

Gambier Village Planning Commission
7:30 p.m. 3-19-24
Regular Meeting Minutes

Commission members Lisa Gichner, PJ Glandon, Elizabeth Bonaudi and Mayor Leeman Kessler were in attendance. Also in attendance were Village Administrator R.C. Wise, Solicitor Clint Bailey, Ian Smith and Corey Hitchman from Kenyon, applicants Justin Streby, Lisa Jacobs, Jesse, Jane and Sarah Marlow and visitors Greg and Susan Spaid.

- **Call to order:** Mayor Kessler called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
- **Recusals, if any.** PJ recused himself from the items Kenyon had on the agenda.
- **Swearing in members of the public giving testimony:** Mayor Kessler swore in applicants Streby, Smith, Hitchman, Jacobs, the Marlows and the Spaid.
- **Visitor's Forum –** Ian said the updates from the College are the applications in front of the Commission tonight.
- **Approval of the 2-20-24 regular meeting minutes.** PJ moved and Lisa seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. All approved in a voice vote.
- **Applications for Conditional Use:**
 1. Corey Hitchman, Grounds Manager for Kenyon College, said the College wants to put up a fence at 204 E. Woodside. He said the fence is designed to keep students' vehicles off the grass. He showed Commission members illustrations of the type of fence being proposed. Mayor Kessler asked about the fence height. Corey said the eight-foot posts would be placed four feet in the ground leaving a four-foot-high fence. He said Campus Safety and the Fire Marshall have been consulted to make sure they could still respond to emergencies with the new fence. Solicitor Bailey read the criteria items for granting conditional use under the new zoning code. Mayor Kessler said he received an e-mail from Council Faber, a neighboring property owner, who indicated they were in favor of the project. Elizabeth moved and Lisa seconded a motion to approve the application. The vote was 3-0 with PJ abstaining.
 2. Kenyon College applied for conditional use for a fence at 212 N. Acland. Corey stated the fence at the North Campus Apartments is for the same reason- trying to eliminate cars going into the grass or using sidewalks meant for pedestrians. Greg Spaid, a neighboring property owner, told the Commission he is in favor of this project as he has witnessed much of what Corey described. He said he wishes the fence would be a different style to better complement other types of fences in town. Corey said there is only \$10,000 budgeted for fencing at both properties. Ian thanked the Spaid's for their comments and support and said the College wouldn't rule out replacing the fence sections later with a different style as budgets permit. Corey said, if approved, the fencing would be put in during the summer. He also said Kenyon wants to have a pull-off area for move in and move out events so Acland Street doesn't get blocked. Susan added that she

would like to see more assertive enforcement when cars park in the grass. Elizabeth moved and Lisa seconded a motion to approve the application. The vote was 3-0 with PJ abstaining.

3. Jesse Marlow, member of Marlow Salon Spa LLC, presented the request for a conditional use for the family to operate a salon at 112 Gaskin. Jesse said the spa would be moving from their Mt. Vernon location. He said there are still more improvements to make for the space such as a washer/dryer area and shampoo bowls and a back room for a massage area. PJ asked about parking and planned hours of operation. Sarah said most customers would park for two hours or less and that business hours would likely be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. VA Wise mentioned the Village has parking permits if salon employees want to use a section of W. Brooklyn Street to park during the work day. Susan said it has been a number of years since there was a salon in Gambier and she predicted it will be successful. Ian said the College is in favor of the application as it will enliven this area of downtown. Mayor Kessler moved and PJ seconded a motion to approve the Conditional Use. All approved 4-0.
- **Sign Permit Application** – Marlow Salon Spa also presented an application for a sign permit. Jesse said they plan to use the block letters and he presented an illustration showing how the sign would appear. PJ said the examples were helpful and he noted that under the new zoning code window signs are allowed as well as long as those signs take up less than 25 percent of the window. Lisa moved and PJ seconded a motion to approve the sign permit. All approved 4-0.
 - **Application for Zoning Certificate(s):**
 1. Ian presented the Kenyon application to erect a 20' x 40' tent on the East Lawn of Cromwell Cottage from May 14-18. He said it was part of the College's standard Commencement package. Lisa moved and Elizabeth seconded a motion to approve the application. The vote was 3-0 with PJ abstaining.
 2. Kenyon also applied for a zoning certificate to erect a 20' x 40' tent on the North Lawn of Ascension Hall from May 14-18. Elizabeth moved and Lisa seconded a motion to approve the application. The vote was 3-0 with PJ abstaining.
 3. Lisa Jacobs presented an application for a zoning certificate to open a retail store at 114 Gaskin. She said she hopes to open the Birds of a Feather Bake Shop & Boutique by late April if approved. Lisa stated that she is working with Knox Public Health and Richland County in regard to minor plumbing changes. Ian said the issue is there is Peirce Express under the forthcoming store and apartments above, but he said it should be fine. Lisa explained to the Commission that she prepares baked goods at the Woodward and will bring them into the store. She also plans to sell pre-made soups and salads as well as locally produced items such as maple

syrup. Another part of her inventory will include the bird feeders and bird houses that she has made. Clint asked about business hours and Lisa said she is planning to be open Sunday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and be closed Saturday so as not to compete with similar product offerings on Middle Path. Ian added that Kenyon supports the application as the store will add to the diverse set of downtown businesses. Mayor Kessler moved and PJ seconded the motion to approve the application. All approved 4-0.

- **Sign Permit Application:** Lisa said she would like to place her new business sign at 114 Gaskin that would be in the style of the hanging sign for the Gambier Deli. PJ moved and Elizabeth seconded a motion to approve the sign permit. All approved 4-0.
- **Application for Zoning Certificate:** Justin Streby presented a request for a zoning certificate on behalf of owner Steven Barr and Heather Schooler to expand the house at 100 Duff Street. Justin showed Commission members the plans he had made. He said they plan to retain the legacy two-story part of the home facing Duff Street and remove the rest while adding onto the home to include an art studio above a planned garage. Justin said someone from the family plans to live there full time when the work is done. He said the work wouldn't begin until late summer and that it may take eight months to a year to complete. Commission members reviewed the setback requirements from the new zoning code, particularly as it relates to a corner lot where the expanded house would face both Duff and Wiggin St. Based on the new requirements, it was determined that the rear yard would be considered the south side and that the plans show only a 30-foot setback while the code calls for a 35-foot setback in the rear yard. PJ moved that the application be approved with the stipulation that the expanded structure meet the 35-foot setback. Mayor Kessler seconded the motion and all approved 4-0.

ZONING INSPECTOR – ZONING REPORT

- VA Wise said he had approved "Like for Like" applications from Peoples Bank who want to replace their automated teller machine and for Robert Mann who plans to replace a storm door. There was some discussion about the zoning certificate exemptions part of the new code including the "Like for Like" part and the \$1,000 limit on minor construction before a zoning certificate is required. PJ said the Commission could recommend to Council a change in the zoning code.
- **Adjourn** – Mayor Kessler adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.