



Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

1454 Rome Corners Road, Galena, OH 43021

December 5, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Call to order: Damita Peery called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Determination of a Quorum/Roll Call: Members present were Jon Kerr, Matt Allen, Damita Peery, Philip Pifer and Austin Slattery. Also present were Zoning Inspector David Weade and Meeting Secretary Alison Newton.

Motion to approve the minutes: A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from November 7th, 2024, by Austin, seconded by Jon. Philip abstained. Motion approved 4-0.

Announcements: Our meeting this evening will conclude at 9:30pm. Any unfinished business will be continued to January 9th, 2025, at 7 pm at 1454 Rome Corners Road, Galena Ohio 43021.

Statement of policy: As is the adopted policy of the Berkshire Township Zoning Commission, all applicants will be granted an opportunity to make their formal presentation. Following the applicant's presentation preliminary questions or points of clarification from the commission will be allowed. The audience will then be granted an opportunity to comment. Each individual will be granted three minutes. We ask that you be brief and to the point. The Chairperson may limit repetitive comments and close public comments after a reasonable time. The commission will ask questions and take action if needed.

New business:

Application #24-241. Berkshire Lofts Apartment complex

Pete Schewiegeraht with Pivotal gave a brief introduction to their housing developments and recent projects that have been completed. He gave a summary of the proposed Berkshire Lofts that include 58 units, with a 66,400 square foot building. All the proposed units are ADA compliant, and the community has various amenities such as a community room, fitness center, picnic shelter and more. The exterior space has an open area with a pond, wetland, picnic shelter and other dedicated open spaces. He showed arial pictures of the land and demonstrated its location off Rider Rd while providing context of where the building will be located, the parking, and the landscaping. He referenced an existing gas line that runs through the property that they have included in their planning. He showed the floor plans of each unit and a floor plan of the first floor which has a community room. He also showed renderings of the exterior of the building.

David made a brief note of the community room and the porch that appears to be in the setback, Pete made a note that there are no posts, only a 6ft cantilever overhang that extends into the setback. He noted that if this needed to be noted as a variance request, he could note that in the application.

Pete noted that the only other variance request would be the landscaping exclusion of trees on the parking islands due to the presence of the gas line.

Austin asked about the target population of this development, and the square footage of Pivotal's other developments. Pete noted that these proposed units are ~25 square feet larger than the ones they've developed in the past. Austin then asked about the utilities that are housed in the unit. Pete noted that the hot water heater, HVAC are in the unit. Austin then asked about the location of the entrances, Michael Siegert gave clarification on the access points and noted that the second access point would be a locked gate that would not be used by cars, only in emergencies with Fire/EMS.

Damita asked about where residents would store outside items. Pete said that grills are not allowed, but he could consider adding a bike rack. Damita asked about the picnic area and if it would be big enough to serve all of the residents. Pete thought it would be adequate based on the size of the picnic area, the shelter and the playground. She asked if they permit dogs, and Pete confirmed that dogs are allowed.

Damita asked about the design choice of a flat roof verses gables. Pete thought this made the most sense considering it could hide the AC units and condensers that would otherwise have to be on the ground and require more space.

Damita asked about how they were going to manage the disturbed wetlands and asked him for specifics about the pond. Pete said that they have been approved by the Army Core of Engineers, and the EPA is also working with them on this. They would create an acre of wetlands to replace the 0.5 acre of wetlands they would be removing. The pond has a fountain for aeration and there will be a split rail cedar fence surrounding the pond that would be locked.

Philip asked Pete if he had an image of their recent Delaware development they could look at for comparison. Pete showed images of that development (Riverside Landing at Delaware Place). Philip asked for a more detailed description about the playground and Pete provided a sketch and noted they would not have swings due to insurance costs. He also asked about the option of adding a dog park and Pete thought that there would be no advantage of adding a dog park at the cost of removing trees or a wetland. There was general discussion about where this could be located. Philip asked about the development's walkability, Pete noted there would be sidewalks along Rider Rd and a bike path on the other side of that road.

Jon asked about the comments from regional planning and the look of the exterior. Pete mentioned that this is a common product in the area. Jon asked for clarification about the landscaping and location of trees, Pete described where these would be and how it would be distributed around the 4.6 acres (70% open space).

There was general discussion of the flat roof versus gable roof and the parapets. Pete thought that overall, the flat roof is a superior product for them and the area.

Austin asked about the refuse area and what that looks like. Pete explained this area and how residents could access this area. Austin asked about the estimate of ~2 people per unit, with reference to the need for storage. Pete thought that they could convert one maintenance room into storage lockers for some residents to store bikes etc.

Matt asked if they had given notice of their proposed development to the school district or superintendent. Pete said that they estimated ~30 school aged children would be added to the district. Matt asked if there would be parking spots with charging stations, Pete was not sure about this but thought it was doubtful.

There was general discussion of the look of the building and how it could be made to look more like a residential building rather than commercial. Pete offered a suggestion about making changes to the front door area.

Jon asked how the mail would be delivered, Pete explained a cove that would be off the main hallway dedicated to mail. Jon asked about the landscape plan and the species of trees, if it had been approved by a landscape architect and it was confirmed.

David asked for clarification of the number of doors and their location, Pete referenced the site plan and demonstrated where these are located.

Jon noted some typos (storm/snow removal, red mahogany).

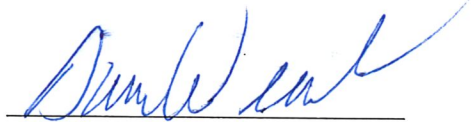
Damita requested a clean copy of their application with the following changes mentioned tonight:

1. Increase the playground size, and add swings if possible
2. Increase the size of the shelter (or make 2)
3. Work on enhancing the front porch 'store front' with the added sidewalk
4. Add a dog park
5. Add more to the front elevation to make it feel more residential
6. Incorporate color variation around the back of the building
7. Add indoor storage/lockers for residents
8. Add bike racks outside
9. Specifically note the 2 divergences (the overhang on the setback, and the landscaping on the parking islands)
10. Provide physical examples of the materials to be used

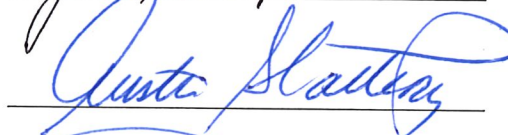
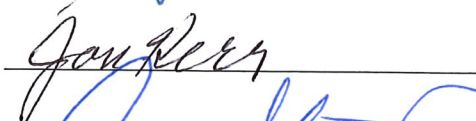
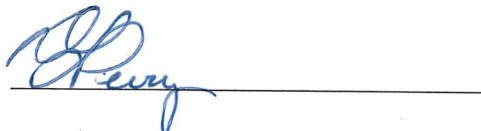
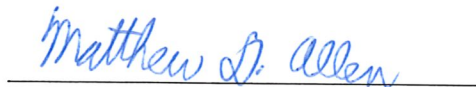
With those changes, David will need the updated application materials by 12p.m. on December 23rd, for this to be included on the January 9th meeting.

Damita made a motion to continue application # 24-241 to the January 9th meeting, Matt seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Jon at 8:29p.m. Seconded by Austin. Motion approved 5-0.



Zoning Inspector



Zoning Commission Members



Meeting Secretary



Date