

BLUE ASH PLANNING COMMISSION

December 4, 2008

Page 1

ITEM 1. - MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Schafer called the regular meeting of the Blue Ash Planning Commission to order at 7:04 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2008.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Schafer, Tom Adamec, Beverley Gill and James Sumner

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: John Moores

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Assistant to City Manager Kelly Osler, Assistant Community Development Director Dan Johnson, Administrative Clerk Traci Smith, Council Member Lee Czerwonka, Public Works Director Mike Duncan and interested citizens

ITEM 2. - OPENING CEREMONY

Pledge of Allegiance

ITEM 3. - APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commission Members waived the reading of the minutes.

DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, Tom Adamec seconded, to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 6, 2008 as submitted. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 4 – 9477 Kenwood Road – Fifth Third Bank

Consideration of a Special Use Permit in the D-1 Downtown Commercial district for a freestanding drive-through ATM building to replace the existing ATM location

PRESENT: Peter Brunner, Applicant

Peter Brunner explained that Fifth Third Bank would like to update their outdated ATM machine with new technology and relocate it to a better location. Currently, the ATM machine is located on the building just past the drive-through window of the bank. This causes conflicts between transactions at the drive-through window and the ATM machine, which sometimes backs traffic up to Kenwood Road. The existing ATM machine is ten years old and does not have many of the functions that the customers are requesting today. The proposed ATM structure would be a stand alone building, but may look like an extension of the building if seen from Kenwood Road.

Ray Schafer commented that this project was presented to the Downtown Design Review Committee which raised questions about parking. They were satisfied that the plan would not result in a violation of the parking requirements in the D-1 district. Bev Gill asked about the actual typical parking demand. Mr. Brunner said that parking demand should not be an issue for the bank building, in part because the second floor no longer has the number of offices that it used to.

Tom Adamec asked how much space would be available for vehicle stacking. Mr. Brunner answered that two cars can wait in line without blocking traffic. Mr. Adamec

December 4, 2008

Page 2

questioned if mirrors should be provided for vehicles exiting the ATM building. David Waltz said there is a diagram that shows that the ATM is smaller than the depth of a typical parking space with stacking behind that. He said it would be similar to parking next to a mini van in a parking lot and the projection stops short of the parking space itself. Ray Schafer suggested keeping the position of the building more to the east.

As there were no questions or comments from the public, Chairman Schafer asked for a motion.

DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, Tom Adamec seconded, to approve a Special Use Permit in the D-1 Downtown Commercial district for a freestanding drive-through ATM building to replace the existing ATM. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 5 – 3977 Hunt Road – Chabad Jewish Center

Consideration of additions to the existing building, which operates per an existing Special Use Permit in the R-1 Residential district

PRESENT: Larry Norris, Applicant

David Waltz said this location was a Special Use that was approved a few years ago. When he and Dan Johnson looked at this, they questioned if this was a minor amendment to that Special Use Permit and if this would require Planning Commission and Council approval or if this should just be handled administratively since it was not a project that is being started from scratch. He did not want an answer at this time, but asked that the members keep it in mind while they were reviewing this.

Larry Norris said this project began almost ten years ago and has been extremely successful in that neighborhood. They plan to build an addition to the east of the Synagogue, which would be Phase 1, and add classrooms to the west, which would be Phase 2. They cannot do both additions simultaneously because they have to remain operational during construction. They are asking for permission to begin building Phase 1 in March 2009 to be finished by fall of 2009 and build Phase 2 during Spring 2010 to be finished by fall 2010. They do not anticipate any increase in parking since most of the congregation walks and the classroom children are dropped off by parents. Parking is for teachers and staff, which is not changing. Mr. Norris said the construction materials would match existing building.

Ray Schafer asked about the total number of parking spaces. Dan Johnson said they currently have about 70 spaces and would be cutting about eight parking spaces, but that would still far exceed the amount they are required to have even with the addition and the reduction in parking.

There was some discussion regarding the retaining wall. Mr. Norris said the addition would require piers for stability, as on the west side. Mr. Schafer asked if City Staff was comfortable with the retaining wall. Mr. Johnson said yes and clarified that the one they are proposing is part of Phase 2 and appears to be much lower than the existing ones.

Jim Sumner went back to the opening comments by David Waltz. He said this does seem like a minor amendment since it is not a fundamental change in use or use pattern and he thinks this might be a good example to set a precedent for these types of minor

BLUE ASH PLANNING COMMISSION

December 4, 2008

Page 3

changes to an existing use. Dan Johnson thought that even though it is a relatively large project, it does not change the land use itself or its affect on the adjacent public right-of-way. Ray Schafer thought that if something is doubling in size it should still come before the Commission. Mr. Johnson said that, as a minor amendment, it would still come before Planning Commission, just not to Council. David Waltz explained that the distinction is that if Planning Commission decides it is a minor amendment, it would be approved by Planning Commission only. If it is determined to be a major amendment, then that would be a recommendation to Council. Dan Johnson's recommendation for this project is that it be treated as a minor amendment. Jim Sumner said he would bring this up to Council to see if they would like to see this type of project. Ray Schafer thought that would be a good idea. David Waltz said that Council empowered Planning Commission with Council representation to objectively come up with guidance.

Ray Schafer opened discussion to the public for comments or questions. As there were none, Chairman Schafer entertained a motion.

DECISION: Tom Adamec moved, Bev Gill seconded, to approve two additions as a minor amendment to the existing special use done in two phases with the following conditions:

1. Final City approval of detailed architectural and site engineering plans.
2. City approval of a landscaping plan adjacent to the wall of the Phase 1 addition that mimics the existing vegetation adjacent to the existing building.

A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 6– MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Public Works Director Mike Duncan gave the Commission an update on the Blue Ash Road and Hunt Road project. Blue Ash Road is finished and was given the final surface. They have intentionally not started Hunt Road since it would not be finished before the bad weather begins. That area will not begin until after school is out and will be completed during the summer.

ITEM 7 – ADJOURNMENT

DECISION: There being no further business to be discussed, Tom Adamec moved, Bev Gill seconded, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Raymond Schafer, Chairman

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Traci Smith, Administrative Clerk