

## WHITEHALL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES APRIL 8, 2021

The Whitehall Planning Commission meeting of April 8, 2021, was called to order by Chairman, Terry Anderson, at 6:33 p.m.

Chairman Anderson asked for a roll call.

Terry Anderson – Present  
Mike Brown – Present  
Denny Roberge – Absent  
Barb Blake – Present  
Amy Smith – Present  
Jason Thomas – Absent  
Zach Woodruff – Present

Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to excuse absent members. Mr. Woodruff motioned. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous to excuse the absent members.

Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to approve minutes from January 7, 2021. Mr. Woodruff motioned to approve. Ms. Blake seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the minutes.

Chairman Anderson introduced Case 807, Ord. 021-2021. Continental Real Estate Company is seeking to rezone parcel 090-008423. Drew Russell (Edge) and Kevin Parzych (Gunzelman Architecture and Interiors) presented an overview of the project – a rezone of roughly 2.1 acres at the corner of East Broad Street and South Hamilton Road. It is currently zoned A2 and requesting a change to GCD. Mr. Russell reviewed the current Norton Crossing project. This is the next step in achieving the original goal of creating the mixed use development that falls in line with the Whitehall Works Development blueprint. Mr. Russell stated they intend to subdivide the project into two parcels. Site A is along the southern portion and includes a 2300 sq ft bank with drive-thru teller lanes and Site B on the northern side includes 5000 sq ft restaurant space with a drive-thru with the ability to add 3500 sq ft additional space. To maintain a consistent street scape and cohesive development with the rest of Norton Crossing, they are planning to keep the existing setbacks along East Broad Street and maintain that along South Hamilton Road, as well as expand the street scape treatment down East Broad and extend that down South Hamilton Road as well. Mr. Russell stated they will also work with the city as intersection improvements are developed. Mr. Russell stated they will work with the City regarding the right of way. Access to the site will be in three locations. One will be on East Broad Street, which is an existing right in and right out that would access the site/shared with the apartments; another full-service access would be a shared access drive to the apartments to the west, and a third access would be a

right in from Opportunity Way into Site A. Mr. Russell stated they have also been working with staff on planning Opportunity Way to include a landscaped boulevard median with street trees, street lights, and sidewalks on both sides to facilitate pedestrian connection from Hamilton Road to the public park which sits within the apartment complex. Mr. Russell stated that the project has been master planned and the ponds have been sized to accommodate the storm water, so no retention will be required. A number of variances are also being requested as part of this project. Cases 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, and 813.

Regarding Site A, the bank – Mr. Russell stated they are requesting the building setback be pushed from the 10 to 20 ft build-to zone as required by the pedestrian subdistrict overlay back to 60 ft. This will allow the “right-in” movement, pull straight in, in front of the building and have one row of parking to remain consistent with the existing setbacks along East Broad Street and have that straight-in movement and convenient parking to the front door. Mr. Russell also requested the minimum lot area to the bank be reduced from .69 acres to 0.6 acres – allowing to maximize density on the site and stay in line as best as possible with the Whitehall Works Development blueprint. For Site B, Mr. Russell requested, that the site setback be reduced from 5 ft to 0 (zero) ft. The right of way sits just off the curb line that we need to align with the apartments to the west. In order to place a ground sign, that would require the sign setback be reduced to 0 (zero). He also requested that the drive-thru setback required for the proposed drive-thru (there is a proposed drive-thru lane that falls within the required 50-ft setback) be allowed so that there may be drive-thru circulation.

**Mr. Woodruff clarified that the drive-thru, Case 813, is only actually for Site A. Mr. Russell** believed he had filed for Site B but, in fact, had not. He is REQUIRED to file a special permit for Site B. Mr. Woodruff stated there is a user in place of Site A that is ready to go but not Site B and will hold off until that user is identified. Mr. Woodruff stated that a special permit is permanent zoning that goes into effect as long as that use goes into effect within one year. If that we were to put in for that special permit in for Site B and did not have a user for that site within that period of time, that they would have to reapply. Mr. Woodruff stated the caveat is Case 807, the rezone, the applicant has committed that the building will look like it does in the elevation. While they will come back in the future for a potential user that meets drive-thru, the building will look like it does in the packet. Mr. Russell would like to consult further with Mr. Woodruff regarding future drive-thru uses. Mr. Russell went over the preliminary elevations of the buildings. The bank building, Site A, would incorporate materials that lean heavy to brick and glass. The building would orient to South Hamilton Road with an entry vestibule tower to create more mass and architectural presence on that side. Mr. Parzych spoke to the retail and fast casual/coffee shop building. The materials would be a mix of brick cladding and fiber cement vertically-oriented siding – in keeping with the architecture of the Norton Crossing Apartments. The colors, general material quality, and window penetration would be in keeping with the Norton Crossing Apartments. The building is four-sided. All four sides would receive the same treatment. The building height is per the

commercial overlay standards, as well as the amount of window openings, use of primary or natural/traditional materials. The upper areas of the taller roofs would screen and general **provide broken up façade treatment that would be required.** In summary, Mr. Parzych stated they would like to provide a similar aesthetic to Norton Crossing Apartments. Chairman Anderson asked for clarification regarding the drive-thru plan – anticipating where cars would enter. Mr. Russell demonstrated where cars would stack, order, circulate around, receive their food at the window, and exit. Eight cars would be able to stack without conflict to the parking area. Mr. Woodruff stated that specific questions regarding the drive-thru and special permit will come second.

Chairman Anderson asked Jenna Goehring for the staff report. Mr. Woodruff made the recommendation to go over the entire staff report, as the applicants have done a good job going over their cases. Case 807: Ms. Goehring stated that this case is in line with our economic development blueprint. This zoning change would allow for further density and the continuation of blending retail, office, and apartment uses at this major intersection of the city – recommend approval. Case 808: The staff also recommends approval of the minimum lot size variance. Case 809: The staff recommends approval for the parking setback. Case 810: The staff recommends approval for the setback, 60 ft outside the 10 to 20 ft build zone. Case 811: The staff recommends approval for the sign setback variance. Case 812: The staff recommends the drive-thru setback variance. Case 813: The staff recommends approval for the special permit window/facility having met all the requirements according to our zoning code.

Chairman Anderson asked for clarification regarding screening between the drive-thru and the apartment complex. There were be at minimum an evergreen hedge.

Chairman Anderson asked for any questions from the audience and Planning Commission. Ms. Blake questioned the setback for the sign location. Mr. Russell stated the sign would be a ground sign used for these restaurants at their curb cut along East Broad Street. The right of way is likely going to fall along the outside of the sidewalk, and 5 ft would push into the drive lane – the current required setback for a sign. If allowed to put it up against the right of way, that would give us enough room to fit a small ground sign within the hedgerow and to put signage for the user. Ms. Blake asked for clarification on **Mr. Russell's** definition of a small sign with her concern being for pedestrians walking or riding bicycles on the sidewalk with drivers not being able to see them as they pull out to turn right. Mr. Russell stated it would be within all the required sight triangles in Whitehall's code. **Ms. Blake reiterated her concern for safety regarding visibility.** Ms. Smith asked for clarification regarding sign height. Mr. Woodruff stated they would work with our team to

potentially slide the sign further east rather than to the south to ensure the line of sight triangle does not occur. Mr. Brown asked for clarification regarding dumpster placement for the restaurant. Mr. Russell stated the location of the dumpster would fall in the island at the end, conveniently located from the back room of the restaurant.

With no further questions, Mr. Woodruff made a motion for a **FAVORABLE** recommendation for Case 807, the rezone, and Case 813, ORD. 022-2021, the special permit. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous.

Mr. Woodruff made a motion to approve the variances, Cases 808, 809, 810, 811, and 812. Ms. Blake seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous to **APPROVE** the variances.

Chairperson Anderson introduced Case 814. Yearling Green 1, LLC is seeking to rezone property located at 4218 – 4238 Rickenbacker Avenue, parcel 090-008215, from LCD to A2. Michael Shannon presented on behalf of the applicant, along with Isaac Nasar, proprietor of Yearling Green. Mr. Shannon stated the expansion would include 20, four-bedroom units, about 1250 sq ft. This new project would have a beneficial effect perceived market rate for housing in Whitehall. Mr. Shannon described the units as brownstone, walk-up units on the South Yearling Road frontage. Mr. Shannon stated that approximately 20 years ago, the desired land use for South Yearling Road encouraged 0 (zero) setback, pulling the buildings to the front. Mr. Shannon stated the plans 20 years ago were visionary, hopefully getting some brownstone, walk-up units that would activate the pedestrian corridor. Mr. Shannon stated this would be upwards of a \$3 million investment to do a beautification and facelift to the entire complex. Mr. Shannon stated the Yearling Road corridor with all the successes this administration has had in the last ten years with the developments along East Main Street, South Hamilton Road, and East Broad Street, he feels all clients deserve the same representation regardless of the size of project. Mr. Nasar stated it has been his desire to build on that parcel. Yearling Green is predominantly one/two-bedroom units. The new units would be four-bedroom townhomes catering to growing families or multigenerational families. The units would be modern, open floor plan with large closets. Mr. Nasar stated he has 14 of these units in another location in Columbus, met with great success. Mr. Woodruff clarified the sidewalk would widen and extend the sidewalk in front of these units and bring the front of the actual units on Yearling Road out to the edge of the right of way with the front steps coming out onto the extended sidewalk. The intent is to utilize pavers or bricks that match what is currently on South Yearling Road and extend that through 12 ft in between units 17 and 16. The front six units have garages with the rest of the units have surface parking. Mr. Woodruff asked Mr. Nasar if he believed there would be adequate parking. Mr. Nasar stated that the residents of the existing buildings are average over 50 years of age or people with only one car. He believed there are unused parking spots. **Mr. Woodruff asked**

Mr. Nasar asked about the placement of an additional dumpster enclosure. Because we envision more people, Mr. Woodruff asked Mr. Nasar to talk about trash on site, how trash would be collected, the times dumpsters are emptied, etc. Mr. Nasar stated the dumpsters for the apartments are existing with a new dumpster enclosure to replace what is there. Mr. Nasar stated that non-apartment residents are dumping trash in the dumpsters and with Mr. Sural's assistance, that has helped tremendously. Mr. Woodruff asked for clarification for the addition of dumpsters. Mr. Nasar stated there would not be additional dumpsters with those staying in the current locations. The size of the dumpsters were increased. Mr. Nasar stated if there is an issue with the dumpsters filling quickly, they would schedule increase the pickup frequency or even larger containers. Ms. Smith asked if there was any new fencing proposed. Mr. Nasar stated he believed there is chain-link fencing by the private residences and Dairy Queen has their own wood privacy fence (which Mr. Nasar stated is in poor condition). Ms. Smith asked regarding the possibility of privacy fencing along the northern edge by the private residences. Mr. Nasar stated that privacy fencing would be a possibility. Ms. Smith stated solid fencing would be a good step with the neighboring properties. Mr. Nasar stated that whatever fencing the City wanted to be placed would not be a difficult investment. Ms. Smith discussed the two different building elevations – brick versus the board and batten. The brick facing on South Yearling Road and board and batten on the rest of the buildings would be board and batten. Ms. Smith asked if the sides of the buildings on South Yearling Road would be board and batten. Mr. Nasar stated they do not have side elevations completed at this time. Ms. Smith asked specifically about units 15 through 20, if those could have more brick wrapping for the presence on South Yearling Road as opposed to the other buildings that are not so street facing. Mr. Nasar said, "Okay." Mr. Shannon asked if we say "okay," is that included as a condition of approval. Mr. Woodruff stated those two conditions would be included when the motion is made. **Ms. Blake asked for further clarification regarding the trash enclosures – one to the right and one to the left with two dumpsters in each enclosure. With four bedrooms in each unit, that is quite an increase in the number of people without a new dumpster or two planned for this site. Mr. Nasar stated if the dumpsters were all upsized there is an increase in frequency from once a week to twice a week, that should accommodate that but could be addressed in the future. Ms. Blake stated the frequency needs to be increased as she has witnessed overflowing trash currently. Ms. Blake proposed the consideration of additional dumpster enclosure. Mr. Nasar stated he is agreeable. Mr. Woodruff confirmed that the current site plan shows two dumpster enclosures. One of the conditions would be a third dumpster enclosure with two dumpsters – totaling six dumpsters. Again, Mr. Nasar stated he is agreeable. Mr. Brown asked for clarification regarding rainwater drainage on the site. Mr. Shannon stated he had no information at this time and would need to inquire with a civil engineer. Mr. Woodruff stated our storm water design manual requires them to, depending on how much area is disturbed, hold a certain amount of water on site before discharging into the storm system. Given the**

size of this site, that could handle it, depending on what they have already existing, or could have storage essentially under the parking area to accommodate storm water.

Chairperson Anderson asked for questions from the audience. Mr. James Radovich had questions regarding trash, violence, and loitering. Mr. Radovich brought in pictures of the dumpsters from Yearling Green. Mr. Radovich states there is blowing trash with children fighting. Mr. Radovich stated he would like the current issues in Yearling Green addressed before building more apartments. Ms. Ann Radovich stated her property sounds like a war zone. Ms. Radovich states she feels Yearling Green is a slum property. She states the new apartments look very nice but the Yearling Green is a nuisance property.

Ms. Goehring reviewed the staff report for Case 814. The staff does recommend approval. This rezone goes in line with the City of Whitehall's Development Blueprint Comprehensive Plan which intends for the Yearling Road corridor to be medium density mixed use. This zoning change would allow for increased density and the blending of retail, office, and apartment uses.

Mr. Woodruff motioned for a **FAVORABLE** recommendation for Case 814,

Ord. 020-2021, with the following conditions: 1. That a six-foot privacy fence be constructed along the northern edge of the property that abuts any residential property. 2. That for buildings 15 through 20, which is really building 15, 17, 18, and 20 – that the brick on the front be carried to the sides of those units. 3. The addition of two dumpsters be added to the site to accommodate trash. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. The voting was unanimous to **APPROVE** Case 814.

Chairman Anderson presented Case 815. Mr. Woodruff that this is, in fact, not the preliminary development plan review for the master development of the northeast corner of East Broad Street and South Hamilton Road. There is a process in the zoning code for the PUD that requires the owner of the property or the developer to come before the Planning Commission. In this case, the developer is represented by Michael Shannon. The purpose is to talk about the PUD and the intent of the PUD. The PUD is intended to have a mix of different uses – commercial, residential, and retail. The conceptual site plan was presented showing three areas – the south village, north village, and the east village. One of the things that was very important was the integration of Whitehall Community Park into the development so it is part of the development, not just adjacent. We have taken Community Park, once fully phased, two large water ponds that bring Whitehall Community Park all the way to East Broad Street. It is also anticipated there will be some sort of amphitheater built into the side of the hill (between the old golf dome and Woodcliff sites). Phase One of this plan starts in the south village – intended to be about a two football field-length pedestrian

plaza with restaurants, retail, commercial, and residential fronting the pedestrian plaza. The buildings to the outside of the south village will be proposed as four-story buildings with potential podium parking below, then three to four stories above the podium, so those would be sub-parked. The tiny purple buildings are intended to be liner buildings, two-story brownstone townhouse-look units with tuck-under garages in back. We have mixed in the south village a variety of different types of buildings to have an organic neighborhood-type feel centered around the green space, ravine, amphitheater, and pond. Phase one is a portion of the south village. There is intended to be a 2000 – 3000 sq ft civic building. We do not know necessarily what that is going to be yet but could envision it being a place where our arts program could thrive. All told, we are continuing to work on this plan. It is a mix of rental residential and we envision for-sale product in the future (single family detached home on zero lot lines or detached townhouse condos). All told, this plan would represent about 1000 residential units and about 250,000 to 300,000 sq ft of commercial including significant office space. One of the things in the development plan that the developer is passionate about, as well as the City, is the concept that 20 percent of all housing that will be built on site will be dedicated workforce housing. We define that as up to 80 percent of the area's median income. We hope to be back in May or June at the latest with the actual preliminary PUD site plan to the Planning Commission. One of thing that we will go through with zoning is Phase One-A, south village, is the part of the plan we know what it will look like, feel like and what will be built. All of the subsequent phases over the next ten years, this is the concept. There will be a certain style, a certain look, and certain aesthetics that will be required but, certainly, I am sure as this commission can understand, it is impossible today to say, "Hey, that blue building needs to look exactly like that you are going to build nine years from now." The PUD will govern the entire 50 acres and for the next 10 to 15 years.

Mr. Woodruff addressed the traffic, ingress and egress, off the site. Ms. Goehring presented the new traffic signals at south village and Hamilton. Additionally, there will be a traffic signal at East Broad Street and at the edge of the ravine. There will be two traffic signals, so there will be multiple full access points, as well as a couple right-in and right-outs along East Broad Street and South Hamilton Road. In the future, there will be another traffic signal in the east village. The City and our partners have already secured roughly \$12.5 million in grants and low interest loans for the project. Mr. Woodruff told Mr. Shannon that we initially contemplate Phase One-A as a \$65 million investment. To put that into context, Norton Crossing was half of that — just Phase One-A. Mr. Woodruff called Phase One half of the south village. Chairman Anderson asked about parking in the south village. Mr. Woodruff stated there was roughly 600 parking spots in the south village. Chairman Anderson stated he had further questions regarding pedestrian traffic and parking. Mr. Woodruff confirmed the intent is to have ample parking. With the shared use path, that would connect the Whitehall Community Park as well. Ms. Blake asked regarding parking.

Mr. Woodruff stated the underground parking would be for the residents of the apartments. Mr. Woodruff stated the desired demolition date would be late summer or early fall 2021. The developer would like to begin doing site work/break ground and start going vertical the first quarter of next year. Mr. Brown asked for clarification regarding the strip of ground between east and south if that would be an extension of the park.

Mr. Woodruff stated this area of the ridgeline would be shared-use path that would bring you down to East Broad Street, then you take the shared-use path and go up along the pond and eventually across a pedestrian bridge all the way across the new creek that we just restored up to the northern part of Community Park. The ponds, paths, and amphitheater would all be publicly-owned amenities. Mr. Brown asked about the strip of ground by the tree on the east side. Mr. Woodruff stated the heavily-densed green area is in the flood way – not buildable. Mr. Brown asked about the bike path. Mr. Woodruff spoke to the Central Ohio Greenways Trail. We are redoing Poth Road this year, so Poth Road will be widened to three lanes with a 10 ft shared-use path from South Hamilton Road to North Yearling Road. The bike path comes down from Gahanna through the airport, gets to Hamilton Road and Fifth Avenue and actually goes up Fifth Avenue to Yearling Road, Yearling Road over to Poth Road, and then, Poth Road over to this site. As part of the Broad/Hamilton intersection project, as well as the Ohio Public Works Commission Grant Project that we received and working with this developer, there will also be a 10 ft wide share-use path that goes from Broad/Hamilton all the way to Hamilton to Poth. Chairman Anderson inquired whether we **envisioned any public art at this location**. Mr. Woodruff confirmed we absolutely envision an art program possibly at the civic building. Conversations have occurred the possibility of art programs with CCAD and the Great Columbus Art Council with the possibility of three or four of the residential units being leased at a reduced rate in partnership with CCAD so that maybe three or four artists could live there. Part of that agreement of reduced rent would be participating in the art program in the civic building once a month as an example. Mr. Shannon stated the clients are invested in the concept. Case 815 was a vote-upon case.

Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Woodruff motioned. Mr. Brown seconded. All were in **FAVOR** to adjourn.

Chairman Anderson asked if there was any further business.  
The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

**APPROVED** \_\_\_\_\_, 2021, respectfully submitted,

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Terry Anderson, Chairman

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Lori Morton, Secretary