



**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

27700 Hilliard Blvd.  
Westlake, OH 44145

Phone 440.871.3300  
Fax 440.617.4324

**WESTLAKE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023**

Present: Lauren Falcone, Duane Van Dyke, Bonnie Smith, Matt Jones  
Absent: Brad Lamb  
Also Present: Planning Director Jim Bedell, Assistant Law Director Nathalie Supler, Clerk of Commissions  
Nicolette Sackman

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Falcone.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Mrs. Smith to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 14, 2023.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Falcone, Jones, Smith

Nays: None, motion carried

**BUSINESS**

**Montessori Children's School site improvements, 28370 Bassett Rd.,  
PP#21228007, rep. D. Michaud, Ward 4**

The applicant requested to be tabled.

Motion: Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to table the Montessori Children's School site improvements to the October 2, 2023 meeting.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

Mr. Van Dyke arrived.

**Hopebridge Westlake site improvements, 29077 Clemens Rd.,  
PP#21211003, rep. E. Kammer, Ward 3**

Applicant requested to be tabled.

Motion: Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to table the Hopebridge Westlake site improvements to the October 2, 2023 meeting.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**360 Athletix site improvements and sign plan, 28989 Center Ridge,  
PP#21618009, Ward 4**

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo reviewing the changes since the last meeting: revised the north elevation; removed the white trim board; additional landscape; traffic signalization and intersection; exterior lights; dumpster color; and placement and details for the signage. Mr. Ross explained he is working with the city's engineering department regarding the intersection and traffic light.

Members of the commission discussed the following: the wall sign details; lighting to wash the front of the building; and the intersection.

Findings of fact:

1. The site improvement plan complies with the Zoning Code with the only modification being for the use of 8" split face CMU.
2. Signage complies with the Sign Code with the only modification being for the encroachment of the freestanding monument sign into the planned right-of-way and for the use of 8" split face CMU.

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to recommend approval of the 360 Athletix site improvement plan with the following:

1. Modification for the dumpster enclosure to be of split face concrete masonry units exceeding 4" X 12" block size.
2. Condition that Ordinance 2023-61 (conditional use permit) is approved by Council.
3. Condition that exterior lighting is administratively approved in accordance with Zoning Code Section 1230.03 and is the same color temperature not to exceed 4000K.
4. Condition that the applicant grants to the City a 10' Permanent Highway Easement along the frontage of Center Ridge Road.
5. Approval is subject to comments in Part III of the 9/7/23 staff report and approval of the final plans by the Building and Engineering Departments in compliance with the code and the ordinances of the City of Westlake; and, in the development process, should there be any changes necessitated by engineering requirements that visually alter the appearance of the development approved by the Planning Commission, the plan shall be re-submitted to the Planning Commission.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the 360 Athletix sign plan the following:

1. Modification for the freestanding monument sign to encroach into the front setback and be constructed of split face concrete masonry units exceeding 4" X 12" block size.
2. Condition that the freestanding monument sign is relocated at the owner's expense when Center Ridge Road is widened.
3. Condition that white background of freestanding monument sign face is not illuminated
4. Condition that the wall sign's raceway is painted to match the wall to which it is attached.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

### **Aldi sign plan, 30700 Detroit Rd., PP#21118019, Ward 5**

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo for signage: non-illuminated signs were installed during construction without permits (instructional wall signs, window sign); the location of the signs; and permitted area for signage. Mr. Scorret representative for Aldi was present.

Members of the commission discussed the following: there were no issues with the instructional signage; the area of the window coverage exceeds the permitted coverage of more than 30% of the window; it is signage, not art; faux window on the upper part of the façade does not allow light into the building, the faux window height exceeds the maximum height of 20' above grade for maximum sign height; the signage needs a waiver from the master sign criteria; concerns if approved any type of sign could be used; the window signs do not make the tenant look overly signed; the design of the faux window; whether the upper floor faux window sign should be removed and replaced with an opaque material; these signs should have been shown on the development plans; the commission would like to see what was originally approved and wished to table the request to receive more information. Mr. Scorret advised the wall signs are the standard signs they use at other Aldi stores.

Motion: Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith table the Aldi sign plan to the October 2, 2023 meeting.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

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Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones  
Nays: none, motion carried

**O'Reilly Auto Parts site improvements and sign plan, 25100 Center Ridge Rd. PP# 21526006, Ward 2**

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo explaining: limited changes are being made to the façade (entrance door, painting, and replacement of exterior wall lights); and signage options. The proposal has red on the wall behind the sign, which can be counted as sign area. He presented several renderings of signage options with and without the red background on the wall. Ms. Bachelder, representative for the applicant was present to answer any questions.

Members of the commission discussed the following: the use of the tenant space as a super store and if it is considered a warehouse; will there be deliveries and at what hours; they were not in favor of granting a waiver and modification for the red background on the wall behind the sign; it was desirable for the sign to have channel letters that do not exceed 4' maximum letter height and 100 sf in size, they preferred Option 3 for the signage as shown by Mr. Bedell. Ms. Bachelder explained the store is not a warehouse and is only retail. The only deliveries would be for incoming stock, not a shipping center.

**Option 3:**



**Findings of fact:**

1. The Planning Commission determined that the proposed red color is signage and did not support the zoning modification that is needed for its approval, as it would be an excessive amount of signage per the master sign criteria and Chapter 1223.
2. No modifications are needed for the other site improvements.

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to recommend approval of the O'Reilly Auto Parts site improvements with the following:

1. Condition the red paint color is not approved.
2. Condition that this tenant space is used for retail sales and not as a warehouse and distribution center.
3. Approval is subject to comments in Part III of the 9/7/23 staff report and approval of the final plans by the Building and Engineering Departments in compliance with the code and the ordinances of the City of Westlake; and, in the development process, should there be any changes necessitated by engineering requirements that visually alter the appearance of the development approved by the Planning Commission, the plan shall be re-submitted to the Planning Commission.

**ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:**

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones  
Nays: none, motion carried

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the O'Reilly Auto Parts sign plan with the following:

1. Option 3 as shown at the meeting is approved with the condition that logo and channel letters do not exceed 4' maximum letter height and 100 sf in size.

2. Condition that the raceway is painted to match the wall to which it is attached.
3. Waiver from the master sign criteria for the plaza to exceed 2' in height.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**Tulip Park of Westlake townhome development plan (8 units), 1636  
Dover Center, PP# 21222021, Ward 3**

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Mr. Bedell reviewed the following from his staff memo: there are eight proposed units; the Guide Plan shows this property as multi-family for many decades; due to the shape of the lot, setback modifications would be needed for the proposal as submitted; the lot is flag shape with the narrow strip along the street being zoned single family; the townhome units are located at the rear of the property adjacent to multi-family apartments and single family homes on other sides of the property; the screening berms will be too steep to mow at the angle shown; landscape, and what will be in the landscape beds when tulips are not in bloom; and lighting.

Mr. Sampat (architect) and Mr. Dardir (developer) were present. They reviewed the following: the site plan; the shape of the lot; the entrance drive, landscape and monument sign is all that will be on the front portion of the parcel; the units will have a modern design and color renderings were shown; trees will be located in the islands between the driveways for the units; there are two buildings with four units in each; each unit will have a covered patio; the buffer mound and fence; floor plans; and exterior materials to be used.

The following were present and made comments: Ms. Scala, 1726 Dover Center Rd.; Mr. Bufkin 1597 Dover Center Rd.; Ms. Mason, 1635 Dover Center Rd.; Ms. Mason, 1635 Dover Center Rd.; Ms. Bobby, 1625 Dover Center Rd.; Mr. and Ms. Bradic, 1686 Dover Center Rd.; Ms. Coleman, 1613 Dover Center Rd.; Mr. Jackson, 1726 Dover Center Rd.; Mr. Jackson, 1726 Dover Center Rd.; Mr. Abdulla (Realty Express, broker for the developer), 13353 Snow Rd., Brook Park; Ms. Urbas, 25696 West Hedgewood (her dad owns adjacent property); and Mr. Owings, 1770 Dover Center Rd. The following comments and concerns were expressed: lighting and how bright will it be; how bright will the sign be; residents were unaware the property was zoned multi-family; objections to multi-family units being built on the property; traffic congestion; increased traffic; flooding concerns; how will trash be collected; eight units is too many units; the neighborhood is currently quiet and this development will bring higher noise levels; in the future will the narrow single family portion of the parcel ever be rezoned to multi-family; tulips will not survive as deer will eat them and what will be there the remainder of the year; lighting along the driveway so it is not bright or look like a landing strip; the resident's rear yards are quiet and this development will impact the noise and privacy; lights shining into homes across the street when exiting the development; impact on property values and taxes; the lot is wooded and will trees be removed; the setbacks are too close and should follow code; the character of the neighborhood will change; the surrounding property is not zoned multi-family; if the property is a wetland; the developer has been contacting people to purchase more property, which is a concern; the units are high end expensive units (over \$800,000) and will increase property values; Dover Center Rd. is a main street and is not quiet; the development will have a good impact on the neighborhood; there is already a lot of noise on Dover Center Rd.; there should be a full buffer; people walking through yards; plastic fences can be distasteful and do not bring beauty to the neighborhood; the lots on Dover Center are unique as they are deep lots with a lot of natural features; there are no apartments to the north; where will snow go, will the entrance drive be maintained; where is guest parking; and will the units be rented or sublet.

Mr. Sampat explained the following; water cannot run off onto adjacent properties; there will be underground retention, which should improve any existing water issues; there should not be any issue with the city's system as there are only eight units; lighting cannot shine off the property and they are working with the city's lighting consultant; the fixtures are full cutoff fixtures and project down; the trash will be private pick-up; it is anticipated since the units are high end that old people will be the target market with two cars; per the code there are no issues with traffic; the back patios will be used and it is not anticipated there would be a lot of noise since it is not expected there will be a lot of large families. Mr. Dardir, developer, expressed the following: his intent when purchasing the property was not to upset the neighbors; the property can be developed; there is a market for multi-family units like what is being proposed; and he will accommodate concerns the best that he can.

Members discussed the following: the city's code are strict for water drainage; the underground retention allows for a slow release as water is retained in the storage tanks and slowly released; water issue will be improved/corrected;

the drainage will not overtax the city's sewer system; the planning commission does not review drainage as that is handled by the city's engineer; the maximum buffer should be in place, especially on the east and south property lines adjacent to the single family homes; looking at options to shift the units closer to the adjacent multi-family property; the proposed setbacks and if they can be adjusted so there is more buffer along the single family property to the north and west; they want to see the quality of the fencing; traffic from eight units would have a minimal impact; any residential use would produce some noise and should be minimal; regarding any cut-through into adjacent property could be addressed through buffering; property to the west and adjacent to the rear of the parcel next to the development is zoned multi-family; as the property is zoned, a three story apartment could be constructed, but what is proposed are townhomes; the property has been zoned this way for decades and the city has to allow the zoning use; there are not many trees on this parcel as it is mostly an open field; the vertical lighting should be revised on the units so it does not shine into eyes and should be subtle; the lights on the patio should not be bright; the color of the units; buffering to block headlights; keep some buffering between the development and the apartments; revised drawings were received earlier in the day and need more review; trash pick-up; possibly reducing the number of units to six to reduce a number of the modifications needed for this proposal; the garage door materials; review the proposed turnaround design; provide more screening; the location of utilities; it is nice that the units have first floor master bedrooms; there are apartment to the north in the area of the proposed units; rental of units cannot be prohibited by the city due to federal laws but the HOA declarations can list owner occupied.

Mr. Sampat expressed: the sign can be reduced, it will have a gas lantern looking lighting that can be reduced in size and illumination or eliminated, the base material will be stone; the lights on the units should only be seen by the units across the drive; a buffer wall could be constructed or landscape to block headlights shining into the apartments; trash will be picked up on a certain day and collect trash with the truck using the turnaround; garages have opaque glass panels but the owners of units across will not see into the garages but will see light from the panels; they can revise the landscape; the proposal has more guest parking than required; snow plowing will be handled by one company as hired by the homeowner's association; they will look at additional types of landscape along the entrance so there is something when the tulips are not in bloom or eaten by deer. Mr. Dardir stated that six units is not feasible and there would not be a project with that amount. The original proposal was 10 units and that was reduced to eight units. The desire is to have owner occupied units, marketed at 55 plus, and the HOA declarations can note that, but at the price point of the units it would not be expected that an owner would rent their unit.

Motion: Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to table the Tulip Park of Westlake townhome development plan to the October 2, 2023 meeting.

**ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:**

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**Extra Space Storage sign plan, 24940 Detroit Rd., sPP#21309027,  
Ward 1**

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo for a panel change in the monument sign and two wall signs (one is an address sign). The wall sign is oversized and will need a modification for the area. The area calculation for what is permitted is based on the width of the parcel, which is narrow and narrow building. The second side of the building could be used to determine the total area permitted with the approval of the commission. Ms. Clark, sign contractor, explained the following: the applicant would like the Planning Commission to approve a modification for the wall sign; the monument faces will be changed to opaque with only the lettering illuminating at night. Members of the commission discussed the following: the location is visible and they were not in favor of a large sign on the wall; there were no issues with the monument sign; the color and branding of the business sign; the signage should be reduced to eliminate any modifications if approved; a wall sign was not desirable.

**Findings of fact:**

1. The existing signs total 37.7 s.f. and the maximum sign area for the site is 40 s.f. The total signage proposed exceeds this maximum by 59.3 s.f. and the Planning Commission did not support a zoning modification for the new 61.6 s.f. wall sign.
2. The required modification is not in accordance with Section 1223.13, Administrative Approval.

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the Extra Space Storage sign plan with the following:

1. Condition that the 61.6 s.f. wall sign is not included in this approval.
2. Condition that the freestanding sign face background is opaque so that only the text illuminates.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**Barry's Bagels sign plan, 24513 Center Ridge Rd., PP#21527009,  
Ward 2**

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Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo explaining: the sign complies with the city code and the master sign criteria for the plaza other than area (4 sf too big); the sign design; the letters are taller than the master sign criteria allow; a modification is needed for the logo height and a waiver for the color orange. Ms. Clark advised the logo is the corporate logo.

Members of the commission expressed the following: felt the sign scale looked appropriate; discussed the color/illumination; and did not have an issue as proposed. Ms. Clark advised the business is not open in the evening.

Findings of fact:

1. The proposal complies with Chapter 1223 and no modifications are needed.
2. Waivers from the Walridge Master Sign Criteria are required for area, logo height, and sign color.

Motion: Based upon the findings of fact Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the Barry's Bagels sign plan with the following:

1. Waiver from the Walridge Master Sign Criteria for total sign area to exceed 20 square feet, logo height to exceed 24" and for the use of the color orange.
2. Condition that raceway color matches the wall to which it is attached and sign is centered vertically and horizontally on sign band.
3. Condition the sign is dimmable for field adjustment by city staff if necessary.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**Ordinance 2023-15 code amendments to Chapter 707 as to outdoor  
dining facilities, ref. 2/2/23, tabled 3/6/23, 4/3/23, 5/8/23, 7/5/23, 7/10/23  
extension of time to 8/31/23**

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Motion: Ms. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Van Dyke to table Ordinance 2023-15 to the October 2, 2023 meeting.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Van Dyke, Falcone, Smith, Jones

Nays: none, motion carried

**COUNCIL REPORT**

Councilman Van Dyke reported on council matters as they relate to planning commission.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2023, in the Westlake City Hall Council Chambers.

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Vice Chairman Lauren Falcone

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Nicolette Sackman, MMC  
Clerk of Commissions

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_