

## **STOW PLANNING COMMISSION**

Minutes of the Stow Planning Commission meeting held on Tuesday, May 30, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Brauer, Mrs. Harrison, Mr. Kohlmeier, Mr. Ross, Mr. Sprungle

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Planning Rob Kurtz  
Planning Commission Secretary Pamela Daerr

**PRESS REPRESENTATIVE:** None

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Mr. Sprungle called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6: 00 p.m. and asked the audience to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Brauer moved and Mr. Ross seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2017, meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

#### **P.C. 2017-009 – OMNI SENIOR LIVING: CONDITIONAL ZONING CERTIFICATE & SITE PLAN; ALLEN ROAD**

Mr. Thomas Finley – 23205 Mercantile Road – Beachwood, Ohio 44122– was present to represent this item as was sworn in by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Kurtz: This is a request by Mr. Thomas Finley, applicant, and the Dorothy Gray Estate, property owner, for the Planning Commission’s approval of a conditional zoning certificate and site plan for the construction of a 148-unit assisted living development located on Allen Road. The 8-acre site is located on the east side of Allen Road across from the Cleveland Clinic/Akron General Wellness Center. The property is zoned I-1 Limited Industrial and assisted living facilities are conditionally permitted in this district.

The main building will include total of 142 units to include the following types of dwelling units: 82 independent living; 42 assisted living; and 18 memory care. Also, 6 independent living villas are proposed to be located on the eastern portion of the site near Hudson Drive. The complex will vary in height from one story to three stories in height: the independent living portion is three stories; the assisted living section is two stories; and the memory care portion is one floor.

The site will be accessed from both Allen Road and Hudson Drive and there will be a circulation drive around the entire site providing access to the building from the north and south. Storm water management will be accommodated through the use of detention basins and underground storage.

The existing elevation on the site generally slopes higher to lower from east to west and the lowest area is located in the northwest corner of the property. The building will take advantage of this sloping site (i.e. the first level of the assisted living section will be on the same level as second level of the independent living portion of the complex).

The exterior of the buildings will be finished using a combination of vinyl siding; stone veneer and EIFS (varying colors and textures). The roof material will be asphalt and standing seam metal. The building will also feature upper story balconies.

The applicant is requesting a variance from C.O.S. Section 1147.04 to permit a portion of the north circulation drive to be located less than 10 feet from the north property line.

The Engineering Department, staff and the applicants went through a number of revisions to this plan. One of the issues of concern was fire access. While it may have met the exact turning radius, the movements Engineering provided showed there wasn't much room for error. This drive here [pointing to the screen] was still a little tight on the previous plan so they were asked to move the drive to the north necessitating the request for that variance.

Engineering Department and Fire Department has looked at these plans and the applicant has made various revisions to the plan in order to satisfy the Engineering and Fire Departments.

Two of the issues the Fire Department has was basically adequate access to this courtyard area [pointing to the screen]. So they provided this access here [pointing to the screen]. The Fire access vehicle we are talking about is the Aerial (Ladder) Truck. Ultimately this is still not quite adequate so the additional request from the Fire Department is to extend this access drive [pointing to the screen] into the courtyard to allow the ladder to be utilized. It will have to be extended approximately 40 feet into this area [pointing to the screen]. That will slightly change their landscape plan for that particular area. According to Chief Stone that will provide adequate access for them as best as they can get for a facility such as this.

The other issue was parking in general. They meet the parking standards. They have 99 spaces provided and includes 8 land banked spaces. Our code requires 97 parking spaces. From the applicant's point of view that is certainly adequate except for special occasions and holidays especially Mother's Day.

The Fire Department's concern was on those days are they going to be parking in the Fire Lane/circulation drive. That is why one of the conditions we are going to recommend, and the applicant has already talked about this, is making arrangements with nearby property owners with a shuttle bus on those limited occasions so that will relieve the pressure of potentially excess parking needs.

The Engineering Department has reviewed these plans a number of times. One of the things they analyzed was the potential site distance issues on both Allen Road and Hudson Drive. They were satisfied that the entrance was at the appropriate location both on Hudson Drive and on Allen Road and did not cause any site distance issues. Primarily Hudson Drive because Allen Road has already been cut down before the Cleveland Clinic was done. Their secondary entrance lines up with the Cleveland Clinic entrance.

The applicant has color elevations and they can go over that. There are varying elevations from three story to one story. There are the standard conditions for the City Arborist and the Building and Engineering Departments.

Mr. Brauer: On the site plan, you indicated this [pointing to the screen] was their only concern. So they are going to move this [pointing to the screen] to the north; correct?

Mr. Kurtz: It is already moved to the north. It was this section of the driveway from here [pointing to the screen] to here [pointing to the screen] and that allowed for an easier turn here [pointing to the screen].

Mr. Brauer: They were not concerned about this radius either [pointing to the screen]?

Mr. Kurtz: As I said, it does meet the turning movement program. In talking with the Fire Department, their mode will be from here [pointing to the screen]. While it is possible it has to be absolutely perfect. In discussions with them they said this is where they are going to go in [pointing to the screen]. They are not going to go in there [pointing to the screen]. This is the easier route [pointing to the screen].

Mr. Brauer: If they had to come in this way [pointing to the screen] and go through this parking lot, that to me is a lot tighter than this [pointing to the screen]. But that looks like it's a lot tighter than this route [pointing to the screen].

Mr. Kurtz: I think there are fewer turns in this route [pointing to the screen]. From the turning movements program, it met all those. They indicated they would take the western route.

Mr. Brauer: I believe it would be a fair statement if they knew there was an issue in this building here [pointing to the screen] they would access it off of here [pointing to the screen] and they would have whatever access to this building [pointing to the screen], over here [pointing to the screen] they would go to the right side of the building.

Mr. Sprungle: I would say the issue is probably when there is something going on in here [pointing to the screen]. You are talking they are driving this way, hoping there are no cars parked here [pointing to the screen], bring your truck in here [pointing to the screen], turn it this way [pointing to the screen]. I'd like to see that driver get that truck out of there.

Mr. Brauer: It's tight.

Mr. Sprungle: They say they can do it, but wow.

Mr. Kurtz: This is a wider drive here. It is a 26-foot drive. Again, it meets that [pointing to the screen]. There may be one space, the very northern space, if that were striped out, that may be something to think about. It is only the loss of one space, looking at it now.

Mr. Sprungle: It looks like there's actually a little bit of a curb there.

Mr. Kurtz: Right. If that were cut down, that might help and relieve it a little bit more. I haven't talked to the applicants about that specifically. Maybe if this last spot [pointing to the screen] were removed it might make it an even easier turn.

Mr. Ross: So the Fire Department is happy with what we see here?

Mr. Kurtz: They are satisfied. I can't say they are happy but they are satisfied. They realize there are a lot of factors to deal with and they have indicated they can live with this as it is.

Mr. Ross: So the plan we are seeing is something they could approve. It's maybe an "I want" as opposed to "it doesn't comply with the requirements."

Mr. Kurtz: Not exactly. The plan before you, with the extension of this access [pointing to the screen], they can live with. So that would be part of their requirements.

Mr. Ross: Is that an "I want" or is it required for access to the building. It looks like what they have here complies without that.

Mr. Kurtz: It technically meets the standard of 150 feet or having an access lane 150 feet from the building. Because there are balconies here [pointing to the screen] they wanted to get as much potential access to those balconies. Knowing human behavior, people would be trying to go out to those balconies even though that is not the fire plan that was indicated. In answer to your question, yes it does meet it.

Mr. Ross: So it's an "I want" that they want to get their ladder truck in there as opposed to the other equipment.

Mr. Kurtz: That's correct.

Mr. Ross: So they can service the building without the ladder truck, without doing that, apparently.

Mr. Kurtz: This drive [pointing to the screen] is necessary to meet their 150-foot minimum of having a fire access lane from all points of the building.

Mr. Ross: Maybe we'll let the Engineer address that.

Mr. Brauer: The other concern I have is enforcing the parking in the fire lane, but maybe the applicant can help with that.

Mr. Sprungle: I have a concern with the parking also. You are saying it meets the requirement of 97 spaces. How does that calculate? You have 142 units, obviously not everybody drives but you also have employees. How do we come up with that kind of number for that building?

Mr. Kurtz: I took 82 for senior apartments which is probably high at one per unit. Then the rest are 60 nursing and assisted at 1 space for every 4 beds. So that is 15. So 82 plus 15 equals 97. That is where the 97 requirement comes in. It does meet our code. According to the applicant they had a different ratio which was even less at how they calculated their need.

Mr. Sprungle: Do you know where they would arrange for the additional parking?

Mr. Kurtz: The applicant can address that. He has a couple possibilities in mind.

Mr. Finley: On behalf of my design team I have Randy Parsons from MPG Architects, who did all the architectural associated with this project; and Travis Crane with TGC Architects.

This is a \$29 million project. It is going to provide premier senior residences in the City of Stow. We're really excited about this opportunity.

As Rob mentioned, we have 82 independent living, 42 assisted living, and 18 memory care. We do look, and I don't mean to muddy the waters, but we do look to expand this both to the north and to the south at later dates because we believe the market; and what Stow is looking for is a larger project predominately in the independent living aspect of this and the villas and what have you. That will be a discussion for other days.

Omni and the associate companies has a long history with the City of Stow. We started out, my brother Pat and Vic Cohn started here in Stow about 30 years ago with Omni Plaza on Route 91. Bruegger's Bagels building from there; the Hampton Inn developed by Omni Hospitality is still operated under a different name but still the same group of people. We went on to do the Clunk Building a 40,000 square foot office building behind the court house.

This is our most ambitious project obviously at \$29 million. We are excited about this opportunity to bring this to Stow because we have this long history of very successful projects and ready to get it going.

In addition to this one, we are currently building in Westlake, Strongsville and Hudson. We have a project in Tallmadge and Massillon that are already built. The last three are being built by our partner Danbury but are also being built by Pride One Construction who's done most of our construction for us.

The independent living is not your typical market-rate independent living. They come with a large level of services including 24-hour access to nursing staff and support. Three meals a day, seven days a week if elected as part of their rent. So if they decide they want dinner here, whether they are independent living or any place else obviously all those are provided for them. The independent living also has monitored health. If someone is not feeling well we can also monitor those amongst many other social activities such as pools, travel, trips to doctor in our own van.

This is a continuum of health and care whereas someone can come in here, go to independent living, as they age and need a little more assistance they move into an assisted living and God forbid you end up with Dementia Alzheimer's or what have you, those obviously will be taken care of as well. It's really an age-in-place type community that serves the residents here and does it very well.

Some of the questions and concerns; this will have a community van that will have wheelchair access and ADA compliant and we will transport residents to wherever they need to go. It will be on site.

That really downplays the amount of parking necessary because we are finding and what the institute's traffic engineers has determined is independent living is really 1.53 cars per unit and it is significantly less in assisted and is zero on the memory care. According to the Institute of Traffic Engineers we are over parked on the analysis. Better to have, in our opinion, a few extra spaces.

As it relates to issues related to parking during holidays; the number one issue is Mother's Day. What we will probably do on Mother's Day and what's been done by our operators is that we will make arrangements somewhere else offsite, in this case the Hampton Inn as well as the

Staybridge. I'm sure with those folks we will be able to gain as many spaces as we need. We know the folks from Akron General. We don't know as many people at the Cleveland Clinic but I'm sure arrangements can be made out by the helipad and we can have some of those up front parking spaces if necessary. Those are being taken into consideration and we'll make sure we will minimize any parking issues or concerns as it relates to those peak times.

Mr. Sprungle: Have you actually talked to any of those folks and gained approval or is it something you're confident you can get.

Mr. Finley: We're confident we can get that. We also know and understand that usually when they're coming to visit Mom it will be scheduled for mealtimes, or we'll request that from folks. There won't be as many drop-ins. We'll know how many people are coming, at what times based on what meals they are using. How many will be taking Mom or Dad out for that holiday. Based on that we're going to be able to gauge fairly closely on how big is the problem and when will parking become an issue and we'll act on that accordingly.

Mr. Sprungle: In this particular case people aren't allowed to visit anytime they want?

Mr. Finley: No, they can, but there's more than enough parking on any other given day but if they're coming to have lunch or dinner with Mom or Dad typically they are making arrangements for that up front and that's how we will gauge to some degree, plus or minus, how many parking spaces will be necessary.

Mr. Kohlmeier: You don't currently own the adjacent properties to the north.

Mr. Finley: We have a contract on the north property, the Schler property. It is currently coming under rezoning right now to the same zoning we have currently as well as across the street. That is in process. We have an option for purchase agreement.

The property to the south is under 2 acres, behind the eye clinic is also under purchase agreement and we intend to purchase that for many different reasons. One is the intent is to extend the villas into that areas but it is also our quickest and easiest access to sewage. There is a manhole just off the corner of the eye clinic that is our shortest route. So that one we'll own. We are agreeable in cost but it is also necessary.

Mr. Sprungle: Mr. Kurtz, on this property here [pointing to the screen] are these homes?

Mr. Finley: It is a cell tower.

Mr. Sprungle: Access to the cell tower comes from where?

Mr. Finley: Right down the property line.

Mr. Kurtz: Right here [pointing to the screen].

Mr. Finley: That's just an easement.

Mr. Kurtz: Right now it is owned by Schler. And Schler gives Crown Castle an easement.

Mr. Brauer: Mr. Kurtz, does staff support this?

Mr. Kurtz: Yes.

Mr. Kohlmeier: Just to clarify again the Fire Department is on board with this site plan and they seem acceptable. Can you explain when this is dated today, right, the Fire Department and then the response.

Mr. Kurtz: According to the Chief yes.

Mr. Kohlmeier: He wrote the memo and then wrote the email afterwards saying that ...

Mr. Kurtz: The memo was written by Fire Prevention. It was all reviewed together and then this is what the result of it was.

Mr. Kohlmeier: In the memo he is saying it is not acceptable but the email then clarifies that there were revisions made in discussions that make it acceptable.

Mr. Kurtz: Those revisions were the extension of that access drive and some accommodation for the excess parking over certain time is what the Fire Chief wanted.

Mrs. Harrison: So if they extend the access drive, that clears up number two on the memo.

Mr. Brauer: As far as helping enforce the "no parking in the Fire Lane," how would you approach that?

Mr. Finley: We'll have on-site staff including maintenance and folks that will be on-site 7-days, 24 hours. We'll add staff or at least people responsible for the maintenance or maintaining access or what have you on those specific dates. It will be self-monitored. I'm sure there will be correspondence and notices put out prior to any event that stipulates what the procedure is, how it's handled, and the ramification for non-compliance. You're going to get ticketed or towed.

Mr. Kohlmeier: Signs?

Mr. Finley: Absolutely, both signs coming out of the ground as well as on the asphalt for any Fire Lanes. It will comply, meet or exceed all fire markings and what have you.

Mr. Kohlmeier: I assume the buildings are sprinkled.

Mr. Finley: The buildings are fully sprinkled, correct.

Mr. Ross: It's been my experience through our family history that we've had access to a number of these facilities over the last few years. It's good to see the fact that we are not over parking. Typically, I have not seen problems in other facilities with the kinds of peak demands that we're discussing. So I wouldn't anticipate that would be a problem giving the type of management you're describing.

I would also like to extend my compliments to the design staff. This is a great project for Stow. It looks to be a well-designed, pleasant environment for people to live in, so my compliments.

Mr. Brauer: So Mr. Ross, you're saying you don't feel the parking is a concern.

Mr. Ross: I think it's an absolutely no brainer. It's an easy one.

Mr. Brauer: I'm challenged a little bit but your statement kind of eases it up. We're assuming we're going to get help. We don't help in the parking.

Mr. Ross: It obviously meets our code clearly, per Rob's discussion. The peak demands on other facilities that we've been engaged with have managed them in exactly the way Mr. Finley is describing. It does not seem to have been a problem. I can't guarantee that's going to happen but it seems realistic. They know these events take place and they know what kind of demand they normally have. So far they seem to have handled them well. We've not been inconvenienced in other facilities, let's put it that way.

Mr. Finley: Our operator manages 15-17 facilities both here, Gables of Hudson, Gables of Kent, Gables of Green and 10-12 in the St. Louis, Kansas City of like and similar to what is there. They understand the need for parking. We use them as our biggest resource along with the data provided by the Institute of Traffic Engineers to develop a very careful plan from a parking standpoint as well as utilization and depend on them significantly to "get it right." They are operators, that is all they do and they run a first-class operation. I feel very comfortable.

In dealing with office buildings and parking requirements for office and retail in the past, I know the significance and the need and how upset people can get if they are walking too far or we don't have enough parking both on a day-to-day basis as well as those holidays. We would not under park this thing. If we find that it is we will have those arrangements well established. We'll get employees more than likely off-site freeing up those spaces for residents and invitees and that should take care of the problem. If it doesn't we'll get other spots and we'll truck them in with the nice van.

Mr. Sprungle: You have contracts on the north and south properties. There must be some plan already for how that's going to look. Would that impact what you are doing? What is the thinking there?

Mr. Finley: We will be developing predominately independent living.

Mr. Sprungle: So you would extend what you are doing now.

Mr. Finley: You see the billows that are on the far east over there [pointing to the screen]. These six units here [pointing to the screen] would be picked up. Right now we have plans for roughly ten on a cul-de-sac street right here [pointing to the screen] on that acreage that's here [pointing to the screen]. We have not fully identified on this 4.5 acres how many will go there at this point.

Mr. Sprungle: But it's that concept.

Mr. Finley: That is the concept. If one of these aspects go gang busters, then we will probably shift and look at the Phase II development to meet the needs or the requirements. Our multiple market studies say there is a high bed count or demand specific to independent living. The folks are moving out of their 2,500 – 3,500 square foot houses and they are saying they want to come here because of the social environments and all the things we are officering to basically simplify their lives.

These are rental units. They are not condos or owned units. Much in the same concept as Laurel Lake in Hudson where it is surrounded by 100+ villas and then they have independent



living within the complex, assisted living and skilled nursing. We will not have skilled nursing. That is not something we want to do. It is a very necessary but very difficult business. The demands say this is what we are looking for.

The couple acre site will definitely be villas. There is not enough room there to build assisted living. Maybe a memory-care type building but we anticipate the demand for memory care actually to decrease over the years because they are getting better at making sure we're eating right and exercising; the drugs and what have you. There should be, and we are hopeful for less demand for the memory care.

Mr. Art Shibley – 4270 Hudson Drive – Stow Ohio was sworn in by the Planning Commission Secretary.

Mr. Shibley: The HD condo which is located south of this project, right there [pointing to the screen]. I own 4720 which is the one closest to Hudson Drive. My question is what kind of screening are you going to have and is there going to be any access into our parking lot. We of course would be a friendly neighbor and if you needed any parking spaces we could help out with that on the weekends.

Mr. Finley: Fortunately grade is a very good screening and we are utilizing grade here to basically bring the buildings up. The three-story building sits the lowest of all of this and it runs up hill very quickly. That's why we go from three stories to two stories to one story.

The building that is closest to you will actually be at your height or lower and we do not anticipate you looking up at a massive building or a big need for screening. If we did anything we would first try to do that with landscape upper because it's softer and more residential. If that didn't work whether it be for sound or some other issues, some form of a board-on-board fence or something like that, that could be stained and look half-way decent would be probably our logical next step from a screening standpoint. That would be our process, landscaping first and a fence second.

I assume our residents are going to talk a lot faster than what your tenants are to say what are you doing about all this, about the noise, etc. So we'd be responding to their needs and coming back to Planning to say how about a fence or an addition to landscaping or something like that.

Mr. Kohlmeier: It looks like a beautiful project.

Mr. Finley: I have the architect and the engineer here if there any more questions.

Mr. Sprungle: Before we call for approval Mrs. Daerr has a letter from Mrs. Gray who has request it be read into the Minutes.

Mrs. Daerr: Patty Gray asked me to read this to the audience and into the record.

*"Our home was always the gathering place for every holiday, party or celebration for our family and extended family.*

*It will be comforting to know that families will continue to enjoy life on our old homestead.*

*The last few weeks we could not care for Mom at home and we searched for a fresh, new & homey atmosphere for her to enjoy her remaining time with us. I am sure this facility will bring comfort to the residents and their families.*

*Mom and Dad would be pleased.*

*It is our family's dream that the remaining three parcels that once was a part of the original 19 acres owned by the Gray family will become a part of this unique campus—making our parents and grandparents proud.*

*Thank you to the City of Stow and everyone involved in making this happen.*

*Patty Gray  
137 Morrison Avenue  
Cuyahoga Falls, Oh 44221*

Mr. Finley: I've had an opportunity to get to know Patty and she sent me that earlier in the day and it touched me as well but it also reminded me of the importance of doing quality high-level projects that they could continue long-term to be proud of. I think we have a project here that Mom and Dad as well as the future residents will be proud of and will really enjoy it.

It is a reminder of the importance to provide people in their later years a great place to live and they can enjoy those years as they get older. I am thrilled to have that letter but also the opportunity to develop this in a manner the Grays will be proud of and obviously Stow will be proud of.

Mr. Brauer: Mr. Kurtz, how do you feel about removing that one parking spot from the swing. Do you think we should do that?

Mr. Kurtz: I think it is something to be considered unless the applicant has an issue with it. Honestly, we have not talked about that prior. We talked about a number of things and that wasn't one of them so I don't like to bring those up unless the applicant is on board. The initial spot we were talking about was this [pointing to the screen].

Mrs. Harrison: It seems like on the Fire Department drawings on page 3 it seems like they have plenty of room.

Mr. Kurtz: I wouldn't say plenty but it is at the point. From my point of view and from the Fire Department....

Mrs. Harrison: Worst case scenario the Fire Truck runs over the curb right. If they need to do that, that's what they're going to do.

Mr. Finley: The Engineer is confident that with a level of care, which is typical for an apparatus of this size it can maneuver through here. When we expanded the one driveway on the memory care he was concerned he was going to clip the canopy and that was the reason, he said they'd have to be really good drivers and in the heat of the moment; i.e., a fire or rescue they may not be perfect. So we made certain accommodations. As far as removing one or even more parking spaces, we are open to on-going dialog and discussions both with Engineering as well as the Fire Department. I think as it reality sets in and we begin to define or identify how it's

going to work; we want the same thing Stow wants and that's a safe and accessible project and we're going to listen to what all the professionals have to say and come to a project that works.

Mr. Kohlmeier: The Landscaping Plan shows a tree being put in there, but I'm assuming that's not going to be there.

Mr. Ross: Mr. Chairman, over the years, I have given Mr. Parsons his fair share of criticism but if a motion is in order I would like to move and Mr. Brauer seconded to approve P.C. 2017-009.

**NOTES: Planning Commission recommended approval subject to the following: Building & Engineering approval of construction and storm water management plans; the applicant extending and widening the fire access drive into the courtyard to provide adequate space for Fire Department aerial vehicle; the applicant securing agreement(s) from nearby property owners to provide adequate overflow parking for holidays and/or special occasions if necessary; the City Arborist approval of landscape plans; and Council granting the variance from C.O.S. Section 1147.04. Planning Commission determined that the variance was minimal and improved emergency access for the development.**

Yea: Kohlmeier, Ross, Sprungle, Brauer, Harrison

Nay: None. The motion passed 5-0.

**NEXT MEETING: Scheduled for June 13, 2017.**

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Kohlmeier moved and Mrs. Harrison seconded the motion to adjourn. It was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

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Richard Sprungle  
Planning Commission Chairman

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Pamela H. Daerr, CPS  
Planning Commission Secretary