effectively fenced their property off from him.

Mr. Joseph stated that was correct.

Member Toth stated that in looking at where he was placing the outdoor deck it appeared to him that he was going to go right across a man door on the side of the building. He commented that on the demolition plan it showed he was removing the two staircases and then was building a deck, and he believed it was 57 feet from the front of the building towards the rear, it looked to him like it was going to be very close to that glass entry area.

Mr. Joseph stated that there was going to be room between there and that it was not going up against that glass but would be 3 feet away.

Member Toth asked if he would cover up the one door then on the west side of the building.

Mr. Joseph stated that no, that door was going to get raised and it would be on top. He stated that he was

going to raise it up above, so that there would be two entrances from the patio into the building. He explained that there was going to be the main entrance and then that would be another, like an emergency door, but he was going to raise it. He stated that it was there now but he was going to raise it up to the height of the deck.

Member Toth asked if he was going to put a railing all the way around that deck.

Mr. Joseph stated that he thought the engineer plan had it on there. He stated that it showed the railing on one side but that it did go all the way around.

Director Lieber stated that if that was the intent, it wasn't represented very clearly.

Member Toth stated that there was a dock in the back that had what appeared to be like a residential type garage door, a pull down door that was a 16 footer and asked if he was going to use that as his loading dock.

Mr. Joseph stated that he was not and that there was no access in the back.

Member Toth asked how he was going to take deliveries at that location

Mr. Joseph stated that it would be off the loading dock off the east side of the building.

Member Toth asked if there is a dock there already, a truck dock in between his building and the embankment of the Turnpike.

Mr. Joseph stated that was correct that it was existing and that there was also an emergency escape, and it had a staircase and railings on it already.

Member Toth remarked that in the notes he stated that the beauty salon was going to continue utilizing the rear of the building there.

Mr. Joseph stated that was correct.

Member Toth asked if there would be an entrance into City Limits from that glass area.

Mr. Joseph stated there would not.

Member Toth asked if that would be specifically for the rear of the building business, whatever that may be at that time.

Mr. Joseph stated that was correct.

Chairman Smolik stated that he liked the fact that they were trying to redevelop that parcel, but he thought that the plan needed a little bit more polishing. He explained that there were a couple of things that he was uncomfortable with, and the main thing was the entrance to the parcel because there was a utility pole and a fire hydrant probably within 5 feet of that. He stated that he wanted to see possibly the drive entryway shifted to the west because he could see cars clipping that. He stated that there was a relatively large utility pole that couldn't be moved and looked to be a transmission line.

Mr. Joseph stated that he was going to put a flower bed there so it would be a little protected.

Chairman Smolik stated that it was still in the turning radius entering and that it was too close and that it would be beneficial for the patrons and everyone if it got shifted away from the utility pole.

Mr. Joseph asked how many feet.

Chairman Smolik commented that that would be up to his engineer of record because they would have to do their due diligence and design. He stated that based on the level that the plans were at, he was uncomfortable with it at that point in time and the Administration had some issues that they wanted addressed as well and it was just a matter of collecting some more information as well. He stated that overall, it was a great plan, but he didn't think they were there yet. He stated that they needed the photometric plan, and the front elevation all needed to be worked out also.

Mr. Smith stated that if the Commission wished to table it to the next meeting, they were welcome to do that to redo the plans a little bit.

Mr. Joseph asked if the issues were the photo and the façade and the turning radius on the plan.

Chairman Smolik stated that his issues were with the entryway and sliding it over to the west and if they could get the emergency vehicle turning radius shown on the lot as well.

Mr. Smith stated that he thought that she said that the emergency vehicles were not an issue getting in and out.

City Engineer Eavenson mentioned that she said it would be reviewed.

Member Toth asked if they could get some more definition on that sign area where he stated he was going to build up a flower bed to protect the fire hydrant and the transmission pole.

Mr. Joseph stated that the fire hydrant stuck out further than the telephone pole, so it was out in the right of way by Center Ridge Road and it only sat about two feet off of Center Ridge and the pole sat about six feet off of Center Ridge.

Mr. Smith stated that they would do what they could with it and figure it out.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that they need detail on the rail and to make sure that it was in the plan and better detail on the materials for the facade and all the materials on the outside of the building.

Mr. Joseph stated that it was an all-brick building. He stated that what he was going to do was add stucco to the brick just to break it up because it was a brick building.

Vice-Chairman stated that he would want to have the materials that he was actually going to be using on the plan.

Council Liaison Abens stated that the Ohio Turnpike was requesting that fence and asked if they had to adhere to that request?

Director Lieber stated that they did not.

Moved by Schumann and seconded by Ali to table the application until the next meeting.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 5 No – 0

PPZ2024-0327 South Central Park Playground, 7565 Avon Belden Rd, PPN 07-00-022-101-054

Applicant: Jeff Snider, Snider Recreation, 10139 Royalton Rd, Suite K, North Royalton, OH 44133. Proposal consists of playground removal and new playground installation. Property is zoned R-1 Residential District.

Application was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber for findings of fact.

Director Lieber stated that she would give the presentation over to the Parks and Rec Director but wanted to mention that the application was coming before the Commission because of the mandatory referral provision in the charter that any public improvements must be reviewed and approved by Planning Commission.

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

Kevin Fougrousse, 29940 Westminster Dr. North Olmsted, OH 44070.

Jeff Snider, 7668 N Linden Lane, Parma, OH 44130.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that they were there to present the new playground in South Central Park. He explained that they sent out RFQs back in October for design build and worked with GPD Group as the Art League architect and received 5 proposals back at that time. He stated that recommendations by the City and GPD Group were to award the project to Snyder Recreation. He discussed that the playground was replacing the current structure that had been there since 1997. He stated that the new playground was going to be located in the same location as the existing playground and would be for ages 5 through 12. He added that the North Ridge of Rotary was also donating \$15,000 to the project and that they would actually be purchasing the zip line that was shown on the north end of that project. He said that they had multiple walkways already adhered to the project for ADA accessibility coming from Schultz Lane off of Bainbridge Road and also off the main parking lot off of Avon Belden Rd. He mentioned that there was ample shade for the playground that will be installed as it was umbrellaed by hundreds and hundreds of trees out in the park system.

Chairman Smolik commented that he didn't see anybody in the audience and closed the general public session. He asked if any of the Commission members had any questions or comments regarding the project.

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked what their timeline was.

Mr. Fougrousse stated that once they received approval from Planning Commission, they already had the contract approved so they would start moving forward with it and Snider Recreation would hopefully break ground barring any setbacks in February, so we can have this open in spring.

Council Liaison Abens asked regarding what looked like the spider web, was that going to be rope.

Mr. Snider stated that it was a nylon rope with steel inserts.

Council Liaison Abens asked if it needed to be changed periodically.

Mr. Snider stated that there might be some wear on it where they might have to do replacements to certain pieces, but it was actually steel threaded with nylon around the steel. He said that unless somebody went out with their hacksaw or something they were not going to be cutting through it.

Council Liaison Abens asked if the potential for a kid to hang himself was very minimal.

Mr. Snider stated that it was designed not to be able to loop and get around. He stated that it was designed with enough tension that it couldn't.

Mr. Toth stated that he went through the application and he wanted to take a look at the what his past performance had looked like, so he took the liberty to call some of the past performance references that were given as part of their package and he called up those references and asked them three questions and that he wanted to share with the Commission members and Mr. Snider the responses that he received. He stated that the first question he asked of those individuals were "Did Snider do what they said they were going to do and did they do it in the time they estimated it would take?" and the responses to that question he received were "Yes, very patient, overperformed, very pleased, numerous projects, great communication, always on time, absolutely great communication above and beyond, experienced crew, a multi-generational operation." He stated that the second question he asked was "Were they responsive to concerns which arose during the project and were they flexible and creative with their solutions to concerns and or any unanticipated challenges encountered?" He stated that the response he received to that one was that one city director told him that their playground was located on a quarry and that they were not aware of this, and that Mr. Snider hit bedrock 36 inches down. They stated that he did not charge them any additional money, he did not bemoan the situation but simply got to work and handled the situation. He stated that another response he got was "Yes, they were very easy to get a hold of and responded in usually less than a day and that he provided numerous workarounds to problems if there was some type of delay in getting a part or some type of material." He said that another response was, "Never any issues with them, three projects, 0 change orders and also a recommendation on the zip line has proven to be the most popular item in their playground. And everybody loved that." He stated that that particular director stated there was a problem with theirs and Snider was able to basically remanufacture part of the zip line so that it functioned to their satisfaction and to the community's enjoyment. He said that the final question he asked them was, in their opinion, did their community realize maximum return on its investment by employing Snider Recreation and the responses were "Oh my God, yes, it's a destination playground, I have absolutely nothing but positive feedback with their projects, the zip line is a real crowd pleaser, absolutely far and above other vendors we have used for similar projects, three quotes apples to apples, absolutely hands down the best." He stated that he was really looking forward to seeing what he would put together for our City.

Chairman Smolik asked regarding the swing location, it sort of seemed a little bizarre to him because usually they were on the perimeter and obviously the zip line was a popular feature, but he thought that kids would be running through the swings when kids were on them. He asked if any thought had been given to moving that to one of the perimeters.

Mr. Snider stated that originally, they kind of had the zip line separate. He stated that the 3D was probably not representing it quite right, but the zip line was going to be a little bit further back with space in between them.

Mr. Fougousse stated that was correct and that it was going to be a little bit further back from the swings

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and would not be right on top of them. He commented that unfortunately the rendering was not really showing that, but there was an ample amount of space for that to go through.

Chairman Smolik stated that he concurred with all those comments in regard to Snider Recreation and that he had professionally known him for a long time and had done multiple projects with him and had no issues.

Council Liaison Abens asked what type of base was going to be in the playground.

Mr. Fougrouse stated that it would be wood fibers.

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 7:46 PM.


James Smolik
Chairman


Tina Wieber
Deputy Clerk of Council

Tuesday, March 11, 2025
Date Approved