

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 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 Frank Toth, Steve Ali, Council Liaison Bruce Abens, Vice-Chairman Paul Schumann and Chairman James Smolik.

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

MINUTES

Chairman Smolik stated that the Commission had received the regular meeting minutes of October 14, 2025 and asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE

Administrative Approvals

1. PPZ2025-0387 The UPS Store, 34297 Center Ridge Rd

Approval of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance for postal, packing and shipping services.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber to discuss the administrative approvals.

Director Lieber stated that she had just one administrative approval for a new business, The UPS Store, since the last meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

- O 2025-110 **An Ordinance amending Sections 1266.02, 1268.02, 1270.02, and ~~1272.04~~ of the North Ridgeville Zoning Code to update use regulations for automobile service station and gasoline station, as amended.**

(Introduced by Councilman Abens; First Reading on 07-21-2025; Council referred to Planning Commission and Building and Lands on 07-21-2025; to Building and Lands on 08-18-2025; to Planning Commission on 09-09-25; Council approved PC extension on 09/15/2025; to Planning Commission on 10-14-2025)

Ordinance was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber if she wanted to discuss the legislation.

Director Lieber stated that at the last Planning Commission meeting, there was discussion by the members in regard to some of the concerns that had been expressed by staff that the one-mile radius of

gas stations could function as prohibition against any new gas station in the city. She explained that when we they left that meeting there was the idea of pursuing more of a half mile radius for certain districts and possibly taking the B-4 district out since it was really a district that was focused on serving the motoring public, so imposing a radius would be really not in line with the intent of that district. She stated to then also to clarify what was an accessory to versus a main use gas station and that one of the clarifications she also wanted to make was not just if a gas station was existing at the time the ordinance went into effect and became nonconforming, could it be reconstructed, just because they had seen that happen in the region as some brands update their buildings and their properties. She discussed that the version before them was what she drafted based upon what she thought she heard the Commission say. She was aware that there might not be unanimous agreement, so there was still room for discussion and debate, but it added in the B-2, which was proposed at the last meeting but she refined the language around the separation and how the separation did not apply where the automobile service station was an accessory use and then gave three different standards of what would constitute accessory use. She explained that the changes in the B-3 District again would be to change the one mile spacing to the half mile and then also to add those clarifying those accessory use definitions and she struck out the B-4 from the ordinance and then maintained the strikeout of B-5 which was included in the original version and then added a Section 4 at the end that just says that legally established active non-conforming gas stations may be reconstructed on the same lot following demolition, just to clarify that if there should be a remodel, that gets so far as removing the building and rebuilding the building. She mentioned that there was still much room for the Planning Commission to debate and discuss, but those were the changes that were made based on the 1/2 mile spacing. She added that there were certainly more sites in the city that could be constructed than there was under the one-mile, which was all but almost entirely prohibitive, except for one or two locations.

Assistant Law Director Morgan stated that the changes that she heard go toward addressing some of the concerns she had but at this point she would say as far as the Commission went, if they were satisfied that those changes left enough room for the building of gas stations, new gas stations with the half mile radius, then that would address that concern. She mentioned that the other concern was, is there a reasonable distinction between what was an accessory use and the more free-standing ones and just treating those differently made sense in that case then addresses one of the concerns she had as well. She stated that as they went forward, she would ask them to consider whether those were sufficiently addressed by the changes that they were seeing.

Chairman Smolik asked if there any members of the audience that wanted to comment on the issue brought before the Commission.

Council Liaison Abens stated that the reason he introduced the legislation was due to traveling along Center Ridge and all the gas stations that they had there and trying to prevent that situation from occurring on some of the other throughways. He explained that some of the changes that had been made were changes that made it more palatable and didn't affect the values of any other properties. His main concern was down the road, and Lorain Road was wide open for numerous gas stations if they didn't put some type of restrictions on it and the one thing he had noticed was that they didn't need that many more gas stations right now. He commented that yes, on the western end of North Ridgeville, they probably could use a couple of gas stations, but again, with the regulations as written there, they could still get that particular area serviced. He mentioned that what came to mind was at the corner of Lorain and 83, in the corner of Sugar Ridge and 83, all those could still within the stay outside that half mile radius and they could put in gas stations at that point as well. He indicated that he had heard rumors about a gas station at Chestnut and the 83 extension, that somebody was interested in putting a gas

station there and the one piece of land there, he thought it was B-3, it was it was changed years ago for a hospital clinic that never got built, they could possibly use a gas station there and it would still allow gas stations in areas of need. He said that it would still limit gas stations where they just weren't needed anymore and that also with the provision that if they wanted to put it within that half mile, it would need to be more or less an accessory rather than the main business. That encouraged some of the larger lots that were still available, and it encouraged a more substantial development rather than just a gas station.

Chairman Smolik stated that sitting on Planning Commission, the choices they made now really don't impact the city until many years later, like maybe 20-30 years. He said that he thought it was important that they started thinking about some of those issues that could impact the city down the road, and he thought this was one of them because things were changing. He stated that they were moving away from the single gas station per se to those large development types, where they had a big box store and then some pumps or something to that similar effect. He commented that he thought that was probably the way it was transitioning. He stated that he thought changing the mile to half mile did still allow some parcels still to develop the standalone gas station. He added that he thought it was a good collaboration of all the comments put together, and he liked what he saw.

Member Toth stated that he had a question for the administration. He said that he wanted to speak specifically about Snappy Gas located at the corner of Chestnut and Route 83, and that it was essentially the only gas station serving that quadrant of North Ridgeville. He stated that it was an independent station and was curious if that owner/operator decided to close that gas station, would one have to wait one year in order to build another gas station somewhere within that half mile. He asked if they would have wait until that a lot became non-conforming before they could proceed with the construction of another station.

Director Liber commented that that was a good question. She remarked, so if the gas station were to go out of business, the facility itself remained, so it was not demolished and it was still there, but it was closed.

Member Toth stated, say they just shut off their gas distribution, they just operate as a convenience store.

Director Lieber commented that then in the time being before that gas station lost its ability to reopen another gas station were located in 1/2 mile from them.

Member Toth stated that that was correct.

Assistant Law Director Morgan stated that there used to be language about "not used for its purpose" and asked if that had been taken out or changed in any way in "non-conforming uses". Not just that it's physically removed, but it's simply not used for the use that it was originally built for. She stated that she didn't remember the time frame, but she would have to go look it up, but it would become non-conforming if it was not used.

Member Toth stated within a year.

Director Lieber stated that prior to the update, it was a two-year period of time before something became nonconforming, which seemed excessively long, so it was changed to one year. She stated that she

couldn't answer his question without further research, but that it was a good question.

Law Director Morgan asked if he was talking about if the same thing wanted to go in there.

Member Toth responded "or within that half-mile radius that that particular legislation would prohibit, would they maintain basically a placeholder spot".

Director Lieber remarked like across the street or on the opposite corner, that was zoned B-3, could a gas station open there, snap these saying they're vacant but not demolished and then six months later new operator comes in and wants to reopen.

Member Toth stated that that was correct.

Council Liaison Abens stated that it would depend on how they closed, if they closed business period because he believed EPA regulations would start taking over, meaning they would have to pull their tanks and that would be within a couple of months of closing. He discussed that if it was a matter of closing and another owner taking over, that would be a different story. He said that if they closed and went bankrupt, and left, they would have to pull their tanks and he didn't think the year was effective at that point, they just had to pull their tanks.

Director Lieber stated that she would think the loss of their tanks would render it not able to be reopened.

Council Liaison Abens stated that that was correct. He mentioned that he believed that when new ownership took over, the EPA again would step in and ask, how old are those tanks in the ground, the new owner may be required to put in new tanks as well.

Assistant Law Director Morgan stated that that might be required, but they knew how fast BUSTER moved.

Council Liaison Abens stated that he understood but he was just saying that based upon that, the year may not apply. He added that if they closed for business purposes or bankruptcy, they would be longer in compliance because they would now get an order pulling tanks.

Member Ali stated that with his Sunoco, BUSTER gave them two years, but that was going back 10 years. He stated that if he had to shoot from the hip stated that it was probably about a year for the Ohio EPA BUSTER.

Council Liaison Abens commented that they give them two years, but they give them the orders to pull those tanks though.

Member Ali stated that he thought it was about a year before they gave the orders.

Director Lieber stated that one nuance was that the Snappy gas example, she didn't know if it was currently within 1/2 mile of another gas station, but if it were too close, it was not in and of itself non-conforming, yet it could be opened as a gas station again because again it was zoned B-3 and it would not

be within 1/2 mile. It would be if another gas station were to come in, that would be the issue as to whether it could reopen. She stated that it was not really a non-conforming issue because that could happen somewhere on Center Ridge where a gas station closed and was non-conforming and then that year mattered more. She stated that if the site was not within a 1/2 mile, there's no nonconformity happening.

Council Liaison Abens discussed that if Snappy decided to close for whatever reason, the ordinance would make the property more valuable to that person who wanted to put a gas station in that area, because now he'll consider taking over that site rather than trying to fight our regulations.

Member Ali stated that once they pulled those tanks the property it looked bad, like a war zone.

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked Member Toth if there was a desire to keep the gas station at that location, if that was what he was saying for a lot of reasons

Member Toth remarked or anywhere in that area to service that side of North Ridgeville because they had nothing there.

Vice-Chairman Schumann asked if he meant that particular site.

Member Toth stated that he was more concerned about them closing and being a placeholder for one year. He discussed that they didn't even need to close, they could just quit selling gas, and you couldn't put another station within a half of a mile.

Member Ali stated that from personal experience, once those tanks were removed that property was like a nuclear landfill. You might as well sell the land full of tires because nobody will want that property.

Council Liaison Abens stated that that was one of the reasons for the legislation because they had a number of gas stations along Center Ridge or areas that were gas stations. He stated that he could point to the corner and that was one of the reasons why you would want to limit gas stations, because if a gas station went in there, it would be a gas station site for probably the next 50 to 100 years and that's why we want to try and limit gas station development. He mentioned that he was sorry that he couldn't find it but he did have it, he had a picture of the corner over on 83 and Center Ridge from 1947 that showed a Gulf Gas Station and a parade going by it and guess what, they still can't build over there because of that Gulf Gas Station. He mentioned that now they did have a grant to clean and reclaim, but that was the second one and he had heard all kinds of stories about the owner of that station. He stated that the point was that they needed to limit gas stations and that he was looking 50 years down the road and he would sure like the city to have more than just gas stations or abandoned sites because, "it used to be a gas station" or "we can't do anything with it". He stated that he grew up in Parma and they had a gas station on just about every corner, and those corners are dead sites.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that one of the biggest issues that he had with the legislation originally a month ago was what Mr. Toth brought up about the west side of town being so underserved and he thought there was a lot of room for a gas stations and a lot of other stuff on the west End of town. He discussed that he thought the half of a mile was a lot more appropriate and he was a lot more comfortable with it. He commented that he wasn't really sure about Member Toth's issue, but he was comfortable with the legislation now.

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

None were given.

Moved by Abens and seconded by Ali to approve the legislation.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 4 No – 1 (Toth)

O 2025-145 An Ordinance providing for the renaming of Thibo Trail to Orchard Park Drive.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-03-2025)

Ordinance was read.

Chairman Smolik asked Director Lieber if she wanted to discuss the legislation.

Director Lieber explained that the legislation was initiated as a petition by the developer and that the applicant had requested the name change of Thibo Trail. She discussed that they indicated due to frequent misspellings or mispronunciations Thibo Trail, the applicant had considered Ridgewood Way as an alternate name, but Planning Commission noted that there could be some potential confusion as there is an existing mobile home community off of Center Ridge Road. She stated that she knew that they had an Orchard Lane and an Orchard Grove Court already, but Orchard Park Drive seemed sufficiently distinct to avoid that confusion. She said that there had also been raised the issue of just the entrance being a driveway and also a private street and where the street name should start, so she thought critically Planning Commission should confirm through this process where the street name Orchard Park Drive would begin as it did not begin right at that intersection at 83. Those homes existing on the entrance drive are Avon Belden addresses and it would be confusing to have a street name sign right at that. For that driveway intersects with Avon Belden when it comes to deliveries or other kinds of response. So having a development sign there that would identify the development she thought was appropriate, but having the street name sign would not be appropriate until the point the street started, which would be at the bend once it entered into the site and then traveled past those existing single family homes and then into the development, so I she suggested that this process, they defined where that street name should start and then also make sure it was distinct from those existing homes that were on Avon Belden.

Assistant Director Morgan stated that it just occurred to her and wasn't an issue that she had looked at previously, but she thought they were encouraged to have a street have one name the whole length of it. She mentioned that the procedure for name changing either for a street or an alley and looking at our definitions and it didn't doesn't fit the definition for an alley that we have because an alley is something to provide access to the rear or the side of lots and not intended for the purpose of through vehicular traffic, so it's not an alley. She stated that if they wanted to approve a name change, then they would have to call it a street, and it seemed unusual to her to have a street name change halfway through or where exactly it would change. She asked if it would be Thibo Trail for how far in.

Director Lieber stated that it would not be Thibo Trail at all. She discussed that there were subdivisions throughout North Ridgeville where the name changes on the bend.

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING–TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

PAGE 7

Assistant Law Director Morgan stated they have had an ordinance that says it shouldn't, but she was correct. She stated that she thought they were going to name it the same all the way through, but it's something to consider whether the Commission thought it was an appropriate thing to do and they had to be satisfied that it is indeed a street.

Chairman Smolik asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to comment or had questions in regard to the application.

Holly Swenk, 36259 Center Ridge, North Ridgeville, OH 44039

Ms. Swenk stated that the issue she had was with the people who own the homes that were currently on 83 and stated that they would have to change their trusts and their mortgages. She stated that the USPS would have to be all changed and asked who would pay for that change if they were to rename it starting at 83. She stated that she did not want them to have to go through that hassle as homeowners.

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

Mallory Mazurek, SLK Capitol Holdings LLC, 27106 E Oviatt Rd, #40411, Bay Village, OH 44140

Ms. Mazurek Stated that she was representing the landowner and developer at Richfield Farms and confirming what Director Lieber stated, the existing homes would maintain their address as Avon Belden as the current plan showed and shown on the street sign starting at the bend and that currently would be Thibo Trail but they would like it to change to Orchard Park Drive.

Chairman Smolik stated that it was his understanding that none of the addresses on Avon Belden wanted to change their address, they wanted to keep it the same. He asked what emergency services comments were on it and asked what they would like to see for mutual aid because mutual aid was a big thing for someone from another city coming in.

Director Lieber stated that their comment to the city engineer was that they use their GPS system and they punch in an address and then they go, so as long as they're not looking at street signs to navigate their way to an emergency, so as long as the houses are and the units are properly addressed, they will find their way there.

Vice-Chairman Schumann commented that it was a private street, so essentially, it's a big driveway, right.

Director Lieber stated that it wasn't a private driveway, it was a private street.

Vice-Chairman Schumann stated that he didn't know why they would have a have a problem with changing the name and leaving those addresses on 83, he remarked that he didn't see an issue.

Chairman Smolik stated that he was a little confused. He said that if the street name was changed, we'll call it the north-south leg, the United States Postal Service wants them to change their address then and asked if that was what he was hearing.

Director Lieber stated that she did not believe that the post office wanted them to change their addresses, and she didn't know what happened with Lorain County, but the post office accepts addresses from the Building Official. Lorain County has been showing that stretch in front of the Avon Belden houses as Thibo Trail, but the city is unsure as to how they got that information because it was not provided as part of the recorded plat because it didn't have street names on it at the time. So that's a bit of a mystery that will have to be corrected with Lorain County, but the post office has not changed though. She explained that if you clicked on those individual homes, the address, the street name has not changed, and they were still listed as Avon Belden. She commented that they just wanted to ensure that our records, the mapping, the post office, everything is saying the same thing, that those continue to be Avon Belden addresses and that the bend is where the new street begins and from that point forward all the addresses would be the Orchard addresses.

Chairman Smolik stated that the consensus seemed to be that no one really has an issue with the name change, it was more or less the limits. He mentioned that it sounded like the administration preferred where it went from north to south to bends to east to west, that was where they think the name change should occur and then the rest would be just an unnamed private road. He asked if that was the way they looked at it.

Director Lieber stated that that was correct.

Chairman Smolik commented that emergency services would have an address still as Avon Belden for wayfinding they would still be able to find that. He asked if those people had any issues getting any mail and remarked that they had always been that way since the overpass went in, so nothing had really changed. He asked if there were any other further questions or comments.

Member Ali stated that he agreed with Paul and where it stopped and with what Holly said regarding fees and the process.

Moved by Smolik and seconded by Ali to approve the legislation for the renaming of Thibo Trail to Orchard Park Drive with the limits starting where that private drive starts to go east to west and for the people on that private street north to south will have no name change and will still have an Avon Belden address.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes – 5 No – 0

NEW BUSINESS

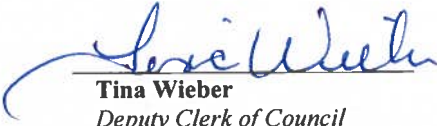
ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairman Schumann adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM.

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING-TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025**



James Smolik
Chairman



Tina Wieber
Deputy Clerk of Council

Tuesday, December 9, 2025
Date Approved

DRAFT