

Athens City Planning Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 17, 2019, 3:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission was held in City Council Chambers, third floor, at City Hall on July 17, 2019.

Attendees: Jeff Risner, Joseph Mayer, Mark Seckinger, Mike Mackey, Don Dispenza, Clinton Kuenzli

1. Call to Order

RJ Sumney called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. and administered the oath to those in attendance wishing to speak before the commission. Quorum was established.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

RJ Sumney, Chair	Present
Christy Zempter	Present
Nancy Bain, Vice Chair	Absent
Steve Patterson, Mayor	Absent
Andrew Stone, Service-Safety Director	Present

STAFF:

Paul Logue, City Planner	Absent
Lance Allison, Interim Code Enforcement Director	Present

2. Disposition of June 6, 2019 Minutes

RJ Sumney moved to table the disposition of the June 6, 2019 minutes because there wasn't a quorum present from the June 6th meeting to approve. Christy Zempter seconded. All present voted aye. Motion passed 3:0.

4. Cases

None

5. Communications

Ohio Health/O'Bleness Hospital

Lance Allison/Summary

Ohio Health/O'Bleness Hospital is proposing to add another building for more doctor's offices. The site is on the opposite side of the hospital behind Express Care. The access will be from the existing hospital driveway and parking lot area, not off of W. Union Street.

Mark Seckinger/President, Ohio Health/O'Bleness Hospital

This will be a medical office building behind the Gawande building (Express Care). It will be a two story 30,000 sq. ft. building. The goal is to move physicians from several Athens locations (Union Street, old Columbus Rd., and Parks Hall) to this site to form a single medical campus. The university wants to take Parks Hall back over.

- Christy Zempter inquired about whether the existing parking spaces meet the code requirements for this expansion. Mr. Allison said he would have to go to the site and get a count. What they are proposing for the building would be enough.
- RJ Sumney read from an email dated July 17th from Planning Commission member Nancy Bain who could not be present. Full text as follows: “I have a major conflict today so I will not be there. I am very concerned about the impact of the filling of the low, often swampy area that will send water off the property. Second what will be the impact on traffic in the corridor. Why not use the existing traffic flow around Castrop? Thanks for expressing my two concerns if you will, Nancy Bain”.
 - Andy Stone clarified that Nancy thought the future drive would be through the Gawande property. That is not what they are proposing right now. The traffic will be via the flow around Castrop.
 - Joe Mayer/Architect, Design Group noted that the intent is not to disrupt the current runoff from the site. He is not sure about the specific swampy area she is talking about.
 - Andy Stone said the area to the south of the project was the former canal and the area to the southeast is a low tree-filled area that does hold water. Good design can mitigate any issue with storm water. There is no requirement to retain for any development less than 5 acres but there is a requirement to maintain storm water quality. Encourages the designers to maintain best practices to treat on site and not divert to the storm system; follow standard best practices.
 - Christy Zempter inquired about flood plain considerations. Andy Stone said that there are considerations – they have to fill 4 ft. to get below the 100 year.

Mike Mackey/Director Design and Construction, Ohio Health

Working with the civil engineer and they are coordinating with the local jurisdiction and will follow all requirements. Intent is to result in an improved situation. The plan design will be available when they come before the Planning Commission as a case.

- Andy Stone noted that the review/approval process will occur after they officially submit. The plans show a site for future expansion, this is a two phase project. The city administration supports this as a development like this is in line with the Comprehensive Plan.

Kenny Drive EMS Station

Lance Allison/Summary

This is a new County EMS facility. The property was donated. Coming forward with their design.

Clinton Kuenzli/Buckley Group

They performed the civil design for the site. The building will be 9900 sq. ft., garage, offices, 37 parking spaces (requirement is 25). The shade tree requirement will be met. Substantial utility work will need to be done – rerouting of a 48” storm sewer through the middle of the property and they have to navigate around Columbia Gas transmission lines that goes through the middle as well.

- Andy Stone inquired if the design on page C102 was theirs or from Columbia Gas. Clinton Kuenzli said the design is theirs, based on the parameters provided them by Columbia Gas. 18” vertical separation, concrete encasement 10 ft. each side of the crossing. Submitted a preliminary work ticket to Columbia Gas to receive feedback from them but they haven’t heard back from them yet.
- Andy Stone noted that this County project is in partnership with the city, and that there should be communication with the Athens Fire Department. The goal of city is to have an extension on Kenny Drive or access road for a fire training facility such that at the southeast corner of the site a vehicle could navigate successfully and take an access road to the training site.
- Andy Stone also noted the storm water quality issues and suggested that they do a couple bmp’s. Clinton Kuenzli said that the storm line goes through the center of the property which is not ideal so they have to reroute in order to build the facility. Draining west toward the railroad.
- RJ Sumney asked if the EMS vehicles will be accessing via Rt. 56 and if so will there be warning lights and/or signs? Lance Allison was not sure about the required signage. Andy Stone and RJ Sumney noted the potential back-ups at Morrison and at the bridge. Andy Stone suggested adding signage/lights warning that EMS vehicles are entering roadway.
- The area is Zone M but a variance will not be required (staff sleeping at facility) because it is not a residential use.
- Don Dispenza said that from a building code standpoint it is a mixed use.
- Lance Allison mentioned that they will have to get a general storm water construction permit from the EPA. Don Dispenza noted that the owner needs to sign this. Per Andy Stone, the city will need to sign as the city is leasing the property.

Board of Zoning Appeals: Proposal for small lot variances

Lance Allison/Summary

This request from the BZA is similar to the request made by the Planning Commission to streamline the approval process for simple modifications to existing wireless telecommunications towers. The applicants for small lot variances are required to appeal to the BZA to make something that is currently nonconforming, more conforming. The BZA would like to eliminate the appeal step and have the approval be made at the administrative level (SSD or designee).

Andy Stone recommended that the Planning Commission review the suggested language changes and then vote on it at an upcoming meeting. The commissioners agreed.

6. **Report from City Planner and Director of Code Enforcement**

Paul Logue

Not present to report.

Lance Allison

Menards is in the process of clearing ground and are working through final steps with EPW to secure utilities. Will bring in fill next to raise it up.

7. **Opportunity for Citizens to Speak**

8. **Announcements & Other Business**

- The next meeting will be August 1, 2019.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

RJ Sumney, Planning Commission

Patricia Witmer, City of Athens