

MINUTES
ONTARIO PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 12, 2025

The Ontario Planning Commission met in regular session on March 12, 2025, at 4:02 p.m., in the Municipal Building with Mayor Knapp presiding. Present during roll call were Commission members Diane Wolfe, Rick Pauley, Service-Safety Director Adam Gongwer, and Mayor Kris Knapp; Engineer Mark Rufener, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Zoning Inspector Benji Hall and Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker.

The minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of October 9, 2024, were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

The first item on the agenda was a variance request submitted by Alverta Williams, 3727 Alexander Drive, requesting to build a house next to her home. The required driveway frontage is 85', the proposed driveway width is 67', a variance request of 18'.

- Inspector Hall said the parcel is 3.93 acres, and she would like to give her daughter 1.47 acres to build a home. At the road the width is 67', approximately 100' from the road the lot opens to 85'. The lot is six times the requirement to build a home, the square footage is there, just not the required width at the road.
- Engineer Rufener didn't see an issue with the request.
- A shared drive is not feasible in this situation.

At 4:08 p.m., the public hearing was opened for the drive width variance request at 3727 Alexander Drive. Residents who received letters pertaining to this variance request could speak before the Commission.

Greg Clemens, 3719 Alexander Drive, said they bought their property with the understanding there wouldn't be any more buildings at that location. His house abuts her property and they prefer not to have a house in their back yard. He is opposed, based on the covenants signed when he built his house, it was a single residence lot and no plans of building additional homes on the lot. They have 1½ acres, against the woods, with distance between neighbors.

Larry Schaeffer, 3704 Alexander Drive, was next to come before the Commission, to say they are concerned about the proposed construction of an additional house at 3727 Alexander Drive that would negatively impact the character and quality of the neighborhood. The lots have spacious frontage and a distinct architectural style. Introducing a new house that does not align with the existing esthetics and a lot with much smaller frontage would disturb the overall visual appeal and detract from the neighborhood. He asked they reconsider the plan to build an additional house in the neighborhood. The negative impacts on the infrastructure, community character and overall peace and quiet are concerns.

Kevin Hookey, 3712 Alexander Drive, is opposed to chopping up the property and not having the space they have today. He is concerned about the location of the house to the property lines. The deed restrictions are 2,000 sf or greater for a house in the neighborhood and how that would impact the property lines.

Director Gongwer said there are three properties with 63' frontage in the cul-de-sac to the west of this property, due to the curvature of the road, which is less than the required 85' to allow a house to sit on a parcel.

Law Director Medwid said the city has nothing to do with the private covenants of the landowners. The city can only enforce the zoning code or a variance of that code.

Mr. Clemens returned to the podium to share a text comment from Dr. Vladimir Fabian, 3811 Horizon Drive, stating he is opposed to the building of the home.

Ms. Williams said when the property was surveyed it did not show the location of the house butting up to anyone else's house. There is still quite a bit of land available for a yard.

At 4:16 p.m., hearing no one else who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Mrs. Wolfe moved to approve the drive-width variance request at 3727 Alexander Drive, second by Mr. Pauley. One member voted aye, three nays by Mrs. Wolfe, Mr. Pauley, Mayor Knapp, and the motion failed.

The next item on the agenda was a rezone request for property located on Stumbo/Ferguson Road from R2/R3 to PUD (Planned Unit Development). Jerry Holden, 3455 Ridgestone Drive, The Holden Agency, and Keith Amstutz, Engineer at Shaffer, Johnston, Lichtenwalter, came forward to answer questions on the rezone.

- R-3, high density, allows 9.6 units per acre and R-2 allows 4.6 units per acre, totaling a possible 324 units on 51 acres.
- Instead of building apartments or multi-family, they prefer to build detached single-family homes, with the same R-2 density, on a smaller lot size. This would require variances for front, side and rear yard setbacks, on smaller lot sizes of approximately 5,400 sf.
- The rear setback next to the existing homes would be the standard 40'. The front setbacks are 22', which is enough to park a vehicle in front of the garage and not be on the right-of-way and off the sidewalk.
- The 234 homes will be built in phases, each phase consisting of approximately 64 lots. The entrance for the first phase would be off Stumbo Road and connect to Jaquelyn Court to Ferguson Road. Construction would start as soon as possible. The second phase would have another connection to Ferguson. The fourth phase would connect to Fulwell Drive.
- The construction timeline is based mainly on pre-sold homes so buyers can customize the interior of the home. A Design Center is ready for customers.
- Minimum pricing is \$250,000 to \$500,000 depending on the product. The larger homes will be offered in different phases.

- Building this project as single-family zoning significantly reduces the density due to the required larger lot sizes that would increase the price of homes.
- Sidewalks will be throughout the development, street lights, and a water feature at the Stumbo Road entrance. A sidewalk will extend from Stumbo to the Ferguson Road crosswalk to get to Stowell Park.

Discussion continued.

- Pictures of a similar community in Seville, Ohio were displayed. The starting price was \$250,000 but with customized upgrades the average starting price was \$320,000.
- R-2 allows a duplex on 100' frontage. The request is to split the duplex creating two single family homes with 54' lot width, the equivalent of two homes on 110' frontage.
- Young families prefer a single-family home to a duplex.
- A firewall is not required in single family homes but is required in a duplex. Fire Chief Spillman reviewed the subdivision plans and accessibility for emergency vehicles. There were no concerns about the distance between the homes.
- Lawn care and snow removal could potentially be part of the HOA for maintenance free living. The common areas and retention ponds have to be maintained.

Engineer Rufener recommended adding the following items to the PUD zoning text and preliminary plans:

Zoning Text

1. Clarify that sidewalk is to be provided on both sides of the street and from the development along the frontage of Stumbo Road.
2. Provide Minimum allowable lot size.
3. Address minimum lot size of 5,400 sf requested when R-2 single family requires 11,600 sf and duplex requires 15,000 sf which would be 7,500 sf per home.
4. Provide cul-de-sac minimum requirements.
5. Specify minimum garage size.
6. Add the requirement for a water study to confirm adequate pressure and capacity. This study will be required prior to final plan approvals.

Preliminary Plans

1. Move storm sewer main line out of the road per subdivision typical section requirements.
2. 20' easement should be shown in the back yards.
3. Show grading beyond the right-of-way into the lots. Has drainage for the back lots been considered?
4. Has the existing overhead power line running east - west along the south portion of the property been considered in the preliminary plan development? The easement for this utility needs to be shown on the preliminary plan.

Supplemental Documentation

1. Fire Department letter documenting that proposed sideyard setbacks and proposed development layout is not an issue for the fire department.

Planning Commission

If an approval is granted by Planning Commission it only applies to the zoning. There are preliminary plan requirements for subdivision, development and comprehensive stormwater that have not been met and these plans would need to be approved separately. Specifically, the subdivision preliminary plan will need to come back before Planning Commission for review and approval, the other two preliminary plans can be approved administratively as long as they meet City code requirements.

Additional Engineer's comments:

- Currently storm sewer is shown in the roadway. The City's code would want the mainline storm out of the road.
- The required code of 20' easement in the backyards needs shown on the plan for drainage.
- Show rough grading for the lots on the plans.

Planning Commission agreed to continue discussion on the PUD rezone request at the April 9, 2025 Planning Commission meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Council President Gallo explained the rezone process to the audience to help clarify questions the neighboring property owners were expressing. Planning Commission is the first step of the process. Public commentary is not permitted during Planning Commission but residents will have the opportunity to speak during the public hearing for the rezone request when it goes before Council. There will be three readings which will take approximately six weeks. Three Council members were in attendance to learn more about this project.

City Updates:

- Raising Cane's will open in July.
- Wing Stop is planning to open in the plaza with Five Guys, Pulp and Panda Express.
- Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile are revamping their image for new signs.
- Moment Development is working on securing financing and a bond for the storm water retention pond.
- The new Starbucks had a 4-6 week setback from soil settlement issues. The exterior of the building is to be completed by June 1st, then they will work on the inside.
- Get Go, owned by Giant Eagle, purchased the lease at the Cheddars site. Giant Eagle cancelled all Get Go building then sold the lease to Circle K. There has been no contact from Circle K.

At 5:00 p.m., with no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mr. Pauley, second by Mrs. Wolfe.