

**Monroe Planning Commission Minutes**  
**May 17, 2016 – 6:00 pm**  
**233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio**

The Planning Commission of the City of Monroe met in regular session at 6:00 pm on May 17, 2016. The meeting was held at Monroe City Hall.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm by Mr. Morris. Members present were Mike Morris, Steve Wood, James Berry, Mayor Routson, and Ron Tubbs.

Also present were: Kevin Chesar, Director of Development/Zoning Enforcement Officer; Kameryn Jones, Planner; Deana England, Deputy Clerk of Council; and Assistant Fire Chief, Richard Mascarella.

Mr. Morris opened Public Hearing Case No. 2016-5-8. Mr. Chesar was sworn in.

**Case No. 2016-5-8:** Consideration of a PUD Amendment for Mount Pleasant Retirement Village.

Mr. Chesar presented all documents and publications to Planning Commission for acceptance.

Mr. Chesar stated that Planning Commission recently approved the properties under a rezoning request for the Mt. Pleasant PUD however, after further review; the case should have been formally presented as a PUD Amendment. The Public Hearing and recommendation is being sought again in order to follow the correct process. No other substantial changes have occurred since the previous report to Planning Commission in January.

Mr. Chesar stated that Stan Kappers, on behalf of Mount Pleasant Retirement Village and Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services, has submitted an application for a PUD Amendment for six parcels (Parcels C1800005340038, C1800005340039, C1800005340040, C1800005340041, C1800005340042, C1800005340043) to enter the Mount Pleasant Planned Unit Development (PUD) on approximately 2.4 acres of land along Seminary Drive.

Mr. Chesar stated that the surrounding zoning includes; North: R-1 PUD (Mount Pleasant Retirement Village), South: R-1 Residential (State of Ohio right-of-way), West: R-1 PUD (Mount Pleasant Retirement Village), East: R-1 Residential (Single-family homes).

Mr. Chesar stated that Mount Pleasant currently owns and operates both properties at 230 Seminary Drive, where Hilltop Early Childhood Enrichment Center and the Treasure Barn are located. Although both have been operating for a number of years, they have yet to be formally incorporated into the Planned Unit Development. More recently, Mount Pleasant has purchased the three multi-family units across the street located at 223, 229, and 235 Seminary Drive. These properties have since been demolished. The amendment request is to officially add in these new properties, as well as incorporate the two businesses that have already functioned as part of the Mount Pleasant community.

Mr. Chesar stated that the review criteria include is the PUD plan is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Chesar stated the proposed change is consistent with the proposed land use plan map which designates the future use of the parcels as residential, though it would fall under a PUD overlay. Though immediate plans are for these parcels to be utilized as open space, the future use of these parcels will need to be considered to ensure this consistency.

Mr. Chesar stated that Planning Commission should also review is the plan in compliance with standards in this chapter.

Mr. Chesar stated that the parcels are either vacant or uses typically associated with Mt Pleasant activities. At this time, the plan appears in compliance.

Mr. Chesar stated the plans are in compliance with the other applicable standards of this code.

Mr. Chesar stated that no public comments were received.

Mr. Chesar stated that Public Works/Engineering had no comment at this time, Police Department had no comment at this time, the Fire Department reserves the right to comment during plans review/inspection process, and the Police department had no comment at this time.

Mr. Chesar stated that based on the analysis of the amendment criteria above, staff recommends that Planning Commission give a favorable recommendation to City Council for the PUD Amendment.

Mr. Tubbs motioned to accept all documents presented before them; Seconded by Mr. Woods. Voice Vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Woods motioned to close the Public Hearing; Seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Berry moved to give a favorable recommendation to Council for approval of Case No. 2016-5-8: Consideration of a PUD Amendment for Mount Pleasant Retirement Village; Seconded by Mr. Woods. Voice vote. Motion carried.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Tubbs moved to approve the March 15, 2016 Minutes; Mr. Berry seconded the motion. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**Case No. 2016-5-9:** Consideration of an application from Monroe Local Schools for a minor PUD Amendment to allow for a digital sign on their site at the corner of State Route 63 and Yankee Road.

Ms. Jones stated that Monroe Local Schools has submitted an application for a Minor PUD Amendment to allow for an electronic message sign at the site of their existing monument sign at the corner of State Route 63 and Yankee Road. The proposed digital panel would be approximately 32 square feet and would be added to the existing lettering sign panel that is 19 square feet. Monroe Schools is proposing

the digital messaging to better utilize the existing monument sign and eliminate the cost associated with and need for temporary banners. The applicant believes an electronic messaging system will allow the School to display multiple messages in a given day, update information more easily, as well as display the current time, date, weather, and potentially forecast information to the public.

Ms. Jones stated that the surrounding zoning includes; North: R-1 Single-Family Residential (single-family homes), South: Township property (Majors farm), East: R-4 Multi-family Residential (Heritage Green), West: Township.

Ms. Jones stated that it should be noted that the base zoning district (A-1 Agricultural) does not permit digital/electronic signage outright. However, because the Monroe Schools PUD overlay has regulated signage, Staff has brought this case forward to Planning Commission for consideration. Code regulates digital signage under Changeable Copy Signs only permissible in Commercial districts. Regulations require static message change, 8 second minimum between messages with a transition of less than 1 second. Other code limits brightness and sets quality standards.

Ms. Jones stated that the resolution standards for electronic message centers/signs are as follows; Only multi-color Light Emitting Diodes (LED) technology or similar quality signs with a minimum 15 millimeter true pixel pitch shall be permitted for electronic message centers in the C-1 and C-4 Commercial Districts. Only multi-color Light Emitting Diodes (LED) technology or similar quality signs with a minimum 10 millimeter true pixel pitch shall be permitted for electronic message centers in the C-2 and C-3 Commercial Districts.

Ms. Jones stated that the applicant is proposing a 15 millimeter resolution full color sign. Since this is an Agricultural District/PUD but very visible, staff initially believed that a minimum 10 millimeter resolution for this use should apply. However, the applicant has stated this resolution is high quality and is appropriate for outdoor electronic signage.

Ms. Jones stated that code requires signage to be at least 125 feet from residential uses. This signage does not face any residential use, with the Heritage Green multifamily units being nearly a mile away to the east. The applicant has indicated the signage will be visible from the State Route 63/Yankee Road intersection at a distance of approximately 200 feet. Visibility from State Route 63 and Yankee Road will be approximately 85 feet.

Ms. Jones stated that Public Works/Engineering Department had no comment at this time, the Fire Department reserves the right to comment during review/inspection process, and the Police Department had no comment.

Ms. Jones stated that staff recommendation be based on report information and that staff recommends Planning Commission approve the Minor PUD Amendment.

Mr. Tubbs stated he had safety issue concerns in regards to the sign being a distraction to the student drivers especially.

Mr. George Long with Monroe Local Schools stated that students receive school updates in other means such as email, text message, or morning announcements. The students are already aware of issues at the school; the sign is more to update parents and residents.

Mr. Berry asked if the sign would be in operation 24 hours a day, and if it was it should be considered to dim or use amber lighting during night time hours as to not to be a distraction or intrusive to drivers.

Mr. Berry moved to approve Case No. 2016-5-9: Consideration of a Minor PUD Amendment for Monroe Local Schools with the following conditions: All Department of Transportation standards are met any and all staff comments are met, and the recommendation that if the sign is in operation during late hours or 24 hours a day, the brightness is limited or a low light/amber effect as to not to be intrusive during night time hours.

**Case No. 2016-5-10:** Consideration of a site plan for Park North Building 5.

Ms. Jones stated that the Kleingers Group, represented by David Wright, has submitted a site plan application for Building 5 to be located at the western end of Gateway Boulevard at the Park North Industrial Park. The proposed building is approximately 143,664 square feet of warehouse and office space. The applicant anticipates a June start date for construction.

Ms. Jones stated that the surrounding zoning includes; North: C-2 PUD (Cincinnati Premium Outlets), South: H-1 Heavy Industrial (Park North vacant property), East: H-1 Heavy Industrial (Park North Building 4), West: C-2 Commercial (vacant property).

Ms. Jones stated that code requires 1 space per 1250 sq.ft. of storage, warehousing, assembly, vehicular service, or general manufacturing area. This site is required 125 parking stalls. By right, however, the applicant may waiver from this figure by 10%. The applicant is proposing 105 parking spaces (5 ADA), which is under the required 125 as well as the 112 stalls allowed with the 10% waiver. However, the applicant provides 24 spaces in shadow parking at the rear of the building. The proposed 9'x18' stalls are permissible for industrial areas. Code requires 3 loading spaces for structures with a gross floor area of 100,001 to 200,000 square feet. The applicant is proposing 27 loading docks. Loading spaces are allowed in any yard in the L-1 and H-1 district but must be appropriately screened at a minimum of 75% opacity up to 10 feet from the average grade. Loading spaces must be a minimum of 12'x50' with a clearance height of 14 feet, which the applicant has indicated on the plans. The proposed dock area is approximately 60 feet deep.

Ms. Jones stated that the docking area must be screened at a minimum of 75% opacity up to 10 feet in height based on the average grade. Screening elements may include walls, landscaping, mounding, or a combination of these items. It appears the site sits slightly below street level, mitigating some of the visibility of the loading area. The applicant is further addressing this issue with landscaping along the frontage facing Gateway Boulevard. The transformer in the eastern parking area must be appropriately screened. Though there appears to be a canopy tree placed in the same island as the transformer, alternative landscaping will be needed to visually screen the service structure on the ground level.

Ms. Jones stated that code requires 20% of front yard area to be landscaped. The applicant has calculated 68,000 square feet of front yard and is proposing 15,200 sq.ft . of that area to be landscaped which equals to 22% of landscaped front yard space. Required street trees have been installed at 50' on center as part of an agreement between the developer and the City during a previous phase of the Park's development. Landscape island sizes need to be indicated. Single row parking islands are required to be a minimum of 135 square feet. Code requires 1 tree and three shrubs for all single parking rows islands. Though it appears all landscape island have the required tree installed, none of the islands

indicate any shrubs. Perimeter landscaping requires a minimum of one canopy tree per every 5 parking spaces with a 3 foot tall visual screen of shrubs in front of all parking areas. With 105 proposed parking spaces, the applicant is required 21 trees along the perimeter (does not include island trees). The applicant has indicated 23 trees between both parking areas. However, the applicant does not indicate any shrubbery as a part of this requirement. Perimeter landscaping requirements may be reduced to one canopy tree and 5 shrubs for every 5 parking spaces in areas not directly visible from the right of way. In this scenario, the number of bushes may be reduced to 105 shrubs dispersed throughout the site's perimeter.

Ms. Jones stated that it appears the primary materials on all facades are concrete with textured coating, meeting Code requirements for industrial buildings. Code requires building entrances to be clearly defined by a number of elements, including recesses, extensions, awnings, porticos, and changes in material type. As the end-user is unknown, two building entrances exist to allow two potential tenants. Both entrances, at the southeast and southwest corners of the building, incorporate recess and extension, large window areas, and an awning to emphasize the main entrance door.

Ms. Jones stated that code also requires consistent lighting across a site to ensure safety for vehicles and pedestrians, with a minimum standard of 0.3 footcandles in parking areas and access drives. The applicant's proposed photometric plan appears to meet this requirement across the vast majority of the site with the exception of the northwest corner of the lot and the very eastern edge of the site.

Ms. Jones stated that Public Works/Engineering had no comment at this time, the Fire Department reserves the right to comment during plans review/inspection process but do request that the rear access drive be paved and the Police Department have no comment at this time.

Ms. Jones stated that staff recommends approval of the site plan based on the applicant providing additional landscaping in front of the two building entrances ways with matching landscaping to be installed in the opposite parking entrance area islands in lieu of the applicant meeting the requirements to screen/landscape with bushes the entire vehicular use area. The updated landscaping will be approved by staff.

Mr. Morris asked for a status update on the bridge and roadway connection.

Mr. Parker stated that construction on the bridge should begin around July.

Mr. Chesar stated that IDI, the City, and Mr. Robinson have been in discussion in regards to all construction and its timing.

Mr. Berry moved to approve Case No. 2016-5-10: Consideration of a site plan for Park North Building 5 with the following conditions: All staff comments and recommendation are met specifically additional landscaping in front of the two front entrances, matching landscaping installed in front of the parking entrance, all updated landscaping must be approved by staff; Seconded by Mr. Wood. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**Case No. 2016-5-11:** Consideration of a site plan for Jim Dandy's Family BBQ.

Mr. Chesar stated that Amy Westheimer with Cincinnati Commercial Contracting has submitted a site plan application for Jim Dandy's Family BBQ. The proposed site is located along Clarence F. Warner Drive

on Parcel C18000092290123 just to the east of the LCNB National Bank. The restaurant is proposed to be approximately 5,000 square feet that will feature an outdoor seating area as well as a call-ahead drive thru window.

Mr. Chesar stated that the surrounding zoning includes North: C-2 Commercial (vacant property), South: C-2 Commercial (multi-tenant commercial space, car wash), East: C-2 Commercial (vacant property), and West: C-2 Commercial (LCNB Bank).

Mr. Chesar stated that the applicant will coordinate with the CCC on the formal split from the larger parcel. Some portions of the proposed site appear to be outside of the sites proposed boundary, so clarification in regards to a future lot split and shared access agreements will need to be clarified.

Mr. Chesar stated that the applicant is providing 47 parking stalls (2 ADA spaces). Though Code requires 50 spaces, the applicant is within the 10% variation permitted by Code. The applicant has indicated standard 10x18 stalls for the majority of the vehicular use area. All access drives within the site appear to meet Code regulations (24 feet for two-way and 18 feet one-way drives).

Mr. Chesar stated it is indicated that only 3 stacking spaces are shown for the Drive up window, however this is a pick up window only, without a menu board. Internal sidewalks along building entrances are required to be 8 feet wide. The applicant has indicated 5 foot sidewalks along the building entrances.

Mr. Chesar stated that an outdoor smoker will be located in the rear of the building. It will have a roof and the unit in front is more for decoration and does not have a roof, just a railing system around it.

Mr. Chesar stated that staff is concerned with the adequacy of the wood storage area as we believe the restaurant will be highly successful. At the current Jim Dandy's Family BBQ in Sharonville, large wood piles exist surrounding the site as pictured below. We would ask for further clarification of anticipated height of the piles and area needed in the context of the proposed storage area in order to avoid a future violation issue. The additional height will also help when considering that the minimum height of the 20 feet is not being met as approximately 32 feet of the rear structure is only 14 feet tall. Outdoor storage is also required to be located in the rear of the structure. Planning Commission review of the proposed smoker's location in the front yard is requested. The applicant has indicated that the smoker in front is more for decoration and doesn't have a roof, just a railing system around unit.

Mr. Chesar stated that perimeter landscaping requires 1 tree per 5 spaces and a 3 ft visual screen of shrubs. The site is required 9 trees based on 47 parking spaces. The plans indicate 8 trees along the perimeter, though 2 are considered street trees and do not count toward perimeter landscaping. The applicant must also indicate the width of perimeter landscaping. The applicant has since added more street trees along State Route 63 and staff has called for a minimum width to be 5 ft.

Mr. Chesar stated that the minimum landscape area surrounding a parking lot is to be 6 feet wide. The Landscape Plan depicts 5 feet and will need to be adjusted. Additionally, the northern portion appears to not have the room for landscaping between the sidewalk and parking lot. As such, the applicant has proposed additionally landscaping in the tree lawn adjacent to Clarence F. Warner.

Mr. Chesar stated that development plans are eminent for the lot to the West. Staff requests that it not be required to install plantings there as it will be a shared access drive and planting would have to be removed as soon as the other lot is developed.

Mr. Chesar stated that code requires 20% of front yards to be landscaped. The site shows a fairly small front yard area and is limited by the right-of-way setback along State Route 63, which may make increasing front yard landscaping area difficult. It is anticipated that landscaping around the monument sign and the addition of annuals, or perennial beds to augment plantings.

Mr. Chesar stated that sidewalks are required along all streets. The applicant has indicated a sidewalk connection on the north side of the site but no sidewalk connection along State Route 63. It is believed that this can be added in the future if it makes sense to do so.

Mr. Chesar stated that this site is also required to adhere to a base-body-cap design. While the sloped roof does not lend itself well to a defined "cap" feature, the metal roof, cedar body, and stone base create the distinction that is the intent of this design guideline. The mixture of both cedar wood and stone create the mixture of materials required by code to create visual variation on the building façade. Additional windows have since been added to the pick-up window side to increase the percentage of window space.

Mr. Chesar stated the code the applicant has since raised the soffit to increase the height, but the 20 foot minimum height cannot be achieved without making the building look out of proportion.

Mr. Chesar stated that the Public Works/Engineering Department has no comment at this time, the Fire Department reserves the right to comment during plans review/inspection process, and the Police Department has no comment at this time.

Mr. Chesar stated that staff cannot make a recommendation for approval until the following comments are discussed and met; the roof screen the as described (or some other method), the daily wood storage area screen (rear adjacent to the building), additional details regarding the main wood storage area, internal sidewalk widened to meet requirements, all landscaping requirement be met. Specifically, the applicant has requested to not place landscaping along the entrance drive due to its possible removal when the adjacent lot develops. Due to the unknown timing, staff would recommend discussion regarding shrubbery and grasses, sidewalk along SR 63 to be installed in the future at the cost of the owner, if required by the city, outdoor storage of the smoker in the front yard appropriateness discussed, adequacy of building height as the height to the peak is 24 feet and the midpoint of the height of the roof is 17'3" which is under the 20 feet required. Additionally, the last third of the building (where the HVAC units are located) is only approximately 14 in height, and detention calculations be submitted.

Mr. Morris stated concern as to why this case was brought forward with so many unresolved issues with compliance to the Zoning Code.

Mr. Morris asked for more clarification on the "Drive-thru" window as it was stated as such, but later was referenced as a "Pickup Window".

Mr. Jonathan Evans with Evans Engineering stated that customers would call ahead and make an order. The customer then would drive up to the pickup window and state what order they are picking up. No menu board will be present and no orders will be taken from the pickup window.

Mr. Morris voiced concern on the construction of the main wood storage area in regards to durability when wood is delivered and dumped in the area.

Mr. Morris stated that he would like to see a concrete surround around the bottom to ensure stability during the dumping process.

Mr. Chesar stated that he would like to see a stone base matching the principal structures façade.

Mr. Evans stated that plans were made for a concrete base already and had no problem with adding stone to match the main building.

Mr. Wood voiced concern with the possibility of semi's and other vehicles using the adjacent vacant lot for parking purposes as seen in other areas in the past.

Mr. Chesar suggested using dirt that will be moved during the construction process to be used to make a 3 foot high seeded mound to block access to that lot until it is developed and a permanent island or curb is installed.

Mr. Morris voiced concern on the screening of the rooftop utility equipment.

Mr. Wood stated that a solution could be to extend the cedar wood façade or parapet wall at least another 2 1/4 feet, which would aid the applicant in meeting the height requirements as well.

Mr. Chesar stated that he would like to see that extended wall to have a decorative cap or border.

Mr. Evans agreed that that was an acceptable solution.

Mr. Berry moved to approve Case No. 2016-5-11: Consideration of a site plan for Jim Dandy's Family BBQ with the following recommendations that the applicant works with staff in regards to HVAC screening in order to meet code, work with staff on main and daily wood storage and dumpster screening with the daily wood screening matching the main building façade, all landscaping requirements are met, a mound/island along access road is installed to eliminate parking in that area, work with staff in regards to the front smoker screening to ensure it meets code regulations and fire code, work with staff for solutions to building height and roof screening requirements, the pickup area does not contain a menu board, and detention calculations are submitted, and all other staff comments; Seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Morris moved to adjourn; Seconded by Mr. Tubbs. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Deana England  
Executive Assistant/Deputy Clerk of Council