

**CITY OF AURORA
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 19, 2020**

The Aurora Planning Commission met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 2020, in the Council Chambers of Aurora City Hall. The Planning Commission Chairman Kathi Grandillo called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Laura Duguay
 Peter French
 Sarah Gilmore
 Kathi Grandillo
 Jim Maulis

Also Present: Denise Januska, Director, Planning, Zoning & Building Division
 Justin Czekaj, City Engineer
 Dean DePiero, Law Director
 Christine Gruttadauria, Secretary Pro tem

Dean DePiero swore in those in attendance who wished to speak.

SUBMISSION OF SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

MOTION: To accept for review an additional document for item 7f, Renaissance Park West – Tree Clearing

Mr. French moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. French, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Duguay, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

MOTION: To remove item 7e, Volunteers of America, W Garfield Rd and N. Bissell Rd. (2001002) from the agenda.

Ms. Gilmore moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Mr. French, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: To adopt the minutes of the February 5, 2020 regular meeting, as submitted

Mr. French moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. French, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Gilmore, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

AGENDA ITEMS**Greens of Aurora/Elm Investment Trust Ltd – North Chillicothe Road – Revised Preliminary Site Plan (1605009)**

Sam Canata, Elm Aurora Ltd, 30799 Pine Tree Road, Cleveland, Ohio attended to represent the project. He was seeking approval of a revised preliminary site plan. He provided the board with an update of his project. He stated that he has been working with the City and the City Engineer to refine the project. He stated that his original plan for the site required some minor modifications. The results of a traffic study called for a traffic light, which required a minor change to the entrance of the developed area, as well as a small decrease in square footage. Denise Januska, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Building stated that during a meeting with the applicant, and the engineers, the minor changes were brought to light and it was recommended that the applicant present the revisions to the Commission.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their comments and questions. Ms. Duguay asked if the applicant had secured any tenants. Mr. Canata explained that he continually has inquiries and a lot of interest, but it is too early in the project to get a tenant to commit. He stated that he has had interest from restaurants, fitness places, and a child-care facility.

Mr. French questioned the existence of two “for sale” signs on the property. Mr. Canata stated that the signs should not say “for sale”. He further explained that one of the signs represents Canata Companies, and the other represents the marketing company. Mr. Canata stated he would check the signs and make sure they are correct. He noted that the property is not for sale. He stated his objective is to finish the site development as submitted.

Ms. Gilmore questioned the traffic light, and who would be responsible for installing the light. Mr. Canata stated that his group would install the traffic light. Justin Czekaj, City Engineer confirmed that a traffic light would be installed. Ms. Gilmore responded to Mr. French and stated that she thought the signs read available, rather than for sale.

Mr. Maulis asked if there would be multiple tenants in one building, or if Mr. Canata was seeking one tenant per building. Mr. Canata stated that he was hopeful that the buildings closest to the road would house restaurants, but that those buildings could be split into multi-tenant units. He stated that he has had interest from a fitness place, as well as a phone store. He stated that the space has been marketed to, and they have made contact with University Hospitals and Cleveland Clinic. He further stated that any potential tenants would be presented to the City for approval.

Ms. Grandillo asked for clarification of the location of the traffic light. Mr. Canata verified the location would be in line with the entrance to Heiners.

Ms. Grandillo opened the floor for public comment.

Linda Sieber, 104 Royal Oak Drive attended to make public comment. She inquired about the distance between the proposed traffic light and the existing signal at the intersection of State Routes 82 and 306. Ms. Grandillo explained that the City is doing a traffic signalization program. This light would be included in the study if it were ready in time. Mr. Czekaj confirmed the City is working on a citywide signalization program. The subject light is in accordance with the criteria for that project.

Ms. Sieber questioned the need for an additional nursery school. She stated that currently, there are two childcare facilities in that area. Mr. Canata noted that if the market research supported that type of tenant, he would certainly consider that type of business for his project. He stated that Aurora was a growing city with many young families.

Ms. Sieber did not agree with the need for additional childcare facilities and noted that people were not having babies anymore. Ms. Duguay commented that she works at a day care center and there is a wait list of a year. Ms. Sieber stated that she comes from an old school where moms stayed home with their children. Ms. Sieber asked to speak to Mr. Canata privately after the meeting. Mr. Canata agreed. Mr. Canata reiterated that the modifications to the site plan are minor.

Loretta Stefan of 102 Royal Oak Drive attended the meeting to make public comment. She commented that the area is very wonderful due to the presence of a water shed. She is concerned about the setback distance of the developed area to the watershed. She stated that someone needs to watch the developers to make sure they do not encroach on the protected area. She stated that her and her neighbor Linda Sieber would be watching with their yardsticks to ensure the setback distances were observed.

Ms. Grandillo asked if Chagrin River has looked at the plans. Ms. Januska explained that the plan before the board is a revision. Mr. Canata has already received wetland variances. Chagrin River looked at the plan at that time. The variances that were granted go with the plan. She further explained that there is a 3.7-acre conservation easement on the rear of the property. The easement will not be effected.

Hearing no further comments, Ms. Grandillo closed public comment.

MOTION: To approve the revised preliminary site plan (1605009)

Mr. French moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. French, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Gilmore, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

Auburn Land Co Ltd – Robeck, 350 Lena Drive – 15,000 sf Addition – Preliminary and Final Site Plan (1912028)

Bob Ready of Curtis Layer Design, 340 Harris Drive attended the meeting to present the project and answer questions. He was seeking approval for a final site plan for a 15,000 square foot addition. Ms. Grandillo noted that the Board was familiar with the project.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their questions and comments. There was none.

Ms. Grandillo asked for public comment. There was none.

MOTION: To approve the preliminary and final site plan for Auburn Land Co., Ltd. (1912028)

Ms. Gilmore moved; Mr. French seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Mr. French, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Duguay, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

Milo LLC – Workshop Wire Cut & Machine, Inc., 100 Francis D Kenneth Drive – 4800 sf Addition – Preliminary and Final Site Plan (1912029)

Bob Ready of Curtis Layer Design, 340 Harris Drive attended the meeting to present the project and answer questions. He was seeking approval for a final site plan for the 4,800 square foot addition.

Ms. Grandillo asked if the additional fire hydrant requested by the fire department would be added. Mr. Ready confirmed that the additional hydrant would be included. Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their questions and comments.

Mr. French questioned the existence of two beehives on the property. Mr. Ready was unaware of the hives. He stated he would check with the owners of the property to verify if the hives should be disturbed.

Ms. Grandillo asked for public comment. There was none.

MOTION: To approve the preliminary and final site plan for Milo LLC – Workshop Wire Cut & Machine, Inc. (1912029)

Mr. Maulis moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. Maulis, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Duguay, Mr. French

Nays: None

ILPEA Industries Inc., Danner Drive and Lena Drive – Wetland Setback Variance for Parking (1912027)

Bob Ready of Curtis Layer Design, 340 Harris Drive attended the meeting to present the project and answer questions. He was seeking approval for a wetland setback variance. Mr. Ready stated that his client is contemplating buying some adjacent property to the North in order to expand the parking.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their questions and comments. Mr. Maulis questioned the possibility of acquiring the property to the West for the expansion. Mr. Ready explained that he used to own that property and it is protected wetlands. The proposed property to the North is the only viable option for the proposed expansion of the parking lot. Mr. Maulis also asked about the removal of trees. He asked if all the trees in the area would need to be removed. The answer was no. Mr. Ready explained that a 65-foot strip that is adjacent to the existing parking lot would be cleared. The entire site is about 2.6 acres. Mr. Ready noted that he is aware that if the variance is granted, he will need to go through full wetland delineation to confirm it is a category two wetland.

Mr. French asked if any specifications need to be written to address how far into the buffer zone of the wetlands the variance covers. Ms. Januska explained that the applicant is going into the full seventy-five feet of the buffer zone. She further stated that the grading, not the parking lot will affect the entire seventy-five foot buffer area. Mr. Ready commented that they would need to install a storm water retention basin. He stated that it is the grading area from the retention basin that would primarily affect the buffer zone. Mr. French also asked about the recommended conditions in the staff report. He asked if there was anything that needed to be written into the conditions to allow the affected area to go right to the border of the wetlands. Ms. Januska explained that the Chagrin River Water Shed Partners looked at the project. All of their recommendations would be followed. She further explained that there would not be any pavement adjacent to the wetlands border. There would be storm water infrastructure. The applicant will have to come back for a site plan approval, which would require the engineering work to be approved. Should the wetland scientist come back and indicate the area is a category three; the proposed variance would not be valid.

Ms. Grandillo asked for public comment. There was none.

MOTION: To approve the Wetland Setback Variance with the condition that the conditions from the Chagrin River Water Shed Partners are met, and a wetlands delineation, done by a certified wetlands scientist, is required before construction. (1912027)

Mr. French moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. French, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Gilmore, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

Renaissance Park Subdivision – Geauga Lake LLC/Pulte Group, Squires – N. Aurora – Treat Roads Tree Clearing – WEST (1912031)

Jim O'Connor of Pulte, 387 Medina Road attended the meeting. He was seeking approval to drop trees in advance of final engineering approval. Mr. O'Conner gave a brief overview of the project and past approvals. The applicant hopes to return to the Commission in May or June for phase one final approval. Mr. O'Connor stated that the project is divided between East and West. He stated that the proposed tree clearing activity is in the Western area of the project. Mr. O'Connor provided pictures of the trees that he is proposing to clear. He stated that the trees need to be dropped before the bat clearing deadlines. He further explained that the work would be conducted with equipment sitting on asphalt. He noted that the trees that are designated to be cleared are located in decorative planters in an old parking lot as well as on the perimeter of the abandoned lot. He stated they would have perimeter control and use a silt fence. Mr. O'Connor clarified that the majority of the trees to be cleared are decorative, or around chest height.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their questions and comments. There was none.

Ms. Grandillo asked for public comment.

Deb Conti, 234 S Chillicothe Road was on hand to give public comment. Ms. Conti asked for clarification of the term wetland impact. Before asking additional questions, Ms. Conti explained that she would be referencing a drawing that she received in December of 2019. Specifically, section J. Ms. Conti questioned the removal of trees close to the wetland area that is being given to the City. She stated she is concerned about erosion and asks if any of the trees can be saved. Finally, she asked what the distance from the wetlands is to the tree removal. Mr. O'Connor explained that the term wetland impact is the area of wetlands that the developer is permitted to effect, or take away. He stated that within the 300-acre site, they would be affecting less than a half-acre. He further stated that some of the wetlands were filled and are no longer considered wetlands. He explained that the developer then paid a fee to a bank for mitigation. The fee will be used to create a higher grade of wetlands. Mr. O'Connor stated that the approximate distance from the trees to be cleared to the wetlands is about 75 feet.

Hearing no further comments, Ms. Grandillo closed public comment.

Ms. Gilmore expressed her appreciation to Mr. O'Connor for being so detail oriented. She noted that his attention to detail was very helpful when navigating the project.

Mr. French commented that the setback on the larger map provided by Mr. O'Connor does show the setback to the wetlands to be 75 feet.

Ms. Grandillo asked for additional comments from the members. Hearing none, she closed the discussion.

MOTION: To allow an exception for the tree clearing for the West side of Renaissance Park at Geauga Lake. (1912031)

Mr. French moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. French, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

MISCELLANEOUS

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Mr. Maulis moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. Maulis, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo, Ms. Duguay, Mr. French

Nays: None

Kathi Grandillo-Chairman

Christine Gruttadauria – Secretary Pro-Tem