



City of Powell, Ohio
Powell Planning & Zoning Commission

Donald Emerick, Vice Chairman
Bill Little

Kevin Futryk, Chairman
Richard Fusch
Brian Lorenz

Jim Hrivnak
Dan Wiencek

MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 8, 2009

A regular meeting of the Powell Planning & Zoning Commission was called to order on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Kevin Futryk. Commissioners present included Donald Emerick, Richard Fusch, Brian Lorenz and Dan Wiencek. Jim Hrivnak and Bill Little were absent. Also present were David Betz, Director of Development; Eric Fischer, Development Planner; Jeff Robinson, Public Information Officer; Chris Meyers, Architectural Advisor; Anne Vogel, Deputy City Clerk; interested parties and members of the Press.

HEARING OF VISITORS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairman Futryk opened the public comment session. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Fusch moved to approve the minutes of March 11, 2009. Commissioner Emerick seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 4 N 0 Abstain - Lorenz

The Deputy City Clerk issued an oath to those attending who intended to speak at the meeting. Chairman Futryk provided a copy of email correspondence (Exhibit 1) from Commissioner Hrivnak. He asked that it be entered into the record. Chairman Futryk asked to move to Agenda Item #6.

AMENDMENT TO APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Applicant: KAD, LLC – David Carmendy
Location: 233 South Liberty Street
Zoning: DB, Downtown Business District
HD, Historic District Overlay
Request: Amendment to Approved Development Plan allowing a revised site plan.

David Carmendy, applicant, said he is asking for an amendment to the site plan because there is an issue with Liberty Township Fire Department. He said they require much more paving which is very expensive so the site plan was redesigned to save money. Chairman Futryk asked if the Fire Department has approved the revised plan. Mr. Carmendy said they have.

David Betz, Director of Development, presented the Staff Report (Exhibit A) for this application. He said the revised site plan (Exhibit B) consists of several changes:

- a two-way drive which circles around in the back, at the north end of the property
- a change from two side-by-side office buildings that are now situated with one in front of the other with the retail buildings out front
- detention pond originally in the center is now moved to the back end
- first phase will be Mr. Carmendy’s building in the back with the drive and pavement as noted

Mr. Betz said additional parking will be required in the future and the applicant will need to design the detention so it can be placed underground in the future. He said the lot coverage is reduced as there is much less pavement. He said the next phase will need to be reviewed by the Commission to see how the applicant implements the additional parking. Mr. Betz said Staff recommends approval of the first phase.

Chris Meyers, Architectural Advisor, said he would like more information about the landscaping plan. He said the design of the building has not changed significantly. Mr. Betz said this submission shows more building detail. He said Staff is still not pleased with the location of the signage. Mr. Meyers said the

building has not changed since their last discussion but at that time they had provided many comments to the applicant.

Chairman Futryk opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, Chairman Futryk closed the public comment session.

Commissioner Fusch asked if a 22' drive is a Fire Department requirement. Mr. Betz said the Fire Department adopted the International Fire Code requirements and the Commission will need to revise the City's zoning code in regard to one-way design. He said they need at least 18' for the largest fire truck and its supports. Commissioner Wiencek said he believes this requirement is absurd and he cannot see why they need a 22' drive aisle in a residential area. He asked they invite a representative from the Fire Department to discuss this requirement with the Commission. Mr. Meyers said the grass paver system will hold the same load but it meets resistance from most Fire Departments. He said it improves the aesthetics. Commissioner Lorenz said it also cuts down on the impervious area. He asked if this was part of the engineering review. Mr. Betz said this was caught when it went to the Fire Department for their review. He said in the future he will be sure they complete the Fire Department review before they come to Planning & Zoning. Chairman Futryk asked if there is a higher cost associated with grass pavers. Mr. Meyers said everything like this has a higher cost.

Mr. Betz said the site plan with a one-way drive ended up having a lot more pavement than was needed. He said less parking is shown on this plan but it can be added on the south side of the site in the next phase. He said Staff is fine with the layout as shown but the applicant may have to consider underground retention in the future phase. Commissioner Lorenz asked if the landscaping plan will be reviewed by Staff. Mr. Betz said the landscaping plan was submitted and approved at the last review. He said it is going to be more rural and less formal. Commissioner Futryk asked if the big tree in the center will be saved. Mr. Betz said the big tree will be removed in the future phase but they do want to save the large spruce tree at the south end of the site. Commissioner Lorenz suggested the applicant have the landscaping plan ready before permit issuance. He asked that they look into alternative methods to paving. Chairman Futryk said he would like to have the Fire Department explain this so they do not run into these problems again.

MOTION: Commissioner Wiencek moved to approve the Amendment to the Approved Development Plan for KAD, LLC, David Carmendy, for the property at 233 South Liberty Street, allowing a revised site plan, subject to the following conditions:

1. The first phase shall be approved for implementation.
2. The applicant shall, at the time of the second phase submittal, submit a plan showing how they will implement additional parking.
3. A revised landscape plan, recognizing a similar scheme to that which was previously approved, shall be approved by Staff prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Commissioner Fusch seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 5 N 0

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Applicant:	North Central Ohio Management Powell Center Plaza
Location:	170 East Olentangy Street
Zoning:	DB, Downtown Business District HD, Historic District Overlay
Request:	Approval of changing monument sign to add 18 square feet and 18 inches of height to existing sign.

Bud McNichol, applicant, NCOM Manager, said they are proposing this signage so it would make four more spaces available on their current sign. He said the change will not be noticed from the road. He said he contacted NewStart and asked them if they could move their sign to the top and they agreed.

Mr. Betz presented the Staff Report (Exhibit A). He said the main sign is out by the entrance and is visually blocked by several utility boxes that have been installed over the years. He said the previous property owner granted a utility easement and now all of the boxes have occurred. He said the owners wish to make an adjustment to the sign by adding 18" in height for a main panel for the church. He said the sign would have equal spaces for the rest of the panels and the front and back panels would match the existing metal frame.

Mr. Meyers asked if there would be a lot of blank spaces on the sign. Mr. McNichol said there would not. Mr. Betz said some of the names are fictitious because they have more lease space than tenants. Mr. Meyers asked if all of the sign space would be filled. Mr. McNichol said they would. Mr. Betz asked where he would recommend they place any blank spaces. Mr. Meyers said they should be located along the bottom of the sign. He said they looked at something similar to this at the storage area up the road and this proposal makes the sign more organized, simplistic and logical. He said the 18" is a negligible change. He asked if the signage is internally lit. Mr. Betz said it is. Mr. McNichol said they only have one side of signage because of the location of the utility boxes. Mr. Meyers suggested they change the location and look of the address numbers because they do not seem to match the new signage. He said this proposal is as good as this type of sign can be.

Chairman Futryk opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

Commissioner Lorenz asked how large the sign is. Mr. Betz said it is 56 sq. ft. Commissioner Lorenz asked if that size is permitted. Mr. Betz said that is the original size from the approved plan and this proposal would increase the size to 74 sq. ft. Commissioner Lorenz said it is kind of busy with all of the names. He asked for clarification regarding open spaces on the sign. Mr. McNichol said they leave the tenants in the spaces until the space is filled. He said they don't plan on leaving blank spaces on the sign. He said it is difficult because the signage is the same regardless of the size of the tenant space. Commissioner Lorenz said he has no problem as long as the big open area is filled and uniform as shown on the exhibit. Mr. Betz said they can always place a sign that says "Space Available" to fill in the blank spaces. Mr. McNichol said they cannot afford a new sign and this was the best solution they could find.

Commissioner Emerick said he agrees with the Architectural Advisor's comment about uniformity. He said it will make it easier to read. Commissioner Wiencek asked if they should require that all of the fonts are the same other than the NewStart signage. Mr. Meyers said the proposed image does not appear to have any branded logos. Mr. McNichol said some businesses have larger text. He said he would like to keep from remaking all of the signs because of the cost involved. He said as the signs are changed out they would be remade in a uniform font and within 24 months the sign would be complete. Mr. Meyers agreed with that plan. He asked about the landscaping that surrounds the sign. Commissioner Wiencek said they should require some landscaping and it should include some evergreens so there is interest all year. He said it should not hide the sign but bright color during the season should bring attention to the area. Mr. Betz suggested two evergreens on each side with the rest of the area in color. Mr. McNichol said they have trees in the area and bedding where color would be appropriate.

Commissioner Wiencek said they should also have a requirement that they are not allowed to combine panels. He said a tenant could use more than one panel but their verbiage would have to be split between panels. He asked if that is their intent. Mr. McNichol said he can work with that requirement. Commissioner Fusch supported the comments about combining panels because if the divisions are removed they end up with a sign which looks like their current sign. Mr. McNichol said his objective to change the sign has nothing to do with the way the sign looks; he said he is only trying to get more space on the sign. He said he sees nothing wrong with having two panels for one tenant but he will comply with what the City wants.

Chairman Futryk said he would like to see them tear it down and start over but he understands the expense. He said consistency should be a requirement and the addresses should be placed within a green panel so they do not look like an afterthought. Mr. Meyers said the applicant can work with Staff to come up with a better look.

MOTION: Commissioner Wiencek moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for North Central Ohio Management for the property at Powell Center Plaza, 170 East Olentangy Street, approving the addition of 18 square feet and 18 inches of height to the existing monument sign, with the following conditions:

1. That future panel replacements are required to use a consistent font similar to that shown in the proposal.
2. That combining of panels shall be prohibited.
3. Applicant shall work with Staff to design an acceptable Landscaping Plan and possible redesign of the existing address numbers on the sign.

Commissioner Fusch seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 5

N 0

TEMPORARY SIGN PLAN

Applicant: North Central Ohio Management
Powell Center Plaza
Location: 170 East Olentangy Street
Zoning: DB, Downtown Business District
HD, Historic District Overlay
Request: Approval of a Temporary Sign Plan.

Mr. Betz presented the Staff Report (Exhibit "A") for this application. He said this is the first temporary sign plan they have received based on the new sign code. He said Mr. McNichol has graciously agreed to be a "guinea pig" and this is probably the most problematic site in the City. He said the applicant proposes three locations where temporary signs can be placed and a design scheme for their placement. He said posts and framework would be installed and temporary signs would be added to the framework. Mr. Betz said this would allow for a total of six temporary signs that are 2' by 4' in size. He said Staff would like to see some new things happen at the front of the site to bring the whole site together but that will not happen for a while. He indicated the location of each sign on the site. He said the signs need to be consistent in design. Mr. Betz said Staff believes two of the signs are too close to the right-of-way and the Grace Drive location is appropriate. He said they will need to have more information about the design and materials of the sign panels and the timing of how the signs will be placed.

Mr. Meyers said the signs seem very permanent to be temporary signs. He asked if it is better suited to design a sign panel that has some permanence but has information that can be changed. He said this site has a lot of visibility and deserves more attention than just a 4' x 4' sign with hanging panels. He said there is a split rail fence and they may be able to incorporate posting to make an area for temporary signage pieces. He said it could tie in with the area. Mr. Meyers said the addition of a sign near their monument sign would be a big mistake as it would conflict with other signs in the area. He said of the three areas proposed, he is only slightly inclined to work one into the area by the fence.

Eric Fischer, Development Planner, said Staff concurs with the Architectural Advisor regarding sign design. He said the center is concerned because the church and preschool like to use banners. He said there is plenty of space near Grace Drive where they can place another temporary sign. He said Staff believes the use of up to three temporary sign frames is appropriate.

Chairman Futryk said Mr. Meyers said the sign to the east would detract from the main signage. Mr. Fischer said there could be a way to accommodate their need with a lower profile frame. Mr. Betz said the fence wraps down and a lower profile sign could be added to an additional piece of fencing. He said three panels of fence could be added at the top of the hill and panels could be changed as needed. He said the same thing could be done at the corner. He said that would make it visible from all areas. He said the fence is not that expensive and it would be a better design choice.

Chairman Futryk opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

Commissioner Fusch said Mr. Meyers addressed many of his concerns. He said he does not want this area of Olentangy Street to look like a "sign lot." He said he likes the idea of linking the signage to the installation of fence. He said the proposed plan looks like sign pollution. Commissioner Wiencek asked if they require 6' x 6' posts in the new code. Mr. Betz said that would be for permanent signs. Commissioner Wiencek said they should be used for a more permanent look if they use them on temporary signs. He asked if the code says 42 days per sign per user and they will have to consider this before looking at the plan. He said the tenants could have almost three years of signage. He said he would be inclined to place one of the signs on the other side of the driveway. He agreed they should not have signage too close to the monument sign. Commissioner Wiencek said he likes the idea of a fence but doesn't like the idea of hanging signs on the fence. He said the signs could be added between the three sections of fencing. He said the support structure is permanent and the design of that portion needs to look like a monument sign. Commissioner Wiencek said he is unsure they should have a sign out too long and they should have a restriction on signage and how long it may be displayed. He said temporary signage should advertise a function or event rather than just the business.

Commissioner Emerick said he likes Mr. Betz's design and locations of the signage. He said he agrees it would be detrimental to have signage too close to the monument signage. He said it would set up a competition between the signs. He said they have a way to go before approving this plan.

Commissioner Lorenz said with the economy the way it is and competing businesses, there are signs everywhere. He said this plan does not look right and is not appropriate. He said he does not support signage in the locations shown. He cautioned the Commission that if they allow this center to come in with changeable copy signs it may create precedence. Commissioner Lorenz said they need to examine the cost per panel, type of panel, and how it can be regulated. He said it also needs to be feasible for the tenants. Commissioner Lorenz said he would be willing to go along with the sentiments of the other Commission members. Mr. Fischer said their intent is to set a precedent for multi-user sites. He said it is appropriate they start with the property that generated the initial discussion. He said the property owner and tenants worked out a plan and are now presenting it to the Commission for approval. He said the code is self-enforced by the property owner. Mr. McNichol said they have a large property with many tenants and one block away there are many more signs. He said the one sign proposed just replaces an existing sign. He said if they end up without adequate signage for businesses at start-up they will not need signage because the businesses will not make it. He said if he ends up with a sign at Grace Drive and one sign on Powell Road for fifteen businesses it will not accommodate the needs of the tenants.

Mr. Meyers said they have not discussed quantity, information, or where the signage has to be placed. He said they have discussed how the signage has to have a sense of permanence and how it should fit into conditions on the site. He said the Commission is interested in promoting business and allowing advertisement but they want to do it in a way that fits the site. Chairman Futryk said this is the Commission's first effort on this type of application. He said they do not want to set precedence for other areas in the City where temporary signs are added to fences. He said they are saying that the proposal does not meet what they thought a temporary sign should look like and the proposed locations detract from what they just approved on the monument sign. He said they are not rejecting the notion or need for temporary signage but the applicant needs to work with Staff to come up with something that is more appropriate to the site, serves their needs, and serves the needs of their tenants. Chairman Futryk said there is a problem with temporary signs in the City and they made these changes because stick signs detract from the properties. Mr. McNichol described their reasoning for the proposal before the Commission. He said the Commission should look at the amount of property they have and should consider the need for signage at their main entrance. Chairman Futryk said the one sign proposed and utility boxes will block the monument sign completely. Mr. McNichol said they intend to line it up so it is attractive and does not detract from the area. He said they have enough land and entrances to have appropriate signage. Chairman Futryk explained the Commission is trying to work through the process and this is their first attempt at this type of application. Commissioner Lorenz asked if they can have two monument signs. Mr. Betz said they are permitted to have two. Mr. McNichol said there are focusing on Powell Road rather than Grace Drive because of the amount of traffic.

MOTION: Commissioner Wiencek moved to table the Temporary Sign Plan for North Central Ohio Management for the property at Powell Center Plaza, 170 East Olentangy Street, to the next meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Commissioner Emerick seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 5 N 0

Chairman Futryk asked if Staff has followed up with Distinctive Marble regarding changing his signage and landscaping. Mr. Betz said this spring they are sending the Code Enforcement Officer and revisiting all of the areas where conditions were placed and not in compliance or where areas are not maintained.

OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS

The OSU City and Regional Planning Department – Sustainability Plan Project

Mr. Betz said there are eleven students signed up for the class and tomorrow is the tour. He said there will be a place online where the Commission can share ideas with the group during this process. He described the project schedule as follows:

- April 9, 2009, 9am – 11am, City Tour
- April 22, 2009, 7pm, 1st Public Meeting (Input)
- May 20, 2009, 7pm, 2nd Public Meeting (Preliminary Presentation)
- June 9, 2009 (TBD), Final Presentation

"Pedestrian Friendly" Design Manual

Mr. Meyers said he met with Staff two weeks ago and they have added minor diagrams to the manual. He said at the last meeting they discussed putting together basic guidelines that move them toward a progressive "pedestrian friendly" design approach. He said the manual includes 15-20 items such as characteristics, site planning, massing, proportion, materiality, transparency, and detail. Mr. Meyers said they are trying to educate and provide a resource for information. He provided a detailed review of the concepts and definitions within the manual. (Exhibit B) He said great architecture and great planning happens in detail at multiple levels. He said he believes this is a good first draft which will initiate discussion. Mr. Meyers said awareness and layering of all of the particular components and how they interrelate to create an attitude toward "pedestrian friendly."

Mr. Betz said they will have the Law Director review this manual. He said they would like to place language similar to "See Design Manual" within the Planned District and the Large Non-Residential Establishment areas of the zoning code. Mr. Meyers said the placeholders in the manual will be replaced with photos which show examples in our own community. Commissioner Fusch said the manual should include information which addresses how a large parking lot may be designed to make it "pedestrian friendly." Mr. Meyers said the middle diagram regarding on-site planning was created to help position the parking so it may be more pedestrian scale. Mr. Betz said the circulation section may want to be changed from a more urban condition to how they may design a strategy for a large parking area. Commissioner Fusch said the Target, if approved, will likely be designed with all of the parking at the front of the store. He said they will have to be guided by the City to design the parking area so it is "pedestrian friendly." He said the shopping center at Route 36 is a good example of ugly landscaping and that is what they want to avoid with large establishments. Chairman Futryk asked if these guidelines are intended to be taken in total. Mr. Betz said they are and the Commission will use the criteria within the manual when reviewing future proposals. Commissioner Fusch said they can create a big box that aesthetically meets these goals but if it has a giant parking lot in front of it, it will not be "pedestrian friendly." Mr. Meyers said the parking lots will have to be designed in this manner as well. He said this will serve as a warning to those who come to the City with proposals; the proposals will have to be responsive to the expectation of the Commission.

Commissioner Wiencek said they are on the right track and he appreciates this effort. Commissioner Wiencek said he would also like to see an introductory page which indicates some history and why the City has these requirements. Mr. Meyers said there is a draft of an introduction page which will be added. Commissioner Wiencek noted an issue with the ratios in the draft. Mr. Myers noted the area and discrepancies. Commissioner Lorenz said this is a great document and a lot of thought has been put into it. He said it arms Staff and the Commission Members with another mechanism to enhance and improve opportunities for better things in the City. Commissioner Emerick said many people have an incorrect impression of the definition of "pedestrian friendly." He said this manual will help them focus discussion on a correct definition. Commissioner Wiencek asked if they should include a "green" component to the "pedestrian friendly" description. Mr. Meyers said the greatest "green" component they can add is to encourage activity to all of the great areas the City already has. He said they should ask applicants to add features that encourage healthier lifestyles. Chairman Futryk said although the City has bike paths they do not always have bike racks to make it convenient for riders. Mr. Betz said it is required in the Large Non-Residential Establishment code. Mr. Meyers said the manual helps to show that this is a combination of little things that make a big difference. Commissioner Wiencek said he would like to see them address strip centers in the manual. Mr. Meyers said there are examples of strip centers with some parking out front and "hidden" parking out back.

Chairman Futryk opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

DATE MINUTES APPROVED: June 24, 2009

Kevin Futryk
Chairman

Date

Susie Ross
City Clerk

Date