

# CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION

## MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST 13, 2025 REGULAR MEETING

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At 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, August 13, 2025, a regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers in City Hall.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

### **PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jessica Cohen, Chair  
Leonard Horowitz

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Justin Hines Assistant Law Director  
Brooke Siggers, City Planner

### **COUNCIL PRESENT**

None

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Gaynier called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. he welcomed the audience to the August 13, 2025, regular Cleveland Heights Planning Commission meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The May 14, 2025 regular meeting minutes were approved 6-0.

The May 28, 2025 special meeting minutes were approved 6-0.

The June 11, 2025 regular meeting minutes were approved 6-0.

The July 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes were approved 6-0.

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

**PROJ. NO. 25-17 [PRELIMINARY REVIEW] SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES LLC, PARK SYNAGOGUE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PHASE ONE, 3300 MAYFIELD**

***This case has been withdrawn at the request of The Applicant, and will be heard at the October Planning Commission meeting.***

**PROJ. NO. 25-18 FOREST CITY ACADEMY [THE CEDAR HILL], 2781 EUCLID HEIGHTS**

Ms. Siggers gave a PowerPoint Presentation:

This is Project No 25-18. They are requesting a conditional use permit for a non-profit elementary school called Forest City Academy in The Heights Theater.

The subject property (PPN 685-14-025) is located on Cedar Road, and is one lot north west of the Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road intersection. The lot is 100 feet wide and about 200 feet deep, and has a total area of about 15,800 square feet.

The property is zoned 'C3' General Commercial, and is neighbored by more 'C-3' General Commercial buildings to its east, a 'MF-3' Multiple-Family district to its west and north, and the Euclid Heights Boulevard median zoned 'Park' to its south. Across the street is another 'MF-3' Multiple-Family district, and the Coventry branch of the Cleveland Heights Public Library zoned 'A' Single-Family.

The proposed project seeks to establish a new, nonprofit elementary school designed to meet the needs of families in the community seeking a smaller, alternative environment for their children. They utilize a mastery-based model inspired by Montessori principles that allows students to progress at their own individual paces. The school anticipates to have about fifteen (15) students and two (2) full-time employees. This is meant to be a temporary location due to its smaller size and lack of traditional physical education space. They are interested in utilizing the Cedar Hill Baptist Church for the following school year. The school day will run from 8:15 A.M. until 3:30 P.M. Mondays through Fridays. Staff will arrive at 7:45 A.M. Transportation will not be provided by the school.

To reduce traffic disruptions, there will be a buffer window between morning drop-offs and the start of classes between 8:00 A.M. and 8:15 A.M. every morning, and another afternoon buffer window between 3:20 P.M. and 3:30 P.M. for pick-ups and dismissals. Because the school is small and starts prior to most neighboring businesses being open, traffic should be minimized. Many of the prospective students live within walking distance of the location and will likely walk to school regularly. Vehicular pick-ups can take place in available street parking spaces on Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road, or parents or guardians can park at the Marc's parking lot and walk their child into the building. The area directly in front of the building is a 'Loading Zone' with spaces for several vehicles. Families can pull into these spaces with

hazard lights to walk their children into the building. They plan to install either indoor or outdoor bike racks.

The school will utilize the Coventry Peace Park for outdoor recreation and play. They will carefully walk to the playground while closely monitoring students. They will also have a teacher with a yoga background who can teach basic yoga exercises, which can take place inside of the classrooms.

Family events and large school gatherings will take place off-campus at community locations such as libraries or parks. The school will only use the building during school hours, so the maximum number of people who will be using the space at any given time is about twenty-five (25) total between students, teachers, and potential approved visitors and volunteers.

This is the section code that provides an exception for the provision of off-street parking spaces for new uses in existing buildings that will not result in significant changes in traffic and parking if the property is located in a commercial district.

Staff recommends approval of the requested Conditional Use Permit for a non-profit elementary school called Forest City Academy in The Heights Theater per Code Chapters Code Chapters 1111, 1115, 1121, 1151, 1153, & 1161 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 City Staff to resolve any complaints from neighbors;
3. The Applicant is to return to the Planning Commission to update their Conditional Use Permit if any significant changes are made to the site, location, capacity, or operations;
4. Any signage is to be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Board of Review;
5. The Applicant is to adhere to all applicable Building Code regulations; and
6. All required construction is to be completed within six (6) months of Planning Commission approval.

Commissioner Wobig asked about the impact of the school on existing businesses with liquor licenses. Siggers and Hines confirm that the school should not affect the re-issuance of liquor licenses.

Commissioner Wobig raises concerns about parking demand during drop-off and pick-up times. Siggers discussed the availability of on-street parking and the potential for double parking. The founder and director of Forest City Academy, addresses parking concerns, mentioning the use of the loading zone for drop-off and pick-up. The school's administrative staff also confirmed that the school will seek a more permanent location as it grows.

Commission Wobig asked if if a study pertaining to the traffic count and safety history in the application was conducted. Planner Siggers stated that there has not been a study conducted.

Judith Miles moved to approve the project, and the motion was seconded by Bob Brown. Ken Surratt abstained from voting because his wife has been involved with the establishment of the school. The motion was passed with Commissioners voting 4-0 to approve it.

## **OLD BUSSINESS**

None

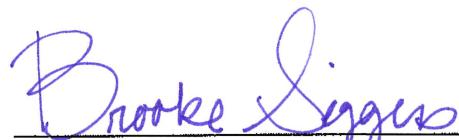
## **NEW BUSSINESS**

Siggers announced that annual code review was happening soon and the RFP for zoning updates has been issued, which will look more closely at places of worship legislation. Auto uses will also be coming before the Planning Commission soon to check for compliance.

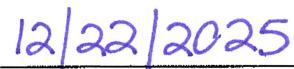
## **ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting was adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

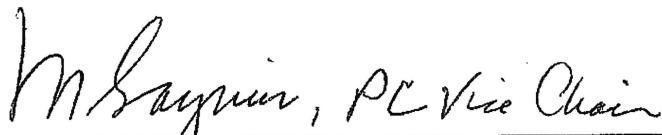


Brooke Siggers, Secretary to the Landmark Commission

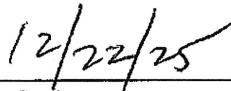


Date

Approved,



Mike Gaynier, Planning Commission Vice Chair



Date