

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO  
COUNCIL MINUTES

September 21, 2020

Regular Meeting

Council reviewed the agenda in Caucus at 6:30 and the regular meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 7:00 p.m. by a virtual Webex connection due to the Coronavirus-19 pandemic, as temporarily allowed by the State.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

*Roby Schottke          Aaron Schlabach          Christine Houk          Randy Holt          Ted Berry*

1. Mr. Schottke moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the previous meeting and approve as written; seconded by Ms. Houk

Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes

2. The Chair read the agenda items and all items were approved by unanimous consent.

**The Chair recognized Mr. Schottke, Chairman of Lands, for discussion and voting under said Committee.**

1. Ordinance C-40-20 (Approve the Rezoning of 71.3+ acres located South of White Rd and West of S.R. 104 from SF-1 to PUD-R with Text) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Rauch, Dir. of Dev., commented that the Pinnacle Text was used as a base for the development of this Text to insure continuity. There will be a 10 acre park as part of the development. Ms. Houk asked what would happen to the zoning if this project did not move forward. Mr. Rauch said after 18 months of no activity, the zoning would revert back to the previous zoning classification.

Mr. Joe Ciminello, developer, was present to answer any questions. He said this site has some challenging topography but are proud to expand the Pinnacle development with their partner M/I Homes. He said the public/private partnership has been very productive for the area. He said they had the foresight with the original Pinnacle development to set up the TIF funds for use to upgrade the entire area.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Schlabach.

Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes

2. Ordinance C-41-20 (Approve the Rezoning of 32+ acres located West of Hoover Rd and North of S.R. 665 from SD-1 to PUD-R & PUD-C with Text) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Commission. He explained that there will be a tree preservation area and the commercial portion will be pushed back off of Hoover Road. He said the trees are supplemented as they go north on Hoover, north of the extension of Birchbark Dr. He said there is a potential for the extension of Quail Creek Blvd. He said multi-family development is 700 feet from Hoover Road. He said there is a wooded area at the rear and some green space that is intended to be shifted to the City. He said the density is 10.26 acres per acre, with all the property. If the green areas get transferred to the City, the density would increase – only because of the transfer of property.

Ms. Houk commented that her consideration is based on trying to balance the housing we are offering our residents. She said she supports the commercial portion of the project. However, since she has been on Council, a total of 995 apartment units have been approved. She said she doesn't know how much more is needed.

Mr. Berry said he sees no architectural vision with this project. He said he disagrees with the position of the pond on the site. He said he is not sold on the land use for multi-family and what has been presented. He said as more people work from home, 1 and 2 bedroom units are not going to cut it.

Mr. Schottke said he feels this is workforce housing for the hospital and is a positive step. Mr. Plank confirmed that their target market is the hospital. He said the City has an incredible occupancy rate for their apartments. He feels it is a great location with connecting to the trail system, open space and other amenities.

Ms. Kelly read the questions from the Q&A on-line:

Ms. Laura Comak – questioned the density in the Zoning Text. She said there is a possibility for 24 units per acre. Mr. Plank reiterated that the units per acre would be 10.26 over the entire 22 acres, but when some of the property gets transferred to the City, it changes the density to 24. He said it doesn't change the open space, it just changes the ownership of the ground.

Ms. Marlene Bower – asked what is proposed for the area; how many stores are expected; if Quail Creek Blvd. would be extended over I-71. Mr. Schottke reiterated there would be multi-family, office buildings and a potential day-care. Mr. Plank said there would be a limited amount of retail allowed – a possible coffee shop. He said the extension of the road is still a big question. It won't be part of this project. It only leaves the corridor open to allow for the extension.

Ms. Marlene Bower stated that Council has to understand that all homes are single-family in the area and apartments are not wanted. She said this plan was rejected last year. She said the setback need to be back further. She said the Sale sign of this property says this is for medical and professional offices. They are not enthusiastic about this plan.

Mayor Stage stated that in the big picture, this project provides for an opportunity to extend the road and open up a new area for development. Even if this doesn't happen, there is enough demand for this type of housing with the hospital, VA Hospital, Cancer hospital, etc.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Ms. Houk	No
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes

3. Ordinance C-44-20 (Approve a Special Use Permit for a Car Wash for Carwash USA Express located at 2607 London Groveport Road) was given its second reading and public hearing.

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Mr. Rauch, Dir. of Dev., stated that they had a conversation with the applicant to determine what they were willing to discuss. He said they were willing to discuss traffic issues, but were not willing to move their access to an access drive off Hoover Road.

Mr. Jody Freeman, representing applicant, stated that they are the largest car wash operator in the world. He said they believe they are in compliance with all regulations and comments from staff. He said they consider themselves experts in traffic flow on and off the site. He said they are taking a three lot, three business development and proposing a one lot, one business. He said this reduces the traffic. He said they did send a sketch for a two-way ingress/egress drive that ties into Hoover Road. He said it would reduce traffic and gives opportunity to the Huntington Bank. He said they would stripe lanes on the access road. He said their business is primarily a subscription service, which reduces the stacking, as these customers only stop briefly. He said this prototype has 40% more stacking than any store they have built in the last three years, because they don't need as much with the Fast Pass. They feel it would serve the town well.

Mr. Schottke voiced concern over the existing congestion in this area. He said he doesn't want to repeat the mistakes in developing Stringtown Road. He asked Mr. Freeman if they would commit to having the only entrance off Hoover Road through the access road, with an exit to S.R. 665. Mr. Freeman said they proposed to add on to the access road, but the owners have not agreed to educate their customers to pass the car wash, turn right then turn again to gain access to their store. Especially when there is a dedicated traffic light in front of their lot. They don't believe the store will perform well if access is not directly off S.R. 665.

Mr. Holt commented that he does not want to propagate the problems we have on Stringtown and he believes this does.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Schlabach.

Mr. Holt	No
Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Schottke	No
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	No

4. Ordinance C-48-20 (Approve the Rezoning of 0.29 acres located at 3506-3510 Park Street from D-1 to PUD-R w/text) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on 11/02/20.
5. Ordinance C-49-20 (Approve a Special Use Permit for a Day Care Center for The Agape School located at 4461 Broadway) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on 10/5/20.
6. Resolution CR-27-20 (Approve the Development Plan for Carwash USA Express located at 2607 London-Groveport Road) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Schottke asked if Mr. Freeman was still present. It was determined that he was not.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Schottke	No
Mr. Schlabach	No
Ms. Houk	No
Mr. Holt	No

7. Resolution CR-34-20 (Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for an Outdoor Smoker located at 4086 Broadway) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Mike Boso, Chief Building & Zoning Official, stated that they struggled to see how this fits into the area. He said it is zoned for a food service, but not for outside. Because of the unique situation, it was decided to bring it through the system for consideration. He said staff had concerns over the hours of operation; noise; and the smoke. He said it will need to be on a concrete pad, ten feet (10') away from any building or combustible material. Mr. Rauch, Dir. of Dev., confirmed that this application falls between several Code sections and his department shares the concerns of the Building Division.

Mayor Stage voiced opposition for this permit. He said he doesn't believe it is appropriate in the Town Center. This is a pseudo Drive-Thru. He believes this will affect the traffic on Broadway and First Street is a one-way alley behind the building. He feels this is a logistical issue and is not appropriate for the property or the area.

Mr. Schottke asked about the smoke stacks for City Barbeque. Mr. Boso stated that the stacks for City BBQ are attached to the building and all the food prep and service is done on the inside. This is different, with food prep being done outside.

Mr. Berry stated that this is happening in the Short North and other communities. It is not a food stand, but it serves a similar service with being a permanent location. He feels it would be a plus for the Town Center atmosphere.

Ms. Renee Glover, petitioner, said they had a pre-opening and had no congestion at all. She said there is parking in the rear and they do bring the food out to customers. She said they would be open Wednesday – Saturday from Noon – 9:00 p.m. She said they would be smoking meat from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. to be ready for customers. She said the Health Dept. is requiring a fence all the way around the smoker with a lock for when it is not in use. She also indicated that the other tenants did not share any concerns with the property owner, Ms. Dover.

Mr. Holt asked about the grease. He said on the inside, there would be a grease trap. He asked how that is handled with the Smoker. Ms. Glover said there will be a grease trap. Mr. Holt asked where the grease for the outdoor smoker goes. Ms. Glover said it would go into aluminum foil and then the trash.

Ms. Houk disclosed that her office is directly next door and right where the smoker will be located. She said, while she is excited of the prospect, she is concerned over the safety of this smoker's location. She said the Fire Dept. required a 10' buffer from any building and knows this smoker is right next to the parking spaces. She asked for confirmation that they have enough space to meet the Fire Dept. requirements. She said she worries about smelling the smoking meat daily, as this is a residential and commercial district that are trying to exist in harmony.

Mr. Schlabach stated that he feels this will add some character to the Town Center and is not opposed to moving beyond the regular bounds.

Mr. Holt asked how long a Certificate of Appropriateness is good for. Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, said it would go with the property and be permitted for this and any new tenant. Mayor Stage said we have put time limits on Special Use Permits in the past. Mr. Holt asked if we could place a time limit on this permit, due to the newness and small concerns. Mr. Smith said he would like to check the Code before confirming that Council could add a time limit. Mr. Berry said if there are Code violations, they could be addressed.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Schlabach.

Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes

8. Resolution CR-35-20 (Approve the Development Plan for Pinnacle Quarry located South of White Rd. and West of State Route 104) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Schottke explained that the stipulation for the deviation of the street size is for a private road in the condo area to provide for sidewalks.

Mr. Rauch provided an overview of the project.

Mr. Ciminello, petitioner, accepted the stipulations of Planning Commission and said they would be donating the shelter house area and pond to the City.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Schottke moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Schottke	Yes

**The Chair recognized Mr. Schlabach, Chairman of Safety for discussion and voting under said Committee.**

1. Ordinance C-51-20 (Amend Various Sections of Chapter 718 titled Food & Beverage Street Vendors) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on 10/05/20.
2. Resolution CR-36-20 (Support Issue 19 – Jackson Township Fire Levy on the November 03, 2020 ballot) was given its reading and public hearing.

Ms. Houk said she put the resolution forward so Council could have the conversation before voting begins. She shared some history of the Township since 2014, when the last Levy was on the ballot. She said they have utilized part-time staff; stayed at the same staffing level; leased equipment; started a community para-medicine program; all to try to contain costs. She said besides support of Issue 19, in order to maintain a high level of fire and EMS services, there needs to be ongoing communication and collaboration with the Township.

Mr. Holt said he will support this based on the conversations he has had with Township Trustees, but there are still a few numbers and proforma information that he would like to receive.

Mayor Stage said this Resolution was drafted with the Mayor included and he asked that he be removed for a fundamental reason. He said the City's support for the Township has been overwhelming but we represent the residents of Grove City. He said he believes our residents need a much more thorough explanation of what they have done to save money and what they will do if it fails. He wonders why they did not reply to his letter to offer to do some in-depth study and possible sharing of more TIF revenues to assist them. He said the selfishness of not being part of the resolution is due to needing more information. At this point, he is neutral on the Levy issue.

Mr. Chuck Boso, City Admin., prefaced his comments with his respect for Firefighters. He said his grandfather, father, four Uncles, and brother have over 100 years of service on the Columbus Fire Dept. He said there is a level of confusion when you listen to the Township meeting and hear the Chairman vote "no" to put the levy on the ballot because it is not needed at this time; and there are comments that numbers are being pulled out of the air. He said it is not a matter of for or against; it is a matter of timing and getting the answers that the Administration felt were needed.

Council Members shared comments for the Levy. Mr. Berry asked if any Trustees were attending the meeting this evening. Ms. Kelly, Clerk of Council, noted that Mr. Grossman, Township Treasurer was present. Mr. Berry asked Mr. Grossman to provide some detail about the need for the Levy. Mr. Grossman said that the projections for the fire and EMS funds are continuing to decline. He said the Township expenses are going up and the revenues are flat. He said at some point, they will be facing a point of running out of money. Mr. Holt said that explanation is exactly why he is asking for additional information. Mr. Grossman said they have provided data through July to the Administration. He said they are right on target for the budget numbers.

Mr. Robert Ruth, resident, stated that he has spoken with Chief Little and Treasurer Grossman today. They were both very helpful, but he still has concerns. He said the Mayor's Administration offered to sit down with the Township and discuss the City subsidizing much of the Township's capital costs, negating the need for a Levy. At the Township's Aug. 04 meeting, Chair Burris suggested postponing the levy question until a concrete agreement could be reached with the City. He stated that in 2021, the Township projects a deficit of \$241,000.00. With a subsidy from the City, this projected deficit could be erased. He said there is no doubt that the Fire Dept. will need eventually need a levy increase. However, he feels it was premature for the Township to place a levy on the ballot this year. Likewise, he feels it is premature for Council to endorse the levy at this time. He said he did a calculation on his home and this levy will increase his taxes by 39%. He said that is a huge increase.

Additional discussion took place over the levy. Ms. Houk said it is important that we have an understanding of what the situation is with the Township and have a conversation in a united fashion. She said if there are questions that still need answered by Council, then it might be best to postpone this item until the next meeting.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Berry moved it be postponed to 10/15/20; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	No
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes

**The Chair recognized Mr. Holt, Chairman of Finance for discussion and voting under said Committee.**

1. Ordinance C-46-20 (Authorize the purchase of Property for the Columbus Street Extension and Authorizing a Note of the City to Finance the Acquisition of such Real Property Interests and other documents related thereto) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Holt explained that an update has been received to include another piece of property. He moved to replace C-46-20 with the new copy that includes the Mill Street Property; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes

Mr. Holt said this now includes two properties – Hill & Mill Street - for the Columbus Street extension. Mr. Smith, Dir of Law, explained that they have been working for many months to complete the land acquisition for these last two pieces. He explained that we could have put the road through by only acquiring a corner of the Hill property, but by purchasing the entire property it alleviates a number of issues – including relocation for all the tenants. As for the Mill Street property, the City is only buying areas 1 & 2 on the attached map. He explained that the request to add the Mill Street piece is due to the seller wanting to be paid over three (3) years. He said this project has been put out for bid and by passing this tonight, will enable the project to get underway.

Ms. Houk asked about the appraised value of these properties and how this purchase affects the budgeted \$6 mills. Mr. Boso stated that the purchase of these properties puts the budget over by \$400,000.00. However, the Engineer's estimate for construction puts the project within budget. They think that the bid climate will put it within budget. He indicated that they also have \$300,000.00 already budgeted for parking. Ms. Houk asked what the valuation of the "other items" listed in Exhibit "B" is. Mr. Smith went through the list of items and explained each. He said there is no specific cost.

Mr. Schottke asked if there was an Option Fee paid to Ms. Dover. Mr. Boso said no. Mr. Schottke said the amendment to add Exhibit B was received this afternoon and asked what the hurry was to approve this rather than having a separate piece of legislation for Mill Street. Mr. Smith explained that money to purchase this portion has already been budgeted and the purchase already authorized. He said the only reason it is coming before Council is to approve the three (3) year term of payment. He said the rush is due to the bid opening. He said owning the property as soon as possible is necessary to move forward with the bid. He also noted that the appraised value for Mill Street was over \$1 million.

Ms. Houk voiced her consistent opposition to the Columbus Street extension. She believes this will go well beyond \$6 million for 700 lineal feet of roadway.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Schottke.

Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	No
Mr. Holt	Yes

2. Ordinance C-47-20 (Initiate a Grove City "Buy Local Certificate Program" administered by the Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce and Appropriate \$75,000.00 from the General Fund for the Current Expense for Said Program) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Berry explained that businesses have suffered greatly due to COVID19. This program allows the Chamber of Commerce to solicit for local businesses and expose them to outside forces. He said this is for small businesses with the City, not just in the Town Center. He explained that the Chamber has agreed to administer and champion this pilot program.

Ms. Shawn Conrad, Director of Chamber, expressed their excitement to administer the program and potentially increase their membership.

Mr. Schottke said the ordinance provides for the Chamber to create some rules for the program and he believes they need to flush out some details concerning the Chamber's processing fee. Currently, if only 10 people take advantage of the program, the Chamber gets \$250.00 per card. He also asked what happens if all the money is not used for the program – how does the City get that back.

Ms. Houk shared concerns and said the program is a bit murky for her. She said Council just passed a small business working capital grant program to assist this target market. She said this puts the City in the gift card business and doesn't believe we belong in that business. Nor, does she believe we should be buying \$50,000.00 worth of gift cards with tax payer money, being administered by a third party. She feels there should be a Grant Program that allow us to support our community partners while uniformly applying the criteria to those receiving grant dollars and use them to their maximum potential. She said supportive of offering a grant to the Chamber, but this is not the format to do so. She said the overworked staff of the Chamber does not need another project.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Berry.

Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	No
Ms. Houk	No
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes

3. Ordinance C-50-20 (Appropriate \$622,308.00 from the Pinnacle Tax Increment Financing Fund for the Current Expense of Professional Services for the Design of Infrastructure Improvements along White Road and State Route 104) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on 10/05/20.
4. Resolution CR-37-20 (Authorize the City Administrator to seek Financial Assistance from the State Capital Improvement Program/Local Transportation Improvement Program for funding the Demorest Road Improvement, Phase 1 Project) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Boso, City Admin., explained the project and said they hope this will provide some needed funding to get this project underway.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes

5. Resolution CR-38-20 (Accept the Amounts & Rates as determined by the Budget Commission and Authorizing the necessary Tax Levies and Certifying them to the County Auditor) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Turner, Dir. of Finance, explained that this is a requirement of the Ohio Revised Code. He stated that in 1983 the millage for the City was \$5.8 mills, which was the highest. Since then, the millage has been reduced or stayed the same. In the last 14 years, the millage has been \$3.5 mills. He said the millage in 1983 generated over \$1 million. Next year, this millage will generate \$3.5 million.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Schlabach	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes

**The Chair asked that any new business to be brought before the attention of Council be done so at this time.**

**The Chair recognized members of Administration and Council for closing comments.**

1. Mayor Stage had Ms. Fitzpatrick report on the Wet Basement Program, who shared that letters were sent to all eligible properties. She said 48 people have opted in so far. She said they will begin with the first 20 homes soon. The Mayor then had Mr. Rauch report on the Working Capital Grant, which has had 30 applications received to date. If all applications are granted, they have space for about 10 more. The Mayor reported that in this year, the city has been able to complete improvements to Southwest Blvd., Borrer Rd., and Seeds Rd. He said those total \$12 million, of which \$8 million was paid by other parties. In addition, we have completed \$3 million in the street program. He reported that there will be no Boo on Broadway, but Beggars Night in the neighborhoods will go forward and they will have suggested guidelines on the website. He said it is Emancipation Day in Ohio tomorrow and we have one of the first Lutheran Bishops in the U.S. living in Urbancrest. Finally, he expressed condolences to the families of Megan Mountain and Jennifer Cotton, who both passed last weekend. Megan's husband and Jennifer's father were both former Council Members.
2. Mr. Boso reported on the progress to acquire a firm to market the Aggregation Ballot question for the City. He said they received two more proposals this week, which are being reviewed. He hopes to have something definite by the end of the week.
3. After comments from Council and Administrative staff members, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourn at 9:58 p.m.

  
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Tami K. Kelly, MMC  
Clerk of Council

  
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Christine Houk  
Chair