

**Minutes of VERMILION MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
of October 9, 2024 @ 7:00 pm

***PRESENT:** Jim Chapple, Heather Shirley, Heidi Strickler, Joe Williams. **Absent:** Jeff Hammerschmidt*

***In ATTENDANCE** Mike Werner, Building Inspector; Jeff Lucas, Council Representative; Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk; Melanie Wood, Assistant Clerk of Council; Mayor Forthofer*

**Call to Order:**

Heidi Strickler, Chairperson called the Wednesday, October 9, 2024 meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**J. Chapple MOVED;** J. Williams seconded to approve the minutes of the September 4, 2024 meeting. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Correspondence/Audience:**

Heidi Strickler stated she received a letter from Hollace Weitzel on behalf of Thomas Palmer that will be distributed to the rest of the commission. The letter is regarding a potential development on Baumhart Rd. and Route 2 and he is in favor of the development. She wanted to acknowledge they received the letter, and it will be distributed.

Mayor Forthofer stated there is a conversation about putting a commercial project at that location and there are deed restrictions on the property. The letter states the owner of the property okayed the deed restrictions on the property. It does not pertain to the city business, but it is something that had to be negotiated in order to proceed.

H. Shirley asked if it was a commercial project. H. Strickler answered yes, it is the parcel south of where the distribution center was slated to go.

**Old Business:**

Cannabis Zoning Regulation Discussion has been tabled until further notice.

**New Business:**

**Applicant: Lorain County Metro Parks** – Property Location: Cassell Reservation – PPN#: 01-00013000023 – C.O.V. 1262.07 – Review of Parking Lot for Sunnyside Rd. Trailhead (*Zoning Certificate*)

Mike McAndrews of the Lorain County Metro Parks presented the commission with the parking lot design. There is a trailhead and parking lot on the Highbridge Rd. side of the reservation, and they are proposing another trailhead on the east side which would be off of Sunnyside Road. The drive would come in off of Sunnyside Road with a 24-foot-long driveway with a 20-car parking lot. The existing trail comes from Highbridge Road to the west and loops around so this would add another trail connection which is about 235 feet long from the parking lot to the existing trail. The trail will be 10 feet wide, similar to what is out there now. Parking in the trail will be similar to the Highbridge side and will be a gravel material.

M. Andrews stated he received the letter from City Engineer Chris Howard, and they will be addressing the items on the letter. They will be proposing limestone material for a base. The other item they found as they were developing their drawings is that there is a catch basin proposed as part of the Sunnyside Rd. expansion which would have ended up in the driveway. There is a large 36-inch oak tree north of the driveway they are trying to save so they are pushing everything away from the oak. They have asked the engineer to see if they can move the catch basin and they responded they could. The letter from Chris Howard stated any expenses occurred by moving the catch basin would be paid for by the Lorain County Metroparks and they will be willing to pay for any additional costs.

They would like to get the project started and completed this fall. Knowing there is ongoing construction on Sunnyside Rd. they want to work with the engineer working on that project to make sure they are not in the way. The plan is to complete work on the west side of the road by the end of October and then they will move to the east side of Sunnyside Rd. so Lorain County Metro Parks will not start work on their project until after that part of Sunnyside Rd. is done. They are looking at an early November start date.

J. Chapple asked how long it will take to complete the project. M. Andrews answered they will start the tree clearing in-house and it will probably take just a few weeks to complete the entire project. The one thing they may hold off on is the concrete apron until the final paving has happened on Sunnyside Rd.

H. Strickler stated they should add the moving of the catch basin to the motion, so everyone is clear on who is incurring the cost.

H. Shirley MOVED; J. Chapple seconded to approve the Zoning Certificate contingent upon the applicant addressing the city engineer's comments dated October 4, 2024 and contingent upon the proposed catch basin being moved at the cost of Lorain County Metro Parks. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Forthofer made mention to the commission that the November 5<sup>th</sup> ballot will have an issue regarding PUDs. This is not the referendum, the Board of Elections set that aside, this is a proposed charter amendment that requires all approved PUDs will still need to go to the ballot after being approved by both Planning Commission and City Council. It will be relevant to the commission as they make future decisions.

H. Strickler asked if the referendum was appealed to the Ohio State Supreme Court. Mayor Forthofer answered yes. H. Strickler asked how that affects early voting which has already begun. Mayor Forthofer said he asked the same question to the attorney, and he has not received an answer yet. He is leaving that up to the Board of Elections and the Ohio Supreme Court to decide.

### Adjournment:

H. Strickler adjourned the meeting upon no further business.

*Next meeting – November 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. - Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street*

*Transcribed by Melanie Wood, Assistant Council Clerk*