

**CITY OF AURORA
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 17, 2019**

The Aurora Planning Commission met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, July 17, 2019, in the Council Chambers of Aurora City Hall. The Planning Commission Chairman Kathi Grandillo called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m., immediately following the public hearing.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Laura Duguay
Sarah Gilmore
Kathi Grandillo
Dixie Benschhoff
Absent: Peter French
Also Present: Denise Januska, Director, Planning, Zoning & Building Division
Justin Czekaj, City Engineer
Jack Burge, Director, Economic & Entrepreneurial Development
Denny Kovach, Council Member
Harold Hatridge, Council Member
Matt Vazzana, Legal Advisor
Marie Lawrie, Secretary
Ken Lahmers, Aurora Advocate

Matt Vazzana, Legal Advisor swore in those in attendance who wished to speak.

SUBMISSION OF SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

MOTION: To accept information from Brian Grassa from the 2016 BZA Submission for 219 N Bissell Road – Wetland Setback Variances – for consideration

To accept the July 16, 2019 updated letter from Chagrin River Watershed Partners for 219 N Bissell Road – Wetland Setback Variances – for consideration

To accept a letter from Deb Conti, 234 S Chillicothe Road for Geauga Lake LLC/Pulte Group – Conceptual/Development Plan for consideration

Dr. Benschhoff moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Dr. Benschhoff, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

MOTION: To accept a letter of response from Jim O'Connor of Pulte Group for Geauga Lake LLC/Pulte Group – Conceptual/Development Plan for consideration

Ms. Gilmore moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Dr. Benschhoff

Nays: None

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

MOTION: To move Geauga Lake LLC/Pulte Group – Conceptual/Development Plan last under the agenda items

Ms. Gilmore moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo, Dr. Benshoff

Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: To adopt the minutes of the June 19, 2019 Meeting, as submitted

Ms. Duguay moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Duguay, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo, Dr. Benshoff

Nays: None

AGENDA ITEMS

Joe and Amy Jenyk, 219 N. Bissell Road – Wetland Setback Variances in Conjunction with a Driveway for a Proposed New Residence (1905015)

Brian Grassa, Marsh Glen LLC 212 Baptist Circle, Sagamore Hills, agent for Joe and Amy Jenyk, attended the meeting. He addressed comments from the public hearing. He stated that the next step of the process for the Jenyk family should the variances be granted, would be to submit engineered drawings that would address topography and drainage and storm water management requirements. He further explained that part of what created the uniqueness of this property was the development of the subdivisions to the east and west of the property, which now drain into this parcel. He explained that the sanitary line has already been installed for this lot. No further disturbance would be necessary. He could see no further impact to the citizens that voiced concerns.

Ms. Grandillo asked the board members for their questions and comments. Dr. Benshoff had none. Ms. Gilmore asked for confirmation about the utilities. The answer was that water and electricity are available to this lot off Bissell Road and the sanitary line was previously installed.

Ms. Gilmore asked about the comments of the Chagrin River Watershed Partners and the comment from Fire Chief David Barnes. Ms. Januska explained that code requires driveways to be constructed of asphalt or paving. There is an exception that allows Ms. Januska or the city engineer to grant a gravel driveway. The comment from the fire chief would be addressed when the topographic map is submitted. Mr. Czekaj stated that he believed the applicants have agreed to comply with the suggestion of a gravel driveway, as recommended by the CWRP.

Mr. Grassa asked if the applicants were expected to maintain a full gravel driveway or if it was expected in the wetland setback areas only. Mr. Grassa stated that the drainage issues may be better addressed by plantings and that maintenance of such a long gravel driveway may not be feasible. Ms. Januska stated that if the applicant desires an asphalt driveway, these issues should be addressed on the topographical drawings, when submitted. She further stated that the Planning Commission could put conditions on any approval, if they so choose.

Ms. Duguay acknowledged the comment from Chief Barnes, which reads, “The driveway is too long for a residential standpipe. It would need to hold the weight of a fully loaded tanker truck, approximately 60,000 pounds and have a turnaround near the house. If they install a residential sprinkler system, they can get

away with 40,000 pounds for a normal fire engine.” Ms. Duguay asked about the comment of CRWP, which reads, “As a reminder, impacts to any wetlands may require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.” It was stated that this statement generally accompanies their comments.

Ms. Grandillo opened the floor for public comment.

Michael McFadden, 200 Woodhaven Court, was in attendance. He asked if there was a diagram available to the public for this project. The answer was that the information is public record.

Chuck Vella, 196 Forestview Place, was in attendance. He stated that if the utilities are not connected with care, drainage could be considerably worse. He asked how this issue could be addressed. He stated that the neighbor at 195 Forestview Place has moved, in part to the issues created by the removal of trees for the sanitary line. Ms. Grandillo explained that the commission is deciding whether they want to grant permission for the driveway to disturb the wetland setback. If that is granted, plans will be submitted to the Building Department that will address his concerns in detail. Ms. Januska explained that a topographical drawing would be required and is public record. Mr. Czekaj invited the resident to discuss the submission with him, when and if the project moves forward.

Paula LaMantia, 510 Woodview Trail, was in attendance. She asked about the information included in the updated letter from CRWP. Contact information was given to several residents to contact Marie Lawrie for that information by email.

There were no further comments or questions from the public.

Ms. Duguay asked for clarification on the project pertaining to whether the driveway would cross over the wetlands or just impede on the setback for the wetlands. The answer was that it is expected to impede the setback, however; until an official site plan is submitted, that is simply an expectation.

Mr. Grassa stated lastly, that two of the other residents that have developed properties in conjunction with this original lot split were granted setback variances to cross over creeks.

This item was previously accepted for study. No motions were necessary as this item is still being reviewed.

Gatta Holdings LLC, 435 Gentry Drive – Addition (1907016)

Jack Burge, Director of Economic & Entrepreneurial Development was in attendance to discuss the project. He stated that it is always a pleasure when a company is doing well. He reported that R.P. Gatta has expanded twice and is ready to expand yet again. This will be an increase in jobs and an 18,000 square foot addition is needed. He further explained that a CRA tax abatement was approved by council for this project.

Bob Ready, of Curtis Layer Design Build, 340 Harris Drive was in attendance. They were seeking approval for the 18,000 square foot addition to R.P. Gatta, explaining that they need to expand production and need additional office space.

David Kane, of Alban Surveying Company, 38052 Euclid Ave, Cleveland was in attendance. He described the additional parking spaces that are proposed. He also described the proposed stormwater management basin. It was stated that the parcel has enough room for an additional expansion of 15,000 square feet in the future.

Ms. Grandillo asked the board members for their questions and comments. Ms. Duguay had none. Ms. Gilmore asked about a mound on the property. Mr. Ready stated that topsoil from a previous project will be hauled away to make space for the stormwater basin.

Dr. Benshoff asked what the company does. The answer was that the company manufactures robots for automotive and aeronautical fields. She asked how many jobs this would produce. The answer was 5-10. She asked where the location of the addition would be. The entry will remain in its current location. The addition will be tucked behind in the southeast section of the property. Dr. Benshoff mentioned that she noticed materials stored on the grass of the site. Mr. Ready explained that the company is bursting at the seams and the materials are most likely temporary. Dr. Benshoff stated that it was unsightly. She also suggested that the American flag is in need of replacement. Dr. Benshoff asked about a body of water near the site. Mr. Ready explained that there is a master retention pond on the neighboring property for the area. It will be unaffected by this addition.

Mr. Burge spoke a second time. He gave a brief history of the company. He stated that the engineering firm has been in Aurora since the late 1990's. He explained that the company was on the leading edge of robotic tire manufacturing early on. The company has expanded to include aeronautics and automotive manufacturing. He said what they are providing for electric cars is truly amazing.

There were no public comments.

MOTION: To accept Gatta Holdings LLC, 435 Gentry Drive – Addition (1907016) for study

Dr. Benshoff moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Dr. Benshoff, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

Geauga Lake LLC/Pulte Group, Squires/North Aurora/Treat Roads – Conceptual/Development Plan (1905014)

Brian Uhlenbrock, Project Manager for Neff & Associates, and Jim O'Connor, Director of Planning for PulteGroup, and Dave Francesoni, Land Project Manager for PulteGroup were all in attendance for this project. They were presenting a modified and revised plan for the Geauga Lake LLC conceptual plan based on the collective feedback they have received.

Mr. O'Connor explained that a good design is a collective process. He stated that they have offered site tours, which are still available to council. They met with the Chamber of Commerce, Parks and Recreation, the school board, Police and Fire Departments. They have collected all the comments and revised their plan. That new plan is called P7.

Plan P7 includes a change to the entrance to the east neighborhood, changes in lot sizes and front and side yard setback adjustments. The plan reflects a reduction in the total number of housing units.

Brian Uhlenbrock described these changes in detail, including 60' wide lots with depths of 140' – 180' in the west development. Also on the western portion the cul-de-sac has been extended and 2 townhouses were added to the plan. Some additional guest parking spaces have been added near the townhouses. Each townhouse has parking for 2 cars in the garage and an additional 2 on the driveway. He stated that 502 parking spaces for 119 units can be developed. (See attached, page 6.)

Mr. Uhlenbrock explained the design of the entrance monuments and fencing planned for the development. He described the changes in detail to the eastern development, including all 80' wide lots with depths of 135' – 195'. The entrance has been redesigned to minimize the visual impact from Treat Road. (See attached, page 9.) The plan has been upgraded to offer some 3-car garages.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their comments and questions. Ms. Grandillo asked if the park space has been decreased. The answer was yes and that the park space could be private or common space.

Ms. Gilmore thanked Pulte Group for listening to the concerns and improving the plans. She further thanked them for the visual perspectives provided at the meeting for clarity. Ms. Gilmore asked whether the commercial and medical designated areas would be flipped on the site plan. The answer was that it would be left open-ended and would depend upon the first tenant.

Dr. Benshoff thanked Pulte Group for dispelling the myths and explained that the process is a healthy give and take. She explained that the Planning Commission is in place to make sure that the development is successful and in the best interest of the residents. Dr. Benshoff asked for clarification on the design standards for the mixed-use zoning as they pertain to front versus side-load garages. The Planning Commission will look at the site plan at a later date and determine the best design for the overall project.

Ms. Duguay asked for some clarification on the space left between lots 35-36 of the west development. The answer was to leave space for a future trail. She mentioned that the buffering of trees behind lots 36-49 is gone. Mr. O'Connor said that they would achieve that same effect when development of the trail begins at a later date. Ms. Duguay asked for clarification that the trees would not be cleared around the existing basin they intend to use for stormwater management located on the east portion of the plan. Mr. Uhlenbrock stated that some refinement is needed in that area, but that they did not intend to clear all the trees. Clarification on the lots sizes and orientation of the homes for the east entrance was discussed. Percentages of garage door orientation was discussed. The final percentage of front-facing garages is yet to be determined, as physical engineering for the project has not yet happened. Finally, she asked if the commercial portion would be built without securing a tenant first. The answer was no.

Ms. Grandillo opened the floor for public comments.

Deb Conti, 234 S. Chillicothe Road was in attendance. She stated that she was glad that Pulte listened and liked that the lots were 80' wide in the east development. She would like to see more side-loading garages. She asked for clarification on whether all the homes in the west development will be front-loading. She asked design questions about the townhouses.

Harold Hatridge, 195 Devorah Drive was in attendance. He stated that since the first meeting Pulte has been listening to the Planning Commission, Council, and the public. He stated that the idea of developing an empty parking lot into so many homes was a big change. Now that there have been several meetings explaining the concept, people have a more intelligent view of the plan. He was in favor of the developer meeting with the city arborist to plant appropriate trees in the tree lawns. He asked questions about the architecture of the townhouses. He asked what the expected time frame was for this project. He further explained that the hardest part of being a councilman for him was keeping the balance between small town flair and growth to keep Aurora alive.

Hearing no further public comment, Ms. Grandillo asked Mr. O'Connor to address the concerns.

Mr. O'Connor answered some of the questions and addressed comments. He stated that the project is expected to be 3-phase and take 5 years to build-out. He offered a personal preview of the townhouses to anyone interested. He provided explanation to Ms. Conti for her specific questions pertaining to lot

sizes. He had a prepared statement to address questions Ms. Conti submitted at the last meeting. This was accepted into the record, for consideration. See page 1 for the vote. He offered to have Keith Filipkowski meet with Ms. Conti for a townhouse preview.

Ms. Januska stated that this plan is a concept. Some of the questions that were asked will not be answered until the plan goes through an engineering review. She further stated that whenever the commercial area is submitted it will be reviewed for compliance with the permitted uses of that zoning district. Pulte would be required to submit a site plan, a landscape plan and the architecture of the project, all of which can be looked at in more detail at a later date, should the conceptual plan be approved. It was also stated that unlike other projects, the mixed-use zoning district is reviewed by the Planning Commission.

No motions were needed, as this plan continues to be studied.

MISCELLANEOUS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Benshoff moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Dr. Benshoff, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

Kathi Grandillo-Chairman

Marie Lawrie, Secretary