



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
WORTHINGTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
WORTHINGTON MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION
March 11, 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 (7:05 p.m.); David Foust; Richard Schuster; and Susan Hinz. Also present were: Lee Brown, Director of Planning & Building; and Lynda Bitar, Planning Coordinator. Worthington City Council Representative Scott Myers was absent; and

A. Call to Order – 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. The minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting were not available.

B. Architectural Review Board – Unfinished

Mr. Reis moved to take the following Agenda item off the table, and Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the Agenda item was removed from the table.

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

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

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 vehicular/pedestrian connector and the north/south vehicular/pedestrian 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 be making a separate ARB application to remove the northern portion of the mall and skylights/roof prior to the officially rezoning of the property. Case #ARB 38-2021 is next on the agenda to demolish of approximately 21,000 sq. ft. of the northern portion of the mall. A separate ARB application will be coming to a future meeting for removal of the skylights/roof.

Application History:

- September 24, 2020 – The Municipal Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Board reviewed and tabled the proposal for the site where the applicant received feedback from the Commission & Board and the public.
- October 22, 2020 - The Municipal Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Board reviewed and tabled the proposal for the site where the applicant received feedback from the Commission & Board and the public.
- February 25, 2021 - The Municipal Planning Commission and the Architectural Review Board reviewed and tabled the proposal for the site where the applicant received feedback from the Commission & Board and the public.

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 interior 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.
- Reconfiguration of the parking lot in front of Kroger on the east side of the mall that will add parking and a central crosswalk going east/west through the parking lot.
- 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 pedestrian improvements along the north/south and east/west connectors on the site. The tenant spaces that have access on the eastern elevation will now have a secondary access to the 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 the methodology used when the Holiday Inn site was reviewed and approved for parking. Phase I will provide 1,246 spaces and Phase II will provide 482 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 dated February 5, 2021 was submitted and 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 has been reviewed; however, the City has asked for an updated Traffic Impact Study that reflects the current proposal vs. the previous proposal. The traffic impact will be much less, however the City feels that the materials should adequately reflect what is being proposed.*

High Street & Wilson Bridge Road Analysis:

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: *Updates in Bold & Italics*

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 more detailed in the Development Text.
 - 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.
 - ***A firmer timeline is needed as it relates to the improvements proposed in Phase I.***
 - 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" ***13'6"*** 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. ***Corrected in the Development Text.***
- ~~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.~~ ***Corrected***
- Signage
 - The signage section needs to be updated to reflect all the signage proposed for the redevelopment of the site. ***Updated, however further clarification is needed in the text and exhibits that addresses the overall size, material and location of signage on the site. Better understanding of what is going to be signage vs. the logo/branding (HN) on the site.***
 - Monument signage and retaining wall signage needs to be updated and reflected in the text. ***Updated***
- 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.
 - ***An updated Traffic Impact Study has been reviewed; however, the City has asked for an updated Traffic Impact Study that reflects the current proposal vs. the previous proposal.***
- 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.
 - ***Timing of improvements still needs to be clarified.***
 - Confirmation needed that the north/south drive will be completed separately from the parking lot improvements.
 - ***Timing of improvements still needs to be clarified.***
- Public Space Amenities
 - ***Amenities and location of amenities will need to be discussed and will be a separate application at an upcoming meeting.***
- 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. **Corrected**~~
- ~~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. **Corrected**~~
- Exhibit E-4B needs to be updated to reflect the removal of the cupola on the mall. ***The cupola will possibly stay, so some exhibits will show the cupola remaining.***
- An example of the color of the spandrel glass is needed as it pertains to exhibits E-1A, E-1B, E-1C and E-1D.
- ~~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. **Corrected**~~
- A greater discussion is needed with the Board concerning the interior improvements and amenities proposed on Exhibits E-5B, E-5C and E-5D. ***This will be a separate application at an upcoming meeting.***
- Exhibit E-5E, E-6A, E-6C needs updated to reflect the removal of the cupola. ***The cupola will possibly stay, so some exhibits will show the cupola remaining.***
- 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 these applications to give the applicant time to address staff comments and gather additional input from the Board & Commission members and the community.

Discussion:

Mr. Foust said he was comfortable with the architecture on the buildings because they fit in with what is already on West Wilson Bridge Road with a more contemporary approach, but he was concerned about the look of the interior of the mall when the mall will be opened. He asked if there were any issues concerning the different styles. Mr. Coulter said it would be interesting to see what they come back with for their final design. Mr. Schuster asked if the number of parking spaces would be reduced if the building was going to be reduced from ten to eight floors. Mr. Brown said that was possible but depending on who the tenant(s) will be. He explained the city is working on the financing with the applicant so this would be a public garage. Mr. Brown said they are also doing a subdivision of the property that is going to be creating this new parcel where the office building will be constructed. One of the things they will need to discuss is when this is split out, they will need to discuss when this goes to City Council, if this stays within the Architectural

Review District, and if so will need to be recaptured back into the Architectural Review District as part of the subdivision process. Mr. Brown said the initial thoughts were they did something similar with the Telhio site that became the site for Bank of America, the kiosk along West Wilson Bridge Road. When the Board approved of the subdivision for that project, they did recapture that back into the Architectural Review District, and Kroger as well. He said they would need to have a discussion about that as the recommendation moves forward to City Council. The applicants have been working with the City's Fire Department to address any of their concerns, and the Division of Building Regulation for any Building Code possible issues. Mr. Brown then turned the discussion over to Mr. Watson.

Mr. Brown swore in Mr. David Watson. Mr. Reis said he was trying to understand the full scope of the phasing. He asked if four quadrants of the mall would remain in the final phase of the development project and Mr. Watson said yes, what they were working on previously, and the most difficult part of the project would be to activate the western and northern end of the mall. There is no visibility to Kroger, there is no visibility to the roadways. After talking with their consulting team, he said the area was too tight to have vehicles and the pedestrian experience they want. They want to make this the coolest pedestrian esplanade in the Columbus area. They are away from vehicular traffic now and strictly thinking pedestrian. Mr. Reis asked what the widths of the pedestrian quarters were. Mr. Kolwicz said they were about 40' from store front to store front. Mr. Watson said what they have now is a much broader canvas to activate the pedestrian ways. Mr. Coulter thanked Mr. Watson for listening to the comments of the Board members and the residents of the community, and he appreciated the renderings of the different viewpoints. He said he was very comfortable with the project. Mr. Coulter asked Mr. Watson what his time overall time frame would be. Mr. Watson said there is a tenant in the market that they have signed a confidentiality agreement with, that has a very aggressive timeline, and they would need to begin demolition this summer, and immediate construction, with a completion around January of 2022. Mr. Watson said this has taken a tremendous number of resources and they are competing with the suburb to the east, and one to the south and west. He said you would have the roof off the mall, the office building up, and all the improvements they talked about. If they get the zoning, this would be the best office opportunity within the Columbus area. It could take 9 months to a year to get leases fully executed. It could take 14 to 20 months to construct the building. It could be a year before they have the leases in place to go forward, and then another 18 months to get the building constructed. Mr. Brown said the keys things they will see at the next meeting would be the review by the traffic consultant, some preliminary information related to one of the city initiatives they are working on with the High Street and West Wilson Bridge Road related to those short term and midterm and long-term improvements that would help the vehicular and pedestrian traffic moving through that intersection. Mr. Brown said with everything packaged together, and the information from those two studies, in addition to what was outlined in the staff memo, should give the Planning Commission members the ability to give their recommendation to City Council. When making the recommendation to City Council, the commission members will need to state their reasons why the items mentioned at the meeting tonight and in the staff memo, helped generate their response. Mr. Coulter said as far as the subdivision was concerned, he would like to see everything remain within the Architectural Review District. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mr. Brown said there was one caller.

Mr. Brown swore in the speaker, Mr. Eric Fisher, a resident from Caren Ave., Worthington, Ohio.

Mr. Fisher asked when the plan would be finalized and how tall the building would be. Mr. Brown explained with zoning and the PUD, every zoning district in the city has a maximum height requirement, so with the PUD you would be creating and setting your own standards, and with the way the PUD has been drafted, the maximum height they could have would be ten stories, and this would require ARB approval once the PUD is approved by City Council. They must come back with the actual building plan, and the building could not be taller than ten stories.

Mr. Foust moved to put all three of these items back on the table and Mr. Reis seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and items were tabled.

D. Architectural Review Board – New

1. Partial Demolition – 7227 N. High St. (DRP Worthington LP) ARB 38-2021

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of Fact & Conclusions

Background & 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 is in the process of 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 that will ultimately need to be approved by City Council.

This application focuses on just the demolition of the northern portion of the existing mall on the site. This review does not give the applicant any additional rights as it pertains to their current application before the City. The result of this application would give the property an advantage in preparing the northern portion of the site for the new proposed Class A Office building and garage during the referendum period. Construction of the new building may not occur until the zoning is in effect, however this will allow the acceleration of the construction of the northern Class A Office building to meet the occupancy date needed for the potential tenant.

If for some reason the rezoning portion of the application were to be held up or overturned, this application requires the northern side of the mall to be refaced and the site to be restored.

Project Details:

1. Demolition of approximately 21,000 sq. ft. of space at the northern portion of the Worthington Mall.
 - a. This would prepare the site for the new Class A Office building and parking garage that would be located on the newly created lot.
 - b. The proposed Class A Office building and parking garage would be adjacent to the existing building; however, it would need to meet all Ohio Building Code requirements for fire separation.
2. Façade Plans
 - a. Staff requested a façade plan for the northern portion of the building for the scenario that if the rezoning did not occur that we would not be left with a scar on the building similar to what happened a decade ago when the mall was disconnected from Kroger.
 - b. Proposed painted CMU on the northern elevation.
 - c. Proposed gray metal canopy over the rear doors.
 - d. Pre-finished metal coping along the roof.
 - e. Brick columns painted gray.
 - f. HN (High North) logo/brand on the rear of the building.
 - i. Approximately 23-feet in height.
 - g. Proposed fiber cement panels for tenant signage.
 - i. This signage will eventually only be visible from inside the parking garage, and will act as wayfinding signage for the tenants.

Worthington Land Use Plans:

Part Thirteen – Building Code

In mid-2019 City Council approved an amendment to [Section 1301.07](#) and [Section 1305.09](#) Demolition or Moving Buildings to add additional requirements related to the demolition of buildings and the required restoration of the site after demolition. This was a proactive measure to alleviate sites that are left unfinished for months or years at a time. This was important knowing that the City has many sites that might redevelop in the coming years.

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.

Worthington Design Guidelines

The [Worthington Design Guidelines](#) makes recommendations for demolition. Demolition, of course, is final. Because it is an irreversible act, full or partial demolition must be carefully considered before any decision is made. A decision on whether a particular demolition is appropriate must be made in light of several factors, including whether the demolition is full or partial; the age of the structure; the level of integrity of the structure being demolished (has it been extensively altered?); the impact of the demolition on Worthington's character; and plans for the site following demolition.

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.

In all cases where demolition is proposed, applicants should be prepared to explain and to document the financial and technical reasons why it is not feasible to accomplish their goals while retaining the existing building.

It may be acceptable to demolish an older building that has been so altered over the years that its integrity is low, and it has lost most or all of its historic character. This does not, however, always apply, since even altered buildings can sometimes be important placeholders along the streetscape. Because of age or design, some building additions may be nearly as important as an original building. Removing these elements might affect the building's character, and this should be taken into account when demolition is proposed.

Worthington Planning & Zoning Code – Chapter 1177

[Section 1177.06](#) outlines the requirements for the demolition, partial demolition or removal of a building within the Architectural Review District must be reviewed and approved by the Board.

The Board may request a statement from the City's Division of Building Regulation on the structural condition of the building and the conformity of the building to applicable building codes. In addition, the Board may request at the City's expense a written statement concerning the proposed demolition by a registered architect, historical conservator or other professional having experience with historic structures. Such statement shall be taken into consideration in determining the appropriateness of the request.

The applicant may provide at his or her expense any evidence or testimony from a registered architect, historical conservator or other professional having experience with historic structures.

The Board of Architectural Review shall determine by a vote of its members whether to issue a certificate of appropriateness based on the determination:

- That such building is not historically or architecturally significant.
- That if the building is found to be historically or architecturally significant, there is no feasible or prudent alternative or change that would allow preservation of the building.
- The proposal for grading, landscaping and other design treatment once the structure is removed meets the standards of this chapter.

In any circumstance, the Board shall not deny a request for a certificate of appropriateness if it determines either:

- That such denial will deny all reasonable use of the property or
- That such denial shall result in an unsafe condition because of the structural or physical condition of the building.

No building shall be demolished or removed in the Architectural Review District without the owner or his or her representative first obtaining a certificate of appropriateness approving such removal or demolition, unless such building presents an immediate danger to public health and safety in the opinion of the City's Chief Building Official, in which event, the Chief Building Inspector may order removal or demolition of such building in order to protect public health and safety.

Staff Analysis:

- Façade Plans
 - Proposed painted CMU on the northern elevation.
 - *Clarification needed on the color.*
 - *Examples of where this has been utilized elsewhere has been requested.*
 - Proposed gray metal canopy over the rear doors.
 - Pre-finished metal coping along the roof.
 - Brick columns painted gray.
 - HN (High North) logo/brand on the rear of the building.
 - *Clarification needed on the color.*
 - Proposed fiber cement panels for tenant signage.
 - Any exterior lighting on the northern elevation will need to be approved by the Board.
 - *Lighting has not been shown at this time.*
- An updated site plan is needed showing the portion of the site where demolition will occur.
 - What will this portion of the site look like if the Class A Office building is not constructed?
- A site restoration plan is not required if an application for a permit to construct a replacement structure on the site is received within 60-days of receipt of the application for demolition, however this portion of the site will be subject to referendum, so knowing how this portion of the site would function if not approved is necessary.
- Division of Building Regulation Comment – General Comments
 - 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.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended tabling of this request until the requested information has been provided.

Discussion:

Mr. Watson said there was no reason for them to tear down space that they have bought, if in fact, they do not have an office deal done. He said they paid \$180.00 per square feet for 21,000 feet on the north end of the mall. There is no financial impetus to go and tear 21,000 square feet down, and not have your office deal done. When they go to tear the northern end of the mall down, the office deal will be financed and ready to go. Board members did not have any questions or concerns.

Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or calls from the public and Mrs. Bitar said there were no calls, but she received an email earlier from Ms. Susie Needler, who lives on Weydon Rd., Worthington, Ohio. Ms. Needler said the proposed building with its big box look with sharp corners did not look like the rest of lovely Worthington. She asked if the design could have a more classic look like City Hall. Board members did not have any additional comments.

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

2. Window & Door Replacement – **555 Evening St.** (Susan J. Ellis Kerr) **ARB 35-2021**

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

The house on this 84’ wide parcel is a Colonial Revival style constructed in 1941, with an existing deck to the rear that was enlarged in recent years. This request is to replace all the windows in the house and the rear patio doors.

Project Details:

1. Most of the existing wood windows are not original to the house and are reportedly in poor condition.
2. Rosati vinyl windows are proposed in the same size and location as the existing windows. The owner originally wanted to change the style of all windows to the look of “undivided light”, but has agreed to add between the pane muntins to the front and side windows that would be seen from Evening St. All other windows would not have muntins.
3. The new patio doors are not proposed to have muntins dividing the glass and would be the same vinyl material.
4. The proposed windows and doors would be white, and the house would likely be painted white in the future.

Land Use Plans:Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

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.

Some earlier houses may have been re-done with later windows -- 1-over-1 sash in a Federal style house, for example. In general, it is better to retain the older non-original windows (since they probably are quite old themselves, even if not original) than to replace them with new ones. If the nonoriginal windows are deteriorated and require replacement, it would be appropriate either to return to an original window design (with true muntins; again, refer to the style guide) or to install new 1-over-1 windows.

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.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended approval of the application. The proposed vinyl windows seemed to be a reasonably good match for the existing windows. It did not seem the existing windows had true through-the-glass muntins, so replacement windows with muntins between the panes should be an acceptable alternative for those windows seen from the street.

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar swore in the applicant, Ms. Susan Kerr, 555 Evening St., Worthington, Ohio. Ms. Kerr said she is the owner of the property; her daughter and son-in-law live there. She said the windows should look exactly as they do now, except for the grids at the back of the house. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or calls from the public and Mrs. Bitar said no.

Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY SUSAN J. ELLIS KERR FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO REPLACE THE WINDOWS AND PATIO DOORS AT 555 EVENING ST. AS PER CASE NO. ARB 35-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 35-2021, DATED FEBRUARY 22, 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. Foust, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Ms. Hinz, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

3. Attached Garage Conversion – **100 W. South St.** (Neil Toepfer) **ARB 36-2021**

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of Fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

The former 1962 split-level house on this 70.13’ wide and 150’ deep lot was approved to be partially demolished, added onto and renovated in 2018. During construction it seems that none of the existing house or foundation was saved. Extension of the completion deadline has been granted twice and the owner hopes to be finished this year.

Originally, the eastern part of the house was set up as a “mother-in-law” suite that was to have an attached one-car garage with access from the rear. Now the owner would like that area to be living space.

Project Details:

1. Instead of a garage door on the back of the house, two double hung windows are proposed that would match the other windows on the house.
2. The driveway is no longer proposed to continue behind the east side of the house.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Compatibility of design and materials and exterior detail and relationships are important concepts in the Design Guidelines and standards of review in the Architectural District ordinance.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended approval of this application. The proposed changes were appropriate.

Discussion:

Mr. Neil Toepfer, 100 W. South St., Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Toepfer said the new windows would match the existing windows on the house. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or calls from the general public and Mrs. Bitar said no.

Motion:

Mr. Foust moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY NEIL TOEPFER FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO MODIFY THE HOUSE AT 100 W. SOUTH ST., AS PER CASE NO. ARB 36-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 36-2021, DATED FEBRUARY 24, 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. Mr. Reis, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Hofmann, aye; Mr. Schuster, aye; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mr. Foust, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

4. Patio, Fireplace, Kitchen, Pergola, Fence – **28 W. Granville Rd.** (Oakland Design Associates/Lahue) **ARB 37-2021**

Mrs. Bitar reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of Fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

This property is at the corner of the northwest Village Green Dr. and W. Granville Rd. The lot is 107.25' wide along W. Granville Rd. and 67.1' deep for total area of 7196 square feet. The 2518 square foot Dutch Colonial house was constructed in 1913 and added onto and renovated in the late 1990's.

The right-of-way for Granville Rd. is 100' wide and a 50' setback is required. The house is approximately 50' from the street.

This application is a request to renovate the west side yard.

Project Details:

1. The current yard area is enclosed with a scalloped wood picket fence, and concrete steps from the house to a patio that is overgrown with vegetation.
2. New stone steps are proposed from the house, leading to a two-tiered patio. The top level would have an eating area under a 12' high cedar pergola with a curved top at the south end and a hot tub to the north. A 4' high scalloped fence is proposed to run next to the pergola and return to the southwest corner of the house. The lower level is proposed on the north side of the yard, and would have a fireplace, an outdoor kitchen, seat walls (with storage under) and a water feature. Bluestone is proposed for the walking surfaces and the other structures would also be built with stone.
3. The plan shows the old fence would be removed and instead new planting beds would be at the perimeter of the yard. Several large trees would remain on the south side of the yard and several would be removed from the northwest corner of the property.
4. Variances are needed for almost every structure that is above grade due to the 50' required setback.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Decks and patios should be limited to the rear of buildings. Patios may be constructed of concrete, stone or brick. Consider the style of the house when designing decks and patios, since some styles and some designs are not compatible. Compatibility of design and materials and exterior detail and

relationships are important concepts in the Design Guidelines and standards of review in the Architectural District ordinance.

Recommendations:

Additional details are needed for the following:

- Picket size and spacing for the fence
- Railing specifications
- Fireplace dimensions
- Hot tub details
- Planting details.

Staff recommended approval of this application if those details are acceptable. Due to the size, orientation, and required setbacks for the house and lot, the only opportunity for usable yard space is on the west side of the house. The proposed design should create a semi-private space that is not terribly obtrusive for those in the right-of-way due to retention of the large trees that partially block the space, and the proposed new landscaping.

Discussion:

Mrs. Bitar swore in the applicant, Mrs. Christine Lahue, 28 W. Granville Rd., Worthington, Ohio. Mrs. Lahue said she had two corrections for clarity. She said Mrs. Bitar pointed out two deciduous trees in the back corner she thought were going to be removed but those trees were not on her property, and the trees would not be removed. What would be removed is a bush that seems to be like a tree. One pine tree would be removed to make room for the fireplace. On the south side of the house that faces St. Rt. 161, the fence would only be the length of the pergola, and then the patio would continue to the house, but it will be open so they can have a seating area and look out onto the street. Mr. Schuster said they have had many discussions about fences, and this fence would face St. Rt. 161. He said he would prefer to see the fence kept at the height level approved for the district. She said she respected the need for the consistency in the district, but she was requesting the additional foot for the need of privacy because this would be the dining area. Mr. Reis said he respected Mr. Schuster's comment, he said fences have become a mountain for the Board members to climb. He said because the fence was not a consistent five or six feet, and the design was open, and nicely designed, he did not have a problem with a portion of the fence being a tad higher, and since they have not had a neighbor express an opinion in a negative manner he would not be opposed to the minor change. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or calls from the general public and Mrs. Bitar said no. Mrs. Lahue said she would like the fence to disappear as much as possible, so she planned to stain the fence dark gray.

Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY OAKLAND DESIGN ASSOCIATES ON BEHALF OF DAVID AND CHRISTINE LAHUE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO RENOVATE THE WEST YARD AT 28 W. GRANVILLE RD. AS PER CASE NO. ARB37-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 37-2021, DATED FEBRUARY 24, 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; Mr. Foust, aye; Mr. Schuster, nay, because of the height restrictions for the district; Mrs. Hinz, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

E. Municipal Planning Commission – No New Business

F. Other – No Other Business

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 8:37 p.m.