



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
WORTHINGTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
WORTHINGTON MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
February 25, 2021

The regular meeting of the Worthington Architectural Review Board and the Worthington Municipal Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mikel Coulter, Chair; Thomas Reis, Vice-Chair; Kathy Holcombe, Secretary; Edwin Hofmann; Richard Schuster; and Susan Hinz. Also present was: Worthington City Council Representative Scott Myers (Arrived at 7:07 p.m.); and Lee Brown, Director of Planning & Building. Commission member David Foust was absent.

**A. Call to Order – 7:04 p.m.**

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of the minutes of the January 28 and February 11, 2021 meeting

Mr. Reis moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Hofmann seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Schuster moved to take the following two Agenda items off the table and Mr. Hofmann seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the items were removed from the table.

**B. Architectural Review Board – Unfinished**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

1. Redevelopment – **7227 N. High St. (DRP Worthington LP) AR 66-2020**  
&

**C. Municipal Planning Commission – Unfinished**

1. **Planned Unit Development**
  - a. Redevelopment – **7227 N. High St. (DRP Worthington LP) PUD 02-2020**

&

**D. Municipal Planning Commission – New**

1. **Subdivision – Preliminary and Final Plats**
  - i. Create New Lot for Redevelopment – **7227 N. High St. (DRP Worthington LP) SUB 01-2021**

## **Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

### **Background & Updated Request:**

The Worthington Mall (The Shops at Worthington Place) was originally constructed in the mid 1970's and has been added onto, renovated and reworked many times over the years. The property transferred at the end of 2019, and the owner of the mall property is planning to redevelop the northern and western part of the property by removing part of the existing mall and adding Class A office, entertainment, retail and restaurant uses with structured parking and open public spaces on the 15.66-acre site. The property owner will be rezoning the site from the C-2 District (Community Shopping Center) to a Planned Use District (PUD) to accommodate the redevelopment of the site in two phases. Staff will provide an update on the changes to the proposal since the previous meeting and will outline items that need to be addressed and discussed.

The applicant has made several modifications to the original proposal that reflects comments from the community, Board & Commission members and changes related to the current market conditions. The redevelopment of the site will occur in two phases. The first phase will include a 10-story Class A Office/Mixed Use building on the northern portion of the site, renovation of the existing mall and construction of the central promenade. This phase will also reconfigure the access drive adjacent to the east side of the existing mall to accommodate north/south traffic movements on the site. The northern east/west connector south of the northern building and the north/south connector between the buildings have been removed. Phase I will also include the future removal of the westernmost section of the existing retail and realignment of the adjacent access drive. Phase II will include a 6-story Class A Office/Mixed Use building on the southern portion of the site, reduced from the previous 10-story request. This building would have a max height of 4-stories within the first 100-feet of W. Wilson Bridge Rd. with the remaining height stepped back from the roadway. This reduction in height addressed staff comments and comments from the community concerning the height. The 10-story hotel/residential/mixed use building has been removed from the proposal. While the City would love to see a hotel on the site, we realize that it is not feasible at this time. The removal of the residential option also addresses staff comments and concerns. The applicant will likely be making a separate ARB application to remove the northern portion of the mall and skylights/roof prior to the official rezoning of the property at some point in the near future.

### **Existing Conditions & Background:**

There is approximately 138,000 sq. ft. of leasable area in the mall today with approximately 790 parking spaces on the mall site. Kroger is approximately 58,000 sq. ft. in size and just finished a \$3.2 million dollar renovation to their store. Approximately 45% of the mall space is not producing revenue and overall is underperforming. Previous improvements and changes in use have enabled the eastern portion of the mall to operate at a higher level. The addition of medical service providers in the mall has also been helpful. The overall performance of the western side of the mall and those with only interior access is where the mall is struggling in today's retail environment. The site also suffers from poor pedestrian and vehicular flow throughout the site.

The City currently has a 7% vacancy rate for office, if you include the Anthem site it bumps the vacancy rate to 17%. The City has approximately 2 million square feet of office space, however only 20,000 sq. ft. of that space is truly Class A office space. The average age of office space in

the City is approximately 45 years old. The remaining office space throughout the City is considered Class B and Class C office space. The largest office space available in Worthington, excluding Anthem is approximately 13,401 sq. ft. in size. We are unable to market ourselves to larger employers that are wanting to come to the City with the limited amount of office space available. The average available office space is approximately 4,923 sq. ft. in size.

There are multiple real estate signs throughout the City offering up space that gives the illusion that there is more space available than there truly is in the City. These signs are typically left as advertisement and to maintain interest in their properties.

The City's rental rate for Class A, Class B and Class C are at a lower rate than what is found in neighboring communities. The average asking rate for rent is \$14.25 sq. ft. (gross rate is \$18.24 sq. ft.) in Worthington. The proposed rental rate for the proposed office would be approximately \$24.00 sq. ft. (gross rate approximately \$34.00 sq. ft.).

Office properties are typically divided into three main categories, Class A, Class B and Class C. While there aren't any all-encompassing rules to these classifications, they are typically based on quality factors such as building age, amenities and aesthetics.

#### Class A Office Space:

Class A space is comprised of the nicest space in the market. Class A buildings are generally either new developments or properties that have had significant improvements and renovations in recent years. The building's common areas will have high-quality finishes and amenities such as covered parking, fitness centers, leisure areas, restaurants or cafeterias. These buildings are also typically conveniently located, either in the epicenter of central business districts or along major streets, highways or transit centers.

#### Class B Office Space:

Class B office buildings are going to be slightly lower than Class A in terms of quality. These buildings can be found in major commercial areas but are more commonly found in the suburbs. Age is a common factor contributing to a building being considered Class B, as they are usually older than their Class A counterparts. Oftentimes, a Class B office building was originally Class A, but has been downgraded due to age and deterioration. These properties typically have good amenities, management companies and tenants, and can even be brought up to Class A standards with common area renovations and amenity upgrades. Rental rates for Class B buildings will typically be lower than Class A. The buildings themselves are usually considered average, and the rental rates they draw are average for their markets.

#### Class C Office Place:

Class C properties are typically very dated, with minimal amenities and located in less desirable locations. These properties are sometimes slow to lease and occupied by tenants requiring value office space. Class C office buildings typically provide a space at below market rates compared to other types of office space. Class C offices can also appeal to small, start-up tenants as it allows them to allocate much of their financial resources towards growth, while keeping a sufficient roof over their heads.

Employers are contemplating a go-back-to-work strategy and workplace adjustments post COVID, the new development of Class A office in a mixed-use development sets the City ahead of the curve.

### **Project Details:**

#### **Phase I:**

- Class A Office/Mixed Use Space – North Building
  - 100,000 sq. ft. to 125,000 sq. ft.
  - 8-10 stories with a public parking garage on the first 4-5 floors
    - Height 120.6-feet to 145.6-feet
  - 542 garage parking spaces
- Approximately 21,000 sq. ft. of the existing mall will be demolished at the beginning of Phase I.
  - Atrium of the mall and the northern portion of the mall will be removed as part of this phase.
- Approximately 35,000 sq. ft. of the existing mall will be demolished at the end of Phase I.
  - Western portion of the mall will be removed as part of this phase.
- Installation of public amenities
- Refacing the portions of the mall that will now be exposed.
- Realignment of the one-way traffic that is currently only a southbound movement on the eastern portion of the mall. The new northbound movement will allow traffic to go directly north without having to meander through the site.
- Creating enhanced east/west and north/south pedestrian connectors throughout the site.

#### **Phase II:**

- Class A Office Space – South Building
  - 100,000 sq. ft.
  - 6 stories with a public parking garage on the first 3-4 floors
    - Height 87-feet
  - 482 garage parking spaces
- Approximately 16,500 sq. ft. of the existing mall will be demolished.
- Installation of public amenities
- Reconfiguration of the roadways for pedestrian and vehicular connections.

### **Project Overview:**

The project is designed in two phases. Phase I would include the removal of 21,000 sq. ft. of existing retail space and would include the addition of approximately 100,000 sq. ft. – 125,000 sq. ft. in 8-10 stories. This would be an actual height of 120.6-feet to 145.6-feet in height. Phase I would also see the introduction of a new north/south connector on the site for pedestrian and vehicular movements on the site. The tenant spaces that have access on the eastern elevation will now have a secondary enclosed walkway that will run parallel to the new north/south connector that runs through the site. This phase also includes an updated traffic pattern on the site that will direct northbound traffic along the eastern side of the mall that is currently a one-way southbound movement to a northbound movement so that those entering the site will have better access to the

northern portion of the site and better access to the northern parking garage. There is an existing 30" public waterline that runs east/west on the northern portion of the site along Old West Wilson Bridge Road. The City of Columbus will require that the new office building to be constructed 25-feet from the existing line. Phase I would also see the removal of the existing area of the mall with the cupola and skylights to provide an open-air pedestrian environment. Phase I also includes the removal of 35,000 sq. ft. of existing retail space that would be completed at the end of Phase I.

Phase II would include the removal of 16,500 sq. ft. of existing retail space and would include the addition of an additional building of 100,000 sq. ft. in 6 stories. This would be a height of 87-feet. The parking garage would then be at a similar setback and height as apartments and offices to the west along West Wilson Bridge Road. The Heights Apartments are setback 50-feet from West Wilson Bridge Road with a height of approximately 60-feet for the first 75-feet then the building goes up to approximately 74-feet, however there is a grade elevation change and the rear of the building is constructed partially below grade.

Current tract coverage is approximately 92%, which is approximately 14.4-acres of imperviousness. The proposed coverage after redevelopment will be approximately 87%, which is 13.6-acres of imperviousness on the site. Additional amenities are being added as part of the redevelopment of the site.

#### **Site Improvements:**

The applicant has shown several onsite and offsite improvements as part of the redevelopment of the site. While the City is supportive of these improvements, a funding source has not been identified if the applicant is requesting the City to participate in these improvements. The City is committed to helping pay for some improvements, however refining the scope, timing, and expectations will be an important discussion. These improvements will require additional analysis from the City and may be constructed as funds are made available. This is likely to be over a several year period, so a priority discussion on these improvements is important.

#### **Possible Improvements:**

- Updated and enhanced signage for the entire site.
- New gateway banners on the streetlights.
- Accent paving and enhanced crosswalks.
- Streetscape improvements along West Wilson Bridge Road with street trees and streetlights.
- Monument walls and project identification at the mall drive realignment with the Holiday Inn site.
- Enhanced entries on W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
- Sidewalk along Old W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
- Possible sidewalk along W. Wilson Bridge Rd. in front of First Financial Bank.
- Possible Amenities:
  - Outdoor seating
  - Entertainment space
  - Outdoor lounge
  - Plantings

- Gathering spaces
- Open/green areas
- Swings
- Fire features
- Water features
- Seating Nodes
- Outdoor patio spaces
- Public Art
- Improvements at the intersection of Wilson Bridge and High Street, including enhanced brickwork and knee walls similar to what was approved as part of the Holiday Inn redevelopment to match with the knee walls and brickwork found at the Village Green.
- Improved wrought iron fencing, brick pillars and street trees along the High Street frontage.
- Additional mounding and screening improvements to the rear of the Kroger building and along the I-270 frontage at the exit ramp.
- Worthington gateway signage along the entrances into the City from I-270 on the new monument wall with wrought iron fencing and brickwork.
- Extension of the wrought iron fencing and brick columns further north towards the ramps of I-270 and the installation of a new brick gateway feature that would welcome people to Worthington. This would also provide additional screening and backdrop to help screen the dumpsters, storage and loading docks associated with the Kroger.
- Updated parking lot lighting.

**Stormwater:**

Stormwater will continue to be addressed by detention vaults under the parking garage ramps in each phase that will then connect to the existing storm sewer lines on the site.

- All stormwater will be required to be reviewed and approved by the City and its Consultants to be in compliance with all local, state and federal requirements for water quantity and quality.

**Parking:**

Parking Analysis reflects the parking needs associated with the mix of uses by phases using the Urban Land Institute Parking Analysis as guidance. This is how the Holiday Inn site was reviewed and approved for parking. Phase I will provide 1,246 spaces and Phase II will provide 363 additional spaces for parking for a total of 1,609 parking spaces on the site, which exceeds the ULI recommendation by 200 spaces.

**Traffic Study:**

A Traffic Impact Study is an analysis which assesses the adequacy of the existing and future transportation infrastructure to accommodate additional trips generated by a proposed development or redevelopment. New development or redevelopment may generate enough traffic to cause congestion, safety concerns, and/or the need for infrastructure improvements—such as new signalization, turn lanes, or crosswalks.

A Traffic Impact Study was submitted and is currently being reviewed by the City Engineer and Carpenter Marty. The study states that the study area road network generally has enough reserve

capacity to accommodate site generated traffic and anticipated non-site regional growth. The primary traffic issue is the existing congestion at the High St. and Wilson Bridge Rd. intersection.

- *The Traffic Impact Study is currently being reviewed at the time of this report.*

The City is currently undertaking a comprehensive study of the High St. and Wilson Bridge Rd. intersection; however, our consultant Carpenter Marty was waiting for information that was provided by the applicant's engineer that generated the Traffic Study. This analysis will evaluate short, medium- and long-term opportunities to improving traffic flow at the Wilson Bridge Road and High Street intersection.

- *The High St. & Wilson Bridge Rd. Analysis is currently underway.*

### **Staff Comments & Items Needing to be Discussed:**

The applicant has been working diligently with City staff over the past several months on their application and materials. The list below appears to be a lot of items that need to be corrected, however many are minor items to be corrected and many are required at the PUD Final Plan and Architectural Review Board approval stage in the development process.

- Development Text:
  - Phasing - The phasing timeline needs to be added to the Development Text. The phasing is currently referenced in the introductory letter from the applicant.
    - Phase I - Once acquisition of the Class A Office tenants is completed for the Northern Office/Mixed Use building, the construction of the first phase will begin.
      - Completed within 24-months.
    - Phase II – Class A Office/Mixed Use building and additional commercial buildings will be market driven and will likely take place over several years.
  - Design Regulations – Southern Office/Mixed Use Building
    - The first floor of the parking garage should maintain a height of 14'6' to permit the flow of traffic east/west.
      - This height would permit a semi or fire truck to go east/west without having to maneuver around the site.
  - Existing Retail – Clarification is needed on the reference to the language stating that they will maintain the existing Colonial architectural style and character of the existing mall and then it references the area of the mall that is currently on the interior that will become the exterior once the roof has been removed.
  - Setbacks are referenced in the text, however the setback along Old W. Wilson Bridge Rd. is missing and needs added to Exhibits D-1 and D-2.
  - Signage
    - The signage section needs to be updated to reflect all the signage proposed for the redevelopment of the site.
      - Monument signage and retaining wall signage needs to be updated and reflected in the text.
  - Traffic Study
    - Currently being reviewed

- This will be required to be reviewed and approved prior to MPC making a formal recommendation to City Council. The Traffic Study may influence Phase II of the redevelopment.
  - Parking
    - References that the improvements to the parking lot in front of Kroger may be delayed beyond Phase I and references it may be done in conjunction with Phase I or II or at any point practical.
      - This needs to be adjusted to be completed within Phase I.
    - Confirmation needed that the north/south drive will be completed separately from the parking lot improvements.
  - Public Space Amenities
    - Amenities and location of amenities will need to be discussed.
- Exhibit D-1, D-1B, D-2, D-2A, D-3, D-3B, D-4, needs to be corrected to show the sidewalk extending along Old W. Wilson Bridge Rd. behind the existing Kroger and add the dimension for the setback along Old W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
- Onsite & Offsite Improvements
  - Exhibit D-5, D-8, D-9 and D-10 reflects several improvements on and off the site that needs to be coordinated separately with the City.
    - City of Worthington monument signage along both sides of High St. at I-270.
    - New fencing and masonry columns along both sides of High St.
    - Improved landscaping and mounding behind the rear of Kroger to screen the back of house items.
    - Landscape enhancements
    - Signage updates
    - Lighting updates
    - Improved project entries on W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
    - Enhanced crosswalks, paving and monumentation at the intersection of High St. and Wilson Bridge Rd.
    - Pedestrian improvements
    - Possible community bulletin boards at the intersection.
    - New gateway banners
    - Accent columns along W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
    - Accent paving
    - Streetscape/landscaping improvements along High St. and W. Wilson Bridge Rd.
  - Exhibits D-11A, D-11B, D-12A, D-12B and D-12D reflects a hashed crosswalk that provides access through the middle of the parking lot.
    - Clarification is needed on the materials being used to identify the crosswalk. Other exhibits should also be updated to reflect this crosswalk.
  - Exhibits D-15A and D-15B needs to have the correct Worthington Fire Truck added to the exhibits.
  - Exhibit D-15B needs to be updated to reflect the comments from the Division of Fire for circulation on the site as it pertains to Phase II.
  - Exhibit E-4B needs to be updated to reflect the removal of the cupola on the mall.



- Exhibits E-4A, E-4B and E-7B gives the appearance that the site is a Kroger development versus the redevelopment of the former Worthington Mall to the rebranded High North development. Signage should be limited.
- A greater discussion is needed with the Board concerning the interior improvements and amenities proposed on Exhibits E-5B, E-5C and E-5D.
- Exhibit E-5E, E-6A. E-6C needs updated to reflect the removal of the cupola.
- Future sidewalks along West Wilson Bridge Road and Old West Wilson Bridge Road will need to be a minimum of 5-feet in width.
- Possible sidewalk installation as part of this project in the area in front of First Financial Bank should be discussed.
  - Will likely require additional public right-of-way and a retaining wall. City staff has reached out to First Financial Bank; however, we have not had a response at this time.
- The plans reference future onsite and offsite improvements as part of this proposal. Further discussion with the City is needed on these improvements. Several of the proposed images match with previous plans that have been adopted by City Council, however City funding has not been available. Discussion with the City should continue on these offsite improvements and any grant opportunities to cover the cost of these improvements should be explored.
  - City staff will continue to work with the applicant on any offsite improvements associated with the redevelopment of the site.
- Clarification needed concerning dumpster locations on the site. All dumpsters will be required to be completely screened from view.
- Screening and landscaping throughout the site.
- Lighting
- Stormwater will continue to be addressed by detention faults under the parking garage ramps in each phase that will then connect to the existing storm sewer lines on the site.
  - All stormwater will be required to be reviewed and approved by the City and its Consultants to be in compliance with all local, state and federal requirements for water quantity and quality.
  - An Operation & Maintenance Plan will be required and will be required to be recorded with the Franklin County Recorder.
- Discussion related to possible sustainable practices that might be able to be incorporated into each phase of the redevelopment of the site.
- Discussion related to the overall architectural character and design of the entire site.
  - There have been previous discussions that the Wilson Bridge Road corridor is an area that could deviate from the Worthington Design Guidelines. The majority of the Wilson Bridge Road corridor is located outside of the Architectural Review District. Just the parcels that front on High Street are located in the District. We have previously deviated from the Design Guidelines as it pertains to the mall site, however a greater discussion should occur.
- Proposed Public Space Amenities – Locations to be determined.
  - Park Benches
  - Trash Receptacles
  - Bicycle Racks

- Pet Waste Receptacles
- Shade Structures
- Public Art/Sculptures
- Lighting
- Seating Areas
- Enhanced Crosswalks & Pathways
- Decorative Landscaping
- Discussion related to offsite improvements along Old West Wilson Bridge Road, North High Street and West Wilson Bridge Road.
  - The applicant is in discussion with City staff on possible improvements that would complement the redevelopment of the site and be in compliance with existing plans.
    - The City has a Corridor Enhancement Plan that was adopted by City Council in 2015 giving direction for streetscape improvements.
- Subdivision Regulations
  - Clarification needed concerning the easements shown on the on the Preliminary Plat.
- Division of Building Regulation
  - The existing Kroger on Parcel 100-006599 is an unlimited area building and there is an easement with a “no build area” provision, Instrument # 200608250169750 recorded on August 25, 2006, per [OBC 507.14](#) and [ORC 3781.02](#), that was recorded when Kroger was split from the mall and placed on its own parcel. The proposed new lot split and proposed garage/office appears to comply with that easement. Lots 5A and 6A should have similar easement language to preserve the Kroger’s unlimited area building. Otherwise alterations to the Kroger may be required to comply with the requirements of the Ohio Building Code should any construction west of the Kroger not comply with the no build provisions previously agreed upon. Because it is not known when those improvements may happen, the Kroger alterations should be completed before the lots are recorded, if similar “no build area” language will not be recorded with these lots.
  - The covered mall is an unlimited area building, which requires a 60’ open perimeter around the building per [OBC 507.4](#). It appears from the documents the existing roof will be removed, possibly converting the building into an Open Mall per [OBC 402.1.1](#) which still has a 60’ requirement. It is possible the building will be converted to 5 separate buildings, with adequate separation from other buildings per [OBC 602.1](#), the creation of fire walls or fire barriers at the new north lot line per [OBC Section 705](#), and possibly using a fire wall for the existing Mall West Building to maintain the area limitations of [OBC Chapter 5](#). Although these are all possibilities, it is not clear which direction these buildings will ultimately go. It would appear the recording of the lots should not be permitted until alterations to the existing covered mall and unlimited area building are completed, inspected, and approved. Once a lot of created, and if the project is abandoned or cannot proceed due to technical difficulties in complying with the Ohio Building Code, it will be difficult to enforce the Ohio Building Code requirements without an injunction ordering the lots to be recombined.
- Division of Fire & EMS

- Below you will find a list of items which will be assessed during site plan review for the North High project. While designers are required to follow the Ohio Fire Code in its entirety, this list captures the Division of Fire & EMS high priority concerns.
  - a. OFC 507.3 Fire flow requirements for the proposed buildings shall be determined by an approved method. (OFC Appendix B will be accepted as an approved method)
  - b. OFC 507.1 An approved water supply capable of supplying the required fire flow for fire protection shall be provided.
  - c. OFC 507.5.1 Where a portion of the building is more than 400 ft from a hydrant, as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the structure, on site fire hydrants shall be provided. (Distance requirement shall be 600 ft if equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system)
  - d. OFC 507.5.1.1 Buildings equipped with a standpipe system shall have a fire hydrant within 100 ft of the FDC.
  - e. OFC 503.1.1 Fire apparatus access roads shall extend to within 150 ft of all first story exterior walls. (Distance may be increased to 300 ft if equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system)
  - f. OFC 503.2.1 Fire apparatus roads shall have an unobstructed width of no less than 20 feet.
  - g. OFC 503.2.3 Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus.
  - h. OFC 503.2.5 Dead-end access roads in excess of 150 ft shall be provided with an approved turnaround area.
  - i. A travel path exhibit which demonstrates unobstructed access for Ladder 101 will be required. (Fire apparatus access roads only)
  
- General Fire & EMS Notes:
  - a. Installation of key boxes (Knox Box) will be required
  - b. Emergency responder radio coverage is required in new buildings.
    - i. Installation of an emergency responder radio coverage system may be necessary.

**Worthington Land Use Plans:**

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

1. Scale, Form & Massing: Simple geometric forms and uncomplicated massing tend to make buildings more user-friendly and help to extend the character of Old Worthington into the newer development areas. Inclusion of sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled signage, and planting and lawn areas will help communicate a sense of a walkable pedestrian scale. Carefully designed building facades that employ traditional storefronts -- or similarly sized windows on the first floor -- will help make new buildings more pedestrian-friendly.
2. Setbacks: Parking areas should be located toward the rear and not in the front setbacks if at all possible. Unimpeded pedestrian access to the front building facade from the sidewalk should be a primary goal. Building up to the required setback is desirable as a means of getting pedestrians closer to the building and into the main entrance as easily as possible.

3. Roof Shape: Generally, a traditional roof shape such as gable or hip is preferable to a flat roof on a new building. Roof shapes should be in scale with the buildings on which they are placed. Study traditional building designs in Old Worthington to get a sense of how much of the facade composition is wall surface and how much is roof.
4. Materials: Traditional materials such as wood and brick are desirable in newer areas, but other materials are also acceptable. These include various metals and plastics; poured concrete and concrete block should be confined primarily to foundation walls. Avoid any use of glass with highly reflective coatings. Some of these may have a blue, orange, or silver color and can be as reflective as mirrors; they generally are not compatible with other development in Worthington. Before making a final selection of materials, prepare a sample board with preferred and optional materials.
5. Windows: On long facades, consider breaking the composition down into smaller “storefront” units, with some variation in first and upper floor window design. Use traditional sizes, proportions and spacing for first and upper floor windows. Doing so will help link Old Worthington and newer areas through consistent design elements.
6. Entries: Primary building entrances should be on the street-facing principal facade. Rear or side entries from parking lots are desirable, but primary emphasis should be given to the street entry. Use simple door and trim designs compatible with both the building and with adjacent and nearby development.
7. Ornamentation: Use ornamentation sparingly in new developments. Decorative treatments at entries, windows and cornices can work well in distinguishing a building and giving it character, but only a few such elements can achieve the desired effect. Traditional wood ornamentation is the simplest to build, but on new buildings it is possible to use substitute materials such as metal and fiberglass. On brick buildings substitute materials can be used to resemble the stone or metal ornamental elements traditionally found on older brick buildings. As with all ornamentation, simple designs and limited quantities give the best results.
8. Color: For new brick buildings, consider letting the natural brick color be the body color, and select trim colors that are compatible with the color of the bricks. Prepare a color board showing proposed colors.
9. Signage: While the regulations permit a certain maximum square footage of signs for a business, try to minimize the size and number of signs. Place only basic names and graphics on signs along the street so that drive-by traffic is not bombarded with too much information. Free-standing signs should be of the “monument” type; they should be as low as possible. Such signs should have an appropriate base such as a brick planting area with appropriate landscaping or no lighting. Colors for signs should be chosen for compatibility with the age, architecture and colors of the buildings they serve, whether placed on the ground or mounted on the building. Signs must be distinctive enough to be readily visible, but avoid incompatible modern colors such as “fluorescent orange” and similar colors. Bright color shades generally are discouraged in favor more subtle and toned-down shades.
10. Sustainability: The City of Worthington and its Architectural Review Board are interested in encouraging sustainable design and building practices, while preserving the character and integrity of the Architectural Review District. Energy conservation methods are encouraged. Landscape concepts often complement energy conservation and should be maintained and replenished. Utilize indigenous plant materials, trees, and landscape features, especially those which perform passive solar energy functions such as sun shading

and wind breaks. Preserve and enhance green/open spaces wherever practicable. Manage storm water run-off through the use of rain gardens, permeable forms of pavement, rain barrels and other such means that conserve water and filter pollutants. Bike racks and other methods of facilitating alternative transportation should be utilized. Streetscape elements should be of a human scale. Make use of recycled materials; rapidly renewable materials; and energy efficient materials. Use of natural and controlled light for interior spaces and natural ventilation is recommended. Minimize light pollution.

#### [Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study](#)

The Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, adopted in 2011, makes recommendations for the Wilson Bridge Road corridor from the Olentangy River to the west to the Railroad Crossing to the east. The Study recommends the need to promote the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City. These requirements are intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value; encourage a mix of uses; enhance livability of the area; to augment pedestrian and bicycle connections; and to promote construction of high-quality buildings and public spaces that create and sustain long-term economic vitality.

The 2011 Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study identifies this area as Mixed-Use with a mix of retail and office and a recommended height of 5-6 stories in height in the area.

#### [Wilson Bridge Corridor Districts](#)

Chapter 1181 was adopted by City Council in 2016 to facilitate implementation of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, which promotes the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City. These requirements are intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value; to encourage a mix of uses; enhance the livability of the area; to augment pedestrian and bicycle connections; and to promote construction of high-quality buildings and public spaces that help create and sustain long-term economic vitality.

The area was recommended for WBC-3 Mixed Use that would allow for a mix of retail and offices uses both vertically and horizontally with a maximum height of 4-stories. Retail uses are encouraged on the first floor of multi-floor developments. Pedestrian and public spaces are encouraged. Some residential uses may be appropriate in this area.

#### [Comprehensive Plan Update & 2005 Strategic Plan for Worthington](#)

States that retail development trends appear to be shifting toward mixed-use, adaptive reuse, and entertainment-oriented uses.

#### Increase Commercial Office Space:

Worthington's office space currently consists of 4% of the total land use. Because the income taxes generated from these office uses are crucial to the City's financial stability, great efforts should be made to encourage the private market to add additional commercial office space within the City. This can be accomplished by converting some land to office use and by allowing increased densities on office sites. This can also be accomplished by keeping vacancy rates low and by encouraging home-based offices and telecommuting in the City. Recommendations include:

- Encourage the renovation and redevelopment of the existing highway office properties to make them more competitive and attractive in the market. Increased densities through expansion and use of structured parking (parking garage) should be promoted.
- Support and work to meet the needs of companies in the business incubators, such as the Worthington Commerce Center.
- Promote the addition of amenities and services around the existing commercial areas to make their location more attractive.
- Work to attract work-at-home employees but develop a system to monitor/capture the income tax from these home office locations.

#### Freeway Commercial Area:

- Promote the improvement of the Worthington Square area, including redevelopment of the west side. Encourage a mix of uses including urban village residential development based on a town center design with streets that create synergy with the mall and street level retail. New development in this location will improve this retail node and return regional focus to the mall and highway commercial area.
- Consider allowing phased redevelopment of existing office space – such that new structures are placed on the site adding to or replacing the existing building. This will be facilitated by the inclusion and integration of structured parking. Phasing may create situations where the site does not meet parking code, but this is acceptable on a temporary basis.

#### [Chapter 1174 - Planned Unit District - PUD](#)

The purpose of Planned Unit Development is to promote variety, flexibility and quality for the development of properties in the City of Worthington. Planned Unit Development allows for more creative planning and design and enables a greater range of uses than traditional Zoning regulations. Planned Unit Development allows for the design and mix of uses necessary to meet changing economic and demographic demands; permits implementation of development standards, plans, studies, and guidelines adopted by the City Council; and provides the opportunity to retain and enhance the character of the City, and the health, safety and general welfare of the inhabitants. PUD

#### [Subdivision Regulations – Chapter 1101](#)

“Subdivision” means the division or combination of any parcel or parcels of land shown as a unit or as contiguous units on the latest tax roll.

Section 1101.09 Preliminary Plat Contents and Section 1101.12 Final Plat Contents outline the necessary information required to consider an application complete to be approved by the Municipal Planning Commission and be sent to City Council for final approval.

#### [City Initiatives](#)

The City has been evaluating the Old West Wilson Bridge Road and Corporate Hill intersections for quite some time and are in the process of designing improvements in this area. This includes the possible extension of Corporate Hill Drive to Old West Wilson Bridge Road. Additionally, as part of our continued efforts to look at traffic in this area, we have our traffic consultant Carpenter Marty evaluating short, medium- and long-term opportunities to improving traffic

flow at the Wilson Bridge and High Street intersection. We expect this study to be completed during the project review and will help inform and guide decision making.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended tabling of these applications to give the applicant time to address staff comments and gather additional input from the Board & Commission members and the community.

**Discussion:**

After reviewing the staff memo, Mr. Brown turned the presentation over to Retail Partners. Mr. Chris Hipps, Vice President of Development for Retail Partners, 5310 Harvest Hill Rd., Dallas, Texas 75230. He thanked the Board and Commission members, and city staff for their help and support. He also wanted to recognize a few of his team members present at the meeting: Kendra, their Chief Entitlement Officer, Bruce and Jake Fields with the VSC Group, Mick and Amador with O'Brien Architects, Steve and John with POD Design, Brian and James with EMH&T.

Mr. Hipps said he would be focused on the PUD and Zoning aspect of High North with a plan to come back before the Architectural Review Board (ARB) in March to further elaborate on the architectural aspects. Since their last presentation to the ARB there has been a tremendous amount of effort and thought put into the revisions of High North based upon the feedback they received from the community over the past year. They aim to further address comments. They heard about density, and the physical height of the redevelopment of the Worthington Mall. They also aim to address comments they heard from the market of a potential tenant including both of their requirements and the expense associated with trying to accommodate them. In an effort to continue their significant progress today and truly create the most vibrant and inviting mixed use development combined with a unique sense of place and pedestrian friendly environment they made the following changes to their overall plan:

First, they reduced the density by removing the hotel and scaled back the height of the Phase II office building. Secondly, they removed the vehicular traffic through the mall and focused solely on the pedestrian experience through what they are calling the Central Promenade. Thirdly, they focused the vehicular circulation improvements to the north and south connection on both the east and west side and maintained the current east west connection along the southern edge of the mall. Mr. Hipps said the design for the High North Phase I Class A Office space remained unchanged from their previous presentations. He said the design of the building was in the best position to attract quality tenants. The design was well received to meet the Class A Office tenant needs and the market interest was high. The building height was reduced. The building would be compatible with adjacent multifamily and office buildings and the building was oriented to minimize visual impact on West Wilson Bridge Road and the surrounding neighborhoods. Phases I and II from a zoning perspective remains relatively unchanged. Phase I features the Class A Office building on the northern end of the mall, a revised north and south vehicular traffic plan, and the removal of the roof which will create a walkable, vibrant, and pedestrian friendly environment. Phase II will feature the second office building to complete the redevelopment of High North and deliver the complete the live, work and play environment.

Vehicle Circulation Improvements:

- North/South drive created at eastern West Wilson Bridge Road entrance
- Mall Drive entrance is straightened.
- Improve access to parking garage.
- Increased visibility for western retail

#### Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

- Central Promenade  
Connectivity between Class A Office and retail and restaurants
- Establish connections with  
Kroger  
Exiting multi-family area and medical offices

Mr. Hipps said with the removal of the roof and beautification of the walkways to create the central Promenade, High North will be established as a premier mixed-use destination within the greater Columbus region. The Class A Office area will have direct access to the restaurant districts and health and wellness districts. The experience will not only engage the consumer but encourage pedestrian interaction through thoughtfully placed outdoor entertainment spaces along with carefully selected landmarks.

#### Promenade Invites Interaction

- Class A Office has direct access with pedestrian experience points.
- Arrival experiences encourage pedestrian interaction from the east and west.
- All retail and restaurants will open on to the promenade.
- Promenade will utilize placemaking elements to establish High North's identity

#### Specific Design Will Begin in March:

- Tonight's focus – PUD
- ARB application for Promenade planned to be filed March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- ARB review of the Promenade

Mr. Hipps continued his presentation and showed photographs of what the Promenade might look like. Mr. Hipps introduced Mr. Mick Granlund from O'Brien Architects and Mr. Steve Kolwicz, from POD Design. Mr. Granlund said they would not be bringing any more ideas than what has already been seen for the mall corridor at this meeting, but they would be bringing more photographs at the next meeting because this is a work in progress. Mr. Granlund discussed his background and said their offices were located in Dallas, Texas, and they are licensed in about 40 states. He gave an overview about how the company began and how they have become a boutique firm specializing in mixed-use development projects. He explained how they are creating a space that will be unique to the destination and provide a lot of different ways for people to have a memorable experience. Mr. Kolwicz said he is one of the partners with POD Design. He said their office is located about a half of a mile from the site that they are working



on. Mr. Kolwicz said he has over 25 years of experience with landscape architecture, and he gave an overview of the projects that his company has worked on. He is also a 45-year resident of the City of Worthington. The slide presentation showed photographs of some of the other projects that his company is currently working on throughout the United States.

Mr. Higgs discussed the High North scheduled designed to meet potential tenant needs without rushing ARB review.

Potential Tenant is driving schedule:

- Building needs to be ready for occupancy within 24 months
- Construction schedule is accelerated by beginning “mall enabling”/mall reconstruction using existing zoning
- Processing ARB approvals for mall reconstruction in two phases provides for further acceleration
  - Phase I – removal of northern end of mall
  - Phase II – Central Promenade

Estimated Schedule:

- PUD or rezoning
  - MPC February 25, 2021 – future meetings as needed
  - City Council April 2021
- Mall Reconstruction
  - Phase I – North Demolition
    - February 26 ARB Application
    - March 11 ARB Hearing(s) begin
  - Phase II – Central Promenade
    - March 12 ARB Application
    - March 25 ARB Hearings begin
  - Northern Office Building
    - June 2021 after close of the referendum period

Mr. Reis said he appreciated the efforts that were put forth in giving the Board a little bit of information about their firms. He said it was important to know their philosophy and their interest in Worthington. Mr. Reis said their rethinking of the pedestrian mall way from Wilson Bridge Road up to the new north office building is a good idea to keep that all pedestrian and removing the vehicular traffic. He said he liked what he has seen so far.

Mr. Coulter said he liked the size and scale of the building along West Wilson Bridge Road. He felt the building was more fitting and in line with the apartment building next door. Mr. Coulter said they also cut down on the overall density of the property. They have taken the hotel away; they have taken one of the office buildings away and now the project seemed more humanistic. Mrs. Holcombe agreed and said she felt this was a beautiful project. Mrs. Hinz said she echoed everyone else’s comments, and she was particularly excited to see the vehicular traffic going away so the area would be safer for pedestrians.

Mr. Coulter asked if there were any other emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no. Mrs. Holcombe moved to table the application and Ms. Hinz seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the application was tabled.

#### **E. Architectural Review Board – New**

##### **1. Rooftop Service Platform – 2151 W. Dublin-Granville Rd. (John Ingwersen) ARB 31-2021**

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

#### **Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

##### **Background & Request:**

This shopping center was originally constructed in the 1950’s, with a major addition and renovation completed in the late 1980’s. Over the years, many amendments have been approved including the addition of a gable at the east end, the addition of a patio, and multiple sign changes. In 2008, the eastern half of the building was approved for a facelift including new fascia and a change to the sign styles. In 2017 the building was painted a different color.

Rooftop equipment has been necessary for many of the businesses located in the center. This request includes a required service platform for a kitchen hood for a new restaurant – Velcani Bistro.

##### **Project Details:**

1. An exhaust fan with a service platform is proposed on the back side of the roof of this multi-tenant building. The platform would measure 8’ wide x 6’ deep x 5’ high. The equipment and platform would be a galvanized grey color.
2. Existing evergreen trees are along the south property line of this center.

##### **Land Use Plans:**

###### **Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance**

- There are recommendations in the Worthington Design Guidelines to use exterior materials traditionally used on commercial building in Worthington.
- Compatibility of design and materials and exterior detail and relationships are standards of review in the Architectural District ordinance.

##### **Recommendations:**

Staff recommended approval of this request, as the equipment and platform were properly located on the rear of the roof, which is screened from the view of nearby residents.

##### **Discussion:**

Mrs. Bitar swore in the applicant, Mr. John Ingwersen, 2151 W. Dublin-Granville Rd., Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Foust asked if there would be any additional noise coming from the exhaust fan. Mr. Ingwersen said he was not an exhaust hood expert; he is an architect. He did not believe there would be any intrusive noise coming from the exhaust fan. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no.

**Motion:**

Mr. Reis moved:

**THAT THE REQUEST BY JOHN INGWERSEN FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT WITH A SERVICE PLATFORM AT 2151 W. DUBLIN-GRANVILLE RD., AS PER CASE NO. ARB 31-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 31-2021, DATED JANUARY 7, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.**

Ms. Hinz seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

2. Condensing Unit – **60 Short St. (Natalie Moore) ARB 27-2021**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

**Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

**Background & Request:**

An American Foursquare built in 1910, this house is on the lot at the northeast corner of Oxford and Short Streets. The house and the garage, which is accessed from Oxford St., are contributing buildings in the Worthington Historic District. The homeowner would like to add a mini split condensing unit on the east side of the home.

**Project Details:**

1. The mini split condensing unit will be located on the east side of the home with the refrigerant line mount on the rear of the house near the northeast corner of the house.
  - a. The unit is 1’ in height, 1’ deep and 3’ wide.
2. The refrigerant line will be covered and will be a neutral beige in color.
  - a. The refrigerant line is also able to be painted.
3. The existing condensing unit is located at the rear of the home on the northwest corner.
4. The application states that there is an ornate iron arch that could be moved to provide screening.
  - a. Screening is required on the front and side by the Planning & Zoning Code unless a variance is approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

**Land Use Plans:**

**Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance**

Equipment should be screened from view.

**Worthington Planning & Zoning Code**

Section 1173.10 requires air-conditional equipment to be located to the rear of the dwelling unit, however it does give the option to place the equipment at the side of the dwelling provided that

the equipment be effectively screened on the front and sides by an evergreen hedge or dense planting of shrubs not less than the height of the equipment, or by a fence or wall of similar height.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended conditional approval of the application with the condition that the applicant add additional vegetation or fencing to screen the condensing unit.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Ms. Natalie Moore, 60 Short St., Worthington, Ohio. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Ms. Moore stated that there was an herb bush that would help screen the condensing unit from Short St. Mrs. Holcombe stated that she believed the screening would meet our needs. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no.

**Motion:**

Mrs. Holcombe moved:

**THAT THE REQUEST NATALIE MOORE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL A CONDENSING UNIT AT 60 W. SHORT ST. AS PER CASE NO. ARB 27-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 27-2021, DATED FEBUARY 1, 2021 BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE APLICANT ADD ADDITIONAL VEGETATION TO SCREEN THE CONDENSING UNIT.**

Mr. Schuster seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

**3. Lighting – 51 E. South St. (Sarah Sweeney) ARB 32-2021**

The applicant requested to table this item.

Mr. Schuster moved to table this application and Mr. Reis seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the application was tabled.

**4. New Windows – 112 E. New England Ave. (John D. & Ellen C. Scherer) ARB 28-2021**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

**Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

**Background & Request:**

This structure is a cape cod constructed in 1935 and is a contributing structure to the Worthington Historic District. In the 1960’s, the house was renovated, and a 230 sq. ft. sunroom addition was added to the rear of the home. In 2019 the Board approved the replacement of windows on the rear sunroom. The applicant would now like to replace the remaining windows at this time.

**Project Details:**

1. Replace the existing single pane double hung windows with storms and install 9 double hung Pella Reserve & Pella Lifestyle aluminum clad wood windows with simulated divided lights to match the style of the original windows.

**Land Use Plans:**Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Residential additions are recommended to maintain similar roof forms; be constructed as far to the rear and sides of the existing residence as possible; be subordinate; and have walls set back from the corners of the main house. Design and materials should be traditional, and compatible with the existing structure.

Retention and repair of existing historic windows is always preferable to replacement. Because they usually comprise so much of a building's exterior surface, windows are a major part of its character. Keeping them is one of the most important ways to protect that character. Even non-original windows may be of sufficient age and design quality to warrant their retention. If historic windows are too deteriorated to repair cost effectively and replacement is justified, the preferred option is an in-kind replacement in the same material and design. This usually means real wood windows with true through-the glass muntins (if appropriate) in dimensions and profiles that duplicate the originals. Window suppliers have become very good at doing such work at reasonable prices, but this still may take some persistence and hunting around. New windows made of substitute materials such as aluminum, vinyl, or clad wood can be an acceptable second choice if they provide a reasonably good match for the windows being replaced. Number of panes, real muntins, and correct profiles still are important.

Be sure that window and door designs are appropriate for the style or time period of the house. Design and materials should be traditional, and compatible with the existing structure.

**Staff Analysis:**

1. The existing windows are in need of maintenance which is expensive and difficult to find qualified people to do repairs.
2. Functionality in the ease of use of the windows would be greatly improved for the homeowners with the new windows.
3. The proposed windows are compatible with the existing structure.
4. The windows are believed the original wood windows that are 6 over 6 and 8 over 8 with storm windows.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended approval of this application, as the request was consistent with the Design Guidelines.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Mrs. Ellen Scherer, 112 E. New England Ave., Worthington, Ohio. Mrs. Scherer said she hoped to have the job completed by the end of May. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no.

**Motion:**

Mr. Schuster moved:

**THAT THE REQUEST BY JOHN AND ELLEN SCHERER FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO REPLACE WINDOWS AT 112 E. NEW ENGLAND AVE., AS PER CASE NO. ARB 28-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 28-2021, DATED FEBRUARY 5, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.**

Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

**5. Fencing – 1 Kenyon Brook Dr. (Robert Best) ARB 29-2021**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

**Background & Request:**

This property is roughly 0.6 acres in area on the north side of Kenyon Brook Dr. and adjacent to N. High St. The 1 ½ story house was constructed in 1923 and was one of 3 original houses that were later part of the Kenyon Brook Dr. subdivision. The owners were previously approved by the Architectural Review Board and the Board of Zoning Appeals to construct a freestanding oversized 24' x 28' two-story two-car garage to the east of the house in November of 2018. In April of 2019, the Architectural Review Board approved modifications to the previously approved garage and to replace the siding and roofing on the house.

In 2020 the property owner installed a white vinyl fence without a Fence Permit and Architectural Review Board approval. This application was the result of a Code Enforcement case concerning the installation of the fence without a Fence Permit and Architectural Review Board approval. The applicant made application once they were notified of the violation.

**Update:**

In January 2021, the Board approved the applicant's request to install a sauna, however, they did not approve the applicants request to legalize the placement of a white vinyl fence that was installed without a Fence Permit and Architectural Review Board approval. The Board asked the applicant to come back with revised materials on how the fence would be painted to match the color of the house and an updated landscape plan that reflected the change in elevation in the area in front of the fence.

**Project Details:**

1. Installed four separate sections of white vinyl fence along the west side of the house to create a visual/sound barrier that is part of a proposed Japanese garden and outdoor sauna.
2. The fence sections are 96" wide and 72" high.
3. Barrette Privacy Vinyl Fence Kit – Full Privacy Fence
4. Paint fence dark gray to match the house.

5. Install stone retaining wall at the base of the fence to raise the elevation to mitigate the slope for the proposed plantings.
6. Landscaping proposed to reach full height to screen the fence.

**Land Use Plans:**

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Fences have long been used to mark property boundaries, to restrict access to properties by people and animals and for decorative purposes. They serve these traditional purposes in Worthington and can add to the character of a neighborhood when they are well executed and properly cared for. Fences are not permitted in the front yard, with the goal of maintaining an open, friendly feel and avoiding barriers between neighbors. However, there are many other kinds of fences, both natural and man-made, that can be used to protect and enhance a property.

Fencing should be appropriate for the house's period and style and should be open in style (avoid solid, opaque fences that block all views) and three to four feet in height. Consider using natural plant materials instead of fences.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended approval of fence with the proposed modifications as it appears to match with conversation the Board had at the January 28, 2021 meeting.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Brown swore in the applicants, Mr. Robert and Mrs. Mary Best, 1 Kenyon Brook Dr., Worthington, Ohio. Mrs. Best said they listened to the Board's comments at the last hearing and incorporated those ideas into their plan, including changing the color of the fence panels to match the house. Mr. Schuster thanked the homeowners for the changes that they made, but he said he respectfully did not feel the fence met the criteria of the Design Guidelines. He said the fence was too high and was not made of the appropriate material and the fence did not have the proper spacing. Mrs. Hinz said she agreed with Mr. Schuster that the fence did not meet the criteria of the Design Guidelines and she would also be voting no. Mr. Best said he appreciated the Board members comments, but he disagreed and felt that his fence panels were appropriate. He said the fence panels were at the maximum level allowed and the fence was not continuous. Mr. Schuster asked Mr. Brown what the Guidelines require for fencing in the area regarding height. Mr. Brown said if the property is located with the Architectural Review District and a fence is going to have two-inch panels, the fence is required to have two-inch spacing. The Guidelines also recommend shorter style fencing. Mrs. Bitar said the Design Guidelines recommend a height between 3 and 4 feet. Mr. Best said his neighbors that live nearby have submitted emails of their approval, so he asked the Board members for reconsideration. Mr. Hofmann said the discussion would have been much easier if Mr. Best had brought his plans to the Board before installing the fence, and because of that the Board members were experiencing a high level of frustration. Mr. Hofmann said he did appreciate the changes, but it was a band-aid at best. Mr. Best said they worked closely with the Board members on their last project, and they had no intentions of misleading the Board. He said since they had a fence in that location before, he did not think he needed approval to replace the fence. Mr. Best said the fencing company also told them there should not have been an issue since there was already a fence in the same location, so he apologized for their mistake.

Mr. Brown swore in Mr. Joe Foust, 30 Kenyon Brook Dr., Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Foust his neighbor's property is adjacent to U.S. Route 23, and the area has plenty of traffic and noise. He said his neighbors asking for a higher fence to mitigate the noise made a lot of sense to him. Mr. Foust said he did not have a problem with fence being higher because it was acting as a noise barrier. He was in support of their fence.

Mr. Reis said they sat through this same discussion at the previous meeting and gave the applicant recommendations if they came back with some kind of raised planting area and painted the fence to match the house that might be acceptable. He said he did not want to take words out of anyone's mouth but as he recalled that was what they discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Reis said he felt there were times and certain situations when the rules and laws can meet middle ground and knowing that the adjacent neighbors have not objected at all, he would be voting yes. He felt the discussion was a train wreck this evening. Mrs. Holcombe said she agreed with Mr. Reis, that they told the applicants at the last meeting what they could do to compromise and make the fence somewhat acceptable. She felt all the work the Bests have done to improve their home was a great entrance to the City of Worthington and she would be voting yes. Mr. Schuster said he appreciated his fellow members comments, but they did not take a vote at the last meeting, and all the Board members did not agree on what was acceptable. He said the Board members were charged with upholding the Design Guidelines and this fence did not meet any of the criteria for fencing with the Architectural Review District and he felt it was inappropriate for the Board members to allow fencing of this height and material for this area. Mr. Hofmann said there was a fair number of split opinions, and there was opposition from one of the neighbors at the last meeting. Mrs. Best said was very confused with the Board members discussion because they went ahead and spent more money on architectural drawings based upon what the Board members recommended at the last meeting. She thought if they made the changes the Board recommended that that was a compromise. Mr. Coulter suggested re-taking a look at the Design Guidelines to see what modifications to the fence could be made. Mr. Best requested to table the application.

Mrs. Holcombe moved to table the application and Mr. Hofmann seconded the motion. All Board members voted, "Aye," and the application was tabled.

#### 6. Drive-thru Awning – 6130 Linworth Dr. (Tushar Patel) ARB 30-2021

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

#### **Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

##### **Background & Request:**

This building was constructed by Wendy's International in 1985 and operated as a fast food restaurant with a drive-thru until earlier this year. The applicant received approval to transform the property into a restaurant that combines Dunkin (formerly Dunkin Donuts) and Baskin Robbins. Changes to the signage and building, and a request for a Conditional Use Permit were approved in September of 2020, and approval of the directional signs was granted at the last meeting. This request would allow installation of an awning above the drive-thru window.

##### **Project Details:**



1. A 5'4" wide by 1'4" high sloped awning covered with orange vinyl material is proposed above the drive-thru window. The awning would extend 3'6" from the building.
2. Lighting is proposed on the underside of the awning. Specifications have not been provided, and it is not clear if light would also shine through the awning material.

**Land Use Plans:**Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

- The Board should review the exterior detail and relationship of the changes to existing sites and building. Bright color shades generally are discouraged in favor more subtle and toned-down shades.
- Fabric awnings are appropriate but should have a matte rather than a glossy surface.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended denial of this application unless the applicant changed the material and color of the awning. Vinyl awnings are not typical in the Architectural Review District, and the proposed material should have a matte finish rather than be shiny. The color should be a more subtle tone that blends in with the building rather than appearing as an additional sign. The lighting seems excessive and unnecessary and should in no case shine through the awning material.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Patel said they just opened last week so the dumpster was a little messy, but the mess would not be there for long. He said the "now open" marketing material was contracted about a month ago and he was under the impression that Worthington would allow the banner for two weeks. The banner has now been removed. Mr. Patel said the awning was overlooked, he said the awning had been in the elevations since the beginning and they need the awning to cover their customers when its raining. Mr. Patel said he was not aware that signage was not allowed on the clearance sign, and he would have that removed. He said he was not aware that the awning was not approved. Mr. Patel said the original fence was very deteriorated and they had intended to replace the fence. He said they were waiting for good weather to plant good shrubs. They do not intend for their customers to look at the condensing units while looking at the menu board. He said he would like to install a fence and landscaping, but they would come back to the Board at a later date for approval.

Mr. Coulter asked if the awning material was made out of vinyl or canvas, is it translucent or transparent? He said he would not want to see bright orange shining through. Mr. Patel said if there was a concern about light shining through, he could take care of that. He said the only reason they were proposing a light there was because when a car is standing there, the light from above would be blocked from the awning. He said the intent was for light shining down. Mr. Coulter said he would be okay with that; he would not want to see the awning illuminated at night.

Mr. Hofmann said he agreed with Mrs. Bitar that the drive-thru area had a lot of junk and needed to be cleaned up. Mr. Patel said he would take the DD logo sign down. Mr. Coulter asked Mrs. Bitar if her questions were answered. Mrs. Bitar said the awning being vinyl was certainly not typical for what is in the architectural review district. She said whether light would be emitting through the awning or not was probably not as much of a concern as if the awning was a shiny vinyl product verses a matt finish, or metal. The material would not have to be fabric, but is the Board going to allow the awning to be that color? She said the awning was like having an additional

sign on that side of the building. Mr. Reis asked if the awning could be closer to the brick color. He said they did not need to bring attention to the awning, the awning was only there for protection. Mr. Reis suggested the awning be of a fabric material and possibly a tannish or brownish color to blend in better and that might be more acceptable. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no.

**Motion:**

Mr. Reis moved:

**THAT THE REQUEST BY TUSHAR PATEL FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL AN AWNING OVER THE DRIVE-THRU WINDOW AT 6130 LINWORTH RD. AS PER CASE NO. ARB 30-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 30-2021, FEBRUARY 11, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING AND AMENDED:**

- **THAT THE AWNING BE MADE OF A FABRIC MATERIAL AND OF A COLOR TO CLOSELY MATCH THE BRICK BUILDING**
- **THAT THE APPLICANT REVIEW WITH CITY STAFF THE COLOR TO PROCEED WITH AND THE FABRIC CONTENT**

Mr. Schuster seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

**7. Exterior Alterations – 5596-5602 N. High St. (Jim Martin) ARB 33-2021**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

**Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

**Background & Request:**

This neighborhood shopping center was built in 1953, with only the northern 40% of the building being in the City of Worthington and the remainder in the City of Columbus. The property recently sold, and the new property owner would like to do several improvements to the site. The existing signage and stone on the entire building will remain.

**Project Details:**

1. Resurfaced asphalt parking lots
2. New dumpster enclosure
  - a. The dumpsters are currently unscreened.
  - b. The enclosure will be enclosed with wood fencing.
    - i. Height is unknown – *Clarification needed.*
    - ii. Unsure if the fence will be painted or natural – *Clarification needed.*
  - c. Bollards are proposed to protect the dumpster.
    - i. Unsure of the color of the bollards – *Clarification needed.*

1. Should be painted black to match the trim and canopy.
- d. Distance from the side property line is unknown – *Clarification needed.*
- e. The Board of Zoning Appeals will need to approve the dumpster location.
  - i. The existing rear parking lot and dumpsters are currently located on properties zoned Low Density Residential (R-10).
  - ii. The construction of the dumpster will require the Board of Zoning Appeals to approve the expansion of a nonconforming use on the site.
3. Repaint canopy and install new trim black to replace the teal trim and anodized aluminum trim/frame around glazing.
4. New wood, warm stain will be installed under the canopies.
5. New lighting under the canopy
  - a. NUVO Lighting – Wingate 2 Light – 60-watt medium bulbs
6. New glass storefronts – black trim
  - a. It appears that the door for Over the Counter is different than the other doors shown on the elevations – *Clarification needed.*

**Land Use Plans:**

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Building color is a major design element. Some colors are more appropriate than others, varying with a building’s age, style, and setting. The city has a flexible policy giving building owners freedom in color selection but recommends avoiding colors inappropriate for Worthington’s architecture.

Paint only surfaces that have been painted before. Stone surfaces were seldom painted originally; painted brick surfaces tend to be more common on commercial buildings than residential. Poor weather resistance or damage to a wall were the usual reasons for painting brick, though sometimes it was just to change the building’s look. While unpainted brick or stone should not be painted, if such a surface has been painted in the past, consider re-painting rather than removing the old paint.

Help keep a building’s design unified by using the same colors for the storefront and its details, the upper floor windows, and the cornice area.

**Staff Analysis:**

- The existing teal trim adds to the era of the building and the retro signage for the salon and restaurant the Board approved in the past, however the black trim is not uncommon with other commercial buildings found throughout Worthington.
- The Board is only reviewing a small portion of the site that is located in the City of Worthington, the majority of the site is located in the City of Columbus and does not require additional approval from a board or commission for the improvements. With the majority of the building being located in the City of Columbus, it would prove difficult to approve something completely different on the Worthington portion.
- Resurfacing the parking lots and the addition of a dumpster enclosure that would completely screen the two dumpster that are currently sitting out in the open would be a big improvement to the site.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommended approval of this application if the Board is comfortable with the proposed changes. The changes were not out of character with the Design Guidelines.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Mr. Jim Martin, 5596-5602 N. High St., Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Martin said he had elevations of the dumpster to share with the Board members. He said the provided dumpster is 48” tall in the front and 63” tall in the back. The fence height they are proposing is 7’ tall and made out of wood material. They were not planning on painting the fence, but they wanted to protect the fence with a natural finish. Mr. Martin said they would be painting the bollards black, and the dumpster is located approximately 10’ to 15’ feet from the property line. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Bitar said no.

**Motion:**

Mr. Reis moved:

**THAT THE REQUEST BY JIM MARTIN FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR BUIDING AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS AT 5596-5602 N. HIGH ST., AS PER CASE NO. ARB 33-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 33-2021, DATED FEBRUARY 12, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.**

Mrs. Hinz seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

8. Building Demolition – **700 E. Granville Rd.** (Dave Kaldy/Wahlberg Chevrolet) **ARB 34-2021**

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

**Findings of Fact & Conclusions**

**Background & Request:**

Mark Wahlberg Chevrolet is now operating at this site in place Jack Maxton Chevrolet which was there since the 1960’s. Recent approvals by the new owner include a new rear service door and signage for the site and buildings. Demolition is proposed for part of the middle building that was historically the used car site. Parking is proposed in its place.

**Project Details:**

1. The front part of the 7744 square foot “L” shaped building at 750 E. Granville Rd. was used as a showroom for used cars. Demolition of that part of the structure is proposed, with the rear 3636 square foot north-south part of the building remaining as a service building that would be refurbished. Painted block is proposed for the new south face of that building, and the applicant is proposing a mural be painted on that wall. No design has been presented for the mural, but approval by the Architectural Review Board and likely the Board of Zoning Appeals would be needed.
2. In place of the building 32 new parking spaces are proposed to accommodate vehicles for

sale. The area slopes to the west and is proposed to be paved with asphalt. The addition of new parking would require 2” of tree trunk be planted for every 6 parking spaces, so approximately 11” for the 32 spaces. No new landscaping is proposed.

**Land Use Plans:**

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Generally, demolition of pre-1950s buildings should be avoided. These tend to contribute the most to a community’s character. However, it may be desirable to avoid demolishing a newer building, depending on what is proposed to replace it. Demolition to create parking lots should be avoided, particularly along the dense streetscape of High Street.

Chapter 1170 (Signs) of the Worthington Planning & Zoning Section of the Codified Ordinances defines murals as a type of sign. Chapter 1177 (Architectural District) identifies the purpose and standards for review for a Certificate of Appropriateness to determine that an application under consideration promotes, preserves and enhances the distinctive historical village character of the community. Any proposed mural would need ARB approval, and approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) would likely be needed to deviate from the requirements for sign size, number of signs and number of colors. A 2017-2018 discussion of murals felt locations outside of Old Worthington may be appropriate for placement, but there was not a specific conversation about this site.

1171.02 Special Parking Provisions.

(h) Landscaping of Parking Areas. All parking lots shall provide, in addition to screening requirements, two inches dbh (diameter, breast, height) tree trunk size for every six parking spaces. All trees shall be balled and burlapped. The minimum diameter at breast height of any tree shall be two inches. Planting beds for parking lot trees shall be constructed so as to distribute landscaping throughout the parking lot and minimize damage to trunks and roots of the trees from vehicles, pedestrians and parking lot maintenance through the use of adequate soil planting area and curbing or parking blocks. Planting soil area per tree shall be a minimum of forty-five square feet. The minimum dimension for the planting area shall be five feet on any one side. All trees shall be maintained in a healthy condition. Any lot with a minimum dimension of fifty feet on any one side shall have at least one tree planting bed per 6,000 square feet of paved surface. The minimum distance between deciduous trees needed to meet code requirements located in separate planting beds shall be thirty-six feet. Additional landscaping, trees, ground cover, hedge or evergreens may be located between deciduous trees.

**Recommendations:**

It does not appear there is any special significance to the building proposed for demolition except that a building is of more interest to a streetscape than a parking lot. Retention of the rear part of the building will help, and the addition of a mural in the future may be a benefit to the site as well. It is not clear what the applicant or owner have in mind for the mural, but conversation regarding the issue may be helpful.

Although the City cannot require trees be added for existing parking spaces, trees should be added to the new area of the parking lot to meet the Code requirement for landscaping.

With the addition of trees, approval of the following motion is recommended.

**Discussion:**

Mrs. Bitar swore in the applicant, Mr. Dave Kaldy, 49 E. Third Ave., Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Kaldy said the site is kind of funny. There are multiple zoning districts that cut across the property. There is a C-4, an I-2, and then another C-4. The long building they are keeping is in the I-2 section. The building was originally two separate L shaped buildings. The building they have chosen to keep was originally a car wash and the leg of the building that is furthest to the east, that was a little truck sales building. The knuckle between the two, the tall glass thing, was an addition from 1995, to tie the two buildings together. In the past year, Mr. Wahlberg purchased the property. They are using the property in a little bit of a different way than Maxton had over the previous years. One of the other interesting things about this property is that there is a basement inside the larger Chevy dealership. They cannot get the larger trucks like the Tahoes into the building where they normally do detailing. What they are finding is that this building in question that they were looking at, the piece that they want to keep, will be rehabbed so that they can pull in the larger vehicles into the bay and perform detailing on them. They have not been using the building since they moved in. Having the ability to display more of their product is appealing to a car dealer to show their inventory.

In regard to the mural, they are planning to display on the exposed face of the building they will come back to the Board at a later time for further discussion on that. Mr. Martin said some of the conversations about what that could be is getting a local artist to come and maybe have some kind of a mixture between the City of Worthington's history and Wahlberg in some kind of an artistic way to blend. The part of the building that will be coming down is quite high and a little out of proportion for how large it is. He said there is a twenty-five-foot ceiling with nothing in it at all, just a big glass box. Mr. Martin said they would come to an agreement about the landscaping with whatever that needs to be.

Mr. Schuster said he was frustrated because they were supposed to bring all of the other items into compliance and they have not done that. He also felt the application was incomplete. If they are proposing a parking lot then there are things the Board should be looking at before being asked to vote on something. Mr. Schuster said he was uncomfortable moving forward until they can come into compliance with the other items. Mr. Hofmann said he echoed Mr. Schuster's comments and that there is too much on the table that needs to be cleared up first. Mr. Coulter asked the Board members to clarify what needed to be cleaned up. Mr. Schuster said he was reiterating what Mrs. Bitar said earlier that the lighting for the proposed parking lot was not appropriate, there is also a landscaping requirement. Mrs. Holcombe said she agreed, and that she would not want to see the building come down until she saw what the property was going to look like after the building was demolished. Mr. Coulter said he would like to know what the end of the building was going to look like. Will the building have just bare concrete block? Will the block be painted? He said in terms of the tree requirement, that is a fair question. Mr. Coulter said he did not have a problem with the lights being on the building because there are pole lights out there. He was also comfortable with the style of the fixture. How many lights will there be, one per side? Two per side? Mrs. Hinz said she would like to know what the mural would look like and Mr. Martin said that is going to take some time to find an artist and come up with something that the Board would

approve. He said in terms of their lighting plan, there were two wall packs that would need to be added and the poles on the photometric plan are already existing. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mr. Brown said no.

Mr. Martin requested to table the application. Mr. Reis moved to table the application and Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. All Board members voted, "Aye," and the application was tabled.

#### **F. Other**

Mr. Brown reminded the Board and Commission that the developers for the mall would be back at the next meeting and they need feedback and are on a time crunch to keep things moving along. The applicants are hoping for a recommendation by the second meeting to City Council by the meeting in April so that they can meet their deadlines.

#### **G. Adjournment**

Mr. Reis moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Hofmann seconded the motion. All Board members voted, "Aye," and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.