

CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES FOR THE JUNE 11, 2025
REGULAR MEETING

At 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, a regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers in City Hall.

PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jessica Cohen, Chair
Michael Gaynier, Vice Chair
Judith Miles
Robert Brown
Ken Surratt
Jessica Wobig
Leonard Horowitz

PLANNING COMMISSION

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Justin Hines Assistant Law Director
Christy Lee, Recording Secretary
Karen Knittel Assistant Director of Planning & Development
Brooke Siggers, City Planner

COUNCIL PRESENT

None

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. She welcomed the audience to the June 11, 2025, regular Cleveland Heights Planning Commission meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

All Minutes will be approved at the July 9, 2025, from the Regular Meeting.

Assistant Law Director Hines swore in all staff, the public, and applicants.

PROJ. NO. 25-13, ABUNDANCE CULINARY [THE KATZ CLUB LLC], 1975 LEE

Ms. Siggers gave a PowerPoint Presentation.

Proj. No. 25-13, Abundance Culinary [THE KATZ CLUB LLC], 1975 Lee, 'S-2' Mixed-Use, requests review of conditional use permit to allow up to one hundred (100) on-site outdoor dining seats per Chapters 1131, 1151, and 1153.

CONTEXT:

Abundance Culinary is a modern Chinese restaurant. The subject property (parcel no. 687-01-029) is located on the southeast corner of the Lee and East Overlook Road intersection. The property has an area of about 24,872 square feet. The property is zoned 'S-2' Mixed-Use and is surrounded by single-family houses zoned 'A' Single-Family to its east, as well as an 'S-2' District to its north, west, and south.

HISTORY:

2000: (Proj. No. 00-06) – Twenty-eight (28) outdoor dining seats were approved.

2003: (Proj. No. 03-12) – Twenty (20) additional outdoor dining seats were approved allowing a total of forty-eight (48) seats.

2010: (Proj. No. 10-03) – Ninety (90) total outdoor dining seats and an outdoor bar were approved.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Abundance Culinary is a modern Chinese restaurant. The restaurant has sixty (60) indoor seats, and would like to have one hundred (100) outdoor seats. The Applicant is requesting to expand their outdoor seating to accommodate up to one hundred (100) outdoor dining seats in order to accommodate customers, events, and receptions. Abundance Culinary's hours of operations are between 8:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. Tuesdays through Saturdays. They are closed on Sundays and Mondays, but will occasionally hold events on those days. Events will only take place during regular business hours, and will most often be held between about 10 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. During busy seasons, The Applicant expects to host about two (2) or three (3) events each week. The establishment has twenty-six (26) full- and part-time employees. On busy days, which primarily occur on Fridays and Saturdays, The Applicant expects to have as many as 140 patrons at a time, with about one (1) server for every twenty-five (25) customers, and additional staff members for food production. There is a parking lot located in front of the building with about twenty (20) parking spaces for patrons.

STANDARDS:

A conditional use, and uses accessory to such conditional use, shall be permitted in a residential, commercial or special district only when specified as a permitted conditional use in such district, or when such use is determined by the Planning Commission to be a similar use, and only if such use conforms to the following standards in addition to any specific conditions, standards and regulations for such category of use set forth in Chapter 1151 of the Zoning Code. Furthermore, the Planning Commission shall find:

- (a) *That the conditional use will be in general accord with the purpose, intent and basic planning objectives of this Zoning Code, and with the objectives for the district in which located;*

The project is adherent to all pertinent 'S-2' District requirements, and will support local economic development by increasing the restaurant's capacity and viability. The project will encourage vibrant street life and utilize the outdoor space as efficiently as possible.

- (b) *That the establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare;*

The Applicant confirms that pedestrian paths and access routes will be adequately maintained to facilitate safe circulation and to prevent crowding. The outdoor seating design and arrangement will make respectful use of outdoor space that align with the aesthetics and cultural identity of the neighborhood.

- (c) *That the conditional use will be designed, installed, operated and maintained so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, and that such use will not essentially change the character of the same area;*

The Applicant states that the patio design where outdoor seating will be located will use materials, colors, and architectural features that match or complement the existing restaurant building and surrounding structures. The patio expansion is pre-existing and modest in scale.

- (d) *That the conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood;*

The project will make use of buffers to separate the patio from nearby residential properties by installing landscaping, fencing, and sound-buffering elements. The establishment closes at 10:00 P.M.

- (e) *That the establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district;*

The patio will be planned thoughtfully and will not affect future land use or redevelopment potential for adjacent sites. The Applicant hopes that investment in the proposed high-quality outdoor seating space will encourage similar improvements to contribute to the district's overall development.

- (f) *That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or are being provided;*

Existing utility infrastructure is sufficient to serve the expanded patio and no major upgrades or extensions are required. They have an on-site parking lot for patrons with about twenty (20) parking spaces for patrons, and they also sometimes pay neighboring properties that are closed on weekends to utilize their parking lots for busy weekends and events.

- (g) *That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets;*

Existing access points to the property, including entrances and exits from Lee Road and East Overlook Road will remain unchanged and can sufficiently accommodate increased customer traffic. Other areas designated for parking, pedestrian walkways, and loading will not be impacted by this project.

- (h) *That the establishment of the conditional use should not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community by creating excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities such as police, fire and schools;*

The Applicant does not anticipate any increases in public services as operations will primarily remain unchanged.

- (i) *That there is minimal potential for future hardship on the conditional use that could result from the proposed use being surrounded by uses permitted by right that are incompatible;*

The restaurant and patio are located in a commercial district and are surrounded by compatible uses such as retail, dining, and service-based businesses. The expanded patio will be separated using a landscaping and/or fence buffers, and sound-buffering mechanisms will be utilized as well to minimize impact on neighboring residential properties. The nearest residential property is about thirty (30) feet away with hedges and fences already separating them.

- (j) *That the conditional use shall address the sustainability guidelines of Section 1165.06.*

The design utilizes energy-efficient lighting and locally-sourced materials. Construction will prioritize the use of recycled and reclaimed materials where feasible. Design will align with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles by ensuring that there are clear sightlines across the site and that the area is adequately lit.

- (k) *That the conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located as well as the specific supplemental conditions set forth in Chapter 1153.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the conditional use permit to allow The Applicant to have one hundred (100) on-site outdoor dining seats, with the following conditions:

1. This use is to not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other properties in the immediate vicinity or create a nuisance for adjacent properties;
2. The Applicant is to work with staff to resolve any complaints from neighbors;
3. Outdoor lighting is to not directly glare onto neighboring properties;
4. The Applicant is to submit a final landscape plan to be approved by the Zoning Administrator; and
5. All required installation of the use is to be completed within twenty-four (24) months of Planning Commission approval.

Ms. Cohen asked for the location of the building to be clear.

Ms. Siggers pulled up the slide in the power point presentation showing the location of the building.

Mr. Horowitz asked how many parking spots are available on the property

Ms. Siggers stated that there are twenty (20) parking spots and that there will be collaboration with neighboring location to ensure parking is available on weekends and during events.

Ms. Knittel interjected that in 2010, the pervious restaurant did receive an outdoor dining permit for ninety (90) outdoor spaces.

The Applicant came forward however the audio was unclear.

Mr. Horowitz motioned for approval of Proj. No. 25-13, Abundance Culinary [THE KATZ CLUB LLC], 1975 Lee, 'S-2' Mixed-Use, requests review of conditional use permit to allow up to one hundred (100) on-site outdoor dining seats per Chapters 1131, 1151, and 1153. With Staff Recommendations.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Surratt and carried 7-0.

PROJ. NO 25-08, DOAN BROOK RESTORATION NEAR HORSESHOE PARK

Matthew Langan presented plans for Horeshoe Lake to the Planning Commission, describing various site improvements and enhancements.

Proj. No 25-08, Doan Brook Restoration near Horseshoe Park, review of plans per Chapters 1111, 1115, and 1133.

SITE CONTEXT:

The Doan Brook Restoration near Horseshoe Park is located between North Park Boulevard in Cleveland Heights and South Park Boulevard in Shaker Heights. The eastern boundary of this project begins on Park Drive and extends westward to Lee Road.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project consists of improvements to public lands in order to restore Doan Brook near Horseshoe Park, and to construct park amenities that include a trail network, pedestrian bridges, an outdoor classroom, overlooks, a sensory garden, and a nature play area.

The park plan is the result of significant community engagement lead by the consultants and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District in coordination with the cities of Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights.

Code Section 1111.06 (2)(5) requires the Planning Commission to review any substantial changes to public parks.

Presentation was given by Zoom and In-Person by Project Representation:

Matt Director of the Water/Sewer Management along with his colleagues, he went on to affirm the oath and turned the Presentation over to his colleagues via Zoom.

Matt Langan stated the he was the Architect on the Project, and went on to give a PowerPoint Presentation showing the progress and process of this project. Detailing what has been changed and improved, and how construction will work between the two (2) sister cities Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights. He gave a small back ground of this history of Doan Brook, explaining the wetland and lake surrounding the area. He stated that this is public land with a rich history that they are working hard to preserve. He mentioned that there will be some tree removal which is necessary due to their condition. He continued on to explain results of the study that was done by engineers regarding how water will flow through the area to work with the park and surrounding area, and how weather conditions will affect the area long-term. He showed a walking guide of the completed project.

There was an open house for the community to help with this project, which provided great insight as to how the community wanted this area to be used. He described the feedback that led to all the new and updated amenities for the park, and added a timeline for completion of the project.

Ms. Cohen interjected asking how many trees they estimate will be removed, and if those that are being removed are invasive.

Matt stated about half of the tree removal are those that need to be removed for the restoration of the project.

Ms. Cohen asked about the funding of the project. She also asked for clarification of the bike racks and trash cans that are all uniform. She expressed her preference for Cleveland Heights branding on those items on the Cleveland Heights side of the park. She asked what will be done with the wood from the trees that will be removed.

Ms. Knittel interjected that the funds are not from ARPA, she stated that the two (2) cities, Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights, are working together to fund this project through a 35%-65% split of cost between the two, because 35% of the park is in Cleveland Heights. The intent regrading branding is to combine the two (2) cities to have unified, cohesive items throughout the park, showing a union between the two. This land is leased to the City of Cleveland Heights by way of the City of Cleveland.

Additionally, the sewer district is involved because of their management of the stream.

Matt Langan stated that some of the wood will be used in the stream restoration, fencing, and along some paths.

Ms. Miles asked about the animal wildlife and how this will be maintained and also if there will be an area for dog walkers.

Matt Langan responded by stating that deer will be there and will ensure they will be preserved. We always encourage that people are aware of themselves and their surroundings. We will have signs up that will alert those of what is in the area.

Mr. Brown added comments for approval of the project as a whole.

Mr. Gaynier also expressed his support of the project, adding that it is a great way for the two (2) cities to work together. He also wanted to express that he feels it's not necessary to separate the seating or trash can with city logos.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Yozwiak came forth to give an update regarding auto use code enforcement, and announced that they will possibly bring them back to the Planning Commission for a review of their Conditional Use Permits.

ADJOURMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Brooke Siggers

Brooke Siggers, Secretary to the Landmark Commission

9/12/2025

Date

Approved,

Jessica Cohen

Jessica Cohen, Planning Commission Chair

9/11/25

Date