

**CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 12, 2023
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

PRESENT MEMBERS:	Jessica Cohen	Chair
	Michael Gaynier	Vice Chair
	Leonard Horowitz	
	Ken Surratt	
	Judith Miles	
	Adam Howe	

ABSENT MEMBER: Jessica Wobig

STAFF PRESENT:	Eric Zamft	Planning Director
	Lee Crumrine	Assistant Director of Law
	Karen Knittel	Assistant Planning Director
	Christy Lee	Recording Secretary
	Brooke Siggers	Planner I

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She welcomed the audience to July 12, 2023, the regular meeting of the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Cohen stated that the June 14, 2023, minutes were approved as distributed.

Ms. Cohen made the audience aware that there would not be a vote on tonight's case, due to this being a preliminary view.

Lee Crumrine swore in the applicants and all staff

Preliminary Review by Alex Frazier:

Proj. No. 23-18 TWG Development, LLC Noble Station Development, 2228 Noble Road, "S-2" Mixed-Use, requests a PRELIMINARY REVIEW of a Development Plan for a 52-unit apartment per Code Section 1111,1115,1145,1161,1165, & 1166.

Mr. Frazier 2321 Grandview Ave unit 1. He gave an overview of the potential project of a new housing development known as Noble Station Development and the TWG Development Company as well. Mr. Frazier explained the accommodations that will be available to potential residents including in-suites washers and dryers, community rooms, a leasing office on-site, bike racks as well as onsite parking. He said the development would have one, two- and three-bedroom units. He mentioned that this project is funded through a low-income housing tax credit which was provided

through the Ohio Housing and Finance Agency. He further explains these apartments would be available to those who are 60-30% of medium income level based on the HUD index within Cuyahoga County. Mr. Frazier stated that construction could start within the first quarter of 2024 and see completion by 2025. He asked members and the public to refer to the PowerPoint for the possible look of the building and its construction adding that they will go before the ABR on the 20th (month not mentioned). Mr. Frazier stated that they have met with the neighborhood to gain insight into possible improvements and opinions surrounding the Noble Station Project. He went on to say that one concern that was brought up during the community meeting was green space. He went over a plan showing that green space would be available and maintained by property management and that the landscape plan would be available for review the next time they come before the Board. Other concerns were about the safety of the resident within Noble Station and the surrounding community, he stated that there will be onsite management to be sure of the safety and cleanliness of the development. He added that there will be security cameras. He further explained how parking would be enforced and how many spaces would be given to each resident without any guest parking onsite. He addressed the last concern of the project, that it would lower property values in the surrounding area. He said that based on several studies the property values actually increase with these types of potential projects. Mr. Frazier went on to say that a retaining wall behind property 883 Selwynn will stay and if not, they will ensure screening for that resident, he stated that there had been concern about the name of the project "Noble Station" He mentioned that a name change would not be possible at this time.

Ms. Cohen asked that there be views of the final project available to the Commission the next time they present giving a 360-degree view of the completed projects.

Ms. Cohen said that she would like to see a complete view of the project from all angles, including the view from the 3rd floor and the surrounding neighborhood. She said the Commission should also be shown landscape and green space plans and elevations showing what the resident would see once the project is completed. She also asked what was the total number of residents that would be allowed.

Mr. Frazier stated that he would have an exact number at the next meeting.

Ms. Cohen thanks. She also mentioned that they would like to see a full parking plan also.

Mr. Surratt referred to the tax credit that has been granted and asked if this would allow voucher receipts to reside at this location.

Mr. Frazier, they would only be required if requested by the state. But they would not be mandatory for approval for residency.

Ms. Miles asked if there would be any form of "common space" provided to residents.

Mr. Frazier responded "Sure" that the intent was to use the space near the leasing office as a common space for residences as well as towards the back of the building.

Ms. Miles asked where they expected guests to park if guest parking space is not going to be onsite. She also asked if had there been an evaluation of the estimated home prices within the area.

Mr. Frazier stated that they can look into possibly expanding parking to accommodate visitors. In regards to the pricing of homes in the surrounding area, he said that he would have that information at the next meeting.

A question was asked by one of the Commission Members however the audio did it pick up.

Ms. Cohen asked if there could be pictures showing what the potential retaining wall will look like.

Mr. Frazier replied "Yes".

Mr. Horowitz stated that there is green space facing Noble Road and that this is an untapped opportunity to develop a park-like space he also mentioned the placement of the structure and how it's positioned from the street.

Mr. Frazier mentioned that the house that has been left surrounding the project was not something that they necessarily needed or wanted to purchase to complete this project, but that he had been in contact with the homeowner to discuss the project. He went on to speak on the detention pond.

Ms. Cohen interjected and asked for a rendering of the stormwater detention pond plan also at the next meeting. She also asked if that was a requirement for stormwater.

Mr. Frazier responded "Correct" but that he did not have the complete details regarding that.

Ms. Cohen asked if to could be something that can be available for the Planning Commission at the next meeting.

Ms. Knittel commented that the City of Cleveland Heights Civil Engineer will also review the stormwater management plan.

Mr. Horowitz asked about LEED Certification and whether would that be a part of this project as well as green space within the project. He also asks if these units would provide gas or electricity to residents.

Mr. Frazier "Yes". NGBS is what would be used, but I will also provide more accurate information at the next meeting. He stated they would provide electric appliances to all residents.

Ms. Cohen wanted to know if a parking study had been provided and asked if not providing additional parking for guests would be ideal for future residents.

Ms. Miles asked if there was ever a time when we look at the ridership on public transportation. She stated that she lived near the site and has seen the congestion at the bus stop.

Ms. Knittel stated that the staff could look into this.

Ms. Cohen asked what the projected timeline was for this project.

Mr. Frazier said they should have the final proposed project ready for review by the next planning commission meeting.

Mr. Horowitz commented that on the site plan, there is roughly a good 30 feet from the building through the parking lot to the rear area of the property.

Mr. Frazier said that area would be for some of the tree preservation but this question would be better answered by our civil engineer and I will have more information at the next meeting.

Ms. Cohen asked if there is a plan to have a playground installed on the property.

Mr. Frazier responded "No" not at this time but that it is something that can be considered.

Ms. Cohen opened the floor for community comment.

Diane Hallum 1059 Oxford Rd affirmed the oath. Ms. Hallum expressed her concerns and disapproval of the project as a whole. She stated her concerns about the bus lines and how they're not sufficient for people with disabilities. She asked for clarification on terms that were used such as the Ohio Housing Agency and asked how they approve this project. Ms. Hallum also spoke of her concerns about the company, TWG. She stated that the name of the project is low class and that it lacks amenities. She mentioned the design is also unsightly. Ms. Hallum raised questions about the zoning classification. She added that along this area there were always stores with parking in the back what happen what changed?

Ms. Cohen interjected and explained how the Ohio Housing Agency works and how funding is spread out among cities. She stated that the design concerns would go before the ABR for final review. She stated that when the project is brought before the Commission they could either permit them or don't permit them based on what's allowed in the zoning code and that in this case, this is an allowed project.

Ms. Knittel added that in this zoning classification, mix-use zoning classification doesn't necessarily mean that every building is a mix-use building. A multi-family residential building is permitted.

Ms. Gloria Brown made additional comments, however, all comments weren't clear. She stated the property doesn't have adequate parking as well as a workable exit and entrance points. She mentioned that it would be nice to have large trees and fences to conceal the building considering that the design is very poor in design. She also asked for the price range for each apartment and what voucher will be used or accepted.

Ms. Cohen stated that the voucher would be through HUD for low-income housing, Section 8. She also stated that the cost for each apartment would come from the developers.

Mr. Frazier stated the rental amounts would be based on yearly income, he stated that there isn't a precise number at this time for each unit.

Mr. Horowitz asked if this whole building is intended to be low-income housing.

Mr. Frazier replied "Yes" it is all low-income housing.

The question was asked where the children are going to play if they don't intend on building a playground. Will there be additional space for the children to have activities on the premises? It was commented that it seems that the children's playground will be the parking lot.

Mr. Frazier stated that the units are not Section 8 units, it is a low-income housing facility. You will qualify for these units if you're at or below income standards for this property.

Ms. Cohen asked if there were any further comments from the public at this time.

The comment was made by the public but wasn't picked up on the audio.

Ms. Cohen thanked everyone for their comments regarding this project. She now turned the meeting over to Mr. Zamft for Staff Report on Planning Activity.

Mr. Zamft spoke on the Cain Park stramp and the possible new development of a combination of a ramp and steps being placed alongside the Cain Park sledding hill. He gave examples through a PowerPoint presentation, explaining the true investment and curb appeal that this would bring to the community. He reported that City Council has approved ARAP funds for this project, however, nothing has been designed yet. This will be reviewed by the Planning Commission per Code Section 1111.06 (b) 5.

Ms. Cohen stated that she's seen a lot of comments on social media regarding the condition of Cain Park with that said she wanted to have a better understanding of how the city and the developer would work together on this project.

Mr. Zamft stated that part of this project there will be involvement from different departments to ensure that the project is done safely and accurately and will bring harmony to the city as a whole.

Ms. Cohen went on to talk about some of the other park and recreation projects that need additional attention to bring them back up to code and allow families to enjoy them again.

Ms. Miles asked to go back to the PowerPoint to look at the photos showing where the "Stramp" would be located.

Mr. Zamft showed the PowerPoint further explain the project.

There was a question however the audio did not pick it up.

Mr. Horowitz asked about the safety of someone going down in a wheelchair, and will there be safety measures in place.

Mr. Zamft stated that there will be and have been mentions of keeping all safe and this will be part of the design considerations.

Mr. Zamft moved to the next topic of the Zoning Text and Map Amendments as well the Annual Zoning Code Review. He went through a few of the changes that have happened including fees, signs, building permits, and other aspects of the code. He spoke briefly on Air B&Bs, parking, and places of worship. He stated that places of worship, including accessory places of worship have become hard to define and he reviewed how this could be defined to better fit into the community and the City as a whole and that this definition would also include a parking plan for each site.

Mr. Horowitz asked if this would avoid the issue that was found in University Heights and Shaker Heights.

Mr. Zamft replied "Yes" that is the intention.

Ms. Cohen said that there is an interest in creating residential places of worship within the City of Cleveland Heights, the problem is when there is no allowance for it in the code and it happens anyway. But there is no way to regulate the existence of these places of worship without recognizing them in the code. With this change, we'll be able to regulate and make changes as needed for all to enjoy comfortably.

Ms. Miles asked if someone doesn't self-disclose that they have a place of worship within the home how do we regulate it.

Ms. Cohen responded that if a neighbor calls and complains, stating that a neighbor has a place of worship in their home at that point we would have to investigate to confirm and take the necessary steps to make these legal.

Mr. Zamft said some calls are correct with information and some are not. That is why we will need to the necessary step to ensure that all information is accurate and correct and that all permits are up to date with rules and regulations followed. Mr. Zamft mentioned that this would also apply to all forms of worship not just one single faith.

Mr. Gaynier mentioned that in reading the past minutes regarding the Rappaport case, they were not forthcoming about their plans and therefore the case and that it was a neighbor who came forth to explain that this was not a home but a place of worship with people parking throughout the street and that the neighbor was concern about the impact this would have on the community and her quality of life. He asked how moving in this direction solves that problem. He mentioned a similar case with a church on Fairmount and Coventry where they were allowed to park in the street during the days of worship typically Sunday. He said depending on the time and what day they meet we would want to understand how this affects the overall parking through each neighborhood that has a place of worship, and how will this be regulated if there are multiple

places within each community throughout the city. He went on to say that there will always be unintended consequences for every action and or complaint regarding this subject.

Ms. Cohen interjected stating that the Planning Commission had this conversation a few months back, she went on to say that people are now just establishing places of worship without the consent of the City, which is making it difficult for neighbors to object because there is no framework in place to say this is causing a nuisance.

Mr. Zamft referred all members back to the handout that was given earlier which lays out the standards that a neighborhood place of worship would have to comply with to open as a granted place of worship, with the option of making these conditional uses.

Ms. Cohen added that there is a lot of value in making this a conditional use, which regulates this system and provides residents the chance to come out and voice their concerns or approvals of the operation.

Ms. Miles added that she is used to having areas of study where there are established places of worship, with set times and dates for worship or meetings. She asked for clarification as to why it would be permitted for certain places of worship not to have specific times and dates for meetings, instead of having no form of order.

Mr. Zamft stated that making this conditional permitted in all districts would allow for a new use as opposed to the community place of worship which already exists. He reiterated that each place of worship would need a conditional use permit along with a parking plan.

Each member commented on possible ways to improve parking, setbacks, and spacing for places of worship allowing for comfortable parking for all.

Mr. Zamft also stated that there will be the Annual Zoning Code Review and additional zoning changes that may come before the Commission.

Ms. Siggers gave a brief overview of her research on the transportation studies that were completed over the past couple of years, seeing which ones can be prioritized, and which projects have been completed. She briefly reviewed her memo on side walk connections.

Each member gave their option and agreement regarding sidewalk connections.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS



Jessica Cohen, Chair



Eric Zamft, Secretary