

**CITY OF GERMANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AUGUST 23, 2017**

The City of Germantown Planning Commission met on August 23, 2017 at 6:32 p.m. in the City Building Council Chambers.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

The following members were present at the Call to Order: Mr. Jones, Mr. Rettich, Mr. Richter, and Mr. Rohrbach.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

On a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Richter, it was moved to excuse absent member Mrs. Izor. On call of the roll: Mr. Jones, yes; Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Rohrbach, yes; and Mr. Rettich, yes. Motion carried.

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Mr. Ryan Morris, Associate Construction, and Mr. Keith Brane, City Planner.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 26, 2017 AND THE AUGUST 9, 2017 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS:**

On a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Rettich, it was moved to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2017 meeting as written. On call of the roll: Mr. Jones, yes; Mr. Rettich, yes; Mr. Richter, yes; and Mr. Rohrbach, yes. Motion carried.

On a motion by Mr. Rettich, seconded by Mr. Richter, it was moved to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2017 meeting as written. On call of the roll: Mr. Rettich, yes; Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Rohrbach, abstain; and Mr. Jones, yes. Motion carried.

**BUSINESS:**

**1. Final Review of Hickory Pointe Self Storage Units**

Mr. Jones said we saw a pre-submission plan for this last month and the preliminary plan has been approved based on another design for commercial uses. My understanding in the engineering, topography, drainage, and everything else is the same; what we have now is a different pad for a different use. He asked the applicant to review the project.

Mr. Ryan Morris of Associate Construction and Hickory Pointe Development, 31 Eagle Ct, Suite A, Carlisle, Ohio gave an overview of the project, a Climate-Controlled, Self-Storage Unit Facility for a group that has done a market study and says that's what we need. If approved this evening, it will kick the project into high gear and we hope to have ground broken by October or November. We received engineering comments from Mr. Wirrig and Apex Engineering has addressed the items that needed to be addressed. We also received comments from the Germantown Fire Department and the majority of these comments have been addressed. There are some that will be addressed with building permits and final plan review with NIC. We've changed everything we can up to this point and ultimately, Germantown Fire Department will be part of the final approvals when we apply for an occupancy

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permit. We put a separation firewall into the design so we can keep it under 12,000 square feet and eliminate unnecessary sprinkler systems. I'll open it up for any questions you might have.

Mr. Jones said regarding the fencing at the first storage facility, I have a concern with the barbed wire abutting the residential part of the planned unit development. Since all the units will be inside the facility, is there any need for fencing as a barrier? Mr. Morris said there is a six foot high fence on the site plan, three feet of it being a retaining wall next to the berm that will help elevate our parking. Mr. Jones said I don't have a concern with the fence but I do have a concern with the barbed wire. Mr. Morris said if you are not requiring it, the barbed wire can be eliminated.

Mr. Jones said my second concern is how the dumpster is going to be taken care of and where is it located. Mr. Morris said I have three options for you to choose from on the dumpster surround. Mr. Jones said I would like it to match the building as closely as possible. Mr. Morris said okay, and he displayed that option.

Mr. Richter asked what they are doing about the screening. Mr. Jones said here's another situation. Regardless of what's going on with the HOA, I went out and took some photos and I would like to see something in conjunction with the chainlink that would address the lack of opaqueness; some additional shrubbery or small trees to help screen the property. Mr. Morris said what the residents don't realize is they will not be looking at garage doors, they will be looking at shingles. The mound is going to be about 15 feet tall after we lower our grade and that's part of the confusion. Mr. Jones said then there should be some vegetation to break up that roof so when they look out their back yard they don't see a monotonous view of just shingles. Mr. Morris displayed the plan showing vegetation that will be planted.

The board discussed signage which will be applied for at a future date.

Mr. Jones said it appears the engineering comments have been addressed; and the fire department had several comments. Did you say this plan addresses all of them? Mr. Morris said it addresses everything except they were asking about fire extinguisher locations and that will be on the electric plan that comes out. The fire department will have the say on that; they always come out to review the electric and approve it.

Mr. Jones said the control will be through a sliding gate much like you have now where they go online and get a code. Mr. Morris said this is the third phase and their idea is that once they get this office open is to have a staff member there; we currently don't staff it which will enable people to walk in and sign up. We will also have the software we currently have where you can go online. There will be one or two employees depending on how full it is and it will be run like a storage unit facility.

Mr. Rettich asked if one of the plants died, who would be responsible for replacing it. Mr. Morris said there is a one year warranty, then it would fall back to the owners of the business. We will retain title until this phase is built and then a closing will take place when the project is completed.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Brane if he had any further comments. Mr. Brane said just to clarify, as you saw in the staff report it was a fairly deep code review for all of the setbacks, parking, and descriptions, and with the conditions at the end, you can see there is still some built-in assurances to make sure this stuff gets done.

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On a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Richter, it was moved to approve final plan application 17-01 based on the following conditions: that the requirements on the recommendation by City Planner be met; that no barbed wire be used for any fencing; and the enclosure for the dumpster match the brick veneer used for the building design. On call of the roll: Mr. Jones, yes; Mr. Richter, yes; Mr. Rettich, yes; and Mr. Rohrbach, yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Morris asked if he could change subjects and ask a couple questions on another topic. Mr. Jones said yes. Mr. Morris said in 2008 we start designing the Villas at Hickory Pointe for senior housing. I've been approached about this numerous times and every time we get into this topic, the problem is cost. I'm bringing this up as a need in this community that has not been met with housing. Mr. Jones asked what type of housing he was talking about. Mr. Morris said I'm talking about building seniors a nice home and develop them a nice property but it's putting them out of the price range. We get requests for houses in Germantown under \$200,000 and at this point there is no place to put them. Mr. Jones asked if he was talking about patio homes with minimal yard or no yard; what do you want to do. Mr. Morris said the reason the Villa's design is not working is we have the lots way too deep. We went to a 60 foot wide lot which is fine and we were able to get 24 lots on the eight acres but the lot cost is too high. You have the lot cost, tap fees, dry run sewer tap, it all adds up. Mr. Jones asked if he wanted attached or detached. Mr. Morris said single family houses with an HOA to do all the yards, maintenance and snow removal. We do this in Carlisle and if you can keep the houses between \$150,000 and \$200,000, you can sell them. We went to the senior center here in 2008 and had 10 to 15 people interested but the problem then was the market was tanking and no one could sell their existing homes. The question is, if you are open to the same concept but going to smaller lots, not in width but in depth, it would be like a horseshoe. He displayed plans for the board which increased the number of lots to about 40 and said the city would be asked to accept lots that would be about 100 feet deep. Mr. Jones asked if the zoning was R-1. Mr. Morris said there is an overlay. Mr. Brane said it's an aged restricted PUD overlay. Mr. Jones said the PUD zoning is still going to be there but I would guess you will have to go for a new preliminary and final plan. Mr. Morris said we would have to start over; we as a business have to decide if we go back to what we are doing in Hickory Pointe or try to meet a different market of housing that we can't offer in Germantown. Mr. Jones said it looks like a lot size issue. Mr. Morris said it is a lot size issue; the lot costs are the same as the lot costs that our \$350,000 homes come in at and we have to be able to have a total package price of under \$200,000.

Mr. Jones asked if there would be any easement areas for the HOA to have walkways. Mr. Morris said in Carlisle we platted off some common areas and gazebo areas, so we are open to that. Mr. Jones asked what the vegetation was like there now. Mr. Morris said there is a natural tree line to the left side and a power line on the right. Mr. Jones said you might want to preserve as much as you can that doesn't interfere with the utility. I would say that's actually a better plan for older people and I think that would work. I don't have a problem with the concept for the lots; you want to go 100 feet by 100 feet. Mr. Morris said no; to get 40 lots, we would have to go 60 feet by 100 feet which also lowers mowing costs to the residents.

Mr. Morris asked if the city knows of a need for this type housing. Mr. Rettich said the Mayor has discussed it among Council three or four times over the past two years.

Mr. Brane asked if this was Mr. Peterson's project. Mr. Morris said Mr. Peterson started the project but he has pulled out. We are selling each project and it is basically the condo concept but people are buying a house instead of a condo.

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Mr. Jones asked if the houses would be ranch style with no basements. Mr. Morris said ranch style with a crawl space to keep costs down. Mr. Jones asked what the side yard setback would be. Mr. Morris said with a 60 foot width, we need to be able to build a 45 foot house to get a two-car garage on it, so you are looking at seven and one half foot side yards. Mr. Jones said 15 total. Mr. Morris said yes.

Mr. Morris said it would be nice to offer something; the real estate market is moving right now. Mr. Jones said it would be a good use for the land. If you want to come back with a sketch of the land, a pre-submittal especially with what the lot sizes are going to be and to ensure you are going to keep the sidewalks and I'd like to see a vegetation overlay to see what's going to stay.

Mr. Morris said I just wanted to get your feedback before I got into it. Thank you.

**2. Review of Proposed Zoning Code Changes**

Mr. Jones said I tidied up minor errors where numbers weren't spelled out and also further clarified off-premises signs when those are permitted. Basically, off-premises signs, what structurally used to be called billboard signs, are only permitted in open or enclosed public buildings like a baseball stadium, an airport, a convention center, a hotel where basically both onsite and offsite billboard type signs are either free standing or up against a wall where only the people within that building can see it; it can't be seen from the right of way.

Mr. Jones said I also made provisions for ghost signs where existing signs that are non-conforming that have historical or cultural significance can be maintained by ordinance of Council.

Mr. Jones said I talked with the City Manager and I will present this at a Council work session. Then shortly after there might be a presentation to the Economic Development group. Mr. Brane said the City Manager was going to invite them to the Council work session and then if they still wanted a presentation after that a meeting would be scheduled. Mr. Jones said there is a matrix that summarizes the key changes and the idea is to basically get detached signs lower and closer to the road to prevent clutter. I'll also account for some issues and past mistakes other cities have made by trying to regulate by content instead of by type of sign. So I tried to deal with some legal language and also being in a situation where we were before where if somebody did apply for a billboard sign. Right now it says the Board of Zoning Appeals reviews it but it doesn't say if it's a conditional use or a variance and that's the one part of that chapter that I think exposes us to potential problems since there aren't any parameters for that type of sign approval.

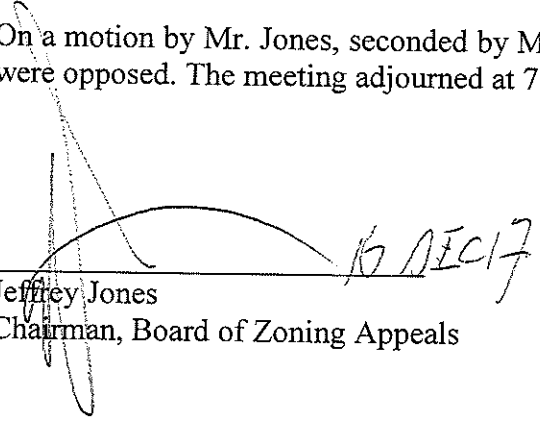
The board discussed the timeline for the presentations, readings of the ordinance, Council's vote on the ordinance, and when the ordinance would go into effect.

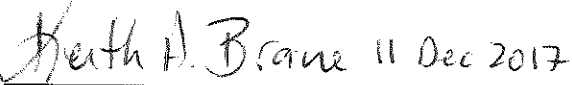
Mr. Jones said the next chapter is probably going to be adult entertainment and that's going to take a while. I have a model ordinance from the city solicitor and I've done some research to incorporate. I also have to account for some existing regulations in the business code and general offenses codes. It will probably take me a couple months to work on that, then we'll go back on our regular schedule and see where we're at on other chapters.

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Rettich, it was moved to adjourn. All were in favor; none were opposed. The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

  
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Jeffrey Jones  
Chairman, Board of Zoning Appeals

  
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Keith A. Brane  
City Planner