

BLUE ASH PLANNING COMMISSION

April 1, 2010

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ITEM 1: MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Schafer called the regular meeting of the Blue Ash Planning Commission to order at 7:03 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2010.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Schafer, John Berry, John Moores and James Sumner

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Beverley Gill

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Assistant to City Manager Kelly Osler, Administrative Clerk Traci Smith, Public Works Director Mike Duncan, Council Member Lee Czerwonka 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, John Berry seconded, to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 6, 2009 as submitted. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 4: TARGET – 9099 Plainfield Road

Amendment to approved Planned Development

PRESENT: John Silverman-Midland Atlantic, Applicant

Chairman Schafer asked David Waltz to briefly describe the application. Mr. Waltz stated that the original Planned Development approval includes a time restriction that limits development of the outlot to after the Target store is operational, to allow an evaluation of the sufficiency of the parking lot. Target is asking that the time restriction be removed so that the lot can be developed concurrently with the Target store. Further study by Target, since the original approval, has shown that even the original estimate of parking required is probably too high. The proposed change would not cause any physical change to the development or affect any of the other conditions of the approval.

John Silverman described the original Target parking demand study and noted that it showed a need for a maximum of 417 parking spaces. The approved plan has 463 which they concluded was sufficient to support the store. He recalled that the timing discussion for the outlot development was a minor consideration at the time. However, getting economic value from that parcel early on has become rather important for them in the current economic climate. The outlot is less than half an acre of ground and would accommodate a building of approximately 4,000. He pointed out that, since the original approval, Target has had another year to evaluate the parking study and found that the results are still more than they feel they really need. In answer to a question from Jim Sumner, Mr. Silverman said the outlot would be developed concurrent with or after the Target store. He said it would not be possible for the outlot to be developed

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prior to Target because the site work must first be completed for the whole site. The best scenario would be to find a user for that site to open at the same time as the Target opens. Mr. Silverman said that they do not have a user at this time, but a bank has expressed interest. They do not expect food service since it is a little tight for that.

David Waltz said he had a discussion with Dan Johnson prior to the meeting and they determined there were two parts to the decision tonight. The first part is a yes or no to the timing of the outlot development. If yes, then the second part of the decision is if it is considered a minor or major amendment. If viewed as minor amendment then any approvals would be effective tonight. If viewed as a major amendment, then it would need to go to Council.

At this point, Chairman Schafer opened the discussion for public comment.

Mindy Nemoff, a resident of Blue Ash, said she only knows of this project because her sister lives next door to the development in Sycamore Township. She voiced her concern that most Blue Ash residents did not know this was still a viable project. She read from the Planning Commission minutes of October 2, 2008 regarding the development timing of the outlot. She said she was concerned about a parking or traffic flow change if there is a drive-up window. She was concerned that a Blue Ash Newsletter dated February, 2009 noted that the Target project was not going to happen due to economic conditions and that residents are not adequately informed.

David Waltz described the original approval processes and the points at which residents had an opportunity to speak about the project. He noted that the approval required that the project begin within 24 months for it to remain a valid approval.

Mrs. Nemoff asked whether the other conditions in the original approval were satisfied. David Waltz explained that all of the conditions would have to be satisfied before or during the Building Permit process.

David Waltz added that information agendas and meeting information is posted on the City website and through Twitter and Facebook.

Ronda Larrick lives on Plainfield Road next to the development. She expressed concern that the changes to traffic patterns on Plainfield Road have not yet occurred. She said that she did not think the timing restriction on development of the outlot should be removed.

Chairman Schafer closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Ray Schafer said for him this is just a change in timing and not a change in the finished project. John Moores said that the total parking is ultimately important to Target and that they know the real need better than the general Code requirement. He would rather see a small retail development in the outlot instead of parking. Mr. Schafer noted that the Code requirements have tended to yield unused spaces. David Waltz said that he and Dan Johnson agreed that a sea of asphalt is not a good or desirable use of land. John Berry agreed that a big box retailer would not short-change itself on parking. Jim Sumner agreed.

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In discussing whether the application should be considered a minor or major amendment, the members generally agreed that it did not change the scope of the project and was, therefore, minor. Jim Sumner suggested a condition that any permit for the outlot be issued concurrently or after the Target permit.

DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, John Moores seconded, to approve the application as a minor modification with the condition that the outlot be developed concurrently or after the Target store. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 5: EL PUEBLO – 4270 Hunt Road

Amendment to approved Planned Development

PRESENT: Edwin Overstreet-Arch/Image 2, Applicant

Ed Overstreet said the proposed exterior area would seat approximately 30 people right next to the building in an enclosed area slightly smaller than the current outside seating area. It would be identical in style with the same gate and detailed fencing around it. The size is 412 square feet.

David Waltz said that Dan Johnson had verified that there is sufficient on-site parking with the additional seating. In would be an extension of the existing restaurant use and he considers it to be a minor amendment. To date, the City has not received complaints about the existing patio.

Chairman Schafer asked for public comment. There was none. He closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

DECISION: John Moores moved, Jim Sumner seconded, to approve the minor amendment to the outside patio seating at El Pueblo, with the following conditions:

1. No additional outside speakers or amplified entertainment are permitted ever, at any time.
2. If substantial development does not occur within 12 months of approval, the applicant may be required to return for further review and approval.

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

ITEM 6: DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS

Mike Duncan, Public Works Director gave a presentation of the direction we are heading with the downtown streetscaping plan that was developed in 2007. David Waltz added there will be an Open House on April 8, 2010 at the Blue Ash Recreation Center for the Downtown Project as well as the latest update on the Golf Course clubhouse and invited everyone to attend.

ITEM 7: MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

There was no miscellaneous business.

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ITEM 8: ADJOURNMENT

DECISION: There being no further business to be discussed, Jim Sumner moved, John Berry seconded, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Raymond Schafer, Chairman

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Traci Smith