



Clintonville Area Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 5th, 2019, 7-8:55 pm

Whetstone Library Meeting Room

Commissioners in attendance:

- David Vottero District 1, cacdistrict1@gmail.com
- Khara Nemitz District 2, cacdistrict2@gmail.com
- Libby Wetherholt District 3, libbywD3@gmail.com
- Judy Minister District 4, judym.cac4@gmail.com
- Kendra Carpenter District 6, KendraD6@yahoo.com
- Michael Weinman, District 7
- Jim Garrison District 8, cacdistrict8@gmail.com
- B.J. White District 9, bjwhite.cac.district9@gmail.com

Commissioner(s) absent and excused:

- Judy Minister District 4, judym.cac4@gmail.com
- Dana Bagwell District 5, dkjbagwellcac@yahoo.com

7:00 p.m. Call to order & formal welcome by Chairperson White

Welcome to your Clintonville Area Commission "...committed to the undertaking of the preservation of the values of the community through promotion, implementation and recommendation to city officials."

The CAC was empowered in 1974 by the Columbus City Charter to represent the Clintonville community in the discussion of community concerns. By City Code, the purpose of the CAC is to "...afford additional voluntary citizen participation in the decision making in an advisory capacity and to facilitate communications, understanding and cooperation between neighborhood groups, city officials and developers"

Introduction of commissioners and district reports

Commissioner Vottero – No report.

Commissioner Nemitz – Reported that there were exchanges with a neighbor about what is being done about trees that are being removed due to construction and Columbus Blueprint. Also received a complaint from a neighbor regarding the icy conditions around the Aamoco business on High Street.

Commissioner Wetherholt – No report.

Commissioner Minister's report as read by Chair White – There will be a Brewpub taking over the former Clintonville Outfitter's site and former Coyle music store at 2864 N High St. The location's prior use had been retail. Converting to a drinking establishment involved a higher parking requirement. 48 spaces. 10 spaces are on site- owners are borrowing adding another 5 from the Harvest medical marijuana dispensary (they also own that site) 33 spaces still were needed. Over two meetings neighboring business owners expressed concerns that parking would overflow into their lots. This was a reduction of 74% of the spaces needed- the largest parking reduction I can recall.

The majority of Clintonville area commissioners voted to support the 74% parking reduction. I have supported many parking variances in the past, **I did not support this variance** due to the percentage size of the variance and in consideration of the voiced concerns of nearby businesses owners and the burden on side streets.

On 12/19 130 new trees were planted in the Whetstone Park Prairie. Trees planted by the Department Public Utilities Contractor as mitigation for trees removed during construction and Columbus BluePrint. Columbus Rec and Parks assisted with locating trees.

Commissioner Carpenter – Reported that she is continuing to field concerns and questions about the Graceland Flat project, including questions about the traffic study. She is still working with the City of Columbus on the Graceland Flat issues. She has been helping neighbors who are concerned about construction traffic. She also has been helping neighbors who have drainage problems stemming from last summer's construction.

Commissioner Garrison – Reported that people were complaining about people going through cars and stealing packages off front porches.

Chair White read from her Facebook Post – One of my favorite places in District 9 of Clintonville is the neighborhood known as Highfield-Broadmeadows. This is where one can access the trail head for Rush Run Park and access the bicycle bridge to the Olentangy Bikeway. Nicely reconstructed curbs, sidewalks, storm sewer, and street lighting make this area walkable, cyclable, and easily appreciated by its residents. This neighborhood is densely populated with multifamily housing units, community gardens, pools, and playgrounds. School buses can be seen with kids and smiling faces. We enjoy our Family Film Fridays in the park, Halloween Trick or Treat, and our Easter Egg Hunt with our neighbors. Whenever I visit the area, whether on foot or on bicycle, the neighbors always wave hello. Enjoy!

She added that everyone in this area is friendly and it probably has the lowest crime district in Clintonville.

She shared a video of this area as part of her district update.

Consideration of moving the January CAC meeting from January 2nd to January 9th, 2020.

Commissioner Wetherholt moved to keep the meeting on January 2nd. Commissioner Carpenter seconded move. A vote was taken approving to keep January 2nd meeting.

Consideration of prior meeting minutes – Commissioner Nemitz

A draft of the minutes and voting record for the November CAC meeting was emailed on December 1st. Commissioner Carpenter made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Vottero seconded the motion. The CAC voted to approve the November meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report – Commissioner Carpenter

Reported that she is getting up to speed on being the Treasurer. She met with the City Treasurer at Huntington bank, so she is the official signatory on the account. She will pay the invoices that have accumulated. She noted that the CAC budget is \$2500 a year and that is how much is currently in the account.

Community Liaison - Katherine Cull

Updates on Midway Bar and Systems of Strength:

Sarah Pomeroy from the City's Attorney Office spoke. Midway Bar was brought to court for various noise violations. They were told they could not have a certain level of noise after a certain time, 11pm. They violated this order and city filed a contempt motion. They were fined \$1800 which they paid. There have been additional complaints. 3rd shift police officers have been tasked with watching the venue for any noise.

Systems of Strength had complaints about noise as well. Officer Stacey, Clintonville's community liaison office, talked to them. The owner said employees that had been informed about noise levels were not adhering to request. Owner will talk to employees again. If owners don't comply, a letter will be sent saying they must comply within 30 days or they will be taken to court.

Contact Sarah Pomeroy regarding noise and code complaints, or more criminal activity.

Chair White thanked Ms. Pomeroy for her work on the Purple Cloud Spa in district 9. Commissioner Vottero asked if Midway continued to make noise would the next fine be more money. Ms. Pomeroy said there is not specific rate increase regarding the fines. However, she will be handling the case if it comes up again and will make some real changes. Commissioner Vottero asked if Midway complied with other items in the consent decree. Ms. Pomeroy said that they and the CPD are continually monitoring the bar for compliance.

Katherine Cull thanked Commissioners who came and spoke at City Council meeting about 3109 changes. Next step is it will be voted on at next City Council meeting.

Next Saturday there is a meeting for chairs, vice-chairs, and zoning chairs at 1111 East Broad Street.

Office hours: 2nd Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m. at Whetstone Library, 3909 N High St, Columbus, OH 43214. The City Attorney, a Code Officer, a City Council member, and someone from Mayor's office will be in attendance.

311 will be attending February commission meeting to discuss non-emergency complaints. Chair White noted that per the informal survey that Katherine Cull took at the last CAC meeting 95 percent of the complaints can be made to the 311 service. She has coached the neighbors in District 9 on how to use 311. It is the most efficient way to get assistance to a neighborhood.

Zoning & Variance Committee - Chair Stephen Hardwick

Variance agenda:

1. GC19-055, 5095 N. High St. (Graceland Flats development), SignCom, Inc. District 6. City staff say the following variances are needed:

1. CC3372.706(C)(4): Graphic area, sign height and setback: To reduce the minimum setback from 15 feet to 11 feet from the ROW. (The applicant agrees to verify by the time of the CAC meeting that these numbers were correct for the proposed sign.)

(The CAC was informed that CC3372.706(C)(4) has been deleted from the variance request.)

2. CC3372.706(B): Graphics: To allow off-premises graphics within the Community Commercial Overlay.

**Z&V moved to approve both approved unanimously without comment, 7-0.
The CAC voted to recommend the variance not be approved 6-0.**

2. GC19-056, 118 Graceland Blvd. (Graceland Shopping Center), SignCom, Inc. District 6.:

1. CC3375.12(B)(4), a special permit for off-premises signage.

2. CC3377.11(A), to increase the number of tenant panels from 4 to 7.

3. CC3377.11(C), to increase the portion of a ground sign utilized to display tenant panels from 50 percent of the total graphic area to 80 percent.

4. CC3372.706(B), to allow an off-premises sign in the CCO.

5. CC3372.706(C)(5), to increase the height of a ground sign from 6 feet to 19' (current sign).

(The CAC was informed that CC3372.706(C)(5) has been deleted from the variance request.)

6. CC3372.706(C)(2), to permit a pylon sign instead of a monument sign. The applicant clarified that frame of the sign will stay the same size and that they plan to add a plaque designating when shopping center was opening.

A motion to approve all variances was approved unanimously. The only comment came from the chair noting that the CAC had recently approved additional panels across the street.

The CAC voted to recommend the variance be approved 5-1.

Bruce Sommerfelt (sales manager at Sign Co.) presented on behalf of the developer Casto. He presented the history of the signage on the site. He reviewed the variance request with the CAC.

Commissioner Wetherholt asked why Graceland Flats sign cannot be put on the pylon sign. Mr. Sommerfelt said it does not work to market residential and commercial properties on the same sign.

Chair White also questioned the addition of another sign (GC19-055) advertising Graceland Flats.

Commissioner Garrison's questions and comments:

Thanked the applicant for the thorough presentation and noted the sign looked nice. He indicated that he had some comments regarding the project, but the comments were not meant to be personal towards the sign vendor (applicant) or their signage design.

The application's sign copy reads, "Graceland Flats Apartments".

Per the project's site compliance document(s) submitted to the city, "Graceland Flats" is a 180 unit Extended Stay Hotel. The city's zoning planning manager had confirmed to him saying it was for "*6 extended stay buildings*" and was how they reviewed the project. And in the Staff review results from Jamie Freise, City of Columbus Graphics Commission, he indicated "*The proposed monument sign in this application will be for Graceland Flats- an extended stay hotel which is being constructed off-site; approximately 2,200 feet to the west of North High Street.*"

Columbus City Ordinance 3303.08 and Ohio Revised Code 3731.01– indicates that an extended stay hotel is a "hotel" and that it cannot be used for non-transient extended stays, stays longer than 30 days, or permanent residence. The ORC specifically prohibits "apartments" from being considered as hotels and from being advertised as such. This sign would appear to violate those code sections since it is for apartments and is a place for permanent residence.

Separate to that issue, the Clintonville Neighborhood Plan as well as the Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) Guidelines discourage additional signage:

Clintonville Neighborhood Plan

- Freeway, pole signs, billboards, “sign benches,” roof signs, larger overhanging signs, light emitting diodes and other such electronic or digital signs, or excessively large signs that interfere with visual character are discouraged.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies Graphics guidelines

- Large commercial developments should utilize integrated signage, with an emphasis on wall signs and central identification signage for the entire development, rather than multiple freestanding signs.

He noted the conflict in the application of GC19-055 whereby its stated hardship is that the residential project is too far back from the street, but the project is not residential use; it was permitted and constructed as a commercial project and thereby should not be viewed as dissimilar from the LA fitness next to it which is on the larger multi-pane sign.

The residents of District 8 were also, unfortunately, against the additional separate sign.

Mr. Sommerfelt was not able to address the grading of Graceland Flats and notes that the Graceland Flats sign is on a separate parcel. They may be able to incorporate the Graceland signage into the existing sign but that would mean going back for another variance.

Commissioner Vottero commented that since the Graceland Flats is a commercial applicant it should be treated as a commercial applicant. He commented that Graceland Flats has an identity problem.

Public Comments:

Someone from the public asked for Mr. Sommerfelt to confirm that the sign placement did not interfere with visibility. Mr. Sommerfelt confirmed that the sign conformed to code.

Kathy is concerned about the clutter and the look at Graceland. She is concerned about trees coming down in the community. The neighbors asked for a walkability and parking shopping center.

Someone said that while reviewing the variance the CAC needs to follow the neighborhood plan and the C2P2 that it is in place.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Election Committee - Chair Ann Henkener

Michael Weinman, a candidate to replace John Eschenbrenner as Area Commissioner for District 7, has filed the necessary documentation and it has been verified. District 7 is defined as the area bounded on the south by the center line of Glenmont Road and its eastward projection, on the east by the railroad tracks just east of Indianola, on the north by the center line of Garden Road, and on the west by the center line of High Street. Per the CAC bylaws, (Article I, C. 4.) If only one valid candidate petition is received for a special election, the Commission shall declare the candidate the winner of the election and cancel the election. The candidate, Michael Weinman, is hereby declared the Clintonville Area Commissioner for District 7 effective immediately for the remainder of the term through June 2021.

Michael Weinman introduced himself and gave a brief biography.

City of Columbus Development Department Administrator - Rita Parise

She spoke on affordable housing and the projected growth of housing units. She borrowed from MORPC web-site for her presentation. Attached is her presentation.

Commissioner Vottero asked how broadly the AMI is sampled and about how low-income tax housing credits are given and their relationship to density.

Project Forecast by Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) – Thea Walsh (Transportation Director)

She is seeking public comments by April about what projects the public would like done by 2050. Please find attached her presentation.

Commissioner Wetherholt asked how does MORPC get its authority.

Public Comments:

Donna asked about 7 widening projects illustrated on the bar graph. Thea said she will send maps in the future illustrating where the widening projects are happening.

New Business

Chair White highlighted the following:

Clintonville Parking Task Force – The CAC Chair will establish and appoint members to a task force to address the demand for parking along the High Street corridor. A task force shall

operate for the duration of January 15th, 2020 through January 15th, 2021 unless disbanded earlier by the Commission Chairperson.

Lyft Scooters – Chet Ridenour, Market Manager with Lyft, has put us on notice that effective November 23rd, 2019, Lyft’s Scooter operations has indefinitely concluded in our market. Lyft Ridesharing and CoGo Bikesharing services are still in effect.

Lower Olentangy Tunnel – This begins south of Clintonville and not inside the Clintonville Area as a graphic misrepresented on a recent TV news story may have indicated. The City’s plan for achieving the requirements of these consent decrees is described in the “Integrated Plan and 2015 Wet Weather Management Plan Updated Report”. You can learn more about this plan and access the report at www.columbus.gov/Blueprint.

Clintonville Tree Lighting – Sunday, December 8th, 2019 6-7:30 p.m. Whetstone Community Center and Whetstone Library.

Public Hearing - Proposed Changes to the Area Commissions

3rd Annual Chili Cook Off will be Sunday, February 16th, 4-6 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Architectural Review – Commissioners White, Garrison, Minster, and Vottero with Community Liaison met with the City of Columbus Planning Division November 26th, 2019 at 10:00 AM to discuss how to move forward with the CAC resolution for a formal architectural review of commercial development sites along the High Street and Indianola Corridors.

Graceland Flats – Development is already in progress. What concerns expressive of the community do we continue to have that we can address as a commission?

2864 N High St (former Clintonville Area Outfitters) - The Clintonville Area Commission has worked proactively and diligently with the community's input for aspirational and purposeful development within the Clintonville Neighborhood Plan which is a living document that established a baseline for neighborhood amenities, redevelopment of vacant sites, and the creation of walkable destinations within the neighborhood. The commission listened to the expressed concerns from those who oppose and have heard those in favor. So, has the applicant. Proof positive is that their site plan has been revised with those tangible concerns which can be addressed.

The Clintonville Area Commission favors this community investment and its design to fruition. The applicant has done an adequate job of addressing the site restrictions that they know the risks involved with the project. This redevelopment of this building should be celebrated with a viable business.

The Clintonville Area Commission's Zoning & Variance Committee heard the expressed concerns of those who voiced them and those opinions in favor. After many questions asked of the applicant and careful consideration of those responses, the Zoning & Variance Committee voted in favor to approve, 5-1.

With added due diligence of a detailed parking study, the narrative of the Zoning & Variance

Committee presented by Chair Stephen Hardwick, and in congruence with the City of Columbus' C2P2 planning policies for improved density, the Clintonville Area Commission responded after careful consideration of those expressed concerns and with pragmatism exercised a vote in support of their recommendation to the city with a vote of 5-2 with 1 abstention. Please don't leave this storefront empty. Any business that will occupy this site will require a parking variance triggered by a change of use. The success or failure of this business venture will rely upon his relationship with the neighborhood and how he mitigates the parking demands. The BZA voted to approve, 3-2.