

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO  
July 10, 2023  
Council Chambers & Via Zoom**

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel called the meeting to order at 6:24 p.m. July 10, 2023, and the following responded to Roll Call:

**PRESENT:** Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz  
Vice Mayor Dave Grendel, Chairman  
Cheryl Chase  
William Gutermuth (5:41 PM)  
Joseph Moeller

**OTHERS**

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

**Old Business:**

- 1. Approval of Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting held on June 6, 2023.**
- 2. 5997 Brecksville Rd., PPN 561-15-006 & 561-13-045, – Proposed lot consolidation of two existing parcels and requesting a special conditional use variance for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.**
- 3. Discussion of a proposed ordinance regarding the electric vehicle charging stations within the boundary of the City of Independence.**

**New Business:**

- 4. 5711 Lombardo Center, PAM Health & Rehabilitation Hospital, PPN 561-17-001 – Requesting a special conditional use permit for the proposal of a rehabilitation hospital.**
- 5. W. Canal Rd., VF Holdings LTD., PPN 571-06-017 – Represented by Dalad Group for the proposal of a lot split and consolidation of PPN 571-06-117 and PPN 571-07-006.**

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Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated we will move into our regular agenda. The first item of business is the approval of the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting that was held on June 6, 2023

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by William Gutermuth, to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing held on June 6, 2023.**

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

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated the minutes of the June 6, 2023 Planning Commission meeting have been approved.

**5997 Brecksville Rd., PPN 561-15-006 & 561-13-045, – Proposed lot consolidation of two existing parcels and requesting a special conditional use variance for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.**

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated this item is what we just had our Public Hearing on.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Cheryl Chase, to table 5997 Brecksville Road for further discussion.**

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

Mayor Kurtz stated the sooner you could get some information back to us, so we can put it together that would be great. Jess, you will be communicating so we can coordinate that, sooner rather than later. We can keep the communication going.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated Jess, if we need a workshop, we will call one. Item 3 is the discussion of a proposed ordinance regarding the electric vehicle charging stations within the boundary of the City of Independence.

Mayor Kurtz asked is there anything on that?

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated I haven't seen anything new on that.

Building Official Gero stated I have something I can pass out at the end of the meeting.

Mayor Kurtz asked but nothing new, no action for tonight, though?

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Building Official Gero stated no action.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated we'll just table this also from the agenda. So, we'll skip over to number 5, which is on West Canal Road.

**W. Canal Rd., VF Holdings LTD., PPN 571-06-117** – Joseph Balog was in attendance.

Mr. Balog stated good evening, first thing I'd like to point out about the approval to consolidate is not 571-06-117, it is 571-06-017. There was an extra 1 in there. All this is, if you look at the small triangular piece, it's going to be the northwest corner of the map, that little triangular piece right there shown on the drawing is actually located in the City of Independence. The rest of the land in that map outlined in green and blue is located in the Village of Valley View.

We're splitting off a small portion of the area in blue, approximately 1 acre, and attaching it to the parcel that is outlined in green. Cuyahoga County has indicated that since there is land in the area of green that is owned by the City of Independence (inaudible) and approve a lot-split. So, it's just that triangular area, northeast of the old river boundaries. To show you very quickly, it's this piece of land right here, is actually in Independence, and that land is going to be attached to the piece in Valley View. Then, we're splitting this piece off and attaching that to Valley View also. This piece is currently in Valley View, it's 571-07-006, and we want to attach this small piece to 571-06-017. So, the remaining lot would be sold, the area outlined in green plus this area right here.

Ms. Chase asked could you show me the Independence property again?

Mr. Balog stated the Independence property; I see that they show a line right here, I don't believe that's the correct line. I believe the Independence line is the old center line of the river, right here. This parcel here on the county map, showing this triangular piece is approximately 1 acre in size.

Ms. Chase stated if that's the boundary, (inaudible).

Mr. Balog stated in my opinion it's less, but this is how the county has it mapped wrong. The old line between Valley View and Independence was the center line of the river, so this piece over here in this area, this is all Independence right here. That side of the original river, the river used to come around and went that way. The river channel was excavated, and the river was straightened out.

Mayor Kurtz asked Joe, who excavated the river?

Mr. Balog stated the river was straightened out by Mr. Viny.

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Mayor Kurtz asked what about that section that loops in the middle there? The County says it's Valley View?

Mr. Balog stated the County map shows this parcel here is 561-14-008, I think the piece in Independence is all of the area contained inside what I would call northwest of the old center line. Bottom line is development is going to be done (inaudible). The County shows it being 1 acre. If you say this piece is actually Valley View, it probably exceeds the value of this piece is. That is how the County has the line drawn, they call this piece in Independence 1.20 acres, but because there's Independence in it, and we want to attach this piece right here to this piece, they're saying you have to go to Independence to get their approval.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated Joe, I know a few years ago we approved something for Valley Ford.

Mr. Balog stated yes. This is the same thing, and actually it's the same buyer. You did the same thing, we have the piece up to the north on board, as you can see a significant amount of that land was in Independence, some of it was Valley View, and Valley Ford bought approximately 25 acres north of that green line. They own that and now they want to acquire another 15 acres.

Mayor Kurtz asked can Engineering review that? Look into it and confirm, so we're approving the right thing?

City Engineer Ramm stated we'll have to seek some consultation from our surveyors. Your surveyor was Langan?

Mr. Balog stated Langan.

City Engineer Ramm stated we haven't used them, but we can check with one of our consultants to verify and get some records, and perhaps you could share some records and data with us.

Mr. Balog stated yes, and I assumed any approval would be subject to your engineer's approval.

City Engineer Ramm stated and to be clear Joe, this isn't any exchange of Municipal Monarchs, right?

Mr. Balog stated right, (inaudible), but when we did the lot-split for piece on the north, the County said since the plat shows Independence land and Valley View land you need to get Independence's approval to add more land to that, and the only land we're adding to it is Valley View land.

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City Engineer Ramm asked to the parcel?

Mr. Balog stated yes, adding to the parcel. They're adding that to parcel 571-06-017.

Mayor Kurtz asked how long will it take you to get that working with their engineer?

City Engineer Ramm stated it could take a few weeks. How quick do you need it to be?

Mayor Kurtz stated let's get it done, so we can approve it next month.

City Engineer Ramm stated that should be enough time.

Mayor Kurtz asked do you have an engineer that we can work with, Joe? That knows this property.

Mr. Balog stated we're using Langan Engineering, their surveyors.

City Engineer Ramm asked are they on Lombardo?

Mr. Balog stated on Lombardo, yes.

Mayor Kurtz asked so, you'll let me access them through our Engineering Department?

Mr. Balog stated not a problem.

Mayor Kurtz stated so, we'll do that, and then bring the information, put it in front of us, then we'll be able to approve it.

**A motion was made by William Gutermuth, seconded by Joseph Moeller, to table the lot split and consolidation on W. Canal Rd., VF Holdings LTD, PPN 571-06-017.**

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

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated we move to item number 4 on the agenda, requesting a special conditional use permit for the proposal of a rehabilitation hospital.

**5711 Lombardo Center, PAM Health & Rehabilitation Hospital, PPN 561-17-001 –**  
Brandon McFarren was in attendance.

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Economic Development Director Hyser stated I am just going to read some information from the staff report for everyone, so that we have some background information. So, Catalyst Healthcare is proposing to develop a rehabilitation hospital, and just to be clear this is a medical rehabilitation hospital, not on the drug rehab side. The location is Lombardo Center. Catalyst Healthcare was founded in 2011 and is a nationwide full-service healthcare investment firm.

The proposed rehabilitation hospital will be of PAM Health, which provides post-acute healthcare services through more than 70 long-term acute care hospitals and medical rehabilitation hospitals, as well as wound clinics and outpatient physical therapy locations, in 22 states. The applicant is proposing to construct an approximately 50,000 sq. ft. rehabilitation hospital. The current zoning of the site is U-5, which is an Office/ Building/Research Laboratory, which would require a Special Conditional Use Permit for this project. Also, the hospital is proposing to build a 42 bed, 51,000 sq. ft. facility, and will be operated 24 hours a day. At peak shift there will be 45 employees on site per day which also includes physicians. The site plan does show 144 parking stalls, which a majority of them will be on the left side of the building.

I'll turn any additional questions over to Brandon with Catalyst and he can answer any other questions you have.

Mr. McFarren stated anything else I can add, I am happy to.

Mr. Gutermuth asked how many beds did you say there were?

Mr. McFarren stated 42 beds. Again, (inaudible) they're very active and community partnered.

Mayor Kurtz asked your approval, what's the timetable and what's the next step for you?

Mr. McFarren stated we'd like to break ground this fall, so we are well under development with our construction drawings right now; we'll be about 95% next week. I know we're looking at setting up a meeting with ABR to share the drawings that we have so far, and go through that process, but if we get all of our approvals, we will be ready to go by October to November of this year.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated, and I believe from your report, Jess, the estimated construction project is about 40 million dollars.

Mr. McFarren stated that is correct.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked and the payroll, the approximate payroll will be about 10 million dollars?

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Mr. McFarren stated that is correct.

Ms. Chase stated I hate to put the cart before the horse, but the parking space sizes; do they need to be larger for your property?

Mr. McFarren stated that was from a preliminary meeting, however we are increasing the size of the parking spaces just slightly. I think per the city code we were off by maybe a foot if I recall we are adjusting those. It may reduce the number of parking stalls, but (inaudible).

Ms. Chase asked with your population would you need more?

Mr. McFarren stated most of the people here will be dropped off. So, keep in mind that these are people that were in the hospital, they've had surgery, and this is their initial time of rehab. The majority of patients are dropped off in a covered drop-off area. The parking is really for staff, employees, and any kind of visitors.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated I think it said you had proposed 144 spaces, so that'll probably come down a little bit, but still I think 104 was required for this facility.

Mr. Moeller asked what sort of occupancy percentage do you anticipate from the start? Is it going to grow as time goes on or is it going to use 42 beds when it's opened?

Mr. McFarren stated it will grow as time goes on, but it will (inaudible).

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked are there other facilities in the area?

Mr. McFarren stated we recently completed one in Miamisburg, Ohio, that's the closest one to here. We just completed one in Illinois, too. I can get back to you on a couple other locations, but the closest one is Miamisburg.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated this is the first one in the Cleveland area.

Mr. McFarren stated the first one in the Cleveland area, correct.

Mr. Gutermuth asked how about competitors? Like similar, for patients that don't need full time, full stay rehab.

Mr. McFarren stated it's a steep market play, hence the short time on us breaking ground. There's been enough research done ahead of time to invest in this location here. I can't remember where the closest competitor is located, but it wouldn't be something that would be (inaudible).

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Mr. Gutermuth stated how about room for expansion if you're at full capacity consistently and you want to add on?

Mr. McFarren stated that's a good question. Folks are only here for days or maybe a week at a time, the turnover rate happens constantly that there's never an issue of adding on. It hasn't happened with the locations we've developed so far, so what you see is what will be here.

Ms. Chase asked is there a specialty population? Is it pediatrics, neurological, or is it across the board?

Mr. McFarren stated it's across the board.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated we have to schedule a Public Hearing also on this request.

Mr. McFarren stated I believe it is August 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Secretary stated it's scheduled for August 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 pm.

Mayor Kurtz stated we had to do it from a timing standpoint. So, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 5 o'clock is the Public Hearing.

Several people began speaking at once.

Mr. McFarren stated okay, we'll be here August 1<sup>st</sup> and present it.

Mayor Kurtz stated a couple things; when we spoke recently, the architect or the engineer, she was looking at the final design of the north portion of the property. Do you know if they made any headway in terms of that, or are still trying to analyze it?

Mr. McFarren stated we received back some geotechnical information that was the deciding factor of how much further north we could push this; I know the conversation was around our setback, it was 50', what we're proposing, and we'd be willing to shave a couple of feet off of that, but with the drop at the back of the district it makes it very difficult.

Mayor Kurtz stated nothing dramatic.

Mr. McFarren stated and with the orientation of the building, it's going to throw it off from a grading standpoint; it'll be very challenging. So, it's coming in around 50'.



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Mayor Kurtz stated okay, and I noticed there's 3 potential entrances onto the marginal road that is proposed, and I wonder if the Planning Commission would entertain a motion to authorize the Engineer to look at the marginal road system, design, and give us some information, so in terms of costs, timing, and assessed value. So, at the next meeting we'll be in a position to at least understand the dynamic of the marginal road as it relates to this project, but also as it comes all the way to Rockside Woods.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked approximately, how far to the south would the marginal road go?

Mayor Kurtz stated right where it's attached, I believe Don could show us.

City Engineer Ramm stated yeah, we have maps. We could show you.

Mayor Kurtz stated I would like the Planning Commission to consider a motion to authorize this.

**A motion was made by Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel, seconded by Joseph Moeller, to authorize the City Engineer to research the marginal road system.**

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

Mayor Kurtz stated that'll help us, Don design the entirety if this, but with the emphasis on the impact of this project, so that there's full disclosure, and we can better understand the dynamic of what it would be like for them to be able to come in at several different access points.

Mr. McFarren stated I think one of the proposed entrances, as you can see, is off of Lombardo, then the secondary entrance is kind of to the right where it elbows (inaudible).

Mayor Kurtz stated these are proposed, but maybe you can look at something and give us a sketch. Give us also some data so that we can start to look at the long-term for the future infrastructure in this area.

Mr. Gutermuth asked who maintains that roadway, is it the daycare that's back there?

City Engineer Ramm stated yeah, the Goddard School.

Mr. Gutermuth asked is that there's or is it the City's?

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Mayor Kurtz stated it's theirs. For Planning Commission, I did have a conversation with the Mayor of Seven Hills, and he is fully supportive of projects that impact Independence. So, we'll be talking to him and Seven Hills officials about Lombardo and the future of Lombardo Center Drive.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel asked maintenance, and everything else?

Mayor Kurtz stated yes, maintenance and access, so it'll be good for everybody.

Mr. McFarren stated we have a coordination meeting with Seven Hills this week.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated I think the utilities are going to be in Seven Hills.

Mr. McFarren stated yeah, that'll be part of our conversation.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated well, it's an exciting project and we welcome you here. We look forward to next month's hearing.

Mr. McFarren stated excellent, thank you very much.

Mayor Kurtz stated so, we have the Public Hearing set, and they're going to provide us with some data for the infrastructure of this area, expand it, and also Lombardo. Then, it's good. I think this was a good evening.

Chairman Vice Mayor Grendel stated the owner is Premier Lombardo LLC. Do they own other land besides that?

Mayor Kurtz stated I think that's the company that bought it from the previous owner.

Several people began speaking at once.

**A motion was made by Joseph Moeller, seconded by Cheryl Chase, to adjourn the July 10, 2023, Planning Commission meeting.**

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

**There being no further business, the Planning Commission meeting of July 10, 2023, was adjourned at 6:43 pm.**

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**Chairman Vice Mayor Dave Grendel**

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**Amanda Sharrer, Planning Commission Clerk**  
Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 07/26/23