

ALLIANCE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MARCH 16th, 2022
4:30 P.M.

Attendance: Members –Mayor Andreani; Mike Dreger, Safety Services Director; Brad Goris, Secretary; John Gross, Mark Locke, President; Cheryl Lundgren; Harry Paidas.

Meeting held at Alliance Senior Citizens Center, 602 West Vine St. Alliance, OH 44601. The meeting was called to order by Locke at 4:30 pm. Also present were Commission Counsel William Morris; Joe Mazzola, City Planning Director; Andrew Pietrzak, City Asst. Engineer; Candice Martin, Eng. Clerk.

Attendance:
All are present.

1) Minutes from February 16th, 2022 meeting;

Paidas moves to accept minutes. Lundgren seconds. All are in favor. Motion passes.

2) Public hearing set for 4:33 p.m. for the Request of a Conditional Use for a Car Wash to be located on Parcel Number 7701240, W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Morris Knowles & Associates, Inc. (2022096PC):

Gross moves to go into public hearing. Paidas seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

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 Car Wash to be located on Parcel Number 7701240, 2080 W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Morris Knowles & Associates, Inc. (2022096PC)

Michael Vale is sworn in. Project Engineer; Morris Knowles & Associates, Inc. 443. Athena Dr., Delmont, PA. Ian McManamon is sworn in. Project Manager. Hutton and Associates. Avon Lake, OH.

Mr. Vale explains they have an undeveloped flag shaped lot. They received a variance from the BZA for the lot width the night before. They are proposing a single conveyor car wash that continuously moves cars through. Customers would enter off State St. They would go passed the vacuums which are free with the payment of a car wash. The pay stations will be back there. The inside lane will be for monthly paid subscribers. The outside two lanes will be for individual pay. The conveyor is about 120 ft. long. It can have up to 5 cars at one time. It shuffles the cars through about every two minutes. They will exit and at that point use the vacuums or exit back onto State St.

Locke mentions they will need a conditional use because a carwash is not an approved use for that zone.

Mazzola in Planning recommends approval.

Pietrzak in Engineering recommends conditional approval based on the following comments:

- Please label the adjacent site’s parcel numbers.
- Please show the location of the parcel with respect to the intersection of two roadways.

Mr. Vale responds that they have addressed those comments today.

Mr. Gross asks if this is a chain or a franchise.

Mr. McManamon answers yes. It is the second year for the chain. He mentions they did 75 last year and plan to do around the same this year.

Locke asks if they have one going up on 62 going into Canton.

Mr. McManamon replies yes there is one in Canton, Warren, and a couple in Boardman. They are trying to saturate the corridor between Pittsburgh and Detroit.

Gross mentions Alliance probably has 5 car washes in the area. He asks why they are different.

Mr. McManamon explains that they get customers in and out quickly. They provide free shammies. The mod stands for Modern. What they want is for customers to pay a subscription. Ten - Fifteen dollars a month allows customers to zip in and out. Their carwash is about speed and service. There will also be 3 to 5 people there every day making sure everything is working properly, giving out free shammies, and making sure customers are happy.

Gross asks about the hours of operation.

Mr. Vale replies 8 am to 8 pm.

Paidas asks if there is a curb cut there.

Mr. McManamon says it is undeveloped.

No other questions or comments.

Gross moves to conditionally approve use for a car wash based on Engineering's comments. Dreger seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

4) Site Plan Review for a Parking Area and Site Improvements to be located at 2395 Hedgewood Ave. NE, Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Hettler Engineering (2022102PC)

Mike Hettler is sworn in. 1225 N. Main St., North Canton, OH. Representing the owner: Stark Athletic Enhancement Corp. They are constructing a concession stand and would like to install a parking lot to provide additional parking to visitors. The parking lot will connect to the existing parking lot and will exit onto Hedgewood Ave.

Mazzola in Planning recommends approval.

Pietrzak in Engineering recommends conditional approval based on the following comments:

- Type B Screening will be required along the northern property line per Planning and Zoning Code Section 1136.06(ii)
- Please show and label intersecting roadways with right of way widths along with the bearings and distances of the centerlines.
- Please show and label all existing easements. Copies of the easements can be provided to you upon request.
- Please show and label all sanitary sewer laterals and waterlines.

- A discharge easement will be required to discharge the detention basin onto Washington Hills Development LTD's property.
- Please attach an inside drop connection detail so that it may be submitted for approval.
- Please submit a Landscaping Plan.
- The top of the detention basin's embankment shall be at least 18 inches above the peak 100-year pond elevation.
- The detention basin's emergency spillway shall be set at an elevation equal to 6 inches above the peak 100-year pond elevation. Also, the 100-year elevation shown in the storm water calculations is 1219.71, but on the Details sheet it is shown as 1219.17. Which is the correct number?

Locke asks Mr. Hettler if he is ok with those comments and if he received them.

Mr. Hettler replies yes.

Mayor Andreani asks if a landscaping plan will be submitted.

Mr. Hettler says yes there will be a landscaping plan.

Paidas asks about any concern of the proximity of the baseball field to the parking lot.

Mr. Hettler replies that the detention basin ended up being in the way, but they have worked around it. They placed the parking lot back as far away as they possibly could.

Gross asks if there is any landscaping that can be explained at this time.

Mr. Hettler replies no.

Gross moves to conditionally approve site plan for parking area and site improvements based on Engineering's comments. Mayor Andreani seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

5) Site Plan Review for the Meijer Grocery Store Company to be located at 2500 W. State St., Alliance, OH 44601 submitted by Fairmount Properties, LLC (2022058PC)

- Request for variance to wave a traffic impact study 1162.35 (b)*
- Request for variance for landscape and screening requirements 1162.35 (d)*
Landscape and Screening. *A greenbelt with a width of 20 ft. shall be provided along all street frontages and side or rear yards to screen the view of the property from street rights-of-way and adjacent residential districts or uses in accordance with the screening requirements of this Ordinance, along with adequate screening for all loading facilities, trash receptacles, and mechanical equipment;*
- Request for variance for pedestrian walkway requirements 1162.35 (f):*
Pedestrian Walkway. *A six-foot-wide concrete sidewalk shall be provided from the public sidewalk to the main entrance in a manner that effectively separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic. Driveway crossings shall be clearly delineated with pavement striping. Sidewalks shall be placed along the entire road frontage subject to City standards;*

Chris Jones is sworn in. Meijer real estate department. 2350 3 Mile Rd. Grand Rapids, MI. Mr. Jones explains that Meijer has been considering the market in Alliance since 2016. Redeveloping property always has its issues. They have 264 stores. There are around 50 stores in the State of Ohio. He explains that what differentiates them from competitors is that they are family owned and based in the Midwest. They will be investing around 20 million dollars in Alliance and creating around 300 jobs.

Brian Smallwood is sworn in. Woolpert Inc. Civil Engineers for Meijer. 1203 Walnut St. Cincinnati, OH. Mr. Smallwood explains that the existing mall is being redeveloped. Meijer is going to take the eastern half: roughly 16 acres out of 43 acres or so. Fairmount is in the process of redeveloping the remainder of the parcel they will own. They are relocating the existing Dunham's into the existing JCPenney Building that is there. There will be some redevelopment and construction of pieces to make it a cohesive development.

Mr. Jones says it will be more of a traditional shopping center than an enclosed mall. There will be Meijer on 16.5 acres or so and mid boxes and Jr. box stores that will take the western portion.

Mr. Smallwood further explains there are two entrances. There is a fresh side denoting the grocery store and The Home side denotes soft goods. The store has a pharmacy drive up on the left-hand side next to the garden center. On the other side will be the online pickup area. There is a dedicated queuing line. Customers drive up using an app on their phone. They will move up to the next spot. There is also a fueling center called Meijer's Express. There will be a rewards program and incentives / discounts from the store to purchase fuel there.

Locke asks Mr. Smallwood to address the 3 variances being asked for.

Mr. Smallwood explains the first variance: waiver of the traffic impact study. In conjunction with Fairmount's engineers at Rockaway and their own traffic engineers, Meijer will be a slight reduction in overall square footage. They are also the same type of use as the mall and fall under the same kind of categories. They feel they are swapping like for like and it is believed that no additional traffic impact study is needed because the infrastructure is already in place and designed to handle that type of traffic and square footage.

Mr. Jones adds that they are also not adding an additional drive cut that would trigger a traffic study.

Mr. Smallwood explains the reason for the second variance on the landscape and screening requirements. Mr. Smallwood states that they have submitted a fairly intense landscaping plan. However, because of the property line divisions that run through the shared parking lot, there would be not a good way to achieve the requirements in our City code. They believe they are meeting the intent of the code in the overall landscaping plan, but there are physical and property line constraints that require them to request this variance.

Mr. Smallwood explains the last variance for pedestrian walkway requirements. They show a walkway from the proposed bus stop. They are not sure that it meets the code entirely. There is vehicular traffic out front. There will be quite a bit of pedestrian connectivity across Meijer, the intersection, and the Jr. boxes. The design theme and landscaping will carry across.

Mr. Jones also mentions the existing bus stop out front.

Locke asks Mr. Jones if they are requesting full site plan approval or approval for variances only.

Mr. Jones replies he is asking for conditional site plan approval. Mr. Jones said the engineer's comments will be addressed in their final design and engineering design. They are asking to be able to move forward with the conditions that are outlined.

Mr. Smallwood wanted to add that requesting these variance items will allow them to move forward submitting full construction documents for engineering review.

Mazzola in Planning is pleased to see a robust landscaping plan in front of the store as well as the parking lot. It mitigates the sea of asphalt affect. Recommends approval.

Pietrzak in Engineering explains that they formulated the comments in anticipation that it would receive full approval and that they would not need to come back to Planning Commission. For this reason, there are quite a few. Engineering is trying to keep the process and the project going.

Pietrzak says regarding the public walkway requirement, a public walkway is required from State St. to the entrance of the building. It must be separated from vehicular traffic. Pietrzak doesn't see a good way to do this in his opinion.

Pietrzak recommends conditional approval based on the following comments:

- The title page or the first page of the set of drawings must include a signature block for the City Engineer and the following note:

Approved by the City of Alliance Engineer this _____ Day of _____, 20____. _____ Vincent Mueser, P.E., S.I.
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Only approved plans signed by the City Engineer are to be used for construction.

- All plan sheets must be stamped and signed by a Professional Engineer licensed to practice in the State of Ohio. (The Existing/Demolition Plan can be stamped and signed by a Professional Surveyor licensed to practice in the State of Ohio).
- Site plans must be referenced to the Alliance Mapping System. Please contact the Engineer's Office at 330-823-5122 for reference points for your project location.
- Sanitary Note 11, shall be changed to "The sanitary sewer shall require an inspection agreement from the city."
- Sanitary Note 13, shall be changed to "All sanitary sewer connection installation shall meet the requirements of the City of Alliance Engineer."
- Under "Trench Excavation, Bottom Preparation and Backfilling," please eliminate Note 1.
- Please show and label all easements. Copies of the easements can be provided to you upon request.
- The "Watermain Improvement Plans" and "Waterline Relocation Plans" still need to be submitted for approval.
- LSM is not an acceptable procedure to abandon sanitary sewer laterals. Please refer to the City of Alliance Water Distribution Department's regulations regarding utility abandonment.
- Please show and label the benchmarks that will be utilized for the site.
- The domestic and fire lines must be split and be separate lines at the right of way and have a shut off valve provided at that point.
- Please show the detail of the 1,000-gallon grease interceptor.
- It was impossible to determine the required number of parking spots because no architectural plans were submitted. The listed parking summary tables were inaccurate as well.
- Please show the heavy and light duty asphalt details.
- Please dimension the parking spaces and aisle widths.

- Please show and label the dumpster and enclosure heights.
- For sites over one (1) acre a permit with the EPA for stormwater pollution prevention must be obtained. A copy of the NOI (Notice of Intent) and the EPA's approval letter must be submitted to the City. The City must receive a letter from the Stark County Soil and Water Conservation District stating that a SWP3 plan has been reviewed and approved for this project prior to the City's approval. All sites (more or less than one acres) must comply with City regulations.
- The following note must appear on the plan: "The contractor shall prevent and/or reduce and control soil erosion resulting from the proposed improvements. The use of silt fencing, jute matting, temporary seeding, silt checks, inlet protection around all catch basins, stabilized construction entrance(s), etc. will be required. Sediment control structures/devices shall be installed in accordance with the latest edition of the manual Rainwater and Land Development – Ohio's Standards for Stormwater Management, Land Development and Urban Stream Protection. Sediment control devices must be installed prior to beginning any construction activity. The contractor shall be responsible for continued inspection and maintenance of all sediment control devices. The contractor shall follow the requirements set forth on the approved stormwater pollution prevention plan if applicable, or as detailed on the construction plans, as specified by the City of Alliance".
- Please submit the Storm Water Runoff Calculations for approval.
- More requirements may be forthcoming as the various plans are submitted.

A brief discussion regarding some comments is documented below:

Pietrzak explains that parking spots were difficult to determine. They are based on usable floor space. Mr. Jones says regarding calculating the number of parking spots there is about 160,000 sq. ft. total and about 130,000 is usable. He says he will get these ratios to Engineering.

Pietrzak also mentions heavy and light duty asphalt details for the new parking lot. Mr. Jones says that they have finished their Geotechnical studies so they can delineate that on the plan.

Mr. Smallwood says all comments will be addressed. All of these will be addressed as part of the final construction documents. He further explains that they work along with Rockaway (Fairmount's Engineer). Rockaway is doing the demolition and they are in the process of finalizing the watermain relocation plan. Woolpert will be working hand in hand with them to complete all the plans and submit to Engineering. When it is finished, Engineering will have a full set of construction documents that address all comments.

Gross agrees with Mazzola that it is an aggressive landscaping plan. He is however concerned some of the shrubs may not be salt tolerant.

Mr. Jones replies that Woolpert has a landscape architect, and he will have them look into that.

Goris asks what they envision on the eastern edge of the property.

Mr. Smallwood explains that Fairmount property extends to this property line (points to map). There is property being swapped between Fairmount and the City because the City has existing utilities that they would like to have ownership of. He doesn't know what plans the City has for that.

Goris asks about screening in the residential area.

Locke mentions there is a 100 ft. swatch of wooded area there.

Goris asks how far back the car dealership goes. They show him on a map.

Dreger mentions there is a car dealership and when you get to the residential there is a duplex that sits on the east side. The predominant residential property is owned by the city and is a wooded area about an acre left over from the Tanglewood development. To the rear of the store is either commercial or City property and is wooded.

Dreger asks Pietrzak if he has reviewed the site plan on the standard of a formal site plan and if his comments are to bring it up to that standard.

Pietrzak replies yes.

Dreger states that if this is approved tonight as the formal site plan Meijer will not be back on the items Pietrzak mentions. Dreger asks Mr. Morris if the variances must be approved first before the formal site plan.

Mr. Morris replies correct.

Mayor Andreani asked about the calculation for the number of parking spaces. 1:250 per sq. ft. He also heard 130,000 usable sq. footage.

Mr. Jones replies yes roughly 125,000 to 130,000. It varies from municipalities in what they consider usable. For example, a service area or a bathroom may or may not count.

Mayor Andreani says they are close on usable based on the calculation of 250.

Mr. Jones says there will be some shared parking arrangements between Fairmount and Meijer. For example, if someone parks at the Fairmount property and then walks to Meijer they are not going to tow that car. They would like the parking to be looked at as a whole.

Lundgren asks about the landscaping on the west property line.

Lundgren is happy to see red in the landscaping because it is an important color for Alliance as well as for Meijer. Lundgren is also happy to see the use of substantial trees in the landscape that will provide some shade in the parking area.

Lundgren moves to approve variance to waive traffic impact study. Goris seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

Lundgren moves to approve variance for landscape screening requirements. Paidas seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

Mayor Andreani moves to approve variance for pedestrian walkway requirements. Gross seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

Gross moves to conditionally approve the site plan based on Engineering's comments. Paidas seconds. All agree. Motion passes.

6) Other Business:

None.

Goris makes motion to adjourn. Paidas seconds. All are in favor. Meeting is adjourned at 5:30 pm.