

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

**HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM
5:00 P.M., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020**

Chairman Lytkowski opened the Public Hearing at 5:14 p.m. and the following responded to Roll Call:

PRESENT: Dale Lytkowski, Chairman
Gregory P. Kurtz, Mayor
David Grendel, Vice Mayor
William Gutermuth
Don Ramm, City Engineer
Michael Gero, Building Official
Jeff Markley, City Planner

OTHERS

PRESENT: Gregory O'Brien, Law Director

Chairman Lytkowski stated that we have one item today before the Planning Commission today, and it was the request of The Goddard School for a U-3 Conditional Use Permit to allow an 8,824 sq. ft. childhood development facility to be built and operated on Permanent Parcel Number 562-32-020 on Acorn Drive.

The Chairman asked the Secretary if all of the residents had been notified is applicable. The Secretary stated that there were no residents who were affected. She stated that a Public Hearing Notice had been put in the paper.

Chairman Lytkowski asked if Jay Romer or Paula Beverage were in attendance via Zoom.

The Secretary stated that she will let them speak.

Paul Beegan of Beegan Architects was also in attendance via Zoom.

Chairman Lytkowski asked Mr. Beegan to discuss the project as Mr. Romer was having issues with his microphone.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Mr. Beegan stated that he didn't know if it was best to go through the drawings that were submitted, or they also did submit a presentation as well. He stated that it might be a little bit clearer. He stated that they would both have the same information. The Secretary stated that Mr. Beegan could share his screen with the other members.

Mr. Beegan wanted to proceed, and he stated that Mr. Romer could give some remarks once the microphone issue was taken care of. He stated that Mr. Romer was representing the owner for The Goddard School. He stated that the Planning Commission may recall from the last presentation, the intent is for the existing location that is on Lombardo Center to move south of Rockside Road on Acorn Drive to another parcel. They were not adding a second school. He stated that the reason for that was they were trying to acquire ownership. Right now they were currently leasing their building and unsuccessfully been unable to acquire the building. For their business, it made more sense for them to look at building another location that they would own outright.

Mr. Beegan showed the Planning Commission the project location at the end of Acorn Drive. There was a cul-de-sac on the end there. He stated that there was a planned extension of the road, and their planning looked at that happening at some point in the future. They would not be encroaching on the right-of-way that would be set up for that.

Mr. Beegan showed pictures of the site. He stated that there was not a whole lot there right now. He stated that All Erection & Crane was just to the south of the site there. He referred to the proposed site plan with the cul-de-sac shown on the lower right-hand side there. There was an entry drive. He stated that there would be a parking lot in front of the building. He stated that surrounding the building on the other three sides would be an enclosed play area with fencing.

He showed a rendering of the proposed building which was very similar to their current location. He stated that The Goddard School was somewhat of a franchise. He stated that they were independent owners, but The Goddard School does have a particular look that they like to stay with. He stated that it was Western Reserve architecture.

He stated that the materials of the building would be very similar to what they have on the existing building with it being a Red brick building with stone for the sills and asphalt roof shingles. There will be White trim on the building as well.

Mr. Beegan included a floor plan to see the classrooms that they intend to have in the space.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Mr. Beegan stated that the drawings that were submitted had similar information on there.

Chairman Lytkowski asked Mr. Beegan if there was anything else he wanted to add.

Mr. Beegan stated that they had some tasks from the last meeting that still need to be done. He stated that they were in pre-develop. He stated that one was meeting with the Fire Department to review in case they would want the entry drive widened a little to allow access for their vehicles.

The Chairman asked if Mr. Beegan met with the safety forces.

Mr. Beegan stated that they had not yet. He stated that they were in a pre-development stage. He stated that the client had not yet closed on the property. He stated that part of the process right now was it would not do them any good to buy the property if they do not think they will be able to build on it. He stated that they will retain a civil engineer and make sure that all the site drainage and any meetings that will need to be held with the safety forces would be done so that they can get a final plan.

Chairman Lytkowski asked Mr. Beegan who owned the property.

Mr. Beegan stated that he didn't have the information off the top of his head. He stated that they did submit a letter of authorization from the owner allowing them to present to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Kurtz asked Mr. Beegan if they were able to renew the lease would they do that and abandon the project.

Mr. Beegan stated that the current building owner where they were located would like them to renew the lease. He stated that the terms were not favorable for continued operation. He stated that it would make more sense for them to build another building. They were not interested in continuing their lease.

Mayor Kurtz replied thank you.

Vice Mayor Grendel stated that it also stated that the owner of the site was Paula Beverage.

Paula Beverage was on the Zoom meeting.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Chairman Lytkowski asked City Engineer Ramm if there were any type of water problems. He stated that he knows that he didn't have the site plan yet. He asked the City Engineer if he had any input with Mr. Beegan.

City Engineer Ramm stated that they hadn't discussed anything in that level of detail, but the site does accommodate the plan for stormwater quality and quantity treatment in the southeast corner.

Chairman Lytkowski asked if they would need a retention pond.

City Engineer Ramm stated that they would need stormwater management.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked the City Engineer how the new submission compared with the event center that the Planning Commission had approved approximately three years ago. He asked if it was very similar as far as the size of the structure and parking.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he believed it was similar. He does not have the site plan in front of him, but they could revisit that. He does believe it was very similar.

Vice Mayor Grendel stated that there was a previous building approved for the site also a number of years ago before he was on the Planning Commission.

City Engineer Ramm stated that it was the Builders Exchange.

Mr. Beegan stated that they did get plans for that previously, and it had a lot more parking. He stated that the building would be about the same size, but the event center, and obviously because of the use, they had a lot more parking.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked if there would be less parking surface compared to what the event center would have had.

Mr. Beegan agreed. He stated that the parking for this project was really sized for the number of children to be served there. He stated that there was some staff parking, but it wouldn't take up those spaces. He stated that each parent will be required to bring their child in to sign in and register. He stated that there was not the drop off like there would be at a school or something like that. So, early in the morning and probably in the afternoon, the parking lot will be close to capacity as parents drop off and pick up their children. He stated that for the most part it will be for the staff during the day.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Chairman Lytkowski asked the City Engineer if there were there any variances at this point and time.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he briefly mentioned at the last meeting regarding a steep slope setback on the east side of the lot.

The Chairman asked if it would interfere with the additional parking needed.

The City Engineer stated that he was not sure about the number of spaces needed, but they were going to avoid the request for a variance by adjusting some of the parking spaces.

The Chairman stated that the Planning Commission could touch base on that at the next meeting.

He stated that he had a couple of more questions, and then would turn it over to the Planning Commission members.

The Chairman asked if the safety forces had any problem with the turnaround, the radius, etc.

Mr. Beegan stated that they did not meet directly with the safety forces.

Ms. Beverage stated that Don Reis from the Fire Department went over and looked at it. She stated that he told her it was fine.

The Chairman asked if Lieutenant Reis had blueprints or prints that he was looking at when he told her it was fine, or was it just his observation.

Ms. Beverage stated that she forwarded him over everything, and then he looked at it and came and saw it.

Chairman Lytkowski stated that they always had a little concern on the east/west road.

Mr. Beegan stated that on the site plan the proposed right-of-way was there if the road would be extended.

The Chairman asked what the timing of the project would be.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Mr. Beegan stated that he could not answer it at this point. He would say that at the soonest it would be a spring project. He stated that there was probably no chance of constructing starting this year.

Attorney Jay Romer stated that he had trouble with his microphone. He stated that they have to close on the property in about 40 days from now. He stated that they would like to get it processed as quickly as possible so that they might be able to break ground yet this year.

Chairman Lytkowski asked Mr. Romer if he was the franchisee of The Goddard School.

Attorney Romer stated that Paula Beverage was the franchisee, and he represents her as an attorney.

Chairman Lytkowski stated that he was going to be totally blunt. He stated that the Planning Commission approved the Noah Event Center, and they didn't have financing. He asked if Ms. Beverage was comfortable that there was sufficient financing to go through with the project.

Attorney Romer stated that they were very confident about getting financing.

The Chairman asked Ms. Beverage if that was correct.

Ms. Beverage agreed.

Chairman Lytkowski asked Mr. Gutermuth if he had any questions.

Mr. Gutermuth stated that the preliminary site plan that was put together looked okay. He would want to see the specifics on the variances from the steep slope; but otherwise he thought it looked okay.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked if they had gone in front of the Architectural Board of Review or were they waiting to get the Planning Commission approval first.

Attorney Romer stated that they did appear before the Architectural Board of Review.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked if they received feedback from the Board.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

Attorney Romer stated that he thought the biggest feedback was landscaping design at the entrance and signage, which they have not gotten into yet. He thought overall they were satisfied with the fencing and the building design and the site layout. He stated that it was more the details of the landscaping and the signage.

Vice Mayor Grendel stated that he did like the design of the building. He thought it was very attractive. He stated that he was more excited about this project than he was about the Noah's Event Center. He stated that it had very employees from a revenue standpoint. He stated that it didn't bring in a lot of income tax revenue. He stated that it looks like this project was definitely needed. He stated that he could see the need to own the building as opposed to renting it to control those costs. He thought it would be a nice addition to the area.

Chairman Lytkowski stated that he agreed with the Vice Mayor. He asked if there were any other questions from the Vice Mayor.

Mayor Kurtz asked if the item was on the agenda for this evening.

Several people stated that it would be on the agenda this evening.

Mayor Kurtz stated that he would reserve comment, his concerns and questions for the Planning Commission meeting, but he had no major reservation.

Chairman Lytkowski asked the Secretary if there was any reason why the matter was on today's Planning Commission meeting.

The Secretary stated that items usually stay on the Regular Planning Commission meeting in case the Commission would want to address the matter this evening.

Vice Mayor Grendel stated that they did it last month with Fortuna.

The Chairman stated that he did recall that. He stated that was a different type of project. It was more like an add on, rather than a brand new project.

The Chairman stated that they will wait and see what will happen at the Planning Commission meeting. He stated that he didn't have any further questions.

He asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO TO DISCUSS THE REQUEST BY THE GODDARD SCHOOL FOR A U-3 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN 8,824 SQ. FT. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITY TO BE BUILT AND OPERATED ON PPN 562-32-020, ACORN DRIVE, INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Grendel, seconded by Mayor Kurtz, to close the Public Hearing.

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

There being no further business, the Public Hearing was closed at 5:36 p.m.

Dale Lytkowski, Chairman

Debi Beal, Planning Commission Clerk
Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 09/03/20