



Village of South Russell

5205 Chillicothe Road
South Russell, Ohio 44022
440-338-6700

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
April 13, 2023
7:30pm**

Members Present: Steve Latkovic, Chairman, James Flaiz, Mark Porter, Mayor William Koons, Elisa Budoff

Other Officials: Bridey Matheney, Solicitor; Ruth Griswold, Board Secretary

Visitors: Greg Bruhn, 169 Chestnut Lane; Phyllis Marino, 124 Southwyck Drive; Mike Roeder, 5740 Primavera Dr, Mentor; James Nace, 400 East Washington

Mr. Latkovic called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Ruth Griswold conducted roll call.

Mr. Latkovic said there are two sets of minutes to approve from the previous month, and asked if board members had any comments, changes, or questions. There were none. Mr. Porter motioned to approve the minutes from the Public Hearing on March 16, 2023. Mayor Koons seconded. On roll call vote, Latkovic-Yes; Flaiz-Abstain; Porter-Yes; Koons-Yes; Budoff-Yes. Motion carried. Mr. Latkovic motioned to approve the minutes from the Special Planning Commission meeting on March 16, 2023. Mayor Koons seconded. On roll call vote, Latkovic-Yes; Flaiz-Abstain; Porter-Yes; Koons-Yes; Budoff-Yes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item 1:

PC CASE # 23-04: Pursuant to Section 3.05(b) of the Zoning Code, the Planning Commission shall schedule a public hearing within 60 days on the Conditional Use Permit Application submitted by Mr. Mike Roeder of EMOD LLC, on behalf of Mr. Christopher Woofter, Director of Operations for Chagrin Schools, to replace the current two-classroom modular unit with a four-classroom modular unit at Gurney School.

Mr. Latkovic asked the applicant to provide a brief overview of the project before the board discusses a date for the Public Hearing.

Mike Roeder of EMOD Construction introduced himself and said Chagrin Falls Schools asked his company to look at the possibility of replacing the existing two classroom modular unit with a four-classroom modular unit for the preschool programs at Gurney Elementary.

Mr. Roeder referred to the large screen showing the proposed structure. He indicated that the four-classroom building was built in 2013, and bathrooms were added by the previous owner. Gurney School plans to keep the bathrooms and make them usable for the young students and staff. He said the location would be where the current building is and would tie into the existing utilities. Mr. Roeder went on to say that they would also like to connect the usable entrance with a canopy that would tie into the school, providing protection from the elements as students and staff go back and forth.

Mr. Latkovic said the Public Hearing must be scheduled within 60 days, and asked if the next regularly scheduled meeting on May 11th would provide enough time for the necessary notifications to go out. It was determined that there would be sufficient time. Mr. Flaiz motioned to set the date of **May 11, 2023, at 7:30pm** for the Public Hearing. Mr. Porter seconded. On roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Roeder asked the board if they would like to see anything other than what has been submitted thus far. Mr. Flaiz asked him to submit drawings that indicate how the canopy would tie in. Mr. Roeder said he could do that, and also provide photographic examples of canopies they have used on other jobs. He will also elaborate on the design and include the bathrooms on the drawings, adding that if there is going to be public comment, the submission should be more accurate.

Mr. Latkovic thanked the applicants.

Old Business: Review of the Solicitor's Zoning Code Recommendations

Mr. Latkovic said the Review of the Zoning Code recommendations should be at a meeting when Dave Hocevar is present.

New Business: Mayor Koons said he would like to discuss appointing alternate members to the Planning Commission. He said in 2019, there was no response from residents when the need for alternates was announced. In 2022, eight people responded, expressing interest in the opportunity to volunteer as an alternate. Over time, the candidates were reduced to three: Greg Bruhn and Phyllis Marino, who are both present tonight, and Brad Fink, who was unable to attend. He said the Building Committee met with Phyllis and Brad and is planning to meet with Greg in May. Mayor Koons said he recognizes that the Planning Commission is not something anyone could just jump into. Discussion followed regarding surrounding communities and their utilization of alternates.

Mayor Koons said the current legislation in South Russell allows for one alternate, and he would like that changed to allow three alternates, with the restriction of never having more than two serve at the same time. He said he would like the first of three readings presented at the April 24, 2023 Council meeting. He hopes to have the changes in place by the end of May.

Mr. Latkovic asked if the alternates would have to be sworn in. Mayor Koons said yes, that is a requirement. Discussion followed regarding scenarios when alternates would be called on.

Mr. Latkovic said he thinks having alternates is a good idea, and asked the applicants why they want to volunteer for this position. Ms. Marino said the position is of interest to her since she has been involved in planning during her career in health care, and she is also getting more involved in her neighborhood as the HOA president. Mr. Bruhn said he has been involved in real estate for most of his life, first as a lender and most recently as CFO of a development company. He said he has a long-term interest in the welfare of the community, and the Planning Commission is a focal point for making decisions that have a long-term impact.

Mr. Flaiz said the Planning Commission protects the appearance of our community more than Council, the Mayor, or any of the departments. He said they are the gatekeepers of the Village and play a vital role in keeping things the way the community wants them, and protecting the qualities of the Village that make people

enjoy living here. He said the Planning Commission performs a very important and underrated function in the Village.

Ms. Matheney said neighboring communities will often have two alternates serving on a board at one time in order to have a full board and said there may be a time when developers may need to come in and get their review, and three members are not available. She wants to make sure the Village is not tying itself down with that rule. She said if every alternate is getting all the information, she sees no reason why three couldn't serve at one time if and when that situation should arise.

Mr. Flaiz said what is unique about the Planning Commission, and different from any other board, is that it has both the Mayor and a Council representative as voting board members. He said he would hate to see someone try to game the system.

Mayor Koons said Jim makes a good point, and recalled past instances where applicants would postpone their review until certain board members were absent.

Mr. Latkovic said the rules could state that neither the mayor's nor Council's seat could be filled by an alternate. Mr. Flaiz said a meeting can always be rescheduled. Ms. Matheney said it would be beneficial to think it through to avoid being put in a difficult position later. Mayor Koons agreed and said there is time to give it some thought.

Mr. Porter said having the alternates available to fill in makes sense, and also to possibly take over a permanent position if a board member should vacate their position.

Moving on to other business, Mr. Flaiz said that it upsets him when the Planning Commission approves something, and then the person changes it. He noticed that the sign for Red Barn Commons is now completely lit up, and he also feels that they turned up the lighting over the entire area. The Planning Commission was very specific in allowing only the tenant names on the sign to be backlit, and now the entire sign is being backlit.

Mr. Latkovic thanked Jim for bringing it up, and he said in his opinion, what was done to the barn completely ruined a beautiful structure. He said the Planning Commission spent a lot of time on that submittal, and the owner should absolutely be held to the standards that were adopted, and to adhere to the requirements of the board. Mayor Koons said Dave Hocevar will be advised of the situation when he returns on Monday.


There being no further business, Mr. Latkovic adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.



Steve Latkovic, Chairman

5/11/23

Date



Ruth Griswold, Board Secretary

5-11-2023

Date