

MINUTES
Planning and Zoning Commission & Architectural Board of Review
City of Willoughby Hills, Ohio
July 7, 2011

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 P.M.

PRESENT: Chairman Charlotte Schryer, Vice Chairman James Michalski, Council Representative David Reichelt, Mayor Robert Weger, John Lillich and Madeleine Smith and John Davis

ALSO PRESENT: Building Commissioner Fred Wyss, City Architect, William Gallagher, BZA Representative Frank Cihula and Clerk Katherine Lloyd.

Disposition of Minutes Meeting of June 16, 2011

MOTION: John Lillich moved to approve the Minutes of June 16, 2011
Seconded by Madeleine Smith
Voice Vote: 5 Ayes and 2 Abstentions (Michalski, Reichelt)
Motion Passes

Correspondence

- Willoughby Hills BZA Minutes of April 12, 2011
- Letter dated June 23, 2011 from Willoughby Hills BZA to Mr. Donald Scott RE: Case 2011-2 Variance Request

ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW

Public Portion opened at 7:03 P.M.

None

Public portion closed at 7:03 P.M.

1. Martin Gazdak
Contractor: Owner
29326 Eddy Rd. – Garage addition /Accessory Structure - PPN: 31-A-008-E-00-001-0
Plans received by Building Department 6-6-11
Plans approved by Building Department 6-29-11
Present: Marty and Linda Gazdak

Owner/Representative Comments:

- We wanted to have an attached garage on the house. Because the lot is so narrow, we opted to have two garages.
- One garage will be free-standing so the truck with plow can drive directly into it. That is important because there is no swing room due to the property line.

- The other garage will be attached to the house with an entranceway because once it is attached onto the house; there will be no back door entrance to the house. This will be an alternate entrance with a coatroom and lead into a laundry room and the house.
- The siding and brick on both garages will match the house.
- Double hung windows on the attached garage will match those on both sides of the house. The single window in the detached garage will also match the house.

City Architect's Comments:

- It is a nice design. We appreciate the window muntins and the details matched all the way through.
- There is no window and door trim on the garage drawings but they are in the pictures of the house. We would like to see that same detail on the garage windows and doors. *Okay. It [trim] is wrapped aluminum. The lower sill is light gray.*
- Will you be able to match the roof color? *I was able to get the same Silver Spring color for our 2001 addition. If we have a problem with matching, we would replace the whole roof. Matching everything will make it look it was built that way originally.*

Board Comments:

(Smith) It is nicely done and will be a nice addition.

(Lillich) It has everything we look for.

MOTION: John Lillich moved to approve the garage addition and accessory structure at 29326 Eddy Rd. as submitted.
Seconded by David Reichelt
Voice Vote: Ayes Unanimous
Motion Passes

2. Jerry and Debbie Stachowski

Contractor: Pavlisin Custom Homes

2886 Oakwood – Screened Porch on Existing Slab – PPN: 31-A-006-L-00-012-0

Plans received by Building Department 6-27-11

Plan approved by Building Department 6-29-11

Present: Milton Pavlisin. Owners are in the audience.

Owner/Representative Comments:

- They plan a covered porch on an existing foundation. It will have four skylights and be mostly screened in.
- The soffits and posts will match the overhangs of the house which is clay colored.
- The siding along the bottom and on the one side will be the same color as the house which is being re-sided.
- The porch roof will match the roof of the house which be being re-done. *(Schryer) The whole house is being re-done? Yes, the siding, overhang and roof, so it will all blend together.*

City Architect's Comments:

- What color will the siding be? *It is light maple which is the same color it is now. [A computer rendition of color was provided].*
- It looks like you plan to wrap the columns with some type of plastic. Will that be the same light maple? *That will be like the overhangs, which is a light hickory color. That is a darker color which will serve as an accent.*
- What color is the banding on the bottom? *That will be the same as the siding. That will give dimension*

- It is nice, open design for a screened in porch.

Board Comments:

(Lillich) I am happy that he is putting on a gable roof.

(Smith) The stairs come right out of the sliding glass door. Would you consider a platform or landing at the same level as the doorway before the steps? *There are only two stairs. We could step down to a platform and then to a remaining step to the ground.* A platform is a safety feature.

(Reichelt) If they decide on the landing, the drawings can be amended and re-submitted to the Building Department.

MOTION: David Reichelt moved to approve the screened porch on an existing Slab at 2886 Oakwood as presented.
Seconded by James Michalski
Voice Vote: Ayes Unanimous
Motion Passes

3. Willoughby Hills Friends Church

Contractor: Ruff Neon Sign

2846 S.O.M. Center Rd. – Sign for School – PPN: 31-A-006-0-00-005-0

Plans received by Building Department 6-24-11

Plan approved by Building Department 7-1-11

Plans received by CT Consultants 6-28-11

Plans approved by CT Consultants 6-28-11

(Schryer) Due to the fact that Friends Church is here for a development plan, the sign project will be reviewed during Planning Commission.

Minor Alterations Approved by the Zoning Administrator

1. Sue Hoffman

Contractor:

2545 Timberline – New Wood Deck - PPN: 31-A-011-E-00-003-0

Plans approved by Building Department 6-28-11

Chairman Schryer read the Minor Alteration into the record

PLANNING COMMISSION

Public Portion opened at 7:19 P.M.

None

Public portion closed at 7:19 P.M.

1. Willoughby Hills Friends Church

Contractor: Ruff Neon Sign

2846 S.O.M. Center Rd. – Preliminary Sign Development Plan – PPN: 31-A-006-0-00-005-0

Plans received by Building Department 6-24-11

Plan approved by Building Department 7-1-11

Plans received by CT Consultants 6-28-11

Plans approved by CT Consultants 6-28-11

(Schryer) This is a review of a preliminary development plan, not a final review. Notifications will be mailed out. In addition to the new sign, Friends Church has had other things done to the property, such as improved drainage.

Present: Bruce Landeg (Church member representing Cornerstone Academy, Jessica Ruff (Ruff Neon Sign) and Lou Marino (church trustee representing the church), other church members in audience.

Owner/Representative Comments:

- The school is a tenant of the church. It is not an affiliate but does share some spaces in the church. It has a tenant -lease agreement with the church. It is important for the school to have an identity of their own. Therefore, the school wants to have its own digital sign. It is a priority of the board.
- The church wants to reserve the right to have a digital sign of its own as well.
- With the help of the building commissioner, we drew up a development plan. Signs and plans for improved drainage and retention basin are part of the development plan.
- During the 2006 Flood, the detention pond on the southerly side of our frontage overflowed to Rt. 91. Working with the City Engineer, a development plan was made. A berm would be constructed along the front to alleviate the prior flooding issue and to restore any volume lost. The volume capacity has been increased 10-fold
- We have over 400 feet of frontage. There are two separate parcels with frontage. They have separate legal descriptions with the auditor. The parcels are consolidated for tax purposes. Perhaps the separate parcels could have their own signs.
- The parking lot does have buildings in the back
- Panoramic photos of the front of the church and location of the two proposed signs were provided.
- There are two temporary signs for the Vacation Bible School and the Divorce Recovery Group which are church programs.
- Location of the proposed digital school sign and eventual digital church sign is based on the above drainage and berm construction.

Building Commissioner's Comments:

- Adding a sign within the proper zoning distance of 25 feet in residential district would have placed the proposed school sign in the middle of the retention basin. Putting the sign any where else on the parcel would be confusing.
- They desire to keep the Church and school signs separate while still keeping them on the parcels because they are different entities.
- The Willoughby Hills Friends Church property is vast and located on SOM Center Road with buffering trees on the south side. It would not be a problem for residents in the area.
- The location of the proposed church sign would be moved slightly forward. It would be a variance requirement if not approved by the Planning Commission as an equivalency.
- Because they have never been to the Board because they were a conditional use and grandfathered and the signs have never been to the Board as part of a development plan, I feel that the Board can consider this a new sign development plan. Under Chapter 11.11 in the Zoning Code, there is a preliminary and final approval requirement with notification sent to residents within 200 feet of the property boundaries. Because of the 400-foot frontage, there would not be many residents to be notified.

Board Comments:

(Lillich) The plan discusses 'berming' along Rt. 91 and increased volume in the retention basin. If the water overflows again and the berm prevents its flow toward Rt. 91, where would it go? *Per the original design located by the City Engineer, the water was planned to go over the entrance drive to the north but the construction did not get the front edge high enough. The water sought its own course and came toward Rt. 91. And after that? There is an inlet basin if the storm sewer is completely backed up. It would then continue to well and could end up on Rt. 91. We are trying to conform to the original plan but increasing the volume to avoid that eventuality.*

(Davis) If the second new sign is in front of the old church sign, would the original be replaced?
Replaced.

(Lillich) I feel that digital signs are a distraction with their changing message. Is there any reason why the two entities could not share the same sign? *Practically, it makes sense but philosophically the identity distinction is important. We are not the same. We do already have the flashing school lights on the road which has traffic volume and high speed. People are alerted to the presence of a school. The two signs make the distinction.* I am opposed to two signs if they both have to have changing and scrolling messages.

(Wyss) The code clearly states that they are not going to flash. The message board can change to list new events. It is a continuous message that is changed to advertise different events. It is not intended to be a changing, flashing or moving message. *The church and the school have totally different programs. It would not be possible to work out both messages in harmony.*

(Michalski) The proposed sign says ‘Cornerstone’ and a message center. My comment is ‘how would you share the sign with both names’. The sign would need to be bigger.

(Schryer) Just to clarify, you would take down the existing church sign and erect two signs like the sample? (Marino) *Not exactly. (Landeg) There are two phases. The school is ready with Phase I and has submitted detail for the first sign. The church is not ready and has not submitted details or a sign proposal. We are looking for an overall permit so that the church would be assured that it also could have a digital sign in the future.*

(Michalski) The two signs should be similar architectural styles. (Marino) *We have mock-up that we are considering. We are the landlord.*

(Smith) They should both be compatible. *Absolutely.*

(Schryer) Now that we are doing this in two phases, we need to notify the public. You should bring a church sign plan. We cannot approve something we have not seen. (Marino) *The church is not ready to go forward with our sign. We want to know that if, by allowing our tenant to go forward with their sign, would that eliminate the opportunity for the church to do the same thing later. Otherwise, we have a problem with the whole idea.*

(Gallagher) Are we in Architectural Board of Review?

(Schryer) We are not. We can discuss the sign as part of the project but we cannot vote on it.

(Lillich) If they get their preliminary approval, how long is the approval good?

(Wyss) A development is approved. We cannot ask them to bring the detail if they are not ready to go forward with it because they may change that detail. (Marino) *We will discuss the plan this week.*

(Smith) I would have no problem with two signs because they are separate entities. The signs should be compatible. The signs are in a residential area but there is no house close by.

(Schryer) The vote would be on the distance of the sign from the highway. The retention basin is approved by CT Consultants. The church sign will be further back than the school sign.

(Wyss) The residential code is 25 feet from the right of way (ROW). Chief Collins’ review will be requested. 10 feet from the ROW might be less of a traffic distraction. We need to keep the sign out of the retention basin.

(Cihula) In the Code, there is a 30-foot setback requirement from the ROW for permanent signs in a residential district for nonresidential, conditional use. Changeable signs are permitted up to 30% of the permitted area of the sign. *Depending on what is purchased, there are 4-5 lines of text in lighted LEDs. The area that actually changes is much smaller. It is programmed to take a certain number of characters so it can be changed to the desired message.*

(Ruff) The message center in the sign measures 2.5 ft by 5-ft 4inches. There can be 4-5 lines of text.

(Gallagher) What is the size of the letters? *2-3 inches depending on the number of lines needed to show the message.* What is the color of the letters? *They can be amber or red.*

(Mayor) The screen has the capacity to do animation or graphics. *There are sign products that will do that.*

(Schryer) This is rendering is not what you picked out? *This is specified for a price for the sign. The color of the letters will be amber.*

(Reichelt) I have several concerns and comments. The City cannot dictate content. Constitutionally, from court cases, they can change the message when they want. From a safety viewpoint, it is probably better to be closer to Rt. 91 because it is in a school zone where people will crane their necks to see the sign. To my knowledge, this would be the first digitally projected sign in city. Once it is approved, it will set a precedent. We also should be concerned about the amount of light that the sign will put out or the distraction when it is changing in the evening. We get complaints about brightly lit signs. Will it have night time-day time settings? *(Ruff) It will have a Day & Night setting that will change automatically.*

(Mayor) We should check some of the other digital signs installed in other cities. The Wickliffe Fire Station has a red one. The City of Eastlake has one near the Captain's Stadium. Their sign is amber. Unless you are stopped at the light, you cannot read them. Those signs have moving letters. The City of Willowick has a sign with a graphic representation. Even large digital letters might not be seen at 40 mph.

(Landeg) We knew that we could not have changeable copy and we have discussed a once a day change just as though someone came outside and changed it manually.

(Wyss) I have always viewed a changing sign as moving letters. We have asked merchants keep their signs set constant, not flashing to avoid distraction.

(Marino) We are a church and Christian church. Our message will be tasteful with no flashing lights. We want people to read what is available here for them. The change process will be discreet. We are aware of the studies done by sign companies and what is effective. This type of sign is coming to many communities. LED is the way to go. It is much easier to change it from inside during the winter.

(Lillich) I feel that we need to familiarize ourselves with these types of signs. I suggest that, before the next meeting, we make a list of the sign examples the Mayor mentioned so the Board can go see them. I would like to add Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, across from the Wickliffe Fire Department to that list. It has an LED screen.

(Marino) People with businesses or offer services in the town need to be successful. LED signs are effective to relay changing messages to generate business.

(Michalski) We have exhausted our discussion of the site plan. We should proceed to the next step.

(Schryer) When you come back, your plan will need to include calculations for the night setting and the exact colors you plan to use. We need to approve what is actually being built. *The best practices of the signage would be to use night time lighting.*

(Gallagher) We need to hear more about the sign.

Comments about Sign by Ruff, Sign Representative:

- The top cabinet will have HL lamps. The bottom cabinet will be the message center.
- The electric will be run underground from the building.
- Colors and any graphics will be decided.
- It will have a brick base with an extruded aluminum cabinet using a through-bolt mounting method.

(Lillich) The sign only says 'Cornerstone'. Do you plan to add the word 'school' to make the sign more self-explanatory? *No, we do not. The Cornerstone engaged in a lengthy discussion process about the sign design. Then the plan underwent further discussion and changes by the Church trustees.*

City Architect's Comments regarding the Sign:

- What text will you put on the Church sign? *It is not designed yet but it will say 'Willoughby Hills Friends Church'. 'Cornerstone' is only in the school's name. The school is looking for its own identity. That is how they are known. That is why a shared sign would be so cumbersome.*
- Will the Cornerstone signage be illuminated? *The top cabinet will be illuminated with 1-ft 3 inch red letters. It will be internally illuminated with a Lexan facing. It is not individual letters; it is a*

piece of plastic? *Plastic with vinyl.* It will be the blue color? *Yes.* The only illuminated will be the white trim and the red. *The blue will be translucent so it will be illuminated as well.*

- Planters around the sign as shown will not be as uniform going down into the retention pond? What type of plantings do you plan? *I believe it is being built up to a flat surface. We calculated a volume displacement and will bring it back to level for the planting.* There be no exposed concrete and the planting will be low growth on level surface with masonry going into the ground? *Yes.* Then the plants listed are appropriate.

(Michalski) Section 8 A is correct for the grade elevation? They will build a berm around the piers. It will not be exposed. They will bring the ground up? *Correct.*

(Reichelt) Preliminary approval would be just for the ‘Cornerstone’ sign but the sign for ‘Willoughby Hills Friends Church’ is just shown for reference. *(Schryer) They want to reserve the right to have a digital sign in the same location.* What is the sideline clearance from the Willoughby Hills Friends sign to the property line? *(Marino) I would estimate a distance of several hundred feet.* It is distorted in the panoramic photograph.

MOTION: John Lillich moved to grant Preliminary Approval for the Preliminary Sign Development Plan for Willoughby Hills Friends Church at 2846 S.O.M. Center Rd.
Seconded by Mayor Weger
Voice Vote: Ayes Unanimous
Motion Passes

Additional Discussion:

(Landeg) What happens next? *The Board will send out notifications of the development plan to the residents. For the next meeting, the applicant updates their presentation as discussed tonight.*

Mr. Gallagher left at 8:07 P.M.

MASTER PLAN

David Reichelt reported on the Planning & Zoning Committee meeting held on Saturday, July 2, 2011 for further discussion of Master Plan 2010. No one from the Planning Commission was able to attend. The committee agreed that the draft submitted will be reviewed by David Hart. A proposal from him was requested. The cost estimate is \$1500.00. Per the Mayor, the funds have been authorized. Time for Mr. Hart to review the plan is estimated for about one month. A meeting will be scheduled when he is done to discuss his findings with him. The Planning Commission will be notified. Board members agreed that a professional review would be beneficial.

Mr. Reichelt suggested the Recreation Board draft discussed last meeting be streamlined before being incorporated, in keeping with the purpose of the Master Plan as a land use document. The Recreation Board can draft its own separate Master Plan outlining historical development, current and projected use and their ‘wish list’ for the future.

Master Plan Public Portion opened at 8:10 P.M.

None

Master Plan Public portion closed at 8:10 P.M.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Sign Issue: David Reichelt expressed concern about the direction of planning for signs. We need to decide whether we as a city will allow electronic signs. Once this sign is approved, there will be precedent for future signs. The example of Willoughby Middle School was added to those discussed previously. Data regarding electronic signs provided by the sign companies needs to be evaluated, together with other options for communication, including manual signs. Question discussed by the Board was whether the signs should be permitted. The Code does permit 'computer driven or manually changed changeable signs limited to 30% of the area of the face of the sign'. An Ohio Supreme Court decision sets an 8-second change as a reasonable time for a changeable sign because the court regards changeable signs as traffic hazards. Enforcement would also be an issue.

MAYOR'S REPORT

None

MEMBER'S REPORT

None

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

None

BUILDING COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

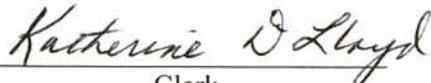
- Mary Rose Estates: Retaining wall details on the lower side of the building came in today. CT will review them. Final approval by HUD was granted for closing in about 4-6 weeks. Fees need to be addressed.
- Cleveland Clinic submitted a renovation plan.
- Lake MetroParks presented their final plans for restoration of floodplain on the south side of the park. They are using historical photographs to guide restoration of the land back from being a nursery. The floodplain and protected area issues will be reviewed by the Building Commissioner. They need to come to Planning Commission for the Protected Area approval. (Lillich) The north side is being eroded by the river. White plastic sheeting buried in the dikes is being exposed and being washed into the river. Stream Litter Laws are enforceable by the Sheriff's Department and the local Game Protector. Something needs to be done about this.
- There are three new houses.
- Maple Grove: Still on hold.

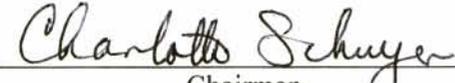
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

None

MOTION: John Lillich moved to adjourn.
Seconded by David Reichelt
Voice Vote: Ayes Unanimous
Motion Passes

Adjourned at 8:25 P.M.


Clerk


Chairman

Date Approved 6-16-2011