

ALLIANCE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF October 21st, 2020
4:30 P.M.

Attendance: Members – Mark Locke, President; Mayor Andreani; Mike Dreger; Brad Goris, Cheryl Lundgren; Harry Paidas.

Meeting held by telephone/video conference due to COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was called to order by Locke at 4:40 pm due to technical difficulties. Also present were Commission Counsel William Morris; Joe Mazzola, Curtis Bungard, Engineer; Kim Palmer, Eng Aid; This meeting streamed live on the City of Alliance Facebook page.

Attendance:

Lundgren makes motion to excuse Henderson. Paidas seconds. Roll call vote. All are in agreement. Henderson excused.

1) Minutes from September 16th, 2020 meeting;

Paidas moves to accept minutes. Lundgren seconds. All are in agreement.

2) Site Plan for the Circle K Convenience Store & Gas Station located at the NE Corner of N. Union Ave. and E. Wayne St., Alliance, OH 44601, submitted by Wellert Corporation (20201080PC);

Savanna Peet and Jesse Delarca are representing Circle K. Savanna Peet is sworn in. Savanna Peet, is the development manager responsible for this project. She works with Circle K's Real-Estate Department located at 935 E. Tallmadge Ave., Akron, OH 44310. Circle K has recently submitted a site plan for review and received comments back from the Engineering Department. A site plan was submitted for review and approval at the intersection of Union Ave. and E. Wayne St. for a 5,200 Sq. ft. convenience store with a fuel island containing 6 pumps. Project features landscaping, 3 driveways, one off of E. Wayne and 2 off of N. Union Ave. , 17 parking spaces in front and a parking lot off of a recently vacated alley off of N. Union Ave which will have dedicated employee parking and parking spaces up against the warehouse bldg. which they have agreed to dedicate to the City. They are looking for Planning Commission's help in approving the site plan and granting any variances they may seek due to Engineering's comments.

Jesse Delarca is sworn in. Isai "Jesse" Delarca, works for Wellert Corporation, 5136 Beech Rd. Medina, OH 44256. Wellert Corporation is the Civil Engineer / Consultant responsible for the site plan design submitted.

Mazzola in Planning believes that Wellert and Circle K have done a wonderful job on the site plan. Mazzola has had a long time to study that corner and has had a number of conversations with them over time encouraging them to make a lot of effort with design because this Circle K is along a major corridor in Alliance that has seen little to no investment for a long time. It is a statement project. He believes they have responded well and he recommends approval.

Bungard in Engineering wants Jesse to go through the comments and understand them and let him know if they can be addressed to our satisfaction. The property will also need to be replatted because of the vacated alley and several things. If they could work through those comments he is comfortable recommending conditional approval based on if the planning commission can include "meeting Engineering's concerns" and "that they complete the replat" at some point including easements located there.

Mr. Delarca states they looked at the comments and didn't have any major issues with them. He thinks the last ones were items relating to the drainage and SWPPP that he thinks they can work through this with Bungard. Some of the items will just be clarifications, if not they will revise their plans accordingly. He has questions relating to landscaping and parking spaces and another one relating to the entrance on Union. Mr. Delarca believes Bungard might have mentioned in the comments that these items required a variance and was not sure how this process would work out. Locke asks Bungard to review with them.

Bungard asks if the second entrance was addressed during the previous evenings BZA meeting. It was confirmed that it was not on the agenda by Mazzola and Palmer. Bungard stated that was one thing brought up through the Zoning Inspector and that is done through the BZA.

Ms. Peet apologizes and explains that she did not know they were on there and said she would have been present. Palmer assures her she was not on the agenda.

Bungard thought that Howard was discussing that with Circle K as far as the entrance there. The Planning Commission does not have authority over that issue. Locke confirms that it is a BZA issue.

Ms. Peet asks if it is something that can be administratively approved or do they need to have public hearings on it.

Locke states that Howard announced Circle K had an agenda item so maybe that is the item that they are going to address next month.

Bungard states a variance will be needed through the BZA for the two drive entrances on Union. Bungard is fine granting a variance on the internal islands. This is done fairly often. He doesn't know if the planning commission wants to add the parking variance. The drive apron is a BZA issue.

Locke states we can add the variance for the parking into the main motion.

Bungard says this is a detailed set of plans: it is a complex site and Wellert did a good job providing information on the site plan.

Delarca asks for clarification on comments. He asks if gravel parking is permitted in the I-Zones. He also asks if anything else is needed such as another approval.

Bungard says it is permissible in the I-Zone. If it were a different zone a variance for gravel parking or a couple year variance would be needed.

Delarca says then the only other thing he is concerned about is the catch basin. He says Bungard's suggestion was to put concrete around it to mitigate it and asks if he has a size that they should be concerned about. Bungard stated that when the drainage was submitted later he saw a detail for the concrete apron around that and he assumes it will be done that way. It looks fine. He further explains that it was kind of a standard detail that was submitted so he was going to ask if they planned on doing that.

Delarca says yes he believes they can address that later and that it sounds like something that can be addressed between the two of them.

No other further questions for Engineer.

Mayor Andreani says they are very complete plans and appreciates being able to see the Lumens and the foot candles on the last sheet. He hears comments by citizens most often in regards to that. It is a good plan for the diffusion of light. He doesn't have a problem with the islands but it looks like a fairly small parking lot. There is a parking lot in the back. He asks if the anticipation is that people will go along the front because he did not see an entrance on the northern exposure.

Ms. Peet explains that parking is primarily intended for employees in which there should be 5 at any time. Part of their agreement with the City was to provide dedicated city spaces. At closing, they will issue an easement with x amount of dedicated spaces to the City for their parking purposes or for whoever takes control of the warehouse and also access through that driveway off of Union. No it is not intended to be customer parking.

Mayor Andreani says thank you that is what he assumed.

Dreger wanted to help with the issues related to some comments. The replat is a condition of the final sale. It must be done. He doesn't see any concerns on that. He also wanted to explain that Circle K will have to go to the BZA but to stress to them that this is an existing drive. It provides access to that parking so it is not new. The City is counting it as a drive to their business but it is really providing access to the back lot. Once that is pointed out he is comfortable saying that they should be ok with it. Part of the agreement is that the City is retaining a portion of the property and the existing building. The agreement is that the City can use that parking for the needs of the building next door. That is why the access is there and why the lot is there.

Lundgren states that the landscape architect did a great job of including plants that reflect the colors of the Circle K logo. In all the seasons the colors of the landscaping, and the changing of the seasons, will enhance the entire project.

Paidas thinks this is a great project. No objections. He said there was considerable angst from the neighbors when this was first presented. He asks if it has been quiet from the neighbors.

Bungard asks Palmer if we have received any new emails or comments from the public regarding this. Palmer replies no we have not received any. Paidas says he assumes Circle K addressed those concerns and believes it is going to be a beautiful property.

Ms. Peet explains that is why they provided the additional lighting detail. In her recollection, that is one of the biggest questions that they get. Hopefully that satisfied them. The plans are available to the public. Hopefully they were able to take a look.

Paidas said that was one issue. The other was that it will be a place for people to hang out and cause trouble. Given the way it has been presented though that is probably an invalid reaction to it.

No additional comments or questions from members.

Mayor Andreani moves to approve the site plan per the conditions set upon by the Engineer, we also provide a variance for the parking islands and contingent upon BZA approval of the former drive to permit two on Union Ave. and the required replat. Goris seconds. All are in agreement. Roll call vote. Unanimous approval. Site Plan is approved.

Mr. Delarca requests minutes from this meeting. Palmer replies that we will make sure he receives a copy.

5) Other business:

None.

Goris makes motion to adjourn. Paidas seconds. Meeting is adjourned at 5:10pm.