

Planning Commission met for the Work Session at Bedford City Hall on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Powers, and Williams.

Absent: None

Also Present: Secretary Tracy Simons.

• **DISCUSSION OF AGENDA**

There were no changes to the Work Session or the Regular Minutes from September 19, 2023.

There were some changes to the Work Session or Regular Minutes from December 19, 2023. Section 2 should state passed, not failed. Section 3 (a) (b) should be passed 4 to 0, removing Mr. Powers, and February 6, 2024, the change to include September 19 and December 19th.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. James Wren has submitted an application to the Planning Commission to open a group home at 821 Archer Rd, which is in an R-1 District.

City Manager Mallis wanted to know if this was going to be for seniors or individuals with disabilities and if there is a provision in the city ordinances for substance abuse and prisoners. In the State Code, if there are over five people, it has to have a sprinkler system.

Mrs. Briggs asked if it had two floors does it still need to have a sprinkler system installed?

Mr. Powers asked if there would be around-the-clock staff and, if there were nine rooms, how many people would be living there.

City Manager Mallis said that they are going to have to follow the state law.

Mrs. Briggs asked if it would be better to table this item this evening.

Mr. Powers asked if they were voting to allow it to be a group home this evening.

City Manager Mallis asked if they have a contract with the entity.

Mrs. Williams stated that it depends on the level of the individual's disability.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 P.M.

Bedford, Ohio

February 21, 2024

Tracy M. Simmons
Secretary

Helen Biggs
Chairwoman

Date: June 18, 2024



REGULAR MEETING

PLANNING COMMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2024

STATE OF OHIO

MINUTES

COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA

TIME: 6:00 PM

1.

Mrs. Briggs called to order the February 21, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission at 6:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a Approval of Minutes of the Work Session of September 19, 2023

MOTION:	Motion made by Williams and seconded by Chuck Mowery to approve the Work Session Minutes of September 19, 2023.
MOVER:	Ceteria Williams
SECONDER:	Chuck Mowery
RESULT:	Pass [5 TO 0]
YEAS:	Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Powers, Williams

b Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 19, 2023

MOTION:	Motion made by Powers and seconded by Ceteria Williams to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 19th, 2023, with the following changes. In Section A, Law Director Montello will clarify if a fail should there be a tie, and in Section C, it should read pass, not fail. In section E is fail 4 to 0 not pass due to the applicant not showing up at the meeting..
MOVER:	John Powers
SECONDER:	Ceteria Williams
RESULT:	Pass [4 TO 0]
YEAS:	Briggs, Mowery, Powers, Williams
ABSTAIN:	Mallis

c Approval of Minutes of the Work Session of December 19, 2023

MOTION:	Motion made by Mallis and seconded by Ceteria Williams to approve the Work Session Minutes of December 19, 2023.
MOVER:	Michael Mallis
SECONDER:	Ceteria Williams
RESULT:	Pass [4 TO 0]

YEAS: Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Williams
ABSTAIN: Powers

d Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 19, 2023

MOTION: Motion made by Williams and seconded by Michael Mallis to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 19th, 2023, with the following changes in section two, which should be passed, not failed. Section three (a.) should be passed 4 to 0. Removing Mr. Powers and then in section three, it should be passed 4 to 0, removing Mr. Powers.

MOVER: Ceteria Williams
SECONDER: Michael Mallis
RESULT: Pass [4 TO 0]
YEAS: Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Williams
ABSTAIN: Powers

e Approval of Minutes of the Work Session of February 6, 2024

MOTION: Motion made by Williams and seconded by John Powers to approve the Minute of the Work Session of February 6, 2024.

MOVER: Ceteria Williams
SECONDER: John Powers
RESULT: Pass [4 TO 0]
YEAS: Briggs, Mowery, Powers, Williams
ABSTAIN: Mallis

f Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 6, 2024

MOTION: Motion made by Williams and seconded by Chuck Mowery to approve the minutes of the regular Meeting of February 6th, 2024. With the change to number three to include also the minutes for September 19th and the minutes for December 19th.

MOVER: Ceteria Williams
SECONDER: Chuck Mowery
RESULT: Pass [4 TO 0]
YEAS: Briggs, Mowery, Powers, Williams
ABSTAIN: Mallis

Mrs. Briggs: Anyone who wishes to speak this evening, if you're to speak at all, if you can just stand right where you're right there at your spot, I'm going to swear everyone in at the same time. You raise your right hand, please. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the statements you are about to make are the truth? If so, please say I do

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. James Wren has submitted an application to the Planning Commission to open a group home at 821 Archer Rd, which is in an R-1 District.

James Durant, 81 Archer Rd., Bedford.

Jessica Wiley, 57 Woodrow Ave., Bedford.

Ms. Wiley: We are proposing a group home in the City of Bedford for the developmentally disabled. This particular group home that we are proposing is specifically for people who have autism, high-functioning autism. And the reason why we wanted to do that is because we know I have family members who are autistic. So I have a heart for people and giving back here. And I know how hard it is to find actually compassionate, empathetic care for people who may not have, the same neurological abilities as most people do. So one of the things that we want to do is open the group home on Archer, and we plan on having between 6 to 8 people living at the residence. It is a five-bedroom residence, but we will only be using four bedrooms for the group home. And one of the bedrooms will be for someone to be there 24 seven. So somebody who would be sleeping over spending the night. The person that we have in mind for our director of operations has 20 years of serving the Department of Developmental Disabilities community. Currently, as of this morning, there were 17 people on the D.O.D.D. website looking for housing. So there is definitely a need for that and we hope to fulfill any. There are five bedrooms in the home, but four bedrooms would be used for our residents.

City Manager Mallis: You did indicate 24-hour care with two supervisors.

Ms. Wiley: Definitely 24-hour with two people there at all times as far as staff. There will always be someone there 24/7.

Ms. Williams: Is there anyone on staff who is in the medical profession or an LPN?

Ms. Wiley: We plan to hire an LPN; since we don't have the house yet, we will have to hire staff appropriately, and we also plan on hiring a therapist specifically for people with autism to have them on staff. Okay.

City Manager Mallis: You mentioned that there were 17 people on a list. Is that something you contract with the D.O.D.D?

Ms. Wiley: As far as the Department of Developmental Disabilities, they have what's called a portal. And on that portal, there are many people on the portal. More people than the government can even, contract out right now, especially after Covid. Just they are having trouble hiring. The agencies are having trouble hiring staff. So, on the D.O.D.D website, there are people who just require someone to come into their homes. And there are some people that require a group home. So for example, if you are a family member and you have someone with autism that you love, however, your life is just busy. You have a family; you have kids, and you have things going on. You

may just not have the ability to take care of them anymore. And some of those people, unfortunately, kind of get forgotten about; prior to what I am doing now, I worked for the Department of Developmental Disabilities, and they loaned me out for the United Way. One of the things that I did for United Way was going to the different, places in our community that require support. One of those was Hattie Latham, and that was one of the places they just had me cry every time I went to visit because one of the things that the nurses said was when people get placed, that helps them; it's a great facility. Their family members may come every day, then once a week, then once a month, then on holidays, then never again. So just to have that place where people can come and it feels like home, and they have a family, with the people that are there and with us. So just like I said, having that compassion for the people that often get forgotten about and having a place where they can comfortably go.

City Manager Mallis: Do you have any other group homes, or are you managing any other group homes?

Ms. Wiley: This will be our first.

City Manager Mallis: This will be your first. The commission recommends, along with the city council any plans or documents submitted to the building department should approval take place. Should the city council on planning approve, I would recommend that you check into the Ohio Building Code, which is what we follow. I don't know if there are certain requirements as far as when you get over a certain number of occupants, it may trigger a requirement to have the homes sprinkled. I only know that because we went through that with another group home at one point. I think there was some calculation based on square footage and occupants and it really didn't go off of bedrooms. In that instance, I think they were looking to have eight individuals in the home, and based on the calculations, they were only able to go to five unless they put a sprinkler system in the home. So I would just recommend that you check with like the Ohio Building Code and figure out what the parameters are before you assume if City Council passes and whatnot. Follow up with that and touch base with the Building Commissioner and or the Building Department before you accept individuals.

Ms. Wiley: I appreciate that. Thank you.

Mrs. Briggs: Questions or comments from the commission. Any questions or comments from the audience?

Denise Lachowski, 745 Archer Rd., Bedford, OH: You mentioned the potential range of 6 to 8 residents and the nature that there would be high-functioning autism. And, the question I had was, are you targeting a particular age range?

Ms. Wiley: Yes, it's definitely for adults. I honestly wouldn't want to turn anyone away due to age, but definitely between 18 and 60.

Ms. Lachowski: So when you come in, there will potentially be at least one person 24/7. Is that likely to be the actual resident owner, or is his residence going to be used for this purpose?

Ms. Wiley: The residents will be used for the purpose. We will be hiring qualified staff, so everyone will have a background check. One of our requirements will also be at least two years of experience. And, of course, we want to hire people that have experience with autistic people. However, if they don't have two years of experience, we will provide training and have specialized training. Everybody will be certified. Everybody will be CPR trained. So we're trying to do everything in advance. When we have people coming in they are trained properly to be able to handle anything that may or may not arrive. Thank you.

Ms. Lachowski: Are there certain criteria or conditions that they have to meet to remain residents?

Ms. Wiley: Well, with anything, you don't know everything about a person until you've spent time with them. So on the D.O.D.D. Website, everybody has what's called an ISP and individual service plan. That individual service plan will outline each individual and what their quote-unquote disability is, the level, and the severity. And, of course, we want everything to run smoothly. So if we happen to have a resident that was causing any type of major disturbance to the other residents in the home or to the neighborhood, the requirement for D.O.D.D. is that we give them 30 days to find other housing for that person. Again, we will look at the ISP and pick people according to the staff that we have and who we think would integrate together because it is going to be people's homes. So you want everybody to feel comfortable there, whether they have a disability or not. So for me, it's more than just, okay, this is a number that everybody has a number. It's more than just people with numbers. Are these people going to be able to live together harmoniously? We are the name of the company is Harmony House. So we want it to be everyone living harmoniously. And we will be able to kind of see that with the ISP. However, if something wasn't listed on the ISP or like again, like I said, if something just wasn't working out, we do have 30 days to give D.O.D.D. notice. To that it's not working out that we need to find that individual another option.

Mr. Mowery: Who fills out the ISP?

Ms. Wiley: Each person on the D.O.D.D. website has a social worker who is for that person. So they are the ones that are filling it out, and I believe the doctors as well. Whoever is the social worker is the person who is doing all the paperwork. But, you know, they, talk to the person's doctors and things and family members. So, like if there's somebody on there that has violent behaviors, it will stay in the ISP, and we wouldn't put that person in our house just for the safety of everyone else.

Ms. Williams: Do you have a number in mind for staff to residents, like for men for women as far as staff and residents?

Ms. Wiley: On the ISP, it'll actually say the recommended staff number. So in a perfect world, I would like to have a female on hand at all times. We plan on doing dog therapy and crafts, so we will always be there, even though there will always be two staff members. Some residents might have a day program that they may go to according to their ISP. So we don't know exactly what that all looks like right now. However, once we get the ISP, we'll plan accordingly. So, for example, if we have four men and four women, we may not have to have as many staff members during the day if most of them go to some sort of day program. A lot of high-functioning autistic people have a work program where they get picked up by transportation to their jobs. So again, depending on the ISP, we will staff accordingly. But a lot of the people won't just be sitting there all day. They will have other activities to do, whether that be the day program or a work program.

Ms. Williams: What are your shifts going to be?

Ms. Wiley: I want it to be an eight-hour shift to maybe a six-hour shift, depending on the staff that we have. And again, depending on the people who have the IPS it will depend on their requirements. When you're dealing with developmentally disabled people or people with autism, I prefer shorter shifts as opposed to longer shifts, just so that, the worker gets a break in between times, and also so that the people that are living in the house, get to have those relationships with the staff and feels like a home.

Cindy Clements, 745 Archer Rd., Bedford, OH: you said it's a four-bedroom house. My question is, what about the rest of the space? Is it appropriate to accommodate bathrooms for that many people's meals? You know, areas of daily living. And are there going to need to be adjustments made to the property to accommodate that?

Mr. Durant: No adjustments should be needed. Right now, it is for three bathrooms and shouldn't need any in one kitchen.

Ms. Clements: What's going to be the vehicle and traffic load with that many people, that much staff coming in and out, and family visitors and whatnot? Well, I mean, traffic and vehicles, are there going to be two cars parked there? Are there going to be eight cars on the road parked all the time on the street?

Mr. Durant: It's kind of hard to predict if we're going to keep the traffic down as minimal as possible. We don't want ten cars in the driveway.

Ms. Wiley: The residents will not have cars, and there will be a light amount of traffic.

Ms. Clements? If the Planning Commission grants this variance, what does that mean for the future? Are they allowed to change the character of the home without coming back to the city and to the planning commission?

City Manager Mallis: I can answer some of that. The way the ordinance is written,

there are certain types of group homes that aren't permitted, for instance, a halfway house alternative to incarceration, a drug rehabilitation halfway, or similar group homes. There are very specific types of uses that are not permitted. If the property would go up for sale the new owner would have to reapply. Should planning recommend approval of the use today, the commission is just recommending the approval of this type of use. It would then go to the city council. They would have to give the ultimate vote, which would be in two weeks. But if the sale of the home would occur, that use would have to come back to the Planning Commission and go through the process. It doesn't stay with the property.

Ms. Clements: I had a question about subsequent use. So should Mr. Durant discontinue this particular undertaking? It reverts back to residential.

City Manager Mallis: Yes, it would, and it remains residential now. Even like R1, the zoning is not changing. But if he chooses not to continue working with Harmony Hall House Cares, and wants to partner with another entity for a different type of use, I would recommend that he come back to Planning if he wants to have some other type of use for the property.

Ms. Lachowski: So, as a resident in the area and as a neighborhood and as a neighbor, I support this effort. So thank you for coming forward with it.

MOTION:	Motion made by Williams and seconded by John Powers to approve.
MOVER:	Ceteria Williams
SECONDER:	John Powers
RESULT:	Pass [5 TO 0]
YEAS:	Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Powers, Williams

Mrs. Briggs: This still has to go before the City Council, and the next meeting is on Monday, March 4th, at 7 p.m. here in Council Chambers. You're welcome to attend that in case they have any questions for you as well.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:	Motion made by Williams and seconded by John Powers to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting at 6:26 P.M.
MOVER:	Ceteria Williams
SECONDER:	John Powers
RESULT:	Pass [5 TO 0]
YEAS:	Briggs, Mallis, Mowery, Powers, Williams

Tracy M. Simmons
Secretary

Helen Briggs
Chairwoman

Date: February 21, 2024