

**Minutes of VERMILION MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
of November 3, 2021 @ 7:00 pm**

**PRESENT:** Heather Shirley, Joe Williams, Heidi Strickler. **Absent:** Jim Chapple, Jeff Hammerschmidt

**In ATTENDANCE:** Bill DiFucci, Building Inspector; Barb Brady, Council Representative; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Jim Forthofer, Mayor

**Call to Order:**

Joe Williams, Chairman called the Wednesday, November 3, 2021 meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**H. Shirley MOVED,** H Stricker seconded to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**New Business:**

**John Reyes – Property Location: Douglas St. (Northeast Corner of Douglas/Devon) – PP#:18-00835 (Approval of Preliminary Site Plan – New Boat Storage Building)**

John Reyes of Star Builders, Inc., 46405 Telegraph, Amherst, Ohio said he is the architect representing the client for this building.

J. Williams addressed the city engineer's comments in his correspondence dated October 29, 2021 regarding distance from the side setback. C. Howard explained they would need to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a variance for the setback, so if Planning Commission approves the application it will be contingent upon getting BZA's approval.

J. Williams asked if it was possible to do some landscaping around the building as they are not far from residences and they are across from the new fire station which is nice looking, so he thought it would help to make this building fit in. J. Reyes said there is some frontage along Devon Drive that would be nice to add some arborvitae. J. Williams said there is a whole group of trees along Devon – are you planning on leaving most of those? J. Reyes said they would like to leave as much as they can along Devon and the eastern property line. Obviously, they will need to clean some of that for the ingress along Devon, but if they can retain some of this they will. J. Williams asked if the front of the building is the short dimension. C. Howard said it is a corner lot, so they are both considered frontage.

H. Strickler said with the ballot issue that passed with no storage – will it affect this at all. Mayor Forthofer said no as this was intended mostly for residential areas. B. Brady said it

was never meant to affect anything going into the industrial zoned areas. J. Williams said he recalls it as residential and business zoning.

H. Shirley asked what the color scheme is of the building. J. Reyes said they haven't worked this out, but they will be primarily neutral colors – maybe sand or something like that, nothing flashy.

J. Williams asked the city engineer if the applicant responded back to his comment on parking. C. Howard noted this is a preliminary plan approval and they will have to come back to the Planning Commission for final approval. J. Reyes said there are minimal employees and occupancy on this building since it is a boat storage. J. Williams said the city engineer had asked if there would be restrooms and offices. J. Reyes said it may only be a single person occupancy bathroom, but no office as they would rather have this space for the storage. B. DiFucci wasn't certain there was a bathroom requirement for this storage.

H. Shirley asked if they had any issues with putting in a sidewalk as it will need to be installed along the Devon Drive frontage. J. Reyes understood this requirement.

B. Brady addressed the BZA setback requirements and asked where the other buildings sit on this street. J. Reyes said the building to the north has the 75' setback for front yard and the new city building is around 63' off the property line, and they are asking for a 47' setback. B. Brady said she just did not want it to look funny. J. Reyes said there are trees along the frontage and if they manage to just clear the area ingress there are some trees they can notate on their landscaping drawing as well, which would address some of the screening of the building. J. Williams said to meet the setback would they have to shorten the building? J. Reyes said yes considerably – they tried to address this and pushed the building as far as back as they could on the corner given the lengths of the boats to be stored as they need this space as much as they can. J. Williams said he drove the area and feels the buildings are far enough apart, so he did not think it would be an issue. J. Reyes said they are also presenting the shortest elevation to this street. J. Williams said the occupancy for industrial does not go that much further before they start getting into residential, so it is not like there will be a lot of buildings going along there.

B. Brady asked if there would be exterior boat parking and J. Reyes said no.

**J. Williams MOVED**, H. Strickler seconded to approve the preliminary site plan contingent upon the City Engineer's comments addressed in his correspondence dated October 29, 2021, along with a request when the applicant comes back for the final site plan that they provide a landscaping plan, and the building color is neutral as specified, and sidewalks as noted. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Gloria Hendricks – Property Location – Cliffside Drive – PP#:0100017000250 (Lot Split/Lot Consolidation)**

Gloria Hendricks of 6783 Cliffside Drive said she is requesting approval to split and reconsolidate some of her properties. J. Williams asked if these were undeveloped properties. G. Hendricks said years ago they owned the bottom land and Metro took over and they had a 30' easement in all of their back yards, so the neighbor that wants to buy it now wasn't one of the six, so Metro gave them theirs, so this is how they got the three. J. Williams confirmed they are splitting the property and selling it to the neighbors.

J. Williams addressed the city engineer's correspondence dated October 29, 2021, and believed their engineer resubmitted the minor changes. C. Howard confirmed there were minor changes.

**H. Shirley MOVED**, J. Williams seconded to approve the lot split/lot combination as submitted. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Robert Kilbane – Property Location: Vacant land – Claus Road/Sunnyside Road – PP#:01-00-021-000-063, 064, & 065 (Lot Split/Lot Consolidation)**

Robert Kilbane of 19885 Detroit Road, Rocky River, Ohio explained he came before the Planning Commission at a zoom meeting months back and he made a mistake as he had Rafter & Associates subdivide the property, but he should have gone to the sanitation engineer first, so he wanted it changed slightly, so Rafter redid it. He said the 19 acres become 15 as the sanitation engineer said it would work better for the septic system. He said he brought the original plans that were previously approved in case the commission wanted to revisit it.

C. Howard said there was only a small legal description typo that was submitted. G. Fisher said she received the corrected legal description.

J. Williams said he is combining the lots and asked if there is a purpose behind it. R. Kilbane explained they subdivided the lots and the engineer wanted it changed as noted above.

**J. Williams MOVED**, H. Strickler seconded to approve the lot split/lot consolidation as presented. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Garcia Rentals, LLC – Property Location: 4450 Liberty Avenue – PP#:0100001103120 (Approval of Preliminary Site Plan)**

Fran Blanchard of 340 County Road 355, Leesburg, Alabama was present to represent Garcia Rentals as well as Auto Zone at 4450 Liberty Avenue.

J. Williams confirmed he would be submitting the building plans in more detail later as this is just the preliminary site plan. F. Blanchard said Auto Zone is working on architectural plans and they have the landscape plan and parking.

H. Shirley asked if there was concern about the competition next to them. F. Blanchard explained they do a lot of these, and they have built around 150 Auto Zones around the country. The Advance, Auto Zone, and O'Reilly's usually choose to go around one another. It just breeds success for them. He said Auto Zone is the leader in the retail business, but it does not mean they will make Advance go under. Somehow, the COVID has made today's society not only because of the money, but people are working on their vehicles, so a few years ago they tried to the deal in Vermilion, but they could not make the numbers work even though they got the industry leader. There are a lot of committees they have to go through to get a Fortune 300 Company to come to the city. However, the numbers work, and it works where Advance makes it and it works where Auto Zone makes it, so the competition with the two together are right. They make for good business, or they wouldn't go in and spend millions of dollars putting these things up if they thought they would shut down in 10 years.

H. Shirley asked if the plan it to level the existing building and F. Blanchard responded yes. He said they will revitalize, and it will be a great lot. H. Shirley asked what their goal is to start construction. F. Blanchard said they are closing December 4 and once the city signs off on everything they will work as fast as possible – they will be building in 2022. H. Shirley asked how many months it will take them to build. F. Blanchard said around 120 days. H. Shirley asked how many employees they are looking at. F. Blanchard said they usually house around seven.

J. Williams asked if they would have the landscape plan when they submit their final plans. F. Blanchard said the landscape is actually in the civils, but it will be dressed up more in the architectural plans. J. Williams said they are attempting to make anything that is boarding on Liberty a lot nicer looking than it has in the past, so they want to make sure this is addressed. F. Blanchard said Auto Zone makes sure their landscape is nice – they also have their stipulations.

B. Brady said storm water has been a big issue along Liberty, and she sees they have detention and asked if they are going into the Crystal Shores ditch. F. Blanchard said yes as there is already piping there for it and they plan on revamping that. The engineers are getting with the city to get their easement in place and if they get more water than what they can handle onsite then it will drain to this. C. Howard said they will do storm water management. F. Blanchard said to go to the creek it is basically for emergency as they have onsite detention.

H. Shirley asked F. Blanchard if he received a copy of the city engineer's comments and had any concerns. F. Blanchard said no as the engineering firm has been fantastic.

**H. Strickler MOVED**, J. Williams seconded to approve the preliminary site plan as submitted. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

**Adjournment:**

J. Williams adjourned the meeting upon no further business .

*The next meeting has been scheduled for December 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.  
Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street.*

*Transcribed by Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk.*