



MINUTES

BOARD OF ZONING AND BUILDING APPEALS THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2016 6:30 PM

PLACE: COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7232 E. MAIN ST, REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43068

A. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Rettke, Linder, Donovan, Enfinger
ABSENT:

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Board of Zoning and Building Appeals – Regular Meeting – April 21, 2016

Minutes stand approved.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda stands approved.

4. SWEARING IN OF SPEAKERS

Chairman Rettke: Since there is no one in the audience, there will be no swearing in of speakers.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **6366 E. Main St.; Sixth Month Review of Application #170493; Applicant Jason P. Goss; Business Auto Direct Columbus; Permit #102-SE; Ord. #81-15**

Chairman Rettke: May we please have the presentation.

Mr. Snowden: thank you Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Board. This is a six month review of a Special Exception Use Permit, 102-Special Exception which was reviewed by the Board and approved by City Council as Ordinance #81-15. The application was made to the Planning and Zoning Division on July 8, 2015. This was referred to the Planning and Zoning Division by our Code Compliance Division, that the auto sales business was operating without a Special Exception Use permit, and the Board heard this last year at the August meeting of the Board. It was forwarded to City Council on August 20, and the Ordinance was passed by City Council on October 12, 2015, and took effect on November 13, 2015. Here we are six months later and I will be making a few comments on what the status is and that the role of the Board tonight is to determine if the applicant is in compliance with their conditions that were placed by the Board, and/or City Council, at the time it was approved. I will make a recommendation to City Council as to whether the Board thinks the permit should be revoked, which would stop the use, or whether the Board thinks the

condition of the Code have been satisfied. Our goal in this type of case is always voluntary compliance. If you turn to the minutes from City Council, page 3, you will see that the conditions that were put on by City Council was that the building would be removed, black-topping of the parking lot, this was because the applicant originally proposed gravel, or some other material to take up where the car wash was being removed, and that they would stripe the parking lot for safety, I am assuming this means arrowing in and out. One of the concerns that was raised by the Board and City Council was the entry/exit into this narrow lot of this use. In addition to that, the applicant refaced the sign without a Certificate of Appropriateness. Following approval of the Ordinance, the applicant was contacted, and had to be contacted multiple times to pick up their zoning certificate. The applicant, upon notification of the possibility of this meeting and additional notices issued by our Code Compliance Division, finally secured their Minor Site Plan Review yesterday, which was the 18th of May, and their demolition permit to begin work. Staff was notified that the applicant actually begun demoing the building sometime last week. I believe Thursday of last week, the applicant finally made their application to the Design Review Board, which will place them at the July 7th meeting of the DRB for their signage approval. Upon last contact with the Building Division, the applicant still did not have their Certificate of Occupancy to the main structure that they are utilizing for the auto sales business at the rear, and several safety inspections were cancelled, as of earlier today, notified by our Building Division. So, with that, I would like to get feedback from the Board. I would be happy to answer any questions. I would like the Board to make recommendation to City Council. This is a difficult situation to be in because both the Board and City Council were flexible in giving this applicant six months to do a number of things that probably should have been done prior to opening the business. The applicant made a lot of verbal promises, you can see in the minutes from the Service Committee meeting on September 21st, saying that the building was going to be down in thirty days, and I am in a hurry, etc... With that, the goal of our process is to get people into compliance. The applicant is not in compliance now. They are much closer to being in compliance today than they were when this was approved back in October, but it also had to sort of take the threat of this meeting to get them motivated to take care of the things they were told and received in writing. The applicant was notified of tonight's meeting, and they were informed this could be referred to City Council from here, and the applicant chose not to attend this evening. I would be happy to answer questions. We need the Board to make some sort of recommendation, if any, to City Council, and I will pass that information along. The last I was informed, the contractor doing the demolition was not registered, but they may have received a waiver from the Service Department. I do not know exactly what the details were there. I think Mr. McBride, when he was our Building Official, told the property owner that the contractor did not need to be registered, so they may have received some conflicting information from the City on that. With that, I will turn it back over to our Chairman.

Mr. Donovan: Is there a way you can hold their permit to do business in advance, until they do complete all of these requirements that they said they would do quickly? If we can't, what is the sense of even talking about this?

Mr. Snowden: Mr. Donovan, ultimately City Council has to make the decision because they approved the Ordinance, and that is what the Code section 145.08 says. If this Special

Exception Use Permit is revoked, recommended from here to City Council for revocation, and then revoked by City Council, that would not allow that use to be operated at that location, and I would work with the City Attorney to get an injunction to stop the business from operating, for a violation of the Zoning Code. We would probably have to do that in either Mayor's Court, or the Environmental Court of Franklin County. We would have to discuss that with the City Attorney. The Code does not appear to allow us to revoke and then reinstate the permit. If we revoke the permit, we are basically saying the use can not operate there for at least six months because that is how long the time is before reapplication is possible for the same use at the same location. It is a pretty powerful tool we have, but it is not overly flexible. The nice thing might be to say, "You are not allowed to operate until you complete these things that you said you were going to complete." Based on my reading of the Code, I do not see that we are able to do that. It just states that the Board can revoke. I could check to see if there is anything about re-issuance, but I am not aware of anything.

Mr. Enfinger: Has the Minor Site Plan been approved?

Mr. Snowden: The Minor Site Plan was approved by myself in conjunction with feedback from the City, including our Waste Water City Engineer. The Demolition Permit that is issued by our Building Division, does come with a \$1000 bond that has to be submitted to the City. And that bond is not released until the applicant has completed all of the requirements, including cutting off/abandoning water, waste water, and sanitary sewer pipes, to the satisfaction of our Water/Wastewater Division. Our Building Division does still have that tool in play in terms of making sure that the end result of the demolition is not going to continue being a problem. Water/Wastewater does not want material seeping back into the water system, that could cause problems.

Mr. Enfinger: Did the Minor Site Plan look appropriate as far as the concerns we had regarding the parking, turn arounds, and all those things?

Mr. Snowden: I have a copy in my office. It had an adequate aisle with, based on the Code. It had an adequate number of spaces. Given our minimum requirements for parking spaces, he was able to display approximately thirty-two cars on one side, and approximately thirty cars on the other side, while still allowing eight spaces for customer parking, which was discussed in the initial meeting. There is not a specific parking requirement for auto sales, but the Board and City Council felt that eight spaces was appropriate. He has cleaned up the very back of the property. There were some concerns raised about the existing gravel parking area at the rear.

Mr. Enfinger: So, are there any stipulations?

Mr. Snowden: Let me clarify. The Board could also refine the conditions and give a recommendation to City Council of additional conditions to correct any problems that the Board feels has arisen.

Mr. Enfinger: The next question was going to be, he has shown he is willing to just shoehorn as many vehicles on there as he possibly can. I know we can put a condition of approval in

that he has a certain limit and that every vehicle has to be parked in a specific parking spot. And, if he is limited by thirty-two on one side, and however many on the other, that is the total number of vehicles he can have on display. Maybe it will not be as big of a deal once the actual structure is down, it might look a little more organized, but up to this point it has been a hodge podge and a big mess.

Mr. Snowden: Mr. Chairman, and other Members of the Board, just looking at section 1145.08, where it talks about revocation, the Code talks about revocation in terms that are very definitive and that the permit is revoked. It does not talk in any way about re-issuance of the permit based on condition compliance. It talks about revocation and reapplication. It simply says that at least one year shall lapse before another application for the same Special Exception on the same site can be considered by the Board. I do not see that we are able to say that he is not allowed to operate until you do "this". I think we can say that you can continue to operate with some additional conditions, or you can not operate.

Mr. Donovan: What is your feeling about the sincerity of the applicant wanting to complete these instead of giving us the run around like they did before?

Mr. Snowden: I do not know if I have a good feeling for that, to be completely honest with you.

Mr. Donovan: He seemed sincere before when he talked to City Council.

Mr. Snowden: It seems that the individual perhaps does not understand the seriousness of what is going on. Maybe that comes from the approvals with the six month review while we are trying to be flexible for a business owner on a site that does not have many other uses other than auto related uses. So, maybe the gentleman is just not understanding that Use Permits, if evoked, prevent him from operating. He may not understand how serious it could be for him, if the Board and Council were to evocate the permit. That is why I feel we need to tread carefully.

Pastor Linder: Would a one or two month extension, in your opinion, give them the ability to demonstrate exceptional good faith in finalizing the work that has just begun? Is there a precedent for that, or would we just be building more work for us, and they are not really going to be motivated by that?

Mr. Snowden: pastor, it is hard to know. The revocation section, 1145.08(b), allows the Board to revoke a permit anytime, for non-compliance with the conditions. So, we are doing a review now. If we were to go ten years with this same use, and the same operation, and then someone violated a condition, it could be referred back to the Board for revocation. The thing that is good now, is that all the permit applications are in. Now, basically, we are waiting to get approval from DRB. The goal is not to punish people. The goal is to get them into compliance. The Code is here for a reason, to protect the public. I almost think of this somewhat like a test in school. Maybe this gentleman has not done well here at the six month review, but we have motivated him, and we have gotten some improvement. It is unfortunate that it took having to have the six month review in order to motivate him to do

some of the things that he needed to do, but it has helped, so if that means the Board feels comfortable giving another two months. Design Review Board will be completed July 7, so he should theoretically have all remaining permits at that time, from the zoning side. If the Board wanted to do a review in July and say that he is either good or not, I do not see where that would be unreasonable. There is not specific precedence, because we just have not had this type of issue since I have been here.

Mr. Enfinger: So once the application makes its way through Design Review, he still has the official paperwork, but do we know at that point in time he still has work to do. So two months is not really going to get us to that point yet, because he will still have work to do, for whatever he is doing that he is getting approval through DRB.

Mr. Snowden: he is getting approval from DRB from the sign, which he refaced before he opened. I already have the zoning sign permit, I have all the fees in, so once DRB approves it, if they approve it, assuming that they approve it, I could issue the zoning sign permit immediately and then he would be in compliance in terms of the Zoning Code. It is frustrating on one hand, but on the other hand, we have motivated him, we have got him a heck of a lot closer than when he started in August of last year with this being referred to me from our Code Compliance. We are closer. We still are not there yet, but we are closer.

Mr. Enfinger: Is he doing anything to the existing structure in the back?

Mr. Snowden: He is not doing any other modifications. Last time I was at the site, he had already repaired the awning at the back of the property, which was a condition that BZBA put on his original approval.

Mr. Enfinger: How long is the process for the inspections on the blacktop and all of that? When will he have the final inspection for the demo process to make sure he has restored the property to what he said he was going to do?

Mr. Snowden: For building, it is when he is done with removing the building. He has as long as six months from when he got the building demolition permit, which was yesterday, to do it. So, I do not see a reason that he would be able to leave the site like that without restoring the pavement. I believe he is actually going to use concrete on that area, rather than blacktop, which does not make a difference from the standpoint of the Code, as long as it is not gravel, which was originally proposed in a demolition plan that was submitted to building. I had to step in to say that we could not have gravel. My gut feeling is that it is going to move along quicker than that, and that two months is not unreasonable.

Mr. Havener: I think maybe a way to approach this, rather than giving him an extension, would be to approach him and ask him for a definitive timeline for a completion date, that was within reason for them to meet. If they don't meet that date, we could let them know at that point that they have to have it done by a date of we could take action.

Mr. Snowden: So, what you are saying is, assuming that the Board and City Council approved, we contact the applicant, have the applicant supply their end date? Either way, we are granting some sort of extension, regardless.

Mr. Enfinger: It is not an extension. At this point it is good to go until we bring it up, and we are able to bring it up at anytime. As soon as the drop dead date is that we are giving him the opportunity to tell us, if it is October, that is fine. November comes around, we are shutting you down. We are going to revoke the permit. Is that where you were heading with it, Dan.

Mr. Havener: Yes, more or less.

Mr. Donovan: Be very assertive about the fact that it will be revoked and he will have to go through the whole process again.

Mr. Snowden: he will not be able to operate at the site for a year. This is the type of situation where the applicant not attending the meeting tonight hurts us because we do not have the ability to get the information from the applicant. They were notified. It is frustrating to Staff because this is information that the Board needs to make an informed decision, and make sure that we are doing our due diligence. So, it is frustrating. It is a difficult situation. I agree with what you are saying. I just wish we had an applicant here to say how much more time he needs, so we could say that we are being reasonable, that we gave him an extension, that he still didn't do it, so now we are done.

Mr. Havener: His deadline was in May, correct?

Mr. Snowden: It was the 13th. If you look in one of the meetings, he said, "I'll have it done in thirty days." Which I think is a good lesson to not over promise on things you can't deliver on.

Mr. Havener: That was a bad way to approach it, going into the winter months.

Mr. Donovan: I have never seen cold weather stop a demolition.

Mr. Havener: yes, but to get the parking lot back into the condition it needed to be to operate.

Mr. Snowden: The only other thing the Board could do if it is not comfortable making a decision given we do not have the applicant here, we could recommend to City Council that the permit be revoked, unless the applicant can present a definitive timeline for what they need to complete the project, and let City Council handle it. There are so many what ifs here, and that is unfortunate. The Board could recommend revocation, say they are sticking to what they said, and say to clean this up within the six month review, or else. But, if the applicant can present additional material to City Council that is reasonable, that City Council can modify that. Ultimately, City Council can do anything. All we are doing is providing a

recommendation. But, my goal is for City Council to take the things that BZBA recommends to them, very seriously, as the subject matter experts.

Chairman Rettke: When would this go before Council?

Mr. Snowden: I believe that Councilman Clemens, as Chairman of the Committee, would be the first Committee Meeting June the 6th. There are three weeks before now and that meeting.

Chairman Rettke: I say refer it to Council for revocation. He can grovel with them.

Mr. Snowden: He still has three weeks to get into compliance with the remaining items, with the understanding that DRB will not be resolved until July. That is just the nature of the beast. The sign reface is not going to hurt anybody.

Chairman Rettke: My point is, you have him in here numerous times, six months not a problem, six months not a problem, I can guarantee thirty days, I am not a procrastinator. He knew he had to have a permit. I read where he said, "Obviously I have to have a permit."

Mr. Snowden: I said Minor Site Plan in one of those.

Chairman Rettke: You gave him a good course of direction.

Mr. Snowden: And all of that was received in writing, just for the record.

Chairman Rettke: I don't want to consider it a penalty, but you can't drag this on. You can't say six months, well then nine months...

Mr. Snowden: If the applicant was here to provide mitigating circumstances, and to give us a completion date, then maybe. I think the fact that they have chosen not to be here...

Mr. Donovan: I think we should vote revocation of the permit unless City Council determines that the applicant is sincere about getting it fixed in a timely manner, and leave it up to them as to whether they enforce it or not.

Mr. Snowden: Gentlemen, if you choose to make that motion, let me check the Code, to help with the language, I would make the motion that you move to recommend revocation of the permit, read the permit number, 102-Special Exception, to City Council, based on non-compliance with the conditions placed on the original approval. That is the language that we want to use. We do not need to site any of the specific items because it talks about revocation of the permit extensively. So, as long as we are basing on our decision on that power that is granted to the Board, I think we are in the clear. They still would have three weeks to take care of everything else, except for the sign. If Council felt comfortable that he had taken care of things, then they can make that decision. I will pass that information along to Council stating that you are recommending the revocation, but the understanding is he still has some additional time, and he did not attend the meeting.

Mr. Enfinger: Council will get these minutes, so they will be able to read this whole conversation, and understand our intent? So it will not just be we are revoking it, but they will understand the conversation.

Mr. Snowden: You are correct, Mr. Enfinger. That is a great point.

Chairman Rettke: Any more questions or comments? I will move for recommending revocation of Permit #102-SE to City Council for their consideration, based on the non-compliance of the conditions set forth.

(Vote)

Mr. Snowden: Very well, this will go to City Council for their consideration, and I will discuss the Board's decision with the Chairman so that he is totally clear as to why the Board did what they did.

RESULT:	REFERRED TO COMMITTEE [UNANIMOUS]	Next: 6/6/2016 7:30 PM
MOVER:	Anthony Rettke, Chairman	
SECONDER:	Aaron Enfinger	
AYES:	Rettke, Linder, Donovan, Enfinger	

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Snowden: No other business other than you may have noticed there were some trees cut down contrary to one of the Site Plan approvals for the Shoppes at East Broad, and we are working with the applicant and property owner to mitigate some of that, and we will present the final landscape plan. It was a situation where the property owner did not properly monitor what their engineer was actually submitting to get approval, so we will discuss what the final mitigation of that is going to be.

Mr. Donovan: I wondered why they took all the trees out. I thought they were just going to clean it up.

Chairman Rettke: We even talked about that with the new phase two...

Mr. Snowden: Dan and I just met with the property owner and applicant there. I believe it was their intent to clear out the area that was not covered by the EPA, or conservation easement. They just didn't communicate on that Site Plan properly. They said tree preservation on a portion of that site plan. They said some things verbally to us that in hind site I can see what they were thinking, but they also submitted a Site Plan that said something different. Obviously, we can not re-grow the trees, but we are going to be requiring them to do some very landscaping things, do some re-plantings, and we will share that with this body and DRB. I did not want anybody to think that we were not aware of it.

Chairman Rettke: I asked that question and a week later you see the grubbing guy there.

Mr. Snowden: There is no other buildable pad there. The area is too small. The ingress/egress is too close to the intersection of Wagram Road and East Broad. There is absolutely no other building plan there.

Mr. Donovan: I was over there last Tuesday, drove up the access road, and there was somebody heading the other way, even with all the signs.

Mr. Snowden: I have almost done it a couple of times because it just feels so natural. Creeks are difficult to develop around. Back in the day, you just put a culvert around it and drive right over it. But the way things are now, you have to leave that as conservation area. It is challenging. Anyway, just be aware that we are working with them and will share the results with the Board.

Mr. Enfinger: What is the story on Jackson Street, just north of Livingston? Or is that Lancaster there? The big development, are they doing more clearing now?

Mr. Snowden: Were you at the final approval for that where they replaced the tree area with a ponds because of the EPA? That might have been the one where you were out of town. I will just give everyone an update on that. Everyone who was at that meeting remembers, they had to remove some of the soil because EPA ordered the arsenic to be removed. Most of the trees were Ash anyways, so they were dead, and I have the documentation from the applicant's civil engineer, and environmental engineer. They have replaced that with a pond area. They did some additional tree plantings, which I think the Board had some concerns about. I have the final landscape plan for that in my office. They got a little carried away with some of the abatement of the site. They should have waited until they had the final engineering approval from the City. Dan, myself, and Mr. Sampson our Service Director, met with that property owner last week to basically say they need to wait until they get their final engineering approval. I would expect that we will be doing a pre-construction meeting with them in the next couple of weeks, and their building plans just came back. It is moving along. They got a little ahead of themselves. They are not working as of now, is my understanding.

Mr. Havener: Their understanding originally was that they had the clearance to do the remediation prior to the start of construction.

Mr. Snowden: And really they should have waited until they had the pre-construction meeting and all of the permits before they started disturbing the ground and so forth. It just makes the whole process work a lot better.

Mr. Rettke: Did Ace go out of business?

Mr. Snowden: Yes, a traampoline park is moving forward to City Council for approval next week.

Mr. Rettke: Did he move the U-Haul.

Mr. Snowden: He will not be utilizing that use. If he doesn't use that use for six months, the permit expires. The tenant is changing to the different use. It is the same operator. He is not going to be combining the U-Haul use with that use. It just does not work. We have a good relationship with the regional manager for U-Haul, and he understands what the regulations are within the City, and we have also tried to identify some locations that could be appropriate for him, and we have actually been looking at re-purposing some of our vacant retail as storage, or having some additional storage new build, depending on what is possible. I think it would be great to take some of our unused retail off the market, even though storage is not the world's greatest use, but it is better than vacant retail in some cases.

Mr. Donovan: Has anybody noticed how the housing market has been heating up around here? In my neighborhood, they go on the market and in two weeks they have sale pending/in contract.

Mr. Havener: That is the way it is everywhere.

Mr. Snowden: It is starting to pick up, definitely. We are getting some new construction for condos and different things.

Mr. Rettke:

F. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman



Planning Administrator