

BLUE ASH PLANNING COMMISSION

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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 7:01 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, 2007.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Schafer, Beverley Gill, John Moores,
William Sikute and James Sumner

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Assistant Community
Development Director Dan Johnson, Administrative
Clerk Traci Smith, 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: Bill Sikute moved, John Moores seconded, to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 6, 2007 as submitted. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 4 – 9920 Carver Road – The Gardner School (Ron Roberts)

Recommendation to City Council for a Special Permit to allow a child daycare facility at this address in an M-1 Office-Industrial zoning district

PRESENT: Ray Seitz, Roberts Engineering

Ray Seitz said the facade texture will be a painted clay-colored brick with a blue metal roof. All trim for doors, columns and windows will be painted white. They have added a dumpster enclosure and changed parking spaces to aid in the traffic flow pattern. The accessible parking in front will be labeled for drop off only. He explained that traffic will flow up Carver Road will be almost a one-way system exiting out a private drive. He said they feel it would be a great benefit for the area to have daycare so close to the offices.

Ray Schaffer asked if there would be anything done differently between the residential property. Dan Johnson said the building and the area they hope to enclose for a play area is far enough back that it would meet all the setback requirements. John Moores asked about the berm between the properties. Mr. Johnson was unsure of the exact size of the berm, but said it a fairly sizable berm. John Moores asked how much of the back would be converted to a play area and how many trees would be removed. Mr. Seitz said the whole length of the building will be used. They will only remove trees at the building line and will save as many trees as possible, but commented that trees are not a good idea for the play area. Mr. Moores expressed concerns regarding about the slope at the rear of the property.

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Bill Sikute commented that the Fire Department will require installation of a new fire alarm system. The applicant said they had planned on doing that. Bev Gill asked about the building meeting the fire and safety codes same as a school building. Dan Johnson confirmed that when the use changes, it is required to be upgraded.

Bev Gill asked about the stormwater management from the playground. Mr. Seitz said that CDS reviewed and the paving materials for the paving materials are porous, with 2” of rubber and 5” of impervious concrete. The intent is for the water not to run off, but to be absorbed. Dan Johnson said there will be actually be more retention on site after this is done than there is currently, so it is not expected to create any issues.

Ray Schaffer opened to public for questions or comments. There were none.

DECISION: Bill Sikute moved, Jim Sumner seconded, to recommend approval to City Council of the application with following conditions:

1. Approval of final detailed plan by City Staff and City Engineer.
2. If substantial development has not occurred 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 5– Downtown Blue Ash Streetscape Master Plan

Recommendation to City Council to adopt the proposed streetscape plan

PRESENT: Clete Benken, Kinzelman Kline Gossman
Kevin Dicke, Kinzelman Kline Gossman

Dan Johnson said a copy of the plan that has been developed so far was provided to the Commission in their packets. The efforts begin in January 2007 and City staff has worked with the consultant to give ideas and feedback. A preliminary plan was provided to Council in late Spring. Based upon feedback from City Council and additional meetings with staff, the consultant finalized the design and layout. This presentation is the plan of what is being proposed for the City to adopt.

Clete Benken of Kinzelman Kline Gossman (KKG) presented the plan (a copy is included in the minutes).

Ray Schafer asked Staff about the pedestrian sidewalk width and if the size had changed since the last discussion. Dan Johnson said that a focus of the design was to work within the existing right-of-way. Mr. Johnson said the plan intends to leave the curbs in place to help reduce construction costs. Where the width of the public right-of-way cannot entirely support the intended design, the City can encourage the adjacent private property owner to provide additional private sidewalk to make up the difference. There is an expectation that much of that will occur as properties redevelop. David Waltz said this will be an evolving process as development comes in. Dan Johnson said that it is important to note that this is the plan; not an engineered design. This serves as a guideline for consistency, but the specific implementation in any one area will have to be engineered before it is built.

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David Waltz added that the plan includes more pedestrian-friendly crosswalks at Kenwood and Cooper Roads, where pavers will extend from the sidewalk into the street. Bill Sikute asked if there would be any additional crosswalks. Clete Benken said they did propose an additional crosswalk at Fairview Avenue.

John Moores asked about a proposed access drive along the railroad tracks and if this was for businesses or residents. Clete Benken said it would not be something that would be promoted as a new street, but anything that can be provided to add alternatives will help traffic flow. Mr. Moores asked if it would be anticipated to add a traffic light at Fairview. Mr. Benken said that would need to be studied.

Bev Gill asked about the bike path and the 15-foot wide sidewalk on Cooper Road by LaRosa's, which is wider than the rest. Dan Johnson noted that the Cooper Road right-of-way is not that wide, but that when that area of the plan is implemented the City would either have to obtain additional right-of-way, work with the property owner to add additional private sidewalk, or revise the design to fit within the existing right-of-way based upon the intent of the Plan.

David Waltz said Council would have to start making some funding decisions to implement sections of the Plan. The City recognizes that the fixtures need to be replaced. The other components would be the sidewalks, curbs and street furniture. The third component, which he feels would be unique for Blue Ash, would be the color scheme, the banners, the overpass on Ronald Reagan, the gateway and the corner of Kenwood and Cooper Roads.

Bill Sikute asked if any thought had been given to the implementation phase. David Waltz said that the City is working on a budget to submit to Council that will recommend funding for Plan implementation. Any work on the recommendations of this Plan will be based upon Council's budget and guidelines.

Ray Schafer asked about slowing down traffic and on street parking especially during rush hour. Clete Benken said one way to alleviate congestion is to provide alternative routes, but also said that people will find ways to adjust to any traffic changes. He cited downtown Montgomery as an example, where on-street parking is permitted except during rush hours. David Waltz said that since the plan does not propose changing curb locations, it will not be too difficult to reverse the changes if the new approach does not work as intended.

DECISION: John Moores moved, Bill Sikute seconded, to approve a recommendation to City Council to adopt the proposed Streetscape Plan. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 6- MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Dan Johnson reminded the Planning Commission of the one-day training courses available and recommended they try to attend. He feels Dayton is a good one to attend as they often have national speakers and he finds it highly informative.

John Moores asked if there was a plan for the Kroger building (old Thriftway) now that they have moved into their new location. David Waltz said that they lease the building which has an automatic renewal and they have communicated to us that they are

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looking at some alternatives for its continued use. Mr. Waltz said they have a couple of years left on the current lease.

ITEM 7 – ADJOURNMENT

DECISION: There being no further business to be discussed, John Moores moved, Jim Sumner seconded, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Raymond Schafer, Chairman

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Traci Smith, Administrative Clerk