

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

Jerome Township Board of Trustees

Minutes of

Meeting

**Public Hearing**

GOVERNMENT FORMS &amp; SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 101-08

Held

October 3, 2023

20

**Case #PD23-003****Application for a Zoning Amendment**

The Board of Township Trustees of Jerome Township, Union County, Ohio met in special session on October 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. for a public hearing. Board Chairman Wezlynn Davis called the meeting to order. Megan Sloat, Barry Adler and Wezlynn Davis answered the roll call. Also in attendance were Robert Caldwell (Fiscal Officer), Eric Snowden (Zoning Inspector/Coordinator), Peter Griggs, (Brosius, Johnson and Griggs), Laura MacGregor Comek representing the applicant, and members of the public.

The Jerome Township Board of Trustees opened the public hearing by swearing in those who wished to speak. The application, submitted by Racetrac Petroleum, LLC, c/o L. M. Comek, requests a zoning amendment from Rural Residential District (RU) to Planned Development District (PD)(application PD23-003) be granted for approximately 8.99+/- acres. This property is identified as parcel number 1400080040000 and is located at 10520 US 42, Plain City, Ohio.

Township Staff Report

Mr. Snowden presented to the Board the Zoning Department Staff Report. He indicated that the applicant is requesting the review and approval of an application to amend the official zoning map. The applicant is seeking to develop a gas station and truck stop. Mr. Snowden addressed the following from the Staff Report:

- Site location and context – the site is currently used for agriculture with neighboring uses including agriculture and single-family dwellings
- Basis of review and approval – Section 230.001 and Section 500.08 of the Zoning Resolution
- Intent of zoning districts – Section 500.001 of the Zoning Resolution
- Land use plan – identifies this area as a medium-density residential use
- Transportation infrastructure – per the requirements of the application process for map amendment, the applicant has provided a traffic study/review for the site, which will be subject to review and approval by the Union County Engineer's Office
- Regional planning commission review by the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission – recommending denial of the application
- Zoning Commission review – recommending denial
- Staff review and recommendation – recommending denial

Applicant Presentation

Laura Comek began her presentation by stating she objects to the characterization of the proposed development as a truck stop. She stated that per NAIC classification it is a gas station which is a permitted use within the Jerome Township Zoning Resolution as a motor vehicle fueling station. Ms. Comek stated that as a result of discussions with Board members and as a result of the hearing before the Zoning Commission, the applicant has agreed to remove the truck parking area. Ms. Comek reviewed the site layout emphasizing the separate entrances for trucks and cars, a potential EV charging station with a separate canopy,

Board of Trustee Questions/Comments

Megan Sloat asked for additional clarification of the scales. Ms. Comek replied that the presence of the scales does not change the classification but allowed the applicant to respond. Brendan Sexton described the use of the scales verses a weigh station.

The Board discussed the characteristics of a truck stop, indicating the provision for items other than just gas and the concerns of residents.

Barry Adler asked why the applicant was applying for a planned development verses a straight rezoning. Ms. Comek stated concerns about enforcement of standards that can be added within a planned development such as architectural standards, sidewalks and paths, and trees.

Barry Adler questioned the alignment of the entrance with Watkins Glenn Road. Peter Griggs replied the County Engineer controls that aspect of a project. Brendan Sexton stated they are working with the neighboring property owner with alignment being the goal.

Megan Sloat asked about the proposed sign by the freeway. Ms. Comek stated that sign has been eliminated.

Wezlynn Davis asked legal Counsel for clarification of the gas station verses truck stop debate. Peter Griggs indicated that statutorily reference is made to gas stations except for truck stops, but truck stops are not defined. Gas stations are defined as fueling for motor vehicles. As a result, in his opinion the proposal does not violate the comprehensive plan. The Board discussed if denial could be based on classification as a truck stop and what elements makes the proposal a truck stop. Laura Comek emphasized there are not amenities such as showers, moreover the applicant is willing to remove the scale from the plan.

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Megan Sloat stated she was in favor of the removal of the truck parking and scales.

Wezlynn Davis stated that citizens have been requesting more amenities and she liked the access road providing access to development. She also did not like the parking and scale.

Barry Adler asked if the plan could be limited to car fueling only. Brendan Sexton stated this is not economically feasible due to the cost of bringing utilities to the area.

Public Comment

Lynda Chapman addressed the Board indicating opposition to the application based on it being a truck stop and risks of such regarding human trafficking. Ms. Davis stated there will be no high sign near the freeway and she had spoken to Zoning Commission members who stated they voted to deny based on the sign, parking, and scale all of which have been removed.

Barry Adler questioned the twenty-four hour seven days a week operation. Eric Snowden and the other Board members pointed out there are other businesses in the area that operate these hours.

Board of Trustee Action

It was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Megan Sloat that the Board of Township Trustees of Jerome Township adopt the following motion:

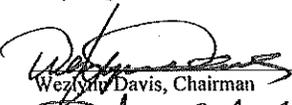
**The Jerome Township Board of Trustees adopt Resolution 23-095 Resolution to Render a Decision on a Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Resolution and Official Zoning Map of Jerome Township for a zoning amendment Case No. PD23-003 including the regulation text dated October 3, 2023 shall be incorporated into and be considered part of the preliminary development plan.**

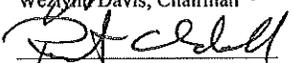
The vote resulted as follows:

Megan Sloat, yes  
Barry Adler, no  
Wezlynn Davis, yes

The motion carried. (Res. 23-095)

At 8:31 p.m. it was moved by Wezlynn Davis and seconded by Megan Sloat that the Jerome Township Board of Trustees adjourn. The motion carried.

  
Wezlynn Davis, Chairman

  
Robert Caldwell, Fiscal Officer