

**CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**January 7, 2014**

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The meeting was called to order at 1:28 p.m.

Chair Holt began the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with the following members present: Mr. Marv Holt, Chair, Mr. Chuck Boso, Mr. Gary Leasure, Mr. Mike Linder and Mr. Dan Havener. Others present: Kim Shields, Planning/GIS Specialist; Kyle Rauch, Planning & Development Officer; Jennifer Readler, Frost Brown Todd; Ryan Andrews, EMH&T; Bill Vedra, Director of Public Safety; Mike Boso, Chief Building Official; Lt. Tammy Greene, JTF Inspector; Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council; Laura Scott, Planning & Zoning Coordinator, Capt. Jeff Pearson, Grove City Police; and Molly Frasher, Secretary.

Chair Holt noted a quorum was present. There were no changes to the minutes of the December 3, 2013 regular meeting or the December 16 and 17, 2014 special meetings. They were approved by unanimous consent.

**Item #1 – 2014 Organizational Meeting**

Officers for 2014 were nominated and approved. Mr. Leasure nominated Chair Holt to serve as Chair for 2014, Mr. Linder seconded. Chair Holt accepted the nomination. With no other nominations, Chair Holt accepted by acclamation. Mr. Linder nominated Mr. Leasure for Vice Chair for the 2014 Commission, Mr. Boso seconded. With no other nominations, Mr. Leasure accepted by acclamation.

**Item #2 – Center of Resource Recovery & Recycling (COR3) – Development Plan (Project ID# 201312020042)**

Mr. Linder excused himself from this item citing a conflict of interest. Chair Holt noted that a quorum was present without the presence of Mr. Linder.

The applicant is requesting approval of a development plan for approximately 21 acres of land south of London Groveport Road; also known as Subarea C of the Gemini Synergy Center PUD-1 approved in 2013. According to submitted materials, the Center of Resource and Recovery and Recycling (COR3) will be a waste transfer and sorting facility, separating waste from SWACO based on type and either process it on-site or transporting it to the landfill of another facility. Materials describe a future conveyor system that will transport usable waste to a plant north of S.R. 665; however this conveyor system is not part of this application and will require separate development plan approval.

The site will be accessed from a new scale road off-site on SWACO's property to the west at the intersection of London Groveport Road and Gateway West Drive. In addition to this access drive, plans also show the utilization of the existing scale road along London Groveport Road; however the approved zoning text states that all access provided at the intersection of SR665 and Gateway West Drive. In accordance with the zoning text the existing access along SR665 should be removed. A six foot high wall is proposed along the eastern and southern edge of the site to provide screening from I-71 and the entrance ramp from London Groveport Road. According to submitted materials, the wall will be finished in materials and color to "compliment the building architecture" and that the final design is to be prepared and approved with the final construction drawings.

A tractor trailer parking area is proposed on the northwest portion of the property, screened on the north and east sides by a six foot wall on a six foot earthen mound. A generator pad is located on the southern edge of the trailer parking area, included in the area to be screened by the wall and mound. Details for the generator show air inlet and outlet hoods reaching heights of approximately 22 feet, leaving approximately ten feet of the hoods visible above the wall and mound. Although supplemental landscaping is proposed, staff recommends that the generator pad be depressed in order to lower the overall height of the equipment and to help mitigate or lessen the potential visual impact from London Groveport Road.

The proposed structure is to be approximately 290,000 square feet in area, 115 feet tall, and finished in a combination of concrete, glass, and metal panels. On average, 62% of the building is proposed to be finished in three varieties of metal panels; however the zoning text for the subarea states that metal panels as well as stucco and wood trim cannot exceed 40% of each façade. Staff recommended the structure be redesigned to comply with the zoning text and the amount of metal paneling covering each façade be reduced to 40%. Staff also noted concerns regarding the lack of architectural detail on the south elevation, given its visibility from the I-71 and recommended that additional detail be added to break up the horizontal mass of the structure.

Ms. Shields stated that staff does not believe that the proposed development will be detrimental to surrounding uses as multiple measures are proposed such as landscape buffers, screening walls, and indoor operations to reduce negative impacts on adjacent properties. Furthermore, staff feels that aside from select architectural elements, the development is designed within the approved zoning text for the area and is appropriate given the unique nature of the proposed development.

The Development Department recommended Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the development plan with the following stipulations:

1. Ingress/egress to the site shall be limited to the proposed new scale road accessed from the intersection of London Groveport Road/ Gateway West Drive. The existing scale road curb-cut located on London Groveport Road shall be removed upon the completion of the new scale road.
2. The generator pad shall be depressed in order to lower the overall height and better screen the generator inlet and outlet hoods from London Groveport Road.
3. Buffer walls for the east property and around the trailer parking area shall be 6 to 8 feet in height shall be designed and constructed with materials complimentary to the primary building. Final details are to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department during the Site Improvement Plan review process.
4. The coverage of metal paneling shall not exceed 40% per façade/elevation, as set forth in the approved zoning text.
5. Additional detail shall be added to the south elevation to break up the horizontal mass of the structure. The final design is to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department prior to Building Permit submission.

The applicants, Matt Ferris of E.P. Ferris & Associates, and Doug Haughn representing Team Gemini, were present to speak to the item.

Mr. Haughn began regarding stipulation number one, the ingress and egress, they propose that once construction is complete, it is their intent to close the entrance to all traffic; however he requested that the entrance remain open during construction to prevent comingling of construction equipment and trash hauling equipment entering the site on the new scale road. Chair Holt asked how long the construction access road would be open. Mr. Haughn stated once work on the foundation begins, construction could be complete within two years. He stated that they might request the road be reopened for the construction of the conveyor system for the next phase.

Mr. Leasure questioned whether depressing the generators, in regards to recommended stipulation #2, would impact their effectiveness. Mr. Haughn responded that the generator would be approximately 300' away from the road and that from the intersection of Gateway West Drive, a large berm would block the generators from SR665. He stated that depressing the generator would impact the generators' operations, particularly in certain weather conditions. Their intent is to be "off-grid" with this facility and it will either run off landfill gas or natural gas as a back-up. Mr. Ferris stated that the generators are designed to be on a pad and that depressing them would inhibit access to the generators for maintenance.

Chair Holt inquired about the six-foot berm plus a six-foot fence, stating you would still see ten feet of the generators' intake and outlet hoods. He asked if they've considered increasing the height of the berm and using evergreen trees instead of a fence. He used the Walmart facility on Southwest Boulevard as an example of screening with evergreen trees. He stated that he felt mature trees and a higher berm would be more aesthetically pleasing and would be more effective for sound absorption. Chair Holt stated that he did not like the idea of depressing the generators, nor did he like the idea of seeing the stacks. Mr. Haughn explained that the generators have containers around them to protect them and keep noise level to a minimum. The containers are green and the stacks are silver; however the stacks can be painted to camouflage their appearance.

Mr. Ferris stated that the berm could be raised one to two feet by steepening the slopes. Mr. Ferris asked for confirmation that the Chair is requesting the removal of the proposed wall and replacing it with evergreen trees. Chair Holt stated that the wall would have to be replaced with sizable, mature trees. Ms. Shields stated the plans currently show six-foot evergreens on the berm, but that the Commission could stipulate that the trees be larger at installation. Mr. Haughn was agreeable to installing taller trees. Mr. Ferris asked the commission to keep in mind that the elevated parking deck (40' above ground) and the building will deter the eye from the stacks; they will be within a backdrop that is substantially vertical.

Mr. Leasure asked how Gemini would like to handle stipulation two and Mr. Haughn stated they would like to go more vertical with the screening and not suppress the generators. Chair Holt stated that it appeared there was room to make the mounding larger. Mr. Ferris responded that changing the berm would affect what could be planted on it. Chair Holt suggested making a stipulation that the applicant work with the Development Department to maximize the height of the berm to hide the stacks. Mr. Rauch stated that they have reviewed not only the visibility of the stacks but the decibels the generators would produce. Development would like to see a wall installed in addition to the landscaping. The sound is projected to be 65 decibels.

Chair Holt reviewed stipulation #1, that the existing scale road curb cut on London Groveport Road would be in place no longer than a 24 month period for construction purposes only. Mr. Rauch stated it could also become a condition before the facility receives their final occupancy permit. Mr. Boso noted that this drive is within the limited access area, therefore it should be further stipulated that the drive shall be removed sooner than the 24 month period if required by ODOT.

Chair Holt noted the generator pad appears to overlay on the tractor trailer parking area, taking three spaces. Mr. Ferris said that the generator pad is in the common area with the tractor trailers. Mr. Haughn stated the generators are delivered in containers and are set in place; they are designed to be in the containers for protection.

Chair Holt moved discussion to stipulation number three regarding the buffer walls on the east of the property; the walls should be 6-8 feet. The applicant was in agreement with the noted stipulation.

Chair Holt asked to skip to stipulation number five, additional detail added to the south elevation. Mr. Haughn stated that the building is taller than originally designed to accommodate the equipment used inside the facility; therefore, designing the building to meet the 40% requirement became difficult. They planned to add solar panels to south side but now, it doesn't fit the budget; it could come in the future. The architects wanted to be sure this building was congruent with the design of the future buildings. The future building north of London Groveport Road will potentially display graphics or logos that can be used on the proposed COR3 building to break-up the mass of the south wall. Mr. Haughn stated they're trying to make it look like a sports arena, not a recycling facility. He stated they are trying to avoid brick and stone, as they are costlier items, and instead use graphics or dimensional panels to break up the building. Chair Holt said he understood their position, but that he believed the Commission would leave stipulation #5 as recommended by staff. Mr. Haughn stated that they were agreeable to working with staff to resolve the issue.

Chair Holt then noted that the west elevation was mislabeled on the drawings and should be the north elevation. Mr. Ferris presented the material board for the project.

Mr. Leasure asked how many people they will employ. Mr. Haughn stated that Gemini would employ an estimated 150 with SWACO needing to add 12-20 people. Discussion took place regarding the look of the facility and the attention it will bring to Grove City. Mr. Haughn stated this will be the largest facility of its kind in the United States. They estimate an additional 400 to 500 employees in the second phase of the Gemini Project, north of London Groveport Road.

Chair Holt moved the discussion to recommended stipulation #4, regarding the coverage of paneling on the building. Mr. Haughn reminded the Commission that the building ended up being taller than initially planned during drafting of the zoning text. He stated that he felt 60% panel coverage would be attainable.

Chair Holt asked Mr. Boso if the project would need to approach the Board of Zoning Appeals for a variance regarding the 40% metal panel coverage; Mr. Boso replied they would not need a variance from BZA, as the approved zoning text states that projects can vary from the standards in the text with Council approval. Mr. Leasure asked if 60% would be sufficient. Chair Holt asked if Gemini would work with the Development Department to resolve or reduce the percentage of metal panels. Chair Holt added that he would also like Gemini to work with the Development Department on stipulations one through three.

Mr. Boso suggested that the Planning Commission accept what Gemini is presenting, through the item in the zoning text which allows developments to deviate from the text if approved by City Council.

Mr. Boso asked Mr. Haughn if Gemini could have new drawings ready to present to Council on January 21. Mr. Haughn stated that they would have updated renderings completed as soon as possible. Mr. Boso asked the Commission if they had any problems with the building as presented, and if they were comfortable recommending this building to Council. Chair Holt and Mr. Leasure said they had no problem with the building. Mr. Havener requested the wording of any stipulation not be for a specific percentage, but to generally reduce the amount of the metal coverage.

Chair Holt asked the Fire Department and Police Department for any concerns. They had none. There was no one from the public with questions or concerns.

Mr. Leasure motioned to recommend the approval of the development plan to City Council with the five noted stipulations and the applicant would work with the development department to resolve outstanding issues. Mr. Havener seconded.

Mr. Boso asked for clarification on the stipulations, noting a number of items discussed during the meeting. He recommended the stipulations be revised:

1. Ingress/egress to the site shall be limited to the proposed new scale road accessed from the intersection of London Groveport Road/ Gateway West Drive. The existing scale road curb-cut located on London Groveport Road shall be removed upon the completion of the new scale road; the existing scale road will be open for construction traffic for a maximum of two-years unless ODOT requires the access to be removed sooner.
2. Team Gemini shall work with the Development Department to increase the berm height and vegetation around the proposed tractor trailer parking and generator area; there will be no depression of the generator pad.
3. Buffer walls for the east property and around the trailer parking area shall be 6 to 8 feet in height shall be designed and constructed with materials complimentary to the primary building. Final details are to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department during the Site Improvement Plan review process.

4. Additional detail shall be added to the south elevation to break up the horizontal mass of the structure. The final design is to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department prior to Building Permit submission.

Mr. Leasure made a motion to amend his previous motion, to change his stipulations to those recommended by Mr. Boso. Mr. Havener seconded the motion to amend Mr. Leasure's previous motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Mr. Leasure made a motion to recommend the COR3 development plan for approval to City Council with four stipulations:

1. Ingress/egress to the site shall be limited to the proposed new scale road accessed from the intersection of London Groveport Road/ Gateway West Drive. The existing scale road curb-cut located on London Groveport Road shall be removed upon the completion of the new scale road; the existing scale road will be open for construction traffic for a maximum of two-years unless ODOT requires the access be removed sooner.
2. Team Gemini shall work with the Development Department to increase the berm height and vegetation around the proposed tractor trailer parking and generator area; there will be no depression of the generator pad.
3. Buffer walls for the east property and around the trailer parking area shall be 6 to 8 feet in height shall be designed and constructed with materials complimentary to the primary building. Final details are to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department during the Site Improvement Plan review process.
4. Additional detail shall be added to the south elevation to break up the horizontal mass of the structure. The final design is to be reviewed and approved by the Development Department prior to Building Permit submission.

Mr. Havener seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Chair Holt thanked Mr. Havener for his service and dedication to the Planning Commission.

Having no further business, Chair Holt adjourned the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

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Molly Frasher, Secretary

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Marv Holt, Chair