OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 10, 2015
7:30p.m.

Call to Order

Mr. Prytherch called the February 10, 2015 Planning Commission meeting to order.
Those members present: David Prytherch, Kate Rousmaniere, Robert Benson, and Peter McCarthy.
Those members excused: Richard Keebler, Richard Daniels, and Robert Bell.
Staff members present: Jung-Han Chen, Stephen McHugh, and Sam Perry.
Staff members excused: None.

Approval of Minutes of the January 13, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting

Mr. McCarthy asked that a correction to the minutes be made under PC-2014-20. Mr. McCarthy asked that the minutes reflect a request that was made by Mr. Scott Webb to apply drawings to an existing development to help understand the process of designing parking lots in the Vehicle Management Chapter of the zoning code.

Mr. Benson made motion to approve the minutes with correction. Ms. Rousaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comments Related to Items Not on the Agenda

Ms. Prue Dana, 6314 Fairfield Road, expressed her surprise from the February 3, 2015 City Council meeting in their response in dealing with the changing south side of town Area Plan. Ms. Dana stated that she felt this to be a critical area and referred to the Planning Commission and City Council having turned down a recent development in that area. Ms. Dana stated that she felt the south side Area Plan presented by Staff was a good plan and hoped that City Council could revisit along with the Township Trustees. Ms. Dana stated she felt there were parts of the document that were very important.

Mr. Prytherch referred to having had an earlier worksession to discuss how to move forward from a Planning point of view.

Reports from Commissions, Boards, Committees & Staff

Mr. Benson reported that the recent HAPC work session with City Council was very productive and thanked Council for their time.

Ms. Rousmaniere reported for the Environmental Commission of having discussed the Sustainable Plan, and that the Commission requested that it go back for more discussion and that the Township Trustees be included in those dicussions.

Items Related to Platting

There was none.

Items Related to Zoning

PC-2014-20 ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT to revise all sections of Chapter 1149, Vehicle Management, regarding site development requirements for parking areas: minimum and maximum numbers of vehicular spaces, bicycle spaces, parking lot design and layout, pedestrian safety and storm water management. Additionally the related Section 1147 Conditional Uses, new provisions for off-site parking and shared-use parking, City of Oxford, Applicant (Tabled)

Mr. Benson made motion to remove from Table PC-2014-20. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Perry provided an update stating that the changes to be discussed were made based upon discussion from last month. Mr. Perry provided a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Perry provided a quick recap of the major overall changes to the parking requirements. Mr. Perry outlined the rationale for the changes.

Mr. Perry provided a summary of the changes made: added a parking maximum; reduced in quantity, stall size and added new details on dimensional requirements; new provisions for compact stalls, motorcycle and bike parking; eliminated the parking lot alternate design plan and replaced with conditional uses for parking reductions, off-site parking and shared use parking; merged land use categories in Parking section of the zoning code.

Mr. Perry provided an example design of a new site with the current code versus the proposed code.

Mr. Perry displayed an existing site (TJ Maxx) designed with the new code.

Mr. Perry reviewed the zoning code document and the changes that were made from the last Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Scott Webb spoke stating that overall the language was good and the intent was good. However, rather than incorporate the ADA Guidelines into the code, why don't we only reference the Ohio Accessibility Guidelines in the code. Mr. Webb expressed concern about absolutes in the code. In regards to the drawings incorporated in the code, Mr. Webb stated he was confused about parking lot designs and that we were only making the lots bigger, and that if the goal is to reduce the size, don't end up making the lots bigger by putting so many requirements on them.

Mr. Prytherch thanked staff for their hard work. Mr. Prytherch noted that the Commission has addressed a lot of issues, but would have to continue to tinker with the code. Mr. Prytherch inquired the Commission, is this a perfect document, probably not.

Mr. McCarthy inquired if trees could be placed in the setbacks instead of in parking lots where they die. Mr. Prytherch responded that he felt trees could be designed in the lot in a way for them to survive. Mr. Perry added that it came down to the maintenance of the trees. Mr. Perry discussed aisle island tree requirements. Mr. Prytherch asked Mr. Perry to touch upon Mr. Webb's comments regarding ADA compliance language. Mr. Perry agreed that it could be referenced instead and that Staff would remove from the final language. Mr. Perry referred to Mr. Webb's comment regarding aisle width, disagreeing that it is a problem and that he felt it was something we did need. Mr. Perry stated that the number provided in the code could be tweaked; making it clearer and a little more flexible. Mr. Perry stated that he felt there was a need to have a minimum aisle width for maneuverability. Ms. Rousmaniere referred to the TJ Maxx design and Mr. Webb's comment of having less parking but a larger lot. Mr. Perry stated that he disagreed with that comment and that he felt this would be a separate conversation of maybe looking at the restrictions that we are not changing in this code revision; it isn't the parking regulations making the lot bigger.

Mr. Prytherch referred to the pedestrian safety section and striping and that he would like to see it more explicit. Mr. Prytherch also discussed tree irrigation. Staff explained why that could be a problem.

Mr. McCarthy called the question.

Mr. Benson made motion to approve PC-2014-20 with the deletion of language within Section 1149.05(e) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to only make reference to the Ohio Building Code Chapter for ADA requirements. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion.

Roll Call:
AYE: Mr. Benson, Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Rousmaniere, Mr. Prytherch (4)
NAY: None (0)
ABS: None (0)

PC-2015-02 CONDITIONAL USE, Kramer Elementary School, construction of a new elementary school building at the site of the existing Kramer Elementary School, 400 West Sycamore Street, Board of Education, Talawanda School District, Applicant

Mr. Benson made motion to enter into Public Hearing PC-2015-02. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Chen provided an overview of this conditional use with a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Chen stated that the new Kramer Elementary School would be built on the same site as the existing school and that the existing school would stay in operation during construction. Mr. Chen stated that once the new school was built, demolition of the old school would occur and a parking lot would be constructed on the site to the west. Mr. Chen also noted that the new school would achieve LEED Silver Certification.

Mr. Chen provided an aerial photo. Mr. Chen stated that the existing primary access point at N. Locust Street would remain but be changed in function to non-bus traffic only. A new access point would be created further east for buses and deliveries. Mr. Chen displayed the travel pattern. Mr. Chen stated that the travel design would separate cars from buses.

Mr. Chen stated that the site elevation dropped over 50 feet from southwest to northeast so the new building would be lower than Sycamore Street.

Mr. Chen reviewed a couple of zoning issues under the current standards that needed to be discussed: a light and glare issue from a light pole on the southeast side of the school property located fairly close to a residential structure; minimal 6" curbing requirements are missing in the off-street parking area. Mr. Chen stated that the zoning code requires curbing around parking lots; the proposed site layout does not show such curbing; a raised, landscaped and curbed island is provided at every interval of seven parking spaces; the site plan does not show access aisles between each 15 parking spaces; a number of parking lot light fixture heights exceed the allowable height; there are two identification signs over the allowable square footage, and signage for traffic directional purposes exceeds maximum square footage.

Mr. Chen discussed the Miami Trail path. Mr. Chen reminded the Planning Commission of the Safe Route to School document and the City having worked with the school district on this initiative to encourage more walking and biking to school. Mr. Chen reviewed the deficiencies that were identified in this document for the Kramer Elementary site: lack of formal connections to adjacent neighborhoods; on-site pedestrian/vehicle conflicts; missing sidewalks west of N. Locust Street; inadequate sidewalk width for pedestrians and bikes on the north side of Sycamore Street; lack of a signalized intersection at Sycamore Street and Brown Road; a missing sidewalk on the west side of Brown Road. Mr. Chen also stated that in regards to the Miami Trail pathway, the plan did not show a connection from the easement to the sidewalk. Mr. Chen noted that an 8' wide sidewalk along Sycamore does not exist as the sidewalk currently is only 5' wide.

Mr. McCarthy discussed issues that he has with no curbing around parking lots and if there was a better way to handle besides cement curbing.

Ms. Etta Reed, Bayer-Becker, Charlie Jahnigen, SHP Leading Design and Mike Davis, Talawanda School District CFO were present. Ms. Reed stated that the actual school site topography would force drivers to travel down onto the site. Ms. Reed described the travel pickup and drop off design. Ms. Reed described the installation of a detention basin to help with the runoff. Mr. Jahnigen noted that the new school LEED Silver Certification was a positive for the project and that it didn't allow them to installation of curbing around the parking lot. Mr. Jahnigen added that the LEED Certification was the driver behind some of the choices that have been made. Mr. Prytherch inquired if they could suggest a design solution for vehicle tire tracks along the parking lot perimeter. Mr. Jahnigen stated they have found a successful solution by installing 6x6 piers with cable. Mr. Jahnigen reviewed the natural swale and other topography of the site. Mr. Benson shared his concern of avoiding traffic jams. Ms. Reed described staggered release times and taking advantage of the east parking lot. Ms. Reed replied that they still have to work out details with the school district. Mr. Prytherch inquired if they had thought about a drop off not going onto the site. Mr. Jahnigen referred to on-street parking and talking with the City about limiting the parking hours on Sycamore Street.

Mr. Benson inquired about the Miami Trail easement and the encouragement for walking and biking to school. Mr. Jahnigen stated that they were aware of the easement and connectivity; however, they concluded the path was developed as an emergency egress. Mr. Jahnigen continued saying that due to tighter budget constraints existing they could possibly grade for future connection or a gravel path, or find other funding. Discussion followed.

Mr. Benson inquired about the monument sign and if they planned for it to be internally lit. Mr. Jahnigen responded it would be internally lit but could be set up with a timer. Mr. McCarthy inquired if the sign was LED. Mr. Jahnigen stated that it was not a sign with moving text.

Mr. Mike Davis, 2100 Dana Drive, CFO of the Talawanda School District spoke. Mr. Davis thanked staff and the Planning Commission. Mr. Davis stated he wished to make comments regarding the budget. Mr. Davis stated that the School Board wants the project to be on time, of high quality and remain on budget. Mr. Davis stated they were budget-wise where they needed to be and have had to make hard decisions to get there. Mr. Davis continued that whatever changes come out of these discussions may affect the budgeting of the project. Mr. Davis expressed his appreciation to the Staff and Planning Commission.

Ms. Prue Dana, 6314 Fairfield Drive, stated she was happy about the resurrection of the easement of Miami Trail to the new school.

Mr. Benson made motion to close Public Hearing. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Rousmaniere made motion to approve PC-2015-02. Mr. Benson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Prytherch expressed how happy he was to see this project moving forward.

Ms. Rousmaniere referred to the Chief of Police review received and the issues he raised in regards to emergency response radio coverage. Mr. Jahnigen responded that the design does prevent certain frequencies in the building. Mr. Jahnigen responded to the remarks the Chief made regarding issues with the new High School and stated that the District can apply for an OSSC grant.

Ms. Rousmaniere inquired about the Safe Route to School Program and inquired if any requirements or funding was available that could help with connectivity from Miami Trail and Parkview Arms. Mr. Chen responded that City Staff were reviewing signaling and sidewalk costs from Safe Route to School funding. Mr. Prytherch shared his concerns with foot-traffic into the parking lot and crosswalks to the front door. Mr. Jahnigen responded that they could look at providing a hatched surface for Parkview Arms. Mr. Jahnigen added that the School District may require a different way of funneling children. Mr. Prytherch inquired if they could provide a sidewalk extension along the southern portion of the parking lot. Discussion continued. Mr. Prytherch noted that the Planning Commission's role isn't to design it, but to raise as a question. Mr. McCarthy stated he appreciated Mr. Prytherch's concerns but thinks the Planning Commission was out of their scope but do need to address the issues that Mr. Chen identified in his Staff report.

Staff and the Planning Commission reviewed Staff issues identified during their review. Discussion followed. The Planning Commission reviewed the countermeasures that could be taken to remedy the situation. Countermeasures identified were installing pathways, providing a direct pedestrian connection to the site, installing 8' wide sidewalks from Morning Sun Road to Kramer School, reconstructing and/or signalizing the intersection of Sycamore Street and Brown Road, and installing missing sidewalks.

Ms. Rousmaniere stated that to her the most important issue was the path design to the school than the 8' sidewalk. Mr. Davis suggested installing crushed stone or mulch for the path, as this would be less expensive than an 8' wide sidewalk.

Mr. McCarthy inquired if we should table the case. Mr. Chen responded that the District was on a tight timeline. Mr. Perry noted that the Safe Route to School Program would not fund sidewalk widening. Mr. McCarthy inquired if the Planning Commission should make recommendations regarding the sidewalk and then let them work it out with City Council. The response was yes.

Ms. Rousmaniere suggested the Planning Commission not try to find a solution right now but work through it. Everyone agreed.

Mr. Prytherch inquired about the playground and how they would play in various weather conditions. Mr. Jason Merz, Kramer Elementary School Principal was present and described where they play during various types of weather.

The Planning Commission reviewed Staff recommendations. The Planning Commission all agreed to accept each Staff recommendation identified and to waive all the zoning code issues identified. The Planning Commission also agreed that they addressed the pathway.

Roll Call:
AYE: Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Rousmaniere, Mr. Benson, Mr. Prytherch (4)
NAY: None (0)
ABS: None (0)

PC-2015-03 ZONING MAP AMENDMENT, for a rezoning of 137.62 acres of land located along Bonham Road near the Four Mile Creek crossing recently annexed into the City of Oxford, formerly zoned Butler County zoning designations, proposed to be zoned City of Oxford R1A (Single-Family Low Density Residential) District and City of Oxford MU (Miami University) District, City of Oxford, Applicant

Mr. Benson made motion to enter into Public Hearing PC-2015-03. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Chen provided an overview. Mr. Chen stated the request was originally initiated by the Butler County Engineer's Office as a result of the Bonham Road bridge replacement project. In December, 2014, the area was annexed into the City. Mr. Chen noted that the property was located in the floodplain and that a large part of the land was undevelopable because of the flood zone.

Mr. Chen stated the property was currently Oxford Township zoned A1 and the request was to zone the property as City of Oxford R1-A (Single-Family low Density Residential) District and MU (Miami University) District. Mr. Chen noted that the zoning designations were consistent with the adjoining properties. Mr. Chen described the surrounding neighborhood zoning and that R1A was the closest zoning designation to the current Township zoning of A1.

Mr. Chen stated that four of the affected parcels were under the Beta Theta Pi Foundation. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if there were single family homes being rezoned. Mr. Chen stated no. Mr. Chen stated that the Beta House would become a nonconforming use and that under County A1 zoning, fraternity organizations were allowed.

Ms. Pamela Kramer, 4796 and 4804 Bonham Road stated she owned two properties on Bonham Road, and inquired what the definition was for single family low density residential district. Mr. Perry read the definition aloud. Ms. Kramer inquired what Miami could and could not do on their properties according to City zoning. Mr. Perry responded that Miami University does not have to follow City zoning codes since they are governed by the State.

Mr. Coe Potter, 5108 Bonham Road, inquired about the Beta Theta Pi Foundation being grandfathered and what would happen if they decided to make alterations and/or modifications. Mr. Perry stated that Staff would be happy to review with more information. Staff stated that Beta Theta Pi would be grandfathered as a legal nonconforming.

Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if there was a way to solve the nonconforming issue. Mr. Perry stated that from a land use perspective R1-A was the closest zoning code designation the City had.

Mr. Benson called the question.

Mr. Benson made motion to close Public Hearing. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Benson made motion to approve PC-2015-03. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion.

Roll Call:
AYE: Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Rousmaniere, Mr. Benson, Mr. Prytherch (4)
NAY: None (0)
ABS: None (0)

New Business

Mr. Chen announced there would be five cases for the March Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Chen suggested not having a work session that evening.

Mr. McCarthy inquired about creating a district covering park districts.

Other Business

Items Under Consideration for Future Discussion - Commercial District Diversification * Neighborhood compatible commercial districts * Commercial core: walkability and mixture of uses - Off-Street Parking Standards * Parking requirements * Sustainable design standards

Mr. Prytherch stated the Planning Commission could remove Parking Requirements from their Future Discussion list.

Adjournment

Mr. Benson made motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.