



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
WORTHINGTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
WORTHINGTON MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION
March 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; David Foust; Richard Schuster (7:04 p.m.); and Susan Hinz. Also present were: Lee Brown, Director of Planning & Building; and Robyn Stewart, Assistant City Manager. Worthington City Council Representative Scott Myers was absent.

A. Call to Order – 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of the minutes of the February 25 and March 11, 2021 meetings.

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

B. Architectural Review Board – Unfinished

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

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 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 PUD 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. The demolition 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. Removal of a portion of the skylights in the promenade area on the northern end of the building.
 - c. 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 painted brick and fiber cement board on the southern and eastern elevations.
 - d. Vegetative green walls on portions of the southern, eastern and western elevations.
 - e. Pre-finished metal coping along the roof.
 - f. Brick columns painted.
 - g. Metal canopies, perforated metal for signage, louvers for signage and fiber cement board for signage on the building.
 - h. HN (High North) logo/brand on the rear of the building.
 - i. Approximately 23-feet in height.
 - i. Proposed fiber cement panels for tenant signage on the north elevation.
 - 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 area 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
 - Exhibit E-2 Material Board has been updated to reflect the exact location of where these colors and materials will be used on the site.
 - Vegetative green wall on the southern, eastern, and western elevations.
 - *Clarification needed on plantings that will be used.*
 - HN (High North) logo/brand on the rear of the building.
 - Any exterior lighting will need to be approved by the Board.
 - *There appears to be new lighting on the southern elevation. Clarification needed on the lighting.*
 - The interior elevations will likely evolve as we work our way through the redevelopment of the entire site.
- Site Plan
 - The updated site plan shows the north side of the mall to be returned to lawn once the building is demolished.
- 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 approval of this application if the Board felt comfortable with the information provided by City staff and the additional information provided by the applicant at the meeting.

The Board needs to determine the following:

- That these buildings are not historically or architecturally significant.
- That if these buildings are found to be historically or architecturally significant, that there is no feasible or prudent alternative or change that would allow preservation of the buildings.
- The proposal for grading, landscaping and other design treatment once the structures are 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.

Discussion:

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Mr. David Watson, representing DRP Worthington LP, 5310 Harvest Hill Rd., Suite 250, Dallas, Texas. Mr. Watson said they have no intention of tearing down the property they purchased until the new office building is a go. Mr. Reis asked for clarification that Mr. Watson would not start the demolition of the mall until they had a tenant for the new building and Mr. Watson said yes. He would not tear down the mall until they had something to replace it with. Mr. Brown said if this Agenda item was approved tonight, once the approval has been granted for something, the safeguard is in place that if for some reason the office building would not be constructed, there would not be that scar on the north end of the mall.

Mr. Brown stated there were six emails forwarded to the Board related to the development and all emails were in support. The letters were from Mr. Peter McCrea, Mr. Matt Gregory, Mr. Michael Ball, Mr. Scott Green, Ms. Paula Ryan, and Mr. Tom Burns, all giving their support for the entire project of redevelopment. Mr. Coulter said he read the letters and asked if there were any additional speakers and Mrs. Stewart replied no.

ARB Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY DRP WORTHINGTON LP FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO DEMOLISH A PORTION OF THE WORTHINGTON MALL AND RESTORE THE BUILDING AND SITE PER THE APPROVED PLANS AT 7227 N. HIGH ST., AS PER CASE NO. ARB 38-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 38-2021, DATED MARCH 12, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

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

2. 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 & 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 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.

The applicant has made several modifications since 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 new Class A Office/Mixed Use building on the northern portion of the site with a maximum building height of 10-stories, 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 new Class A Office/Mixed Use building on the southern portion of the site with a maximum building height of 6-stories, 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 submitted a separate ARB application to remove the northern portion of the mall and a portion of the skylights/roof in the promenade area prior to the official rezoning of the property. Case #ARB 38-2021 is 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 the removal of the main portion of the skylights/roof of the promenade area of the mall and reviewing the interior amenities that will be added to the promenade as part of the redevelopment of the site.

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.
- March 11, 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:

The C-2 District (Community Shopping Center) permits commercial centers of an integrated design which contain a concentration of a wide variety of retail and service establishments which are currently located in the community or within the population they serve, having adequate parking and direct access to major thoroughfares, with limited points of access, being screened or fenced from surrounding residential areas, and serving the day-to-day needs of the community supplying the more durable and permanent needs of the whole community. Community commercial uses include, but need not be limited to: supermarkets, department stores, specialty stores, hardware stores, apparel and shoe stores, jewelry stores, appliance and furniture stores, drugstores, personal and business service outlets and discount markets. The C-2 District permits structures to be a maximum height of 3-stories (45-feet) with 150-feet of road frontage a minimum acreage of 1-acre for development.

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.

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 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
 - This includes a metal roof screen of approximately 10-feet in height to screen the mechanical equipment.
 - 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
 - This includes a metal roof screen of approximately 10-feet in height to screen mechanical equipment.
 - 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 middle of 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 will 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 could include the addition of an additional building of 100,000 sq. ft. up to 6-stories in height. 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. 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 ms 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.

An updated Traffic Impact Study dated March 10, 2021 was submitted and reviewed by the City Engineer and Carpenter Marty. The study states that the study area road network has enough reserve capacity to accommodate site generated traffic and anticipated non-site regional growth. The revised trip generation estimates make the site redevelopment much less impactful than the previous proposal which results in less entering trips in the PM Peak. This also reduces any required improvements that may be necessary at High St. and Wilson Bridge Rd.

	AM		PM	
	In	Out	In	Out
Existing Site*	436	299	830	863
Proposed Site (Phase 1)*	<u>558</u>	<u>317</u>	<u>816</u>	<u>946</u>
New Trips from Phase 1	122	18	-14	83
Proposed Site (Full Build)*	<u>631</u>	<u>321</u>	<u>756</u>	<u>942</u>
New Trips From Full Build	195	22	-74	79

High Street & Wilson Bridge Road Intersection Analysis:

The City is currently undertaking a comprehensive study of the High St. and Wilson Bridge Rd. intersection. 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 to be addressed at the Final Plan for the PUD and ARB approval:

The list below are items to be finalized at the PUD Final Plan and Architectural Review Board approval stage in the development process.

- Development Text:
 - Phasing -
 - 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.
 - Parking
 - Improvements to the parking lot in front of Kroger will be completed within Phase I.
 - The north/south drive will be completed separately from the parking lot improvements in Phase I prior to the opening of the new Class A Office/Mixed Use building.
 - Public Space Amenities
 - *Amenities and location of amenities will need to be discussed and will be a separate application at an upcoming meeting.*
- 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.*
 - Possible colored stamped asphalt similar to what is on the west side of the site would be appropriate.
- 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.
- A 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.*
- Future sidewalks along West Wilson Bridge Road and Old West Wilson Bridge Road will 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.
- 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 ms 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. The

Board has previously deviated from the Design Guidelines as it pertains to the mall site.

- 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
- 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)
- j. Installation of key boxes (Knox Box) will be required.
- k. 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.

[Chapter 1177 Architectural District](#)

Chapter 1177.02 District Boundaries states that there is hereby established an Architectural District which shall include all lots within the area of the original Village of Worthington as laid out in 1803, bounded on the north by North Street, on the south by South Street, on the east by Morning Street and on the west by Evening Street including all lots abutting on the a foregoing named streets and additionally the lot at the southeast corner of East South Street and Granby Street and to the south along Granby Street.

The Architectural Review District shall also include all lots abutting High Street within the corporate limits of the City on both the east and west sides commencing at North Street and

extending north to the northernmost corporation line and commencing at South Street and extending to the southernmost corporation line; and all lots abutting Granville Road within the corporate limits of the City on both the north and south sides commencing at Morning Street and extending east to the easternmost corporation line and commencing at Evening Street and extending west to the westernmost corporation line; plus the lot at the northwest corner of Pingree Drive and East Dublin-Granville Road and the lot immediately adjacent thereto to the north along Pingree Drive; plus all lots within the Kenyon Brook Subdivision, the Bellebrooke Subdivision, Rehe's Subdivision, the Maxton Place Subdivision, the Worthington Mall Subdivision, the lot at the northeast corner of High Street and East Wilson Bridge Road and the two lots immediately adjacent thereto to the east along East Wilson Bridge Road, the re-subdivision of Lots 21 and 22 of the Morris Addition (Greenwich Street East Subdivision), and the parcel at 966 Proprietors Road created by Subdivision Without Plat (SWOP 02-05) approved September 6, 2005, and the lot at 54 W. Wilson Bridge Rd created by Subdivision (SUB 03-18) approved February 4, 2019. The boundaries of the above-described Architectural District are additionally set forth on the map of the City which is attached to original Ordinance 44-2005 and made a part hereof.

City Initiatives:

Corporate Hill Extension

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.

High & Wilson Bridge Intersection Analysis

As part of our continued efforts to look at traffic in this area, the City has our traffic consultant Carpenter Marty evaluating short, medium- and long-term opportunities to improving traffic-flow at the Wilson Bridge and High Street intersection.

- The study is currently underway.

Staff Analysis:

Use Considerations:

- The proposed uses are the uses found in the WBC-3 Mixed Use as defined by [Chapter 1181.06\(c\)](#) as follows an area along the WBC that allows for a mix of retail and office uses both vertically and horizontally. Permitted uses include C-1 Neighborhood Commercial, C-2 Community Shopping Center and C-3 Institutions and Offices as listed in Chapter 1147. In addition to the uses above, hotel and restaurants with ancillary wineries and/or breweries are permitted uses.
 - The proposed uses are appropriate.

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

- The proposal has addressed scale, form and massing on the site along with their setbacks from property lines for the proposed new buildings on the 15.66-acre site. The Board felt that strict adherence to the guidelines would be nearly impossible and that this would be the corridor to review something with a variety. The majority of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor is located outside of the Architectural Review District. The Board will continue to review the proposal as they move throughout the development process.

- If the PUD were to be approved by City Council, the applicant is still required to get PUD Final Plan and ARB approval.
- The proposal went through several modifications from the original proposal addressing height, setbacks and uses on the site.

Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study:

- The proposal ties to the Study's recommendation to promote the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City.
- This area is also identified as a Mixed-Use area for a mix of retail, entertainment, and office with a recommend height of 5-6 stories in height.

Wilson Bridge Corridor Districts

- The proposal promotes the redevelopment of the corridor into a mixed-use area that is intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value, livability of the area, improved pedestrian and bicycle connections and adds new high quality Class A Office buildings and outdoor spaces.
- This area is also recommended for WBC-3 Mixed Use that would allow for the mix of retail and office uses both vertically and horizontally on the site.

Comprehensive Plan Update & 2005 Strategic Plan for Worthington

- The proposal reaffirms that there is a shift away from retail and is shifting towards a mixed-use, adaptive reuse and entertainment-oriented uses.
- The proposal provides a much-needed increase of Class A commercial office space in the City.
- The Plan encourages the redevelopment of existing highway office properties to make them more competitive in the market and that increased densities through expansion may require the use of structured parking and should be promoted.
 - The proposal appears to be in line with the above-mentioned recommendation.
- The site is identified as the Freeway Commercial Area in the Plan which recommends the redevelopment of the Worthington Mall that would include a mix of uses on the site.
 - The proposal appears to be in line with the above-mentioned redevelopment recommendations outlined in the Plan.

Subdivision & Architectural Review District

Section 1177.02 of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Worthington describes the parcels/lots that are included in the Architectural Review District. If this lot is created without also modifying the Codified Ordinances, then it would not be included in the Architectural Review District. It would then be completely surrounded by other lots in the Architectural Review District.

City Staff, and the Municipal Planning Commission at the March 11, 2021 felt that the proposed newly created lot should remain in the district since the adjacent parcels are in the district.

We will need to amend Section 1177.02 of the Codified Ordinances to change the language in the Planning & Zoning Code to accurately reflect the lot remaining in the district. This is then subject to the 60-day referendum period since it is a change to the Planning & Zoning Code.

If the subdivision is approved, the subdivision plat cannot be signed and recorded until after the 60-day referendum period.

Rezoning

Rezoning to a PUD gives the City and its citizens the assurance that what has been proposed will be built, maintained and that the mix of uses are agreed to in the future. The City is also working with the applicant on a Development Agreement and Tax Increment Financing Agreement that will go along with the PUD when the project goes to City Council for review. Any modification to the PUD would require approval in the future.

Board & Commission Discussion:

The Municipal Planning Commission will need to make a recommendation to City Council on an application concerning the rezoning of the property from the C-2 District to a PUD. The requested rezoning of this property would ultimately permit the redevelopment of the site. MPC members must determine if the proposed development meets the intent of the Comprehensive Plan based on the presented information.

In rendering a decision or recommendation, the Municipal Planning Commission shall articulate its basis therefor, in writing, by reference to the relationship that decision or recommendation has to the overall comprehensive planning goals of the City, which may be found in the Master Plan, the zoning map, a course of zoning or subdivision practices by the City, or any other acknowledged comprehensive strategy or goals previously established at the time of the decision or recommendation.

Recommendations:

ARB:

The Architectural Review Board should plan to table the ARB application.

Rezoning:

Staff recommended approval of the proposed rezoning to a Planned Use District to permit the redevelopment of the Worthington Mall as we believe it met the objectives found in the Comprehensive Plan, Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, Wilson Bridge Corridor Districts and the intent of the PUD to promote variety, flexibility and quality for development of properties in the City and permits for a more creative planning and design and enables a greater range of uses, while allowing for the design and mix of uses necessary to meet changing economic and demographic demands.

Subdivision:

Staff recommended conditional approval of the Preliminary and Final Plats for the creation of two lots as it met all the criteria outlined for Preliminary and Final Plat approval in the Codified Ordinances for the City of Worthington with the condition that the newly created lot be recaptured into the Architectural Review District.

The following motions can be approved, modified or denied by the Municipal Planning Commission.

Discussion:

Mr. Watson said he was very thankful for all the input. He felt what was before them, from a zoning standpoint was representative of a collaborative effort and you do not get that in a lot of communities, so he said he was very thankful for that. Mr. Reis said he commended Direct Retail Partners Worthington LP for their partner name and partnering with the City and with the Board and working with the community and coming up with this plan. He said this was one of the few times since he has been on the Board where the developer has gone out beyond the call of duty to work with all of us to come up with a plan that all would approve of and appreciate in the future. Mr. Reis said he could not say enough about the developer and the effort they put forth in coming this far in the project. Mr. Brown reiterated that the Board members received copies of the six emails that were in support of the project. The letters were from Mr. Peter McCrea, Mr. Matt Gregory, Mr. Michael Ball, Mr. Scott Green, Ms. Paula Ryan, and Mr. Tom Burns, all giving their support for the entire project of redevelopment. Mr. Coulter said the vast majority of all the emails he has received over the past several months have been positive and offered very good comments. He reminded the Board members the ARB Agenda item would be tabled until City Council had the opportunity to approve the rezoning.

Mr. Coulter said they would move onto the Planned Unit Development (PUD) discussion. Mr. Brown said with the PUD portion of this and the subdivision portion, staff did not have anything additional to add to the presentation. The subdivision portion did meet the requirements outlined in the subdivision regulations for the preliminary plat and the final plat and then with the PUD as previously mentioned their recommendation for that is approval and to have the recommendation go onto City Council. Board and Commission members did not have other questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter opened up the discussion for public comment. Mrs. Stewart said there was one new email from the Nupur Abbas, a resident of Worthington, Ohio and the owner of Blissful Trends located in the Worthington Mall:

“Regarding the redevelopment of The Shops at Worthington Place: This is a wonderful and beautiful community mall. It has incredible potential; both the existing tenants and the community of Worthington love this mall. The mall management or owners need to put in substantial efforts to market the mall and bring in a unique tenant mix. This could be done by luring the tenants at an attractive lease offer and as they get successful and established the rent could be increased. There is so much office space everywhere on Wilson Bridge Road, why is more office space needed? People are happy to work from home and no one in the right mind would like to own the burden of a commercial property lease and the overhead attached to it. The enclosed structure of the mall is beautiful and loved by many. This mall is just simply abandoned and needs to be revamped. It could be done with the right mix of tenants. Ripping the mall apart and placing a road in between is not the answer. Building around the mall and utilizing dead spaces of the mall make a lot of sense, but to take the atrium out is questionable. There is another space across the street coming up with a similar structure and it hard to understand how the new plan would be beneficial to the City of Worthington. We need to study Westerville downtown and Dublin downtown to see how they have done a marvelous job in renovating their downtown or suburban shopping centers. There is a lot to be pondered upon and studied in terms of market research and demographics before more office space is built here.”

There were no other emails or outside callers.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Coulter reminded the Commission that they would need to state their reasoning for their vote.

AR 66-2020

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

PUD 02-2020

Municipal Planning Commission Rezoning Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY DRP WORTHINGTON LP FOR APPROVAL TO REZONE THE PROPERTY AT 7227 N. HIGH ST. PER THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION PROVIDED SHOWING 15.66-ACRES AS A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, AS PER CASE NO. PUD 02-2020, DRAWINGS NO. PUD 02-2020, DATED MARCH 12, 2021, BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL BASED ON THE PLANNING GOALS OF THE CITY, AS REFERENCED IN THE LAND USE PLANS AND 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. Foust, aye, he is voting to support this project because he believed that the I-270/Wilson Bridge Road Corridor is one place in the community that would be appropriate for some taller new buildings and he wanted to clarify that by saying the direct contrast to his beliefs about the High Street Corridor, south of Wilson Bridge Road where they have some wider lawn areas, shorter buildings, larger, greater setbacks that should be maintained in the future and also in contrast to the historic district where smaller buildings should be maintained and more consistent with the colonial environment of the community and that would be unlike buildings such as Stafford Village which he believed was too large. Mr. Foust said the other comment he would make was in regard to the last email where he said he had to state that he was not a retailer, and that he did not know if what they were doing was in the best interest of what retail remains and he was not sure how those should be addressed, but he was going to cast his vote in favor of this project.

Mr. Hofmann, aye, said he was voting for approval of this and it stemmed a lot from the ability of the developer, and ourselves, to listen to one another and to respond in a thoughtful way. Mr. Hofmann said he did have history and experience with retail, and why he completely understood the issues of the existing mall, and it has been that way for some time, and the idea of the traditional mall has to evolve, our new world simply demands more experience, more meaningfully authentic ideas and experiences. The market is pushing for that and he believed this will become a nice mix of both of those ideas where some of the traditional mall will remain but there will be better amenities added and in the long run will be more successful. Mr. Hofmann said he was cognizant about the comments about office space in Worthington, and much like malls, that game is changing rapidly where the type of office, and the amenities for office that are being offered are changing rapidly. The majority of the stock of office space currently offered in Worthington does not offer the types of amenities and value that the market is demanding. That is the funny thing about the market is

that it moves, and it shifts. This proposal will provide more of what we need and may prompt current landlords to up their game, which in the end will be better for Worthington.

Mrs. Holcombe, aye; she said she felt this is perfect site for this particular plan and she was voting yes because she believed this met the City's Comprehensive Plan and it meets the goals of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study and more importantly it takes the city into the future.

Mr. Reis, aye. He said he wished he could ditto Mr. Hofmann's comments, it could not have been said better. Mr. Reis said as they have stated all along, the planning that has gone on for this proposal follows the Comprehensive Plan and what the city has laid out long before Direct Retail Partners came into the City of Worthington, He said he felt they have been a really good listener, and as Mr. Hofmann clearly laid out, the community and the way they work and the way they shop is evolutionary and the outside experience, as they are laying out in their plan, is what everyone is enjoying more in their shopping experience. Mr. Reis said as far as the office space, he said he would ditto Mr. Hofmann's comments again. Some people think we have office space that is available in Worthington and that is true, but it is not the office space that people want to live and work in at this point in time. He said this was a great opportunity to up the ante for the City of Worthington while not destroying the character of Worthington. Worthington still has a very unique downtown in comparison to all the other suburbs and he will certainly be voting yes.

Mr. Coulter, aye. He said as much as he liked the mall the way it is, and the historical nature of how it got to Worthington, it is not working any longer. Retail has changed in the way people shop and how people get out in the public has changed, not only for the short time but also for the long time. This developer has taken a hard look and based upon their experience with other locations in the United States, they are bringing something to Worthington that has not been seen in a long time. He said there were a couple of comments about office space about what the city currently has and what people want in the future. This building will get us there. This is something that needs to be done now instead of later. He will be voting yes.

SUB 01-2021

Municipal Planning Commission Subdivision Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY DRP WORTHINGTON LP FOR APPROVAL OF PRELIMINARY AND FINAL SUBDIVISION PLATS FOR 7227 N. HIGH ST. AS PER CASE NO. SUB 01-2021, DRAWINGS NO. SUB 01-2021 DATED MARCH 12, 2021 BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL BASED ON THE PLANNING GOALS OF THE CITY, AS REFERENCED IN THE LAND USE PLANS AND ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE NEWLY CREATED PARCEL BE RECAPTURED INTO THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW DISTRICT.

Mrs. Holcombe seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mr. Hofmann, aye, per his earlier comments this makes sense. Mr. Foust, aye; Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

D. Architectural Review Board – New

1. Accessory Building Renovation – 573 Oxford St. (Scott Klingensmith/Overmyer) ARB 39-2021

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of Fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

This house is an American Four Square that was constructed in the early 1900's and is a contributing building in the Worthington Historic District. There are three outbuildings on the property: a two-car garage behind the house built in the early 2000's; a two-story cottage from the early 1900's on the parcel behind; and one-story shelter house on that same parcel. This application is a request for approval to renovate the two-story cottage, which is in disrepair.

Project Details:

1. The foundation was replaced last year.
2. Replacement of the cedar shake siding is proposed with Hardie siding with a textured finish to look like wood. The siding would be styled with the same 7" reveal and straight bottom as the existing and painted to match the brown siding on the house.
3. New rafters are proposed for the roof that would keep the same pitch but increase the overhang a bit. Although the house has 3-tab shingles, this roof would have dimensional shingles. The proposed color is Estate Gray Oakridge by Owens Corning which would match the color of the house shingles.
4. As with the siding and roofing, replacement of the windows due to deterioration is reportedly needed. The inswing windows would be replaced with casement windows, and the others are proposed as 1 over 1 double hung to match the existing. Sierra Pacific Vinyl Premium is the proposed brand. The windows and trim on the building are shown as white.
5. The small gabled roof above the front door is proposed for replacement with a shed roof. Black standing metal is proposed for the roof which is the same material as on the existing.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

For repair work on older outbuildings, use new materials that match the old as closely as possible. Avoid modern materials that are incompatible with the original designs of these structures. When in doubt, use materials that match those on the house, as was often done historically. Compatibility of design and materials and exterior detail and relationships are standards of review in the Architectural District ordinance.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended approval of this application as the proposed changes should not hurt the look of the building, although keeping a gable roof above the door may be desirable.

Discussion:

Mr. Brown swore in the applicants, Mr. Don and Mrs. Lori Overmyer, 573 Oxford St., Worthington, Ohio. Mrs. Overmyer said they want to improve the condition of the outbuilding. Their goal is to take care of the buildings on their property. Mr. Overmyer said the structure was built in 1904 and has been in a state of disrepair for a long time. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Stewart said no.

Motion:

Mr. Foust moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY SCOTT KLINGENSMITH ON BEHALF OF DON & LORI OVERMYER FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO RENOVATE THE ACCESSORY BUILDING AT 573 OXFORD ST. AS PER CASE NO. ARB 39-2021, DRAWINGS NO. ARB 39-2021, DATED MARCH 8TH, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

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

2. New Roof & Gutters – 626 Morning St. (614 Exteriors/Baldaro) ARB 40-2021

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

This house was originally constructed in 1928 and is a contributing property in the Worthington Historic District. The applicant is requesting approval to replace the roof and gutters.

Project Details:

1. The house is painted a tan/taupe color and the roof appears to be in the same color family or maybe gray. New roofing would be black Atlas Pinnacle Pristine dimensional shingles
2. New gutters are proposed to be 5” Mastic Home Exteriors by Ply Gem.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

Roofs, gutters and downspouts are an integrated water removal system that gets rain- and meltwater away from a house as fast as possible. In addition, they are highly visible parts of a

building's character. Various roof materials can be found in Worthington. Asphalt shingles are most common, with a considerable amount of slate still in service; there also are some wood shingles. Asphalt shingles usually are a modern replacement of an earlier material, except on more recent buildings, where they may be original. When installing a new roof on a building that currently has asphalt shingles, avoid the uneven, "staggered-but" design or other shingle patterns that try to create an older look; a medium gray color generally is appropriate on an older building if it originally had a slate roof. Green, red or black shingles may also be appropriate, depending on the building's predominant colors. Avoid very light-colored shingles.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended approval of this application, as the style and color of the proposed roof should look appropriate for this house. It appears the gutters would match the existing.

Discussion:

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Mr. Frederick Baldaro, 626 Morning St., Worthington, Ohio. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Stewart said no.

Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY 614 EXTERIORS ON BEHALF OF FREDERICK BALDARO FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS TO INSTALL A NEW ROOF AND GUTTERS AT 626 MORNING ST. AS PER CASE NO. ARB 40-2021 DRAWINGS NO. ARB 40-2021, DATED MARCH 10, 2021 BE APPROVED BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

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

3. Wall Sign – 7141 N. High St. (Morrison Sign/Duchess) ARB 41-2021

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Findings of Fact & Conclusions

Background & Request:

The current BP building was constructed in 2004, with signage for the convenience store changing a few times over the years. The most recent version of the sign was installed in 2011. This is a request to replace the wall sign.

Project Details:

1. The existing wall sign is 5'6 ½" wide by 4' high (22.2 square feet in area) and says "Duchess Shoppe" with a crown above. The freestanding sign is 30 square feet per side in area or 60 square feet total.

2. Proposed is an internally illuminated yellow crown with internally illuminated red lettering below reading “Duchess”. The sign is 4’2” high x 9’10” wide or 41 square feet in area which would make total sign area more than allowed by Code.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance

The Worthington Design Guidelines and Architectural District Ordinance recommend signs be efficient and compatible with the age and architecture of the building. 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. Exposed raceways or wiring are not desirable.

Worthington Section 1170.05

Commercial and Industrial District Requirements

(a) Sign area. Allowable permanent sign area for any single business shall be limited according to the widths of the building or part of the building occupied by such enterprise. For the purposes of this section, width shall be measured along the building face nearest parallel to the street line. In the case of a corner lot, either frontage may be used in determining maximum area for signage. The area of all permanent signs for any single business shall be equivalent to one and one-half square feet of sign area for each lineal foot of width of the building or part of the building but shall not exceed a maximum area of 100 square feet per business.

Recommendation:

Staff recommended denial of this application unless the size of the new wall sign is less than or equal to 40 square feet in area in order to comply with total sign area in the Code.

Discussion:

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Ms. Abbey Free, on behalf of Morrison Sign for 7141 N. High St., Worthington, Ohio. Mr. Coulter asked Ms. Free to explain the discrepancy in the photographs. She said her company is doing the installation and the permitting for their client Advanced Sign Group. Ms. Free said she understood what they were talking about but based upon the drawing, but she was told the sign was about the same square footage. She said she would have to check with Advanced Sign Group to see if there was any discrepancy in their drawing. The applicant requested to table the application.

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

4. Fence – 91 E. Granville Rd. (A & M Landscaping & Lawncare LLC/Smith) AR 42-2021

This application was withdrawn by the applicant. The Board unanimously approved the withdrawal.

E. Municipal Planning Commission - New

1. Conditional Use Permit

a. Recreational Facility in I-1 – **862 Proprietors Rd.**, Suite A (Emilee Casey) **CU 03-2021**

Mr. Brown reviewed the following from the staff memo:

Background & Request:

Worthington Station was approved in 2005 on the former Worthington Foods manufacturing facility site that occupied 8.75 acres at the northeast corner of Proprietors and E. Granville Roads. The property was sold in 2005 and the plant and most other buildings were demolished to allow for redevelopment of the site into 88,000 square feet of office condominiums called Worthington Station. The southern 7.75 acres began to develop in 2005 with four office condominiums being constructed over the following four years, covering roughly 3-acres of the original site. In 2009 the Board approved the construction of a 3,600 sq. ft. building. Dr. Huelsman occupies 2,059 sq. ft. with the remaining leasable space being approximately 1,226 sq. ft. in size. A recreational use (SoulFuel Fitness) would now like to occupy the space. Since this use is a Conditional Use in the district, the Commission is required to review and approve this type of use in the I-1 District (Restricted Industrial).

Project Details:

1. The business is a heated fitness studio which offers group fitness.
2. Hours of operation will be 5:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM
 - a. *Clarification needed on whether these hours are Monday through Friday or seven days a week. Not referenced in the application.*
3. Parking is available in the lot adjacent to the building.
4. The suite is mainly open floor space with a restroom and entrance vestibule.
5. The application states that the business operates completely inside the building.
 - a. *Clarification needed that there will be no outdoor activity.*
6. The application states an occupancy of up to 12 people during the times of operation.
7. Signage was not referenced in the application.
 - a. Any signage would require Board approval.

Land Use Plans:

Worthington Conditional Use Permit Regulations

The following basic standards apply to conditional uses in any "C" or "I" District: the location, size, nature and intensity of the use, operations involved in or conducted in connection with it, its site layout and its relation to streets giving access to it, shall be such that both pedestrian and vehicular traffic to and from it will not be hazardous, both at the time and as the same may be expected to increase with increasing development of the Municipality. The provisions for parking, screening, setback, lighting, loading and service areas and sign location and area shall also be specified by the applicant and considered by the Commission.

Worthington Code Basic Standards and Review Elements

The following general elements are to be considered when hearing applications for Conditional Use Permits:

1. Effect on traffic pattern
2. Effect on public facilities

3. Effect on sewerage and drainage facilities
4. Utilities required
5. Safety and health considerations
6. Noise, odors and other noxious elements, including hazardous substances and other environmental hazards
7. Hours of use
8. Shielding or screening considerations for neighbors
9. Appearance and compatibility with the general neighborhood

Recommendation:

Staff recommended approval of the application as it met the criteria outlined for a Conditional Use if the Commission felt comfortable with the additional information provided by the applicant related to their application.

Discussion:

Mr. Brown swore in the applicant, Ms. Emilee Casey, 862 Proprietors Rd., Worthington, Ohio. The hours of operation would be from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday, seven days a week. There would be no outside activity. There is no signage planned at this time. If they decide signage is necessary, they would apply for approval. Board members did not have any questions or concerns. Mr. Coulter asked if there were any emails or callers and Mrs. Stewart said no.

Motion:

Mr. Reis moved:

THAT THE REQUEST BY EMILEE CASEY FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO OPERATE A RECREATIONAL FACILITY IN THE I-1 ZONING DISTRICT AT 862 PROPRIETORS RD. AS PER CASE NO. CU 03-2021, DRAWINGS NO. CU 03-2021, DATED MARCH 2, 2021, BE APPROVED BASED ON THE PLANNING GOALS OF THE CITY, AS REFERENCED IN THE LAND USE PLANS AND THE FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS IN THE STAFF MEMO AND PRESENTED AT THE MEETING.

Mr. Foust seconded the motion. Mr. Brown called the roll. Mrs. Holcombe, aye; Mr. Hoffman, aye; Mr. Foust, aye; Mr. Reis, aye; and Mr. Coulter, aye. The motion was approved.

F. Other – There was no other business to discuss

G. Adjournment

Mr. Hofmann moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Reis seconded the motion. All Board members voted, “Aye,” and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.