



MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2020 6:00 PM

**PLACE: COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7232 EAST MAIN STREET, REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43068**

A. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Cullinan (Remote), Zollars (Remote), Hicks (Remote), Furst (Remote), Benner (Remote)
ABSENT:

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved

3. SWEARING IN OF SPEAKERS

Zollars

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

C. NEW BUSINESS

None

1. 6300 East Main Street; Application #2020-5075; Applicant Cocca Development; Major Site Plan

Ms. Wheeler: This is for 6300 East Main St, application 2020-5075. The request is for Planning Commission approval for a major site plan for a new Walgreens brand, what they are calling their Cooper store model. You did receive a brief overview of what that model is. The applicant is on the call so if they would like to give additional information.

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Walgreens has a current Walgreens, large building 15,000 square feet. We have been there for 20 something years. Our initial term of rent came up and we tried to negotiate a lower rent because we aren't making money there and the landlord said, no and is terminating our rent as of 12/31 of this year. So that gave us an option of either abandoning the trade area or finding a location where we could do a pharmacy only drive thru. The Cooper is a 2,500 square foot building where the majority of business is done through pharmacy. The front end of these stores, where we use to do a tremendous amount of business, has slowly over the years declined to the point they become very unprofitable. You can imagine; dollar stores, gas stations, people that have a lot of grab and go like grocery stores, that ate away at the market share of the front of the store. With that we developed the Cooper with the idea that we can stay in the trade area, still service the customer, hopefully retain all the prescriptions and have a small amount of OTC medications in the front, but lose the 10,000 square feet of wasted space for items we're losing money on. So, when our landlord said they weren't going to renew our lease, it pushed us into overdrive to find a

location where we could retain our customer base. It's a good customer base and we don't want to abandon them. That's why we're submitting this application.

Mr. Zollars: Commissioners, any questions or discussions?

Mr. Hicks: I just had a couple of questions for staff. This is sort of our first major site plan under the new code, is that correct?

Mr. Bowsher: That is correct.

Mr. Hicks: Since we're reviewing the checklist of all the new criteria that we need to be reviewing. This application, does it include any architectural elevations for the building itself?

Mr. Bowsher: It does, those were sent to you later. I thought they were part of the original agenda packet and they were not. They will look like this. Can you see my screen ok?

Mr. Zollars: I can see it. It looks like you got about five parking spaces. Is that correct? Seven maybe.

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): The site actually has 17.

Mr. Zollars: 17? ok.

Mr. Furst: Do you expect a similar vehicular traffic volume to what you have now? I realize you're not going to have the dry good or grocery type items, but if the majority of your business is prescription refills now, are you expecting the same vehicular traffic?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Yes. The number of people that come into the drug store just for sundries is relatively a small amount. Usually that is people that forget things on the way home because we're typically located very well between work and home. So probably 90% of the vehicular traffic that we do have will come to the site. We do expect the drive-thru to be busy if not busier than the current drive-thru. So we have a five car stack on it and can accept up to seven cars. So that should give up the ability to manage that traffic flow on site and get people through the store.

Mr. Zollars: Without seeing the drawings, what is the exterior of the building?

Mr. Bowsher: If you can see my screen, you can see the elevation drawing. I also sent it over to your email addresses as well so you should have that digital copy in full color.

Mr. Zollars: The question more specifically is, what is the texture?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): The building overall is a efface building with brick accent. We have a column in the front that is a darker gray than the gray building, then accents on the

vestibule area is a more red brick. A drive-thru with a canopy and there's also an accent on the long wall to break up the long wall that is a gray brick as well. That's where our logo will go if we have the signage capacity to put our logo on it.

Mr. Zollars: Ok.

Mr. Benner: Andrew, do you have the drawing that shows the curb cut going onto Main Street? If I'm not mistaking that looks as if traffic will have the ability to turn both ways. Is that accurate?

Mr. Bowsher: That is accurate and basically what they are doing is they are expanding the current curb cut to allow for those three lanes, one going in and two out. We reviewed this with the City Engineer, EMH&T, as well as their firm talked to them. Basically, the middle turn lane with two lanes going each way a traffic study wasn't deemed necessary with the lower volume of traffic they would receive. With the middle turn lane on Main St. there's very little we could do to mitigate any concerns. We feel confident in what they are showing, at least as far as a traffic pattern is concerned.

Mr. Hicks: While we're talking about traffic. Some of the other sites along Main Street we've tried to make an effort to at least plan for some future form of cross access so that people can get to traffic lights without having to turn left onto Main Street, which is obviously difficult. Trying to turn left out of that area is challenging. Is there any way as part of this application that we could secure some sort of future cross access with any of the other surrounding parcels? Specifically with the parcels to the north and east of this one that would get out onto Brice Road.

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Walgreens certainly doesn't have a problem with that. Anthony, does COCOA Development?

Mr. Bowsher: Steven, if I can jump in and answer. I think what was being discussed with the developer was that they're obviously building on the front portion of their parcel. I think over time they want to potentially sell that back portion, there's another parcel to the east, maybe those two could be combined for another future developments that would have access off Brice. I think your question then becomes, can they have access to this site or the east side so they would also have Main Street access. I think that's certainly something the developer can help answer.

Mr. Cocoa: We're happy to do that if we can do that.

Mr. Zollars: I've got a question for staff. Andrew, without seeing all the details in color, do we have everything to do what we are allowed to do?

Mr. Bowsher: That's a great question and something we talked about internally. The City Attorney and Emily is also on the call and we discussed it briefly. This building in it's current setback would need to be brought closer to the road or potentially have a variance, as well as a side setback. You have to understand that when we were doing our zoning code as well as

the comp plan we were looking for higher density type development. This is a very unique parcel and we think this is a good development and use, given that we are also getting a good infill tenant for the old Walgreens. It's a very unique and skinny lot with development on either side and I don't feel that in any shape or form that we are going to demo this parcel or any parcel to the west or east. So, I think we're getting a good use for as unique as the site is. Therefore if we approve a condition would need to be made that is would need to go before BZBA to get a couple of those variances to ensure we are in compliance with the new code.

Mr. Zollars: Ok. What about the material? Is everything ok on that front?

Mr. Bowsher: That would be more up to you. It seems as if they've included some brick and they had the channel lettering that's a standard concept. This is their new concept. I don't think this got mentioned but this will be the first in Central Ohio that's like this and the United States for the Cooper model, so we're excited about that. Anything else that you would like to see, design related, would be in the purview of Planning Commission and that would be a request or condition.

Mr. Hicks: Pointing to a pylon sign, is there elevations of the sign? That would obviously need to be a monument type sign with a brick base, like what we would require from every other applicant.

Mr. Bowsher: Great question. We do not have a rendering of that sign, but basically what we would require you to match the bottom red brick base; which is what matched the brick on the front of the Walgreens store. Then your sign would have to match our code, which is very similar to the rest of the signs on Main Street. I'm assuming that's what you meant when you put out the pylon sign.

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): I think we always go for pylon, but monument is more than acceptable.

Mr. Furst: I have a clarifying question. Would it be accurate to say that the character of the exterior finishes is relatively similar to the existing site?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): The existing site is mostly brick. These are very toned down colors. Pharmacy business is a very conservative business, you don't want to get crazy with your colors. We did bring in some of the brick exterior so you would have some good accents and it would flow with other buildings. It is a little bit different than our big building with all brick, but as you can imagine we're separating ourselves from the big building and going with a brand new Cooper style. We tried to make it very conservative, approachable, good looking, but different than what we're leaving.

Mr. Furst: That makes sense, thank you for that.

Mr. Benner: With this facility deliver as well as have drive-thru pickup?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Believe it or not, the pharmacy in this is bigger than the pharmacy square footage wise than the big building. Our full focus here is on being efficient and being able to serve the customer in a manner they are use to. If you ever go into a pharmacy at Walgreens, it is a three to five minute... we don't call it a drive-thru, we call it a drive up. The idea is that we have a bigger pharmacy for better ease of filling the prescriptions. We feel as if it is better or equal to what we have currently.

Mr. Benner: My question is, will you be delivering from that?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Sorry, I totally missed that. Currently under Covid we have a cost free FedEx system that we use. We will probably not have deliver vehicles, it's just not in our business.

Mr. Benner: Last question, approximately how many employees?

Mr. Jaime (Walgreens): Five to seven in the building.

Mr. Zollars: Commissioners, I'll entertain a motion either way.

Mr. Hicks: We need to make a couple conditions on this motion. One being the cross access easement and the second being that a sign needs to fit the code when it's submitted.

Mr. Furst: We also need to zoning variance, correct?

Mr. Bowsher: Correct.

Mr. Hicks: I move that we approve the major site plan under the following three conditions; the first being that the applicant provides some form of cross access to the northern part of the parcel to access the east of this parcel that fronts Brice Road. The second condition would be that the applicant submit a monument style sign to staff that meets the city code requirements. Including a brick base and facade. The third condition being that the applicant go through BZBA to obtain the variances needed to comply with this plan that's been submitted. Mr. Shook, did those conditions sound ok?

Mr. Shook: Yes, they sound fine. I think one big concern here is that the insight district there at Brice and Main we have implemented new setback requirements from the front of the road. Right now the proposed plan has a 40 foot setback from the right of way and the current zoning regulations have a max of 20 feet. So that would be possibly a significant variance, especially in light of how small this particular zoning district is. To grant one variance for a further setback from the right of way could create a president that would require us to grant additional variances in the future.

Mr. Hicks: And those will be issues that BZBA will review?

Mr. Shook: Correct.

Mr. Zollars: We need a second.

Mr. Furst: I'll second.

Ms. Wheeler: Mr. Benner, Yes. Mr. Cullinan, Yes. Mr. Furst, Yes. Mr. Hicks, Yes. Mr. Zollars, Yes.

RESULT:	REFERRED [UNANIMOUS]	Next: 5/21/2020 6:30 PM
MOVER:	Steven Hicks, Commissioner	
SECONDER:	Alex Furst, Vice Chairman	
AYES:	Cullinan, Zollars, Hicks, Furst, Benner	

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. App #2020-5070; 8500 Taylor Chase Drive; Mid-Ohio Development Corporation; Major Site Plan

Mr. Bowsher: Let's make it known that this is a continuation of the Planning Commission meeting that we had on April 2nd.

Mr. Zollars: Let's pick up where we left off then. Does Murphy want to start off the conversation?

Mr. Murphy: We're willing to answer any questions you might have that weren't covered at the last meeting.

Mr. Zollars: Commissioners, any questions or comments?

Mr. Hicks: In our last meeting one of my concerns was the landscape buffer between your parcel and the existing single family homes to the west. Based on the new rendering you sent out it appears you have increased the amount of landscaping along that buffer. Would you be able to comment on that regarding the specifics or what you added?

Mr. Murphy: We had our engineer's landscape architect collaborate and look at the new code to create the new requirements for the medium residential code. A fair amount of those properties have fences already so we're focusing more landscape where there are no fences. Then, we are scattering the landscaping on the west and northwest corner. To be perfectly honest, a lot of this was done through auto cad and the street scape at the entrance I like, but some of this is very generic. For example, if you look at the middle retention pond, the smaller one to the left, we would like to scatter the trees more. Right now they kind of rim the community center pond and entrance way and it's symmetrical where we would generally scatter them throughout the community rather than just at the beginning.

Mr. Hicks: I think that answered my question and I don't think anybody at the city is going to stop it if you decide to add additional landscaping as you go through the construction process. I'm sure staff can work with you on moving some trees on the site. It always seems on projects like this that once the buildings are up and you can actually see everything that adjustments need to be made. I do want to make sure that all the buffering along the

perimeter; quantity, number of trees, etc. are generally staying the same. It's important that we're providing a nice buffer between your project and the single family homes. I visited all your sites that were mentioned here in Central Ohio. It does look like a good quality product and for the folks in Reynoldsburg I think this is the best we can ask for to finish out an unfinished condo development that was troublesome from a development perspective. I think it's a good use for this site and as long as we are using the correct buffering and providing all the landscape requirements that are in our code, I think it looks great.

Mr. Murphy: That would be our intent. It looks good from an auto cad perspective, but unfortunately it was done in a pretty short order. My example would be the community center with pool and pond. Typically we wouldn't forest that because you're hiding an amenity that's meant for people to see. My point is, we are very conscious to the west and north existing property owners. I'd like to suggest that there's some flexibility within the community with the same number and species of trees but scattered a little more and placement changed.

Mr. Benner: If I'm hearing Mr. Murphy correctly the cad drawing is obviously not exact, but along Taylor Road, did I hear you like the way that looked?

Mr. Murphy: Taylor Road I don't think is bad. I think that allows for a nice streetscape and entrance. What I'm not a fan of is the tree line around the community center and pond.

Mr. Benner: We're in agreement there, I just like Taylor Road to be as attractive as possible and I think that looks very nice.

Mr. Murphy: Thank you. The other product is a mixture of brick and vinyl. We will replace with brick in places that are seen by automobile traffic. So, Taylor Road will have more brick, for example, Taylor Road may have more brick and less on those on the west end of the property where a building may be facing somebody's yard fence. As we like to go by in our office that we go by the windshield appraisal. What you see when you drive through a community? As some of you have mentioned by driving through our communities, whether it's stone or masonry, it's put in places where you get the biggest bang for your buck. So when you leave the property you remember what you saw not that it's all vinyl.

Mr. Benner: I also drove by all your developments and was impressed. Pioneer Circle in Pickerington, how old is that development?

Mr. Murphy: We finished that about a year and a half ago. It's pretty recent. We started the final phase in May of '19. That was a four phase project. The first three phases were done I think about the same time Taylor Chase about '04 or '05. We built until '08 and until we hit the financial tsunami of '08- '09.

Mr. Benner: From a material aspect, are you using the same material? Particularly the one drawback I saw when driving through the development was the vinyl shutters were horrible. They were terribly faded in what I would assume was some of the older ones.

Mr. Murphy: The problem we ran into on that last phase of the community was in being in

an association, we had to match everything. We had to match the association because it was already part of that group. With this one we are not in that condo association so that is something if we want to get away from that. We're open to entertaining all ideas. That's why those shutters were on there though. The last thing the last phase all the shutters were new but the first phases are from 2006 and that's where the drawback was because one was built six months ago and one that was built 12 years ago.

Mr. Benner: You will be managing the rental units. Is that correct?

Mr. Murphy: That is correct. We will retain ownership.

Mr. Benner: As far as the condos, will they join the current association? Will it be a separate association, or do we know that?

Mr. Murphy: We have approached that but it has become challenging. That was our intent and they were entertaining it. However, they really shot themselves in the foot. They re roofed the entire community and the roofer convinced them they should put larger gutter down spouts in and they exhausted their reserve for community. In order for us to join their community; which is beyond the seven year statute of law. Legally we were able to but the first unit sold by us we had to provide them with a financial statement for Taylor Chase one. Just like with any one of you, they would look at an association with no reserves and it would probably be a different story. The Homestead in Pickerington looked at it and said, "Oh, you have tens of thousands in the reserve". That's not the case here. I'm not trying to be negative towards them, that's just what we came across. We were trying to discuss if there was some common ground but that is going to be one of our biggest obstacles. The roadway will connect because by easement law that loop road will still be a loop road and connected at the pavement. AS far as fire and emergency services go we can travel across each other. They will be able to travel across us and we will be able to travel across them. We kind of left it at that when we found of their financial statement was net zero for reserves.

Mr. Zollars: Good question Mr. Benner. Any other questions?

Mr. Furst: I don't have a question but I do have a request. I know we have talked about descriptively how the materials are going to match the existing building, but I would like that read into the motion, just for the record.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Furst, are you referencing the condominium portion?

Mr. Furst: Yes.

Mr. Murphy: OK, I was just clarifying because we will make something that is complimentary to each other but we will likely take a departure from brick siding and shingle so they are clearly, from the consumers eye, two different communities. I can't say that we may like it and decide to run with it, but that is our intent right now to match the shingle and I believe the brick is still manufactured and if not we will get very close to it.

Mr. Furst: I think that is completely reasonable. I understand you have to deal with the materials that are available on the market. It does make sense to separate the communities so it's obvious they are separate communities. Just because we are finishing the condominium portion of it and there is that possibility that it may join the other association I want it to look a little more contiguous.

Mr. Murphy: I have no issues with that at all.

Mr. Bowsher: There were a couple of asks to us that we fielded over the course of the last couple of weeks. Can we briefly talk about the phasing approach? Obviously you're not going to be able to build all of them all at once. So if you could quickly walk us through the phased approach and which ones we can expect to see erected. I know you will rent a few of them and continue to build, but if you could walk us through this project that would be helpful. Then to kind of sure up some of the concerns with the landscape buffer around the pond and community center, could there be more of a middle ground with the commissioners? Some are saying we really don't want it hidden but others are saying they like it that way, so maybe instead of a columnar tree maybe we can have a Tulip Poplar, something that's going to grow tall, still have a trunk, but you're still going to be able to see. This would allow you to be able to see the amenities but still provide the landscaping.

Mr. Murphy: Yes, as it relates to the landscape we would be in favor of that as well. Taylor Ridge would be a good example of what we intend to do. Sunset maples and oaks with trunks and tend to have blossom to them but you can see through them as they mature. We are open to changing the materials as suggested. As far as sequence, I'd love to give you a brief and short answer, however our intent to construct the condominiums, build all eight building and then move over to the apartments; our lender in the last two weeks has already given us a term sheet on the apartments. We've hit, what I like to call, an air pocket. So we're talking to a couple of our other lenders because all the sudden the turmoil has driven the banks to... how about you phase it. We're not opposed to phasing 32 units, to us that is a phase. Pickerington was 28. Our lender for the apartments actually ended up passing on them for the condominiums because they suggested we go from four to eight and that stifles us. I personally feel like 32 condominiums would move in a year to a year and a half just like they did in Pickerington. The market has changed and unemployment has quantum leaped so we're in a weird pattern right now. I'm confident we're going to get another lender, but it's also timing. If we buy this and we've got a loan for apartments and the condominium loan from discussion to closing is 90 days in a normal environment, the condos could end up being the back part, where our intent was to have them start first. So they could flip flop, but I can tell you with all certainty we are going to build all of them because we believe there's a strong market there for them.

Mr. Zollars: Any other questions? I'd hear a motion one way or the other.

Mr. Furst: Not hearing any additional questions I'd like to make a motion. I'd like to propose that we accept this as presented with the condition that the condominium portion reasonably match the existing condominiums from the prior phase in reason with available materials on the market.

Mr. Cullinan: I'll second.

Ms. Wheeler: Mr. Benner, Yes. Mr. Cullinan, Yes. Mr. Furst, Yes. Mr. Hicks, Yes. Mr. Zollars, Yes.

Mr. Murphy:

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Cullinan, Zollars, Hicks, Furst, Benner

E. OTHER BUSINESS

None

F. ADJOURNMENT

G. MOTIONS

Chairman

Planning and Zoning Administrator