

MINUTES

CITY OF WOOSTER BOARD OF BUILDING & ZONING APPEALS

May 4, 2023

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Chairman of the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals, called the meeting to order. Board members Jason Anderson, Jeff Battig, Martha Bollinger, Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Ben Gunn, and Mark Reynolds were present at the meeting. Vincent Marion, Planning and Zoning Manager represented the City of Wooster.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Martha Bollinger made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023, meeting of the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals. Ben Gunn seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 6-0.

III. APPLICATIONS

BZA-23-5.

Doug Drushal requested an Area Variance from Planning and Zoning Code Sections 1125.03(b)(5), 1123.05(5), and 1123.05(6) to allow a parking lot within the required setbacks without the required buffering and interior landscaping for a property located at the southeast corner of University Street and Spink Street with Parcel Number 65-00024.000 in a CF (Community Facilities) zoning district.

Doug Drushal, 225 North Market Street, stated that the application was approved by the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals roughly two years ago, and those approvals are only good for a year if you don't start construction. Mr. Drushal explained that the College of Wooster could not build the parking lot within the time limit due to budgets and construction timing. Mr. Drushal continued that the application was the same as presented two years ago. Mr. Drushal stated that the setback and the landscaping are independent. Mr. Drushal explained that with the setback of 35 feet requirement on all four sides of the property, nothing would be left of the parking area, rendering the property virtually useless. Mr. Drushal continued that the College of Wooster desperately needed parking for sporting events, significantly improving the site. Mr. Drushal stated that the parking lot was appropriate for all the variances that have been requested. Mr. Drushal noted that the property was being used as parking currently, which was gravel. Mr. Drushal stated that earlier tonight, the Planning Commission approved the parking lot as a conditional use in a CF (Community Facilities) zoning district and approved the site plan as presented. Mr. Drushal explained that the College of Wooster owns everything on all sides of the parking lot except the house to the south on the other side of the alley.

John Long, Shaffer, Johnston, Lichtenwalter, & Associates, Inc., 3477 Commerce Parkway, stated that the parking lot had been there for approximately seven years and was initially constructed whenever the College of Wooster needed construction parking for Ruth Williams Hall. Mr. Long explained that many construction workers were coming on-site, and parking was an issue. Mr. Long continued that the lot was always initially intended to be temporary with the Lowery Center project. There was parking displacement on the north side of the road, so we then needed to replace those spaces. Mr. Long noted that the drainage would be taken care of with curbs around the parking lot and catch basins and discharged into the detention basin. The detention basin will then control the discharge, which is currently there. Mr. Long noted that there would be green between the parking lot and the sidewalk. Mr. Long stated that

the required hedge rows are very dense and very tall for the college campus, and they were concerned about the safety of their students. Mr. Long explained that there had been no complaints about noise or tailgating concerning the parking lot.

Mr. Fitz Gibbon asked if anyone from the public would like to address the Board regarding the application. Mr. Fitz Gibbon closed the public hearing.

Ben Gunn made a motion to approve applications BZA-23-5 as presented. Jeff Battig seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Ben Gunn voted yes and stated that the application meets the criteria and that the setbacks would render the property unusable. The college owns all of the property around the parking lot.

Jeff Battig voted yes and stated that the parking lot was a definite improvement for the area and met all requirements.

Jason Anderson voted yes and stated that the parking lot meets the requirements and will significantly improve the area.

Martha Bollinger voted yes and stated that the parking lot was already there and would be improving the neighborhood's use, structure, and drainage flow.

Mark Reynolds voted yes for reasons cited by the board, and the revised plan was a major improvement to the current parking.

Stewart Fitz Gibbon voted yes, and I appreciate the effort of the College of Wooster to meet as much of the code as possible and be sympathetic to the security of college students and think it raises some issues with more traffic and large-scale events at the college that there are a unique set of circumstances.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mark Reynolds made a motion to adjourn. Ben Gunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Board of Building and Zoning Appeals Chairman

Carla Jessie, Administrative Assistant