

ALLIANCE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2023
4:30 P.M.

Attendance: Members – Mayor Andreani; Mike Dreger, Safety Service Director; Elayne Dunlap; John Gross, Secretary; Mark Locke, President; Cheryl Lundgren; Harry Paidas.

Meeting held at Alliance Senior Center, 602 West Vine St. Alliance, OH 44601. The meeting was called to order by Mark Locke at 4:30 p.m. Also present were Commission Asst. Counsel William Morris; Joe Mazzola, City Planning Director; Andrew Pietrzak, City Asst. Engineer; Kim Palmer, Engineering Aide.

1. Minutes from January 18, 2023 meeting:

John Gross moves to accept minutes. Cheryl Lundgren seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

2. Public Hearing set for 4:33 p.m. for the request of a Conditional Use for a Drive-Up Window to be located at 2500 W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Fairmount Properties (2023059PC);

Mayor Andreani motions to move into public hearing with Harry Paidas seconding.

No one comes forward to speak in favor or in opposition.

Locke ends public hearing and begins regular session.

3. Request of a Conditional Use for a Drive-Up Window to be located at 2500 W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Fairmount Properties (2023059PC);

Rebecca Molyneaux of Fairmount Properties is sworn in. Fairmount is the current owner of the property. States all Meijer stores have a drive-up window for their pharmacies. Located in an area where queuing will not be a problem, nor will pedestrian traffic.

Pietrzak from Engineering has no comments.

Mazzola from Planning & Development recommends approval.

No comments from Planning Commission members.

Mayor Andreani motions for approval of conditional use. Paidas seconds. All in favor; motion passes.

4. Replat of Lots 8167, 8168, 8169, 8170 and Part Outlot 322 located at 567 W. Main St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Akins Land Surveying (2023048PC);

Venessa Akins-Cerccone is sworn in. She states the property has been made up of separate lots and the owner, NSK America, would like to dedicate some road frontage. There was a storm sewer line found to not have an easement. Typically, this is an easy item to remedy by the property owner making an agreement with the City, which the owner is agreeable to. This will be shown on the final drawing submitted for signatures.

Pietrzak recommends conditional approval based on the below comment:

As part of the conditional approval granted by the Planning Commission on 10/19/22, a 25' easement was to be assigned over the 54" storm sewer. Please assign a 25' easement over said sewer on the Replat.

Mazzola recommends approval.

Gross moves to conditionally approve the replat. Dunlap seconds.

Todd Mastroianni of Alliance Ventures is sworn in. He is representing NSK as their general contractor. They would like the City to take some responsibility of the sewer as they feel there are issues. States there is one area that is sinking and the catch basin needs to be addressed. He believes the City Water Department is aware of this.

Locke asks Dreger if he wants to address this now. Dreger responds this will be part of the easement process.

Roll is called and all are in favor. Motion passes.

5. Replat of Outlots 797, 798 and Lot 11671 located on the North Side of McCrea St. 600' +/- West of S. Sawburg Ave., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Akins Land Surveying (2023049PC);

Akins-Cercone states this is for Central Coated Products. They have a small lot in the corner. Was not included in previous projects. There are three parcels that will become one lot in order to continue with development.

Pietrzak recommends approval.

Mazzola recommends approval.

Mayor Andreani motions for approval with Dunlap seconding. All in favor. Motion passes.

6. Replat of Part Outlot 233 located on the East side of Inwood Rd 300' +/- South of Overlook Dr., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Akins Land Surveying (2023050PC);

Akins-Cercone states this is to rectify encroachment issues with building eaves. The owner is working with the neighbor to buy a piece of land to rectify the problem. The setback should not be an issue. A 9.5' section of land will be transferred from the neighbor to the south to the neighbor to the north. Once this land is combined, it will put the property line exactly 11.2' off of each of the eaves. This would be Mr. Mastroianni's eave and the neighbor to the south.

Pietrzak recommends approval.

Mazzola recommends approval.

Dunlap motions for approval with second by Paidas. All in favor. Motion passes.

7. Request for Lighting Variance for the ModWash to be located at 2080 W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Morris Knowles & Associates, Inc. (2023068PC);

Michael Vale of Morris Knowles & Associates sworn in. City ordinance requires minimum one foot candle of lighting on parking areas with the maximum around thirteen. Because parking setback is 5' off the property line, there is no way to get from one foot candle down to zero by the time it hits the property line. Behind the vacuums, at the Sherwin Williams property line, the foot candle is 2.3 and by the time it gets to their parking area it is 1. On the back edge, the back parking lot of Aaron's, they are under one foot candle at the property line. There is no way to have the lighting cut off that quickly. The lighting is on only during hours of operation with closing at 8:00 p.m.

Engineering has no comments.

Mazzola recommends approval.

Paidas confirms the neighbors are all commercial. Vale verifies and speculates those lots are most likely already lit up more than the proposed anyway. Lundgren states she agrees this is okay since the neighbors are commercial and not residential.

Dunlap motions for approval with Paidas seconding. All in favor. Motion passes.

8. Other business:

Mayor Andreani explains **Lowe's** employees are here to discuss the updated outdoor storage and sales plan. After meeting with the Zoning Department and Fire Department, Lowe's is working with the City on updating things from their 2006 plan. The building is faced toward the middle of the property thus creating some issues along State Street and the other side.

Craig Starkey, Lowe's store manager, is sworn in. The site plan given to the Mayor is cleaned up a bit through recommendations given by the inspector.

The Mayor states the concern is along State Street. When a building side is facing a street, a barrier and landscaping are required. To help with this, the storage buildings have been moved towards the center of the lot. He explains this is possible because the number of required parking spaces has decreased due to a newer code.

Starkey says the mulch is an issue because it is pretty much delivered all at once. He realizes previously it has looked bad however they have worked to clean this up. Lowe's wants to make sure they have something in writing stating what can and cannot be done. Lowe's is ready to put landscaping in. The landscaping will be along the area where the sheds were. There will be bushes/trees to hide the mulch from the State Street view.

Locke asks if this is to be considered the site plan; this is where Lowe's intends to place everything. Starkey confirms except for the landscaping. It is also confirmed this layout is okay with the Fire Department.

No comments from Engineering.

Mazzola states this is the primary entrance into Alliance. Anything done is much appreciated and would like to see the landscaping plan prior to moving forward with it.

Dreger is concerned with defining the areas and making them look like a display. Wants the area to be aesthetically pleasing. He does not see how the nursing home is screened. Wants to see a better plan showing what this will look like from State Street and from the nursing home; does not want to see shipping containers stacked on top of one another. He understands Lowe's is not currently doing this but is giving an idea of what is expected.

Mr. Starkey agrees that he is looking for a straight-forward answer. He explains nothing is stored on the side facing the nursing home. The sheds have been moved close to this area but are in quite a bit from the property line and are nice, clean displays. Starkey confirms there is a temporary storage area near the nursing home property line but is not visible from their patio.

Rodney Smith, another manager for Lowe's, is sworn in. He explains at the back of the nursing home is foliage that prevents them from seeing Lowe's temporary storage area. The sheds on the drawing are

farther back than shown. The drawing is not exact; the sheds are more to the center of the parking lot closer to the store. Dreger, Smith, and Starkey study the drawing.

Dreger wants to point out that what is shown on this drawing is what will be approved. Locke agrees that if the sheds are to be in a different area, the Commission needs to know now.

Starkey clarifies there are sheds in the area shown however they do not extend as far out as depicted on the drawing. Currently, only 8 sheds are being displayed while the drawing shows 20 sheds. Dreger states this is fine when the area shown exceeds what is actually being displayed.

Dreger addresses Locke. He can be fine with the plan if the parking requirements are met and landscaping is done with thought. Reminds the Lowe's managers that people will see from both sides, on State Street and the parking lot.

Lundgren agrees with Dreger on being precise with the plan. Suggests an updated drawing which is bigger in order to properly see the layout. Asks what else will be displayed after the mulch is gone. Starkey explains the mulch season continues to extend. Nothing else will be placed in this area. Lundgren also asks how high the mulch is usually stacked. Starkey states it is usually 4' to 9' tall. Lundgren asks them to take this into consideration when creating the landscaping plan. Again, this is the entrance to the City.

Starkey agrees to provide a larger, easier to read plan. He questions whether a hill, such as WalMart's, will be required to screen the mulch. Lundgren doesn't feel this would be necessary. Lundgren does not feel Lowe's needs to do exactly what others have done, just make it look attractive.

Gross agrees with Mr. Dreger in that a definitive plan needs to be in place. Questions the permanent storage statement on the plan. Starkey explains those are bunks of lumber behind the building that must be up against the curb, not the building, for safety reasons. The number of bunks will vary throughout the year.

Locke confirms with Starkey the area behind the store is not for public access.

Gross confirms with Starkey there will be no storage along the Canterbury property line. It is also confirmed that the Fire Department is okay with rear of building. Mayor Andreani explains and Starkey answers yes.

Locke asks if the parking shown on the drawing is per new code or if it is the existing layout. Starkey believes it is the existing layout from 2006. The Mayor and Locke agree the new code will lessen the number of parking spaces required.

Gross asks what is placed in the "seasonal area". Starkey answers mulch and soil. Locke further confirms the front display area is for plants, wheelbarrows, grills, etc. These items are for display, not storage. Lundgren questions if there are 2 mulch storage areas. There are 2 areas with one being inside the loading zone for customers. The additional area is for overflow storage.

Lundgren moves for an updated plan showing new parking and landscaping which would be presented at the March Planning Commission meeting. Dunlap seconds.

Gross asks if this 30-day delay will impact Lowe's business. Starkey confirms it will be difficult due to the height of the season starting in 2-3 weeks. The longer the wait, the worse it will be for Lowe's. They are happy to move the mulch if required, however it will be difficult at this time of year.

Locke asks if the preference would be to approve the current plan regarding the storage locations but come back in March with the landscaping plan. Starkey states his preference would be for temporary approval for this year (season). He would like to come back with a revised plan and be able to make the changes in the fall when the busy season is over.

Lundgren withdraws her motion; Dunlap approves.

Dreger states that while the Commission cannot tell Lowe's it is okay, they will not push to enforce things while Starkey continues to work with the Commission. Dreger likes the idea of set agreements while working towards the final site plan.

Locke asks for Starkey's approval that Lowe's will work with the Commission keeping them informed if permitted to delay the requirement to act now vs. in the fall. In turn, Lowe's will not be cited. It is agreed that larger drawings are necessary to see all details including the landscaping, storage, parking count, etc. Starkey is in agreement.

Both managers welcome anyone who would like to come to Lowe's. They will be happy to show members the areas involved.

Gross motions to adjourn with Lundgren seconding. Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.