

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO  
April 5, 2022  
Held Virtually Via Zoom**

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. April 5, 2022 and the following responded to Roll Call:

**PRESENT:** Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz  
Vice Mayor Dave Grendel  
Cheryl Chase  
Joseph Moeller

**OTHERS**

**PRESENT:** Michael Gero, Building Official  
Gregory J. O'Brien, Law Director  
Jessica Hyser, Economic Development Director  
Anne Lynch, Economic Development  
Don Ramm, City Engineer

**ABSENT:** William Gutermuth  
Jeffrey Markley, City Planner

**Old Business:**

**Approval of Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting held on  
February 1, 2022.**

- 1. 6400 Rockside Road, Union Savings Bank** – Proposed construction of new drive-thru window to service new branch bank and a variance to the existing parking requirement of 150 spaces to 119 spaces.

**Late Addition:**

- 2. 7169 Pleasant Valley Road, Signature Sauces** – Proposed 4,655 sq. ft. addition to the rear of the existing building.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel welcomed everyone to April 5, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

The Chairman stated that originally there was just one Old Business item on the agenda, but there was a late addition with Signature Sauces.

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The Chairman asked if there were any changes, corrections or additions to the Minutes from the February 1, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

There were no corrections or changes.

**A motion was made by Joseph Moeller, seconded by Cheryl Chase, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission held on February 1, 2022.**

**ROLL CALL:        Yeas: Moeller, Chase, Grendel, Kurtz**  
**Nays: None**

**6400 Rockside Road, Union Savings Bank** – Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the Economic Development Director had an updated staff report.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated not to read the entire report that was sent, but just going into the new updates as the Chairman did mention.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new drive-thru to service the Union Savings Bank branch on the first floor of the existing building, referring to 6400 Rockside Road. She stated that the applicant was seeking to construct a drive-thru on the western side of the building due to the existing terrain and provide visibility to the drive-thru from north which was Rockside Road.

She stated that the drive-thru in its proposed configurations would need to reduce the number of parking spaces in the existing lot from 149 to 112 spaces for a loss of 37 spaces.

In the applicant’s previously application they proposed 119 spaces, this configuration included angled parking near the drive-thru; however, in lieu of the angled parking, the current proposal replaces that parking with parallel parking along the drive-thru. The applicant feels with this new work from home model and the rotation of employees’ schedules that the reduced number of spaces would adequately serve the operations of the building.

Entrances to the building were currently located on both the western and eastern side of the building. These entrances would be intended to remain. The eastern entrance would be on the side of Rockside Woods Blvd. South, and the western entrance was on the side of the proposed drive-thru. The proposed drive-thru would be a two-lane covered by a canopy on the western side of the existing building measuring 28 feet wide and 18 feet 6 inches high. The drive-thru would be constructed of brick to match the existing building as closely as possible.

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Currently, there is a crosswalk on the west side from the existing parking configuration to the entrance. To maintain pedestrian safety, the architect added a new sidewalk and provided a decorative guardrail along the curb lane. The guardrail continues to the north a few car lengths, and to the south to the building line. It is suggested that it will allow patrons to exit the building and get acquainted with the surroundings before stepping off of the curb.

The applicant included an additional striping line and stop painted on the pavement at the termination of the drive-thru lane to slow traffic prior to entering the main circulation path. Entrance only and exit only have been noted on the plans for the south and east drives. The applicant is proposing to eliminate 42 parking spaces on the western side of the building to accommodate the drive-thru. The applicant is also proposing to install six parallel parking spaces on the same side of the building on its western edge. Vehicles utilizing the parallel parking would exit via the drive-thru lane. The proposed drive-thru design would utilize existing parking spaces, and therefore be deficient in the number of spaces required for the building. City code requires 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office use, and 7 spaces per 1,000 square feet of bank use.

As part of the proposed project and design, the applicant is seeking a variance to the parking requirement. Currently again there are 149 parking spaces, and the proposed design would reduce that number to 112. With a 7 to 1 ratio, 236 spaces would be required, 169 spaces at the 5 to 1,000 ratio, 135 spaces required at the 4 to 1 ratio. Parking spaces are proposed to be striped 9'x18', the same dimensions of the current lot configuration.

She stated that was an update on the plan. As you will note though, there were some additional comments that were provided to us in the letter from the architect that also addressed the landscaping, which would be enhanced in the roundabout circle in the drive-thru, as well as around the exterior of the building.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that the above gave a good summation of the project as it stands.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel thanked Economic Development Director Hyser.

Vice Mayor Grendel stated that William Schalk of KBA Architects was in attendance. He stated that Rick Zeigelmeyer, who was the bank's representative.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the Planning Commission heard the Economic Development Director that there were some recommendations. He stated that he thought the Police Department was pretty satisfied. Their main concern was to have exterior cameras, and the occupant was encouraged to install them to help them from a security standpoint. There were no issues with the Police as far as the parking was concerned.

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As far as the Fire Department, due to the cross-traffic connections on the west side of the building, the drive-thru, they had an interest in the south entrance. He stated that the south entrance was already nixed.

Mr. Schalk stated that was a pretty good call to achieve.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that they talked about an entrance only and an exit only as far as the drives. He stated that Mr. Moeller had brought that up at the last meeting to have an entrance only from the south drive and exit only from the east drive. He asked if that was still a possibility.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that as it was striped now, it would seem to be the opposite, and the staff would recommend changing those alignments so that again the entrance is at the south, and the exit is on that eastern side.

Mr. Moeller stated that was what they talked about last time. He asked Mr. Schalk if he would speak to that. He stated that the way it was drawn was opposite of what they had discussed.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked where the entrance would be?

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that the entrance would be on Rockside Woods Blvd. South on the south side of the building, and then the exit should be on the eastern side.

Mayor Kurtz stated that there was some discussion about accessing the building on the south side through the area, through the lobby.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he didn't think the applicant desired to go forward with that. He asked Mr. Schalk if that was correct.

Mr. Schalk agreed. He stated that getting to the main elevator lobby from the south side would be very difficult. It would bisect the bank and the back room area there. Plus they had the stairs, the existing electrical room and the elevator on the south side.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that logistically it would not be possible as far as that recommendation would go.

Mayor Kurtz asked people were going to walk through the parking lot and go on the left or right side of the building to get in or out?

Mr. Schalk replied correct. He stated that they would utilize the main entries that were existing to the building.

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Ms. Chase asked even with the drive thru there would be an exit on the west side?

Mr. Schalk stated that exit would be maintained and a guardrail placed along the front of the drive-thru.

Ms. Chase asked where it had the existing exit?

Mr. Schalk replied correct.

Ms. Chase stated it would be just north of the drive thru, so there would still be two ways in and out.

Mr. Schalk agreed.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked most of the employee parking would that be south of the building there, and the customer parking would be on the west side?

Mr. Schalk stated that they haven't defined customer and reserved parking at this point, but he would think they would maintain that parking directly to the south of the building. It would be bank customer, and employees would be asked to park farther away. He stated that it would be just south of the building and parking far east would be customer parking.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that it would be easier, and they would be less susceptible to the traffic going to the drive thru.

Mr. Schalk replied correct.

Mayor Kurtz asked if there was a way to, they would be striping the parking lot so they would not be defining the pathway unless he was looking at the old plan.

Mr. Schalk stated that the parking was currently striped. He stated that it was in fairly good shape.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they would not be changing the ingress and egress. He stated that if he understood correctly, he would come to the bank, and would have to go south and then west to get into the drive-thru. He asked if that was correct.

Mr. Schalk stated that if they go with the suggested in and out that the Commission has proposed, then yes. It would be to the south. He stated that they would like to keep the entrance to the east and exit to the south just so that way the customers would be right there at the branch.

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Mayor Kurtz stated that most of the people when they get out, they would have to get out to Rockside anyways. He stated that the majority of their traffic would want to get out to the red light at Rockside Road.

Mr. Schalk agreed.

Mayor Kurtz stated that what he was trying to define in his mind was the parking spots that were parallel with, you would back out of a parking spot. There was no defined area for a clear path to get to the drive-thru. He asked what was the percentage of the people coming through the drive-thru. He asked if it was the majority of people.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that a lot of their customers did use the drive-thru instead of coming into the branch. He stated that depending on how good their market becomes up there, the older people tend to come inside. He stated that the younger people tend to use the drive-thru. He stated that he couldn't say it was 50-50 or 60-40.

Mayor Kurtz stated that for the Planning Commission, he asked if there would be a variance needed for the parking.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that there would be a variance needed.

Mayor Kurtz asked to what extent?

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that was what they were discussing earlier. She stated that they have 112 parking spaces proposed. If the Planning Commission would use the 7 to 1 parking ratio, they would need 236 spaces which would be the requirement for a bank. She stated that at a 5 to 1,000 ratio, it would be 169 parking spaces and a 4 to 1 parking ratio would require 135 parking spaces. She stated that part of the applicant's argument in the letter to the Commission was that the work from home model, they believe that they will have adequate parking. She stated that they also believe that the fact that they will have 30 people in the building to begin with as well as the building being a single tenant user would help to justify the decrease in the amount of parking spaces.

Mayor Kurtz stated that was quite a request if you ask him. He stated that he was thinking about the parking spaces that were in the open lane area of the drive-thru. He stated that he was wondering if they should make an island type for those two spots. He stated that in the winter time there would be no parameters to keep track of parking, and they would already be limiting parking. He stated that he wondered if it would be better to create islands at the end of those two stalls to create an easy access and in from that south entrance.

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Mr. Schalk stated that they weren't changing the parking that was existing in that area right now. He stated that the previous tenant had it striped to that extent. The only parking they were proposing to change was the drive-thru itself. He stated that the main parking area was existing, and there were no changes to that.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he understood, but they were not asking for a drive-thru either, and that would change the dynamic of the parking. He stated that but for the bank drive-thru, they would be in a much more stable position with what exists. He stated that he could see a bunch of people trying to get into the south and fly straight through to get turned around in the cul-de-sac and come back out to the drive-thru. He was just wondering if this would warrant consideration for a landscape aisle at the ends of those stalls that parallel the path to get to the cul-de-sac that would allow you to go through the drive-thru.

Mr. Schalk stated that he didn't think they would be against that. They would need to remove four more spots. He stated that it would depend on which would be more critical to the Planning Commission. He asked if it was losing the four spots or would it be the parking count. They were open to losing those four spots if that is what the Commission would like to see.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he was not sure they would hit the target with the number of spots that they were requesting.

Mr. Schalk stated that there was no way they could get that number down.

Mayor Kurtz stated that there was no way they could get to the minimum number of 135.

Mr. Schalk stated that it was not possible.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they were really asking for a major consideration as far as he was concerned, and if they would not have a lot of people working there, they would be basically asked for more traffic than there would be people working there.

Ms. Chase stated that she did have a concern, but she would wait until it was a good time. She stated that if what she was hearing was that it was typically older clients who would be parking and coming in, then she was looking at where those customers would be parking. She stated that as an older client their choice would then be would you rather park closer to the door where they would have to back out potentially into people trying to leave the bank, or would they rather park a hair south of that, and then cross over people who are driving past. She stated that she doesn't know if there would be a solution. She stated that it worried her as parallel spaces backing out into cars coming or walking across cars coming. She stated that she thought she would like to idea of at least clear signage that would say how you would get into the building, where the entrances

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would be that could be seen even in snow, and then some way to make sure that the cars don't come out of the drive-thru so fast that they don't see, or that they would be looking at a phone or counting their money or whatnot and see somebody trying to back out or cross.

Mr. Schalk stated that they could have directional signage.

Ms. Chase stated that she certainly wouldn't want some of the most vulnerable members of the population trying to navigate that.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked are both of the drive-thrus would have tellers and everything, or would one have an ATM.

Mr. Schalk stated that they do not do ATM's. There would be tellers.

Mr. Moeller asked the 10 or so spots that would be on the immediate south side of the building, would there be a walkway along the north side of those spots that would go right to the walkway entrance on the west side of the building? He stated to Ms. Chase's point, if that could be designated as guaranteed customer parking spots somehow on the south side of the building to get as close as possible to that walkway so you would not walk across the traffic necessarily, but he didn't know if that was a walkway there on the north side of those spots or if you would have to walk behind cars which would not sound great either.

Ms. Chase stated that her point was that if they were there, then when they leave they would have to back out into the traffic that would be coming.

Mr. Moeller stated that was fair too.

Ms. Chase stated that she would look at that and say she has to pick her poison. Would she back out into cars coming out or would she want to walk across cars coming out. She asked if there was any way to move that, what was currently marked an entrance? She was going through it in her head.

Mayor Kurtz stated to Mr. Schalk that when they would be backing out they would only have to look to their left.

Ms. Chase stated that assuming no one was sneaking in. She stated that she didn't know what it would do because they would still have the cars coming in and the cars going out having to go past each other. She stated that it would at least cut down the pedestrian and backing out. She stated that it would only be one direction of traffic coming in.



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Mr. Schalk stated that they actually made the south entrance a drive-thru exit and entrance only and not have drive-thru traffic come through the east side.

Building Official Gero asked how you would police that.

MR. Schalk stated that it would be honesty of the person. They would put signage on the ground, drive-thru exit, drive-thru entrance, office entrance, office exit.

Law Director O'Brien stated that they have that over on the corner of Shell where it was a no left turn, and he doesn't know how often that was abided by. He stated that Mr. Schalk mentioned, and he noticed that the banks nowadays have the double stacking automated tellers. He stated that they were also inserting an ATM in the building as well so after hours one of the stalls would have an ATM. He asked if he mis-heard that they were not going to install an ATM?

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that they didn't do ATM's.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the question he had for the Building Official was if the Planning Commission would grant a variance of this extent for parking, what would happen if down the road there would be a repurposing of several floors that would attract a lot of people? He stated that if there would be an organization that would need the space, would want the space, but they would have a bunch of people working there, and the Planning Commission granted the variances. He stated that he was wondering how they would protect the building itself.

Building Official Gero stated that he believed, and the Law Director could correct him but he believes that a variance could be granted with contingencies to specific users of that building, and if they were to change then everything would revert back. He stated that the building currently has a parking variance from its original 169 down to 150 that was granted at a time when Miami Jacobs came into the building. He stated so the 149 should be 150, but that was a variance granted for that use. He stated that the original intent of the building was to have 169 based on the City's 5 to 1,000 ordinance.

Mayor Kurtz asked that so under normal conditions of an office building, you would need 169 spots based on the 5 to 1?

Building Official Gero stated that if the building was coming in today, they would have to have 169 spots.

Mayor Kurtz asked if they were to reduce it to a 4 to 1, what would it be?

Building Official Gero replied 135.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they were asking for 112.

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Building Official Gero agreed. He stated that in the whole scheme of things, he was looking at the site plan, and he really believes that those six parallel parking spaces should almost just be eliminated completely because he can foresee nothing but aggravation there and possibly move the dumpster enclosure a little bit to the north to pick up a couple more spaces on the south part. They would have to make sure they had their trash picked up during off hours but widen the area up there. He stated that would eliminate people coming out of that west entrance and going either to the north around the fence, everybody would just be directed to the south to the parking lot area.

Law Director O'Brien stated to the Mayor to follow up on his question earlier, he stated that if the Planning Commission finds that this substantial reduction request of parking is warranted, they would approve a conditional, temporary parking requirement parking modification and not a variance. He stated that it would be 1181.061, and that would follow this particular use. It would also require the applicant not to make any alterations to the use so that it would protect the City. So, it would not be a variance.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they were talking about granting a temporary parking modification.

Law Director O'Brien stated that if the Planning Commission would approve this particular use as submitted by the applicant, then the reduction in parking would be what they would approve pursuant to 1181.061 as opposed to 1181.17 which would be the variance section. He stated that it was essentially a parking conditional use permit that would follow this particular use as presented to the Commission.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the challenge was that they have this nice office building. He stated that there were a couple of different elements or forces working against the City's goal which would be to get as many people in the building, make it functional and safe and habitable and they have a potential user that wanted to use a percentage of the building, and they were willing to sacrifice other elements of the building for this specific use if that was his interpretation of what the request was. He wanted somebody to explain.

Mr. Schalk stated that was the path they were looking at. They do have a letter from the bank stating that they will not lease out the space to anyone else. It will be a single tenant user throughout the life of their ownership which would lend itself toward that temporary parking modification.

Mayor Kurtz stated that basically for this specific use they will have to really take away from the capacity of that facility for this specific use.

Mr. Schalk stated and the trade off for allowing a drive-thru.

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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked and how many employees are going to be working here on a regular basis? He stated that he knows some will be working remotely. He asked how many will be there on a regular basis?

Mr. Zeigelmeyer asked long term or short term?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel replied long term.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated it would be no more than 90 to 100.

Mayor Kurtz asked what will the payroll be, the estimated payroll?

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that it was not his department. He stated that he had no idea. He stated that there would probably be 30 people to a floor, and that was estimating people that would come. He stated that a lot of them would work from home, the loan officers. He stated that they would not be there all the time, sometimes they are and sometimes they are not.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that if they would have 90 employees there on a daily basis, it would not leave a lot of spaces for customers.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that 90 would be employees total, and some of them would work from home.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he agreed with the Building Official as far as the parallel parking spaces, they should be eliminated. He stated that he thought it would be a potential hazard.

Mr. Moeller stated that he agreed with that as well. He stated that he thought it would be a better use of the area, just more safe, to get rid of those.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that maybe they could have it more defined as the parking area would go and sacrifice a couple of parking spaces to put in landscaping and a concrete barrier so it would define the pathway to the drive-thru.

Mayor Kurtz stated that now they were down to a little over 100 spaces. He asked how many people would be there permanently?

Mr. Schalk stated that there would be 30 on day one and potentially 90 max if everyone would be in the building at one time.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the payroll would be \$2,000,000 to \$6,000,000. It would be a big spread. He stated that he was thinking 30 people with \$75,000 average, \$2,250,000.

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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that it was better than what has been there the last five years. There were no employees, and it was an eyesore. He stated that the school had been gone, he didn't know how many years. He stated that it was probably five or more years.

Building Official Gero stated that it was probably somewhere in that timeframe. He stated that it had been a while.

Ms. Chase stated that she would love to find a way to make this work. She stated that the geometry class that she had in tenth grade keeps looking at this and trying to figure out how to get more spaces out of it.

Mayor Kurtz stated it was a good way of looking at it.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated and to have the people safely get in and out.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the difference was that there was a situation before people were initially they were there all day, and then they went to a modified version of that. He stated that at the school you would be there for two or three hours at a time, and now they were going to minutes in terms of use. He stated that the transactional business concept, and the people working from home. He stated that the Chairman makes a good point, something would be better than nothing, but he was struggling with trying to find that sweet spot that would carry the day from a safety standpoint, a logistics standpoint and for full utilization of the property. He stated that having something in there would still create opportunity rather than having nothing.

Ms. Chase asked if someone who had more experience or strategies than her, have a sense of how much parking they would want. If you take away the code, take away the 7 to 1,000 if it was a bank, which the first floor would be. What would be ample parking for this use? What would a number be that they could be comfortable with, and explain that to her either from a math standpoint or the economic standpoint of it. She stated that she was going off of the code. She stated that she doesn't really know what would make sense at 30 people to 100 people, that would be a big swing. He stated that if 30 of those spaces would be blacked out already. She stated that didn't sound too overwhelming to her that the additional 70 spaces would be for customers coming in and out when many of them would be going through the drive-thru. She asked why do they have the numbers they have in the code? She stated that if the code was there, you can't ignore it, 7 to 1,000 on the first floor, and then 5 to 1,000 or 4 to 1,000 on floors two and three.

Law Director O'Brien stated that the spaces per square foot would be historically based upon models based upon uses. Albeit that it has come up in other meetings that perhaps over the years models would change. He stated that at one time when this was set forth was based upon traffic engineers, appropriate and reasonable parking based on a

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particular use. He stated it was pre-Covid, pre share ride, pre whatever, but that was what it was based on.

Mayor Kurtz stated that if you would take Ms. Chase's request, the thought process if you would play it out, they have an existing customer, previous customer that had 50 people average per floor. They had a variance from 169 to 150, so that would be 50 per floor. He stated that following that out, they had two floors at 50, that was 100. He stated that the bank was supposed to be a greater volume, but he was not sure where that would play out. He stated that they were definitely, he doesn't want to do something that would set a precedent for the future, but he also doesn't want to ignore the current situation either.

Mr. Schalk stated that it was just a small portion of the first floor, not the entire floor. The branch itself was maybe a fifth, a fourth at the most, so 7,000 square feet maybe. He stated that remaining square footage would be typical office space, loan processors and that kind of thing, not actual in and out bank tellers. There would only be three tellers in the bank.

Building Official Gero stated that the branch itself was approximately a third to a half of the first floor, not the complete first floor. He stated that they didn't have an accurate square footage number on that.

Mayor Kurtz asked what do they do with the second and third floor then?

Ms. Chase stated that was the mortgage business.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that based on their representation, he thought the parking would be adequate, at least for the near future. He stated that if they would get up near the 90 employees or 100 employees, then it might be an issue then. He stated that he thought for the immediate future he wouldn't think the parking would be a problem.

Mayor Kurtz stated he would hate for them to invest all this money and putting the bank in there, and he was not sure there would be a remedy. He stated that the remedy would be they wouldn't lease the building. He stated that was where the flexibility would come in unless someone would see it differently. He stated that they would control the building usage.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel said as sole tenant, sole occupant.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they would not put themselves in a pickle. He stated that maybe it would make sense to try to find some common ground that everyone could live with.

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Law Director O'Brien stated that he couldn't speak to the concerns regarding the safety regarding the parking, but he asked Mr. Schalk if he was speaking on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Schalk stated that he was, and Mr. Zeigelmeyer was a member of the bank itself.

Law Director O'Brien stated that just so the record was clear and the bank was represented, which the Board was relying on in a letter stating that the bank will retain the single tenant, Union Mortgage Savings and will not lease to another entity and will retain the two uses of bank and office as submitted in the application.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer replied yes. He stated that he believed that the Planning Commission had a letter on file.

The Law Director stated that he wanted to make sure that the Board when it was making its decision and it was relying on that representation, any accommodation with parking would be at the applicant's assumption of the risk.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer replied that was correct.

Law Director O'Brien stated just to pull that full circle, if the bank was not doing well in the mortgage bank, and they are wished well, if they would be looking to subsidize their income, they will be limited to parking. He stated that any further requests, and he thinks they need to kind of legally button that up in agreement, that prior to leasing out, he would guess they would come to the Building Official for an occupancy permit, but the City might want to shore that up with a very simple agreement with the bank so the City would be notified of any intent or desire to lease out to another user other than the bank.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he would go along with that.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he would wonder if this would be the perfect application for the herringbone parking. He stated that it was a concept that Ms. Chase identified recently, and he was just wondering if this might be a great opportunity to be adventurous and try something different, overlay it onto the existing footprint and see what they come up with. He asked if everyone was familiar with the herringbone parking concept?

Mr. Schalk stated that they were talking single lane, single direction.

Mayor Kurtz stated single direction, but you would park on an angle.

Mr. Schalk stated single direction angled parking.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the density was significant.

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Mr. Schalk stated that it would help if they were wider. He stated that he didn't think they could gain another lane. He stated that would be where the efficiency would come in. He stated that he didn't think they could compress their three driveways into four to make it happen, to make it functional.

Mayor Kurtz asked if that was something that the City Engineer could look at because they were talking about safety, they were talking about parking. He stated that it would create a way. He asked City Engineer Ramm his thoughts.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he could definitely have their Engineering guy take a look at it, overlay it and see if it would be practical, if the geometry would work.

Mr. Schalk stated that 22.8 is the parking stalls now, and they would need to scrunch that up to get a whole other row of parking. He stated that they could take a look, but he wouldn't hold out hope for it.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he was trying to give the building flexibility to grow in the future. He stated that he was not there to limit their use, but he also doesn't want to be getting the calls when their employees start complaining about not being able to find a place to park. He stated that they were trying to find a creative way to accomplish their goal which was the bank, but they also have a responsibility to look at the building itself and maximize the potential of the building. He stated that some would say it was not any of his business, but in this business everything would be their business because they live with the decisions they make or the consequences of the decisions they make.

He stated that he didn't think anyone was opposed to the concept, he just thinks they were all trying to come up with a solution that would be good for everybody. He asked the Economic Development Director.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that she was looking at some layouts. She stated that she thought it could give them potentially some options. She stated that obviously the concern would be the number.

Mayor Kurtz asked if it would be appropriate if it would make any sense, if the Planning Commission was not comfortable making the decision with the variance or as at least the Law Director outlined the use tonight, the City's Engineers would look at it with Mr. Schalk's Engineers. Then they could beat this thing up in the interim to come up with a final proposal or solution. He wanted to talk about the aesthetics and all the other components they would have to address anyways. He stated that they could wrap it up, and then see if they could build a consensus out of that from the Planning Commission's standpoint.

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Mr. Schalk agreed. Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that they were open to whatever they would need to do make it work.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he thought that with the directional traffic, he would think that would be important from a safety standpoint. He stated that he thought the parking configuration would be important. He stated that they haven't even addressed the aesthetics of the building, but he thought it would be an opportunity for them to highlight the building because it was at the corner of an important intersection and really identify it as being unique or different. He stated that they should find a creative way to make it attractive. He stated that it was going to be a bank anyways, so he wanted to find a way to bring people to the bank if that was one of their goals. He stated that with all the elements he believes there is an opportunity for them to think out of the box, see if they could find a creative solution and then be united in their decision and allow the applicant the flexibility to grow this thing into something really nice without limiting the use of that building. He stated that was his perspective, but he will respect the other Planning Commission members. If they want to make a decision tonight, that would be fine. He stated that he was very flexible to try and build a relationship that would be permanent and not just some temporary thing.

Mr. Zeigelmeyer stated that they need to come up with a solution soon. They were hiring people, but they were open to things. He stated that he was not the decision-maker. He stated that the sooner the better on the decision. They were trying to move forward with the building.

Mayor Kurtz stated that the Planning Commission agrees. He asked if there was a landscape plan that was submitted?

Building Official Gero stated that he believed it had been submitted, and Anne has looked at it. He stated that he hadn't spoken with her specifically on the landscape plan.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they will review that in the next 30 days to make sure it meets the elements because of the prominence of the building. He stated that he thinks it would need to have some special attention to landscaping, the lighting and create something that's going to make everyone else have to step up their game.

Mr. Schalk stated that there has been substantial landscaping that has been added to the turnaround there. He stated that the existing wall would be retained.

Mayor Kurtz stated to City Engineer Ramm that they would also have to look at the roadway, the sidewalk and everything that the City would be responsible for to see if it would match up with what they were proposing and make sure everything flows. With the weather conditions that change, they need to make sure that they have some flexibility in all of this.



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City Engineer Ramm stated that to that point, they talked at the last meeting about securing sidewalk easements as a condition of approval.

Mayor Kurtz asked if it would make sense to try and get everything wrapped up so that when they come back to the Planning Commission, they can make sure they have settled on a potential solution for ratification at the next meeting?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that sounded like a good plan to him. He stated that he would like to get their approvals so they would be able to get moving on their plan. They still need to get the parking and some of the other things. He stated that he has everything thoroughly explored and reviewed to make sure they would be doing the best possible plan for the property.

Mayor Kurtz asked Mr. Schalk and Mr. Zeigelmeyer how soon they could meet so they could get the ball rolling. He stated that he didn't care if they talk everyday until they get some direction on the issue. He asked how quickly could they put something together to have a meaningful discussion? He asked if it could be next week.

City Engineer Ramm stated that should be doable.

Mayor Kurtz asked Mr. Zeigelmeyer and Mr. Schalk if that would work for them.

Mr. Schalk stated that the Mayor should let him know when he would want to get together, and he would make himself available.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they would take all the information that they have compiled tonight, all the different elements that the various members have addressed or at least presented as a question or concern, and then the Economic Development Director could formalize that so the information could be synthesized and get it to the City Engineer and Anne Lynch, and then they could see how close they hit a target.

He stated that they talked about safety. They talked about parking. They talked about utilization of the building. They talked about aesthetics. They talked about landscaping and the lighting. They talked about the sidewalk easements and the traffic flow. He asked if there was anything else he missed.

Ms. Chase stated that security cameras was a piece as well.

Mr. Schalk stated that they would have cameras.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they need cameras on the building as well as the elements inside to support their additional surveillance equipment. So, they will work that out through the Police Department if that would make sense to the applicant.

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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the Planning Commission would table the matter for one more month, but hopefully have consensus so that next month they could get it approved.

Mayor Kurtz stated that was the goal.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated to the applicants that he looked forward to seeing them next month, and also the Administration looks forward to working with them in the next few weeks.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel, to table the matter.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Kurtz, Grendel, Chase, Moeller**  
**Nays: None**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he looked forward to getting the matter approved next month for the applicants.

**7169 Pleasant Valley Road, Signature Sauces** – Ron Erks was in attendance on behalf of the applicant.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that they would have the Economic Development Director give an update on the staff report regarding the request.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that the building located at 7169 East Pleasant Valley Road was the headquarters and offices, warehouse and production facility for Signature Sauces. She stated that the one-story building was constructed in 1975 as offices, storage and distribution warehouse space. Signature Sauces is a boutique manufacturing facility that specializes in developing and creating products that are custom tailored consistently authentic family recipes for use in restaurant and food service industry.

The start of the company began in Canton, Ohio with a small manufacturer. After some time, Signature Sauces moved to Independence to be closer to the owner's home.

The existing facility is 37,344 square feet with 12,480 square feet of office space, and 24,864 square feet of storage warehouse space. In 2020 a 5,960 square foot addition for distribution was constructed to accommodate the expanding business. The applicant was currently maximizing what could be built on the site and allow for additional company growth. The applicant was proposing to construct a 4,607 square foot addition to the rear

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of the existing Signature Sauces facility. The one-story addition shall be two foot higher than the existing building. Proposed materials and finishes for the addition shall match the previously approved additions. The addition shall require modification and relocation of an existing underground grease receptor. Civil engineering to be submitted under a separate cover. The proposed addition is to the rear of the existing building. According to City code, the rear building setback for building less than 60 feet high is 50 feet from the property line. The neighboring property is another industrial commercial facility, therefore any impacts for the proposed addition should not be severe to the adjacent property, as severe as if the adjacent property was residential.

During heavy rains or after snow melt, the existing parking lot has experienced flooding issues. So, that was something they wanted to bring up.

She stated that concluded what they have gathered on the property. She stated that she knows that City Engineer Ramm was out there earlier today to look at the property as well.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he read that the staff recommends the approving of the addition, subject to them addressing the pre-existing stormwater issues and also providing development of a landscaping plan.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that they did have one concern. City Engineer Ramm was out to the property this morning, and there appears to be a sanitary sewer easement that they need to make sure would be addressed appropriately.

Mr. Erks asked if the Planning Commission received the additional document that he sent late.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that she did not.

Mr. Erks stated that he emailed the entire group a revised sanitary layout now that they have identified that 8 inch sanitary main. He stated that Bruce Robinson sent over a document. He stated that he forwarded it to the group at probably about 4:00 p.m.

Economic Development Director Hyser stated that she did receive it.

Mr. Erks stated that it showed them relocating the sanitary line. He stated that they would add a couple of manholes. He stated that it would actually help with the grease interceptor relocation anyways. He stated that it was a negative that turned into a positive.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he wanted to ask Mr. Erks a couple of questions. He stated that he did get a chance to glance at the alignment, and it might be getting in the

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weeds for this discussion. He stated that some concerns they would have would be the sewers presently exist in a 20 foot easement, and the manhole was immediately adjacent to a property line here. He stated that also the sewer was dipping very close to the corner of the proposed building. He stated that the attempt to have 10 foot to recreate the 10 foot space on either side of the pipe for open areas to access and work on the main, things they would having to look at hard on a realignment of the sewer. Also, adding additional length where it could be flattening the slope. He stated that they would need to look at the hard details, the engineering of the sewer, the details.

Mr. Erks stated that he understood that, and that was what he discussed with Bruce Robinson today. He stated that Mr. Robinson knew those questions would be coming, and he had everything figured on his cross-sections that he would be able to make it work. He stated that he couldn't speak to the width on the easement though. He would have to see it. He stated that he was not sure the ownership of that lane because that was the shared driveway. He stated that he didn't know how that would work, but he did understand that those parameters would need to be checked.

City Engineer Ramm asked if they could talk through the stormwater management real quick.

Mr. Erks stated that was completely on the other side of the building, and he understands if they were going to address other items on the building. He stated that he was never familiar with that because the additions that they have done for Mr. Stancato were all on the east side of the building. He stated that he met with Mr. Stancato last week, and he did see that the parking lot was flooded up on the high side. He stated that they never worked on that part of the building, but he definitely would need to address something there for sure.

City Engineer Ramm stated he was referring to the addition. He asked if there was some stormwater management.

Mr. Erks stated that there was. It was sub-terrainial. He stated that it was the hashed area. He stated that Mr. Robinson had all the volume worked out, and the City Engineer should have the details on that. He stated that on Page C2, he had the chambers arranged and calculated from Storm Tech.

City Engineer Ramm stated it would be below ground.

Mr. Erks agreed.

City Engineer Ramm stated that there was one additional concern. The building was proposed to extend north, taking up the lawn space, almost building it right up to the

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existing asphalt edge of their drive aisle, and there was no separation there. He stated that there was a concern for having some guardrail or some bollards.

Mr. Erks stated that they were going to bollard all along that. That did not make the plan, but that was something that they had verbalized to Mr. Stancato that he would want to do.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he looked at the width of the aisle there on that parking lot, and it was plenty adequate. He stated that there was 30 feet there. Normally, a two-way lane would only need to be 22 or 24 feet. They could chew into the asphalt. That might be an option as well.

Mr. Erks stated that they could put a buffer there. He stated that he was obviously trying to keep the maintenance aspect of things down, but they could actually put a curb through there. He stated that Mr. Stancato was big on having the gravel and minimizing the exterior maintenance. He stated that they have definitely discussed that, so be it bollards or a buffer area, whatever the Planning Commission would prefer. They could roll with that.

City Engineer Ramm stated that as Mr. Erks mentioned earlier, taking a hard look at the existing problem on the west side of the building.

Mr. Erks asked if it was with the sanitary sewer?

City Engineer Ramm stated with the drainage on the west side.

Mr. Erks stated that they could incorporate that. He stated that obviously it would be more work for them. He stated that he had no issue with that. He stated that he knows that Mr. Stancato knows that he needs to address that. He stated that it would probably be a good idea to have Bruce Robinson analyze that and figure out what went wrong there because it does not drain at all.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he wanted to say one comment about the landscaping. He stated that in a prior buildout, prior phase of the addition, the last addition. He does believe it was a lot of landscaping that was supposed to have been put in. He stated that he was not quite sure any of it got put in. He asked Mr. Erks if he could give any update on the landscaping out near Pleasant Valley.

Mr. Erks stated that he knows that Mr. Stancato had mentioned that before. He stated that Mr. Stancato's approval on the first addition came with a prior builder, and then they subsequently ended up doing the build, but he had already went through the approval process. He stated that he has never seen any of those plans that were originally submitted for that. He stated that Mr. Stancato did verbalize that he has some landscaping to do up front yet, and he was kind of on hold because he didn't know where

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he was going with the build thing. He stated that he had kind of been on hold because he didn't know where he was going with the building. He stated that Mr. Stancato had been looking at other buildings and other locations. He stated that he was now dedicated to stay in Independence and do this final addition to get the building up to the capacity he would need to service his current clients. He stated that Mr. Stancato will have no problems at all handling the landscaping at this point.

City Engineer Ramm thanked Mr. Erks.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commission.

Ms. Chase asked what was there now. She asked what would that be displacing.

Mr. Erks stated that it was just a grassy area. He stated that this was an integration. Mr. Stancato's first addition out front that they did, Mr. Stancato used to have two shipping doors and now he has four, he has large indoor freezers and coolers for product. He stated that when you used to drive by the building, you would see tons of blue barrels and a lot of debris. Now they built the trash enclosure where Mr. Stancato has a compactor. Now he was able to produce more now that he has his shipping and refuse all kind of handled. What Mr. Stancato was going to do was add two more of the large pods and have a small maintenance area and an area that he can get his machines in and out of the back of the building as they service them. He stated that this was all kind of a long five year project to get the building up to where he would need for his current client list.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked if this was the last addition that will be able to be added to the building.

Mr. Erks replied yes.

Mr. Moeller asked if Mr. Erks knows if the addition would bring on any additional employees with it or would it be more space inside to operate with existing staff?

Mr. Erks stated it would be existing staff. He stated that there may be a few new hires, but he has 100 empty parking areas every day. He stated that he would imagine a couple of new kettle operators would maybe be included, but that would be it.

Mr. Moeller stated that he wasn't sure what the ratio was.

Mr. Erks stated that when they added the trash area, he needed less employees then. He stated that the whole compactor took away three people carrying trash to the dumpster all day long.

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Economic Development Director Hyser stated to add a little additional color, she met with Mr. Stancato a few weeks ago and was really quite surprised to see how crowded the building was in terms of where they were warehousing and storing the material. She stated that it was really crammed in there. She stated that it was definitely a growing business, and one of the concerns that Mr. Stancato has was finding additional space so that he could continue to grow his business. He stated that this would give him the opportunity to continue to grow in the City of Independence. Otherwise, he would be forced to really look at other options outside of Independence to keep the business growing.

Mr. Erks stated that was correct. He stated that they have looked at other buildings with Mr. Stancato, and he very much wants to stay in Independence.

Law Director O'Brien stated that the easement that they pulled for the property, it seems to be not in the City's name. He asked if the City Engineer would suggest they need the easement with the 10 foot on each side in the City's name.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he thought it was in the City's name because the sewer provides sanitary service for Braewood, and it would wrap through. He stated that there definitely were cross-easements between the two commercial properties, but he still assumed the overall easement was global to the City. He stated that he could be mistaken.

Law Director O'Brien stated that they didn't have time to do a title search, so they did a very informal one, but they worked off the Permanent Parcel Number. He stated that they would look further. He stated that Mr. Erks would have to, if the Planning Commission would approve this, move it so it would not be under the addition.

Mr. Erks stated that was correct. He stated that they were the same way. They looked, and they couldn't find it on a title search. He stated that there were other municipalities where a private lateral like that could be under a building. He stated that they started down that road, knowing that they would probably have to, it could go either way. He stated that when the Planning Commission brought those comments up, they had already prepared a secondary idea on the sanitary. He stated that they couldn't find any easement. They have done title searches as well. They were waiting to see what the City thought.

Law Director O'Brien stated that it may pre-date it.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked the Law Director if the Planning Commission could approve the matter tonight subject to the Engineer's concerns and subject to some legal matters.

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Law Director O'Brien stated that he was going to defer to the City Engineer. He stated that his concern was what Mr. Erks had said. He stated that the City would normally ask for the easement, and they would need room on either side in case they would have to go in there and repair it. He stated that he thinks with a sanitary sewer, someone would be out of their mind not to let the City go in and repair it, but stranger things have happened. He asked City Engineer Ramm if he was comfortable working with the property owner if they would make it subject to the Engineer entering into an easement in the name of the City.

City Engineer Ramm stated that they were committed to look hard at it and try to make it work.

Law Director O'Brien stated to answer the Chairman's question, they could make it subject to the property owner entering into an easement as approved by the City Engineer and the Law Director.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel replied very good because he would like to see this project, like the Economic Development Director had mentioned, they have been very good corporate residents and everything. He stated that this was critical for them to keep the business expanding. He stated that he would like to make it work too and make it subject to the engineering and legal matters being resolved to everybody's satisfaction. He asked the Mayor if there was any input on his end.

Mayor Kurtz stated that as far as he was concerned, he would assume that the Architectural Board would look at the construction of the facility. The Engineering will make sure with the Law Department that they have the necessary easements that they could get that all behind them. He stated that if they take care of the aesthetics, the parking wasn't an issue. They could take care to make sure the easements would be in place. He stated that he thinks it would be an opportunity to help an existing customer grow.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Mr. Moeller and Ms. Chase if they had any comments or questions.

Ms. Chase stated she had none. She stated that she was glad that they were staying, and she was glad that they were willing to work with the building that they have to keep it right here in Independence. She stated that she thinks they might be doing something right as a City.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked Mr. Moeller if he had any comments or questions.

Mr. Moeller stated that he had no additional questions or concerns from his end. He was just excited to see the growth. He stated it was great.



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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked the Law Director if he could craft a motion with the additional requirements that they have.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Joseph Moeller, to approve the application, subject the approval of a landscaping plan, the approval of the City Engineer’s consent regarding stormwater issues in the west parking lot of the property, and the entering into a sanitary sewer easement with the City as approved by the City Engineer and Law Director.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Kurtz, Moeller, Chase, Grendel**  
**Nays: None**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the applicant’s request has been approved, subject to the stipulations that were contained in the motion.

He asked if there was anything further. There was nothing further.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the City Engineer would be in touch with the applicant.

Mr. Erks stated that on behalf of Stancato’s he would like to thank the Planning Commission.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the Planning Commission talked last month about having a workshop. He wanted everyone to look at their calendars. He stated that tax season will be over by next month so maybe they could look at some evening that would be agreeable. He stated that the Mayor mentioned that they could have a workshop and conclude with a dinner.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he thought it was a great idea.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that everyone on the Planning Commission should look at their calendars, and he will let Mr. Gutermuth know also. He stated that he would also like to have the Law Director attend so that the new people could have his expertise. He would also like to have the Building Official and the City Engineer. He stated that there were two relatively new members, and it would be nice to get some information, especially with things changing in the building and engineering, get that together and top it off with a nice dinner and everything. He wanted everyone to come up with a couple of dates on their calendars, and at next month’s Planning meeting they will set something up in May.

Mayor Kurtz stated that it sounded like a plan.

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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked if there was anything else.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they will go to work on the first request, and if anyone would want to participate in the discussions that they talked about relative to the bank, they would be more than welcome to join. He stated that they will set up a meeting with his team, and see if they could mitigate some of the issues, at least exhaust possibilities before they would come back to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Chase stated that she would be interested in listening in just like a fly on the wall for learning purposes to see what the process looked like.

Mayor Kurtz stated that they would see what they could do to accommodate that. He stated that they would probably try and get together early next week. He asked if the Economic Development Director and Building Official and City Engineer, they will do a team meeting next week to deal with the issues. Then they will go from there.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated that the Economic Development Director was invited to the workshop.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Joseph Moeller, to adjourn the April 5, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Kurtz, Moeller, Grendel, Chase**  
**Nays: None**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**There being no further business, the Planning Commission meeting of April 5, 2022 was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.**

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**Chairman Vice Mayor Dave Grendel**

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**Debi Beal, Planning Commission Clerk**

Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 04/08/22