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**MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 20, 2019**  
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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Members of the Commission present were: Ms. Bucco, Mr. Etter, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Kessler, and Mr. Singler.

Also present: Bryan Snyder - Hamilton County Rural Zoning and Jana Grant – Zoning Secretary.

GEORGE FLYNN made a motion to approve the Agenda. GREG KESSLER seconded the motion. Ms. Bucco - ‘yes’; Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘yes’ and Mr. Singler - ‘yes’.

MR. FLYNN made a motion to approve the December 20, 2017 minutes. MS. BUCCO seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - ‘yes’; Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘abstain’ and Mr. Singler - ‘abstain’.

MR. FLYNN made a motion to approve the December 19, 2018 minutes. MR. SINGLER seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - “abstain”; Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘yes’ and Mr. Singler - ‘yes’.

**FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MODIFICATION:**

TODD ETTER called to order the public hearing for **SYMMES 2019-01 MIKE’S CAR WASH** to construct a new Mike’s Car Wash building on the property with associated vacuum stations, trash handling and storage, parking and one access drive onto East Kemper Road. Property located at 9675 East Kemper Road, on the southern corner of the East Kemper and Loveland Madeira Road intersection.

BRYAN SNYDER stated that the applicant is proposing a Zone Amendment for a four-point eighty-seven (4.87) acre parcel of land for the construction of a new Mike’s Car Wash on the southeastern corner of the Loveland Madeira Road and East Kemper Road intersection. The car wash would contain the six thousand three hundred (6,300) square-foot storage/trash handling building, eleven (11) vacuum cleaning stations and five (5) additional parking spaces. The development would be surrounded by an outward facing retaining wall that would be nine (9) feet high as it faces Loveland Madeira Road, eleven (11) feet as it faces Kemper road and thirteen (13) feet at its highest point as the wall faces south. According to the applicant, the building’s design would incorporate both masonry and metal elements with LED lighting. The ISR would be approximately nineteen percent (19%).

Mr. Snyder stated that the Regional Planning Commission has an adopted land use plan for this area of Symmes Township. The adoption and review history of the Symmes Township Land Use Plan is as follow:

- RPC Initial Adoption: February 1988
- Latest Five Year Review/Update adopted: April 2009

**Findings:**

- The Land Use Plan is not current as defined in the HCRPC By-laws because it has not been reviewed and updated by the Regional Planning Commission within the last five (5) years.
- The Symmes Township Land Use Map designates the site as “Planned Mixed Use Employment”, which is defined as “developments containing some combination of office, retail, light industrial or compatible uses developed with a consistent theme and containing architectural, landscape, and signage standard”.
- The applicant has submitted a landscape plan, lighting plan, signage plan and building elevations which are discussed in detail under Zoning Compliance below.

- The applicant indicates that the building would be consistent with both the Symmes Township Land Use Plan and the character of the surrounding area which is commercial industrial.
- Therefore, staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the Symmes Township Land Use Plan.
- However, consistency with the Land Use Plan is not required in accordance with RPC By-laws because the Land Use Plan is not current.

Mr. Snyder stated that the site plan meets the minimum standards of the Symmes Township Zoning Resolution and the “EE” Planned Residence district, with the following exceptions.

**Section 321.3-1(1) “EE” Directional Signs.** This section states that no directional sign shall be closer than five (5) feet to any right-of-way.

**Findings:** The applicant has indicated directional signs with “enter” and “exit” located within the right-of-way of Kemper Road. Staff recommends that the applicant move these directional signs to be no closer than five (5) feet from the right-of-way line in accordance with Symmes Township Zoning Resolution.

**Section 321.41(1) Wall Signs.** This section states that any property or business shall be permitted a maximum of one point five (1.5) square feet of building sign surface area for each linear foot of building frontage (façade) facing the public street on which the principal access is located. For other building frontages that front onto a public street, signs may not exceed point seventy-five (.75) square feet of sign surface area for each linear foot of building frontage.

**Findings:** The applicant has proposed a total of four (4) separate wall signs. One wall sign would face Kemper Road to the North and would be one hundred-two (102) square feet in size. The second wall sign would face Loveland Madeira Road to the west and would also be one hundred-two (102) square feet in size. Two (2) other wall signs are proposed where one (1) would face south and would be fifty (50) square feet in size and the other would face east and would be seventy-three (73) square feet in size. Both of these signs would not face a public street.

Mr. Snyder stated that the western façade would facing Loveland Madeira Road is the principal access for the site. Staff finds that the western façade wall sign and northern façade wall sign would both be below the required maximum square footage permitted. Therefore, no variance would be necessary for either of these signs. Staff finds that the proposed wall sign to be attached to the building canopy facing east and described by the applicant as an “Informational/Directional Sign” would not be permitted as this façade has no frontage onto a public street. However, the sign would not be illuminated and would only be legible from within the property. The purpose of the sign would be to show options and directions related to the car wash use and are not intended to provide an advertising message outside of the property. Therefore, staff recommends approval of a variance to permit the proposed wall sign on the eastern building canopy façade as it would likely have no negative impact on surrounding properties.

Mr. Snyder advised that staff finds that the proposed “Carwash” wall sign sited along the southern façade of the principal building is not permitted as this facade does not have frontage on a public street. The proposed western facing wall sign, due to its setback from Loveland Madeira Road, will be minimally visible to northbound traffic until the western façade sign is also visible. The proposed freestanding sign would also serve the purpose of providing signage for traffic along Loveland Madeira Road. In addition, the Walgreens directly west of the site does not have any southern facing wall signs. Therefore, staff does not support signage on the southern façade of the building.

**Section 321.5-2(4) Variable Message Centers.** This section limits the maximum sign area on a freestanding ground mounted sign permitted for use as a variable message center sign to be limited to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total sign area (up to a maximum thirty-five (35) square feet per side).

**Findings:** The applicant has proposed a forty-five (45) square-foot and ten (10) foot high ground mounted sign that meets the maximum standards of the Zoning Resolution. As part of the proposed forty-five (45) square feet of sign area, the applicant has proposed a variable message center sign that is approximately one hundred percent (100%) of the total sign area. Since this is above the

required maximum percentage in the Symmes Township Zoning Code, staff does not support the proposed digital sign. The sign should be broken down to a non-electronic sign for thirty-three point seventy-five (33.75) square feet with an eleven point twenty-five (11.25) square foot digital to comply with this section.

Mr. Snyder stated that the applicant has submitted a detailed landscape plan. In reviewing the plan, staff identified one (1) issue with the streetscape buffer along East Kemper Road. The applicant has proposed that a large portion of the required streetscape shrubs be located on top of the retaining wall. Due to the height of the retaining wall and lack of landscaping at the base of the wall, staff recommends that all required streetscape landscaping be located at the base of the retaining wall to provide better screening. Therefore, a revised landscaping plan should be submitted as part of the Final Development Plan.

Mr. Snyder stated that based on the findings there is sufficient reason for staff to support the requested Zone Amendment. Specifically, the small, neighborhood-oriented use with the low ISR of nineteen percent (19%) would be appropriate to the adjacent commercial areas and would be consistent with the Land Use Plan. With removal of the proposed building sign on the south side of the building, staff finds that the request would be appropriated for the site.

TY DUBAY, Chief Operating Officer of Mike's Car Wash, 100 Northeast Drive, Loveland, Ohio.

GREG HOFFER, Dualite Sales & Service, Williamsburg, Ohio, does all the signage for Mike's Car Wash.

MIKE DAHM, Owner of Mike's Car Wash, 100 Northeast Drive, Loveland.

Mr. Dubay stated that they have had their headquarters in Loveland for the past couple of years and have been in Cincinnati serving the community since 1999. Mr. Dubay brought a power point presentation to present to the Board.

Mr. Dubay stated that this is in computer module to help visualize how the site will look as you are driving and you happen to be setting on Loveland Madeira Road heading north and looking to the east to see their site. The building is their current design, it is a mixture of brick and metal elements. It is set up on a pad and the building will be sitting up on the retaining wall to get it out of flood plan. The retaining wall is actually modular, it is very similar to the wall that is at their Oakley Station facility. They take great pride in keeping the facility very clean, trash free, well maintained. They are always having their maintenance team and operational team keeping the facility looking nice.

Mr. Dubay stated that they put together a drive northward on Loveland Madeira Road because they were trying to understand the site lines of what would be obscured by the strip mall on the south side. Once you clear that strip mall is when you first can see the actual building. They are trying to see when the customer will see their facility. There is a lot of traffic going north on Loveland Madeira so they would see the facility at the last second which could cause them to drive by or change lanes at the last second. That is part of the reason for their request for having the EMC. This EMC would be seen even when the facility is blocked by the strip mall and give the customer time to pull in the right lane to turn on "East Kemper Road. They have used their EMC at the other locations to put out different messages for their events. They want the sign to be big and the twenty-five percent (25%) rule restricts them down to about twelve (12) inch letters. The small letters will make it difficult for drivers to see and read, so they always try to do larger fonts so it is easier to read from the road.

JAMES SINGLER asked Mr. Dubay if he had run into digital sign restrictions when building other shops?

Mr. Dubay stated that usually each district or townships have restrictions but he believes that twenty-five percent (25%) is the smallest percentage that they have seen.

Mr. Flynn asked as it relates to the wall, they talk about a module wall, he knows what it is but he would like them to describe it better for the panel.

Mr. Dubay stated that they are twelve (12) inch to fifteen (15) inch wide by eight (8) inch tall bricks pieced together like legos to construct a wall. It is taupe in color, similar to the walls at Oakey, Fields Ertel and West Chester.

Mr. Flynn asked if they would be willing to add some additional landscaping at the base of the wall?

MIKE DAHM stated that they would be willing to put landscaping at the base of the wall.

Mr. Flynn stated that one of the things about a reader board that bothers him is when they flash.

GREG HOFFER stated that the EMC has all kinds of program capability so they will not be flashing. The EMC also has a dimmer so it will lower the lights when it gets dark.

Mr. Flynn asked if they plan on keeping the EMC on for twenty-four (24) hours.

Mr. Dahm advised that it would be on for twenty-four (24) hours.

Mr. Flynn asked if they just want this to be an EMC and not a Mike's Car Wash sign and an EMC.

Mr. Dahm stated that is correct.

BRENDA STEPHENSON, Owner of AMS Construction, 10670 Loveland Madeira Road stated that they have two (2) entrances for that location. One of them is on Kemper and the other one is on Loveland Madeira Road between Fifth Third Bank and Arby's. She does not oppose Mike's Car Wash but her concern is the traffic on Kemper Road and Loveland Madeira Road. She currently has about one hundred sixty (160) to one hundred seventy (170) vehicles for her business. They range from standard pickup trucks to semis and also has a lot of vendors that deliver materials. Currently at the intersection of Kemper and Loveland Madeira the curb is already falling apart because it is almost impossible to make that turn from Loveland Madeira onto Kemper Road. She stated that she is concerned about the wall because she does not know how far it will set back from the road and the trucks are already popping the curb.

Mr. Flynn stated that traffic is not this committee's purview.

Mr. Etter closed the public hearing.

Mr. Singler asked does anyone know how far back from the road the wall will set?

Mr. Etter stated that it would be set back one hundred ten (110) feet from Loveland Madeira Road.

Mr. Snyder stated that the wall is eleven (12) feet from the right-of-way and about twenty (20) feet from East Kemper Road.

MR. GEORGE FLYNN moved to approve case Symmes 2019-01; Mikes Car Wash, a request for a Zone Amendment from "H" Riverfront to "EE" Planned Residence (with Subservient Retail) subject to the standard covenants for the planned districts and the following conditions and variances:

Conditions:

1. That the proposed directional signs shall be no closer than five (5) feet from the right-of-way along East Kemper Road.
2. That the applicant shall locate all required streetscape trees and shrubs along East Kemper Road at the base of the retaining wall facing the road.
3. That a detailed landscape plan in compliance with the Zoning Resolution and with Condition #2 above shall be submitted as part of the Final Development Plan.
4. That a detailed lighting plan in compliance with Zoning Resolution shall be submitted as part of the Final Development Plan.

- 5. That the site shall be permitted a maximum of one (1) freestanding monument sign with a maximum height of ten (10) feet and a maximum area of fifty (50) square feet.
- 6. That there shall be no wall signage located on the southern façade of the building.

Variances:

- 1. Section 321.4-1(1) - That in addition to the permitted signage on the northern and western façade, that one (1) additional wall sign with a maximum area of seventy-three (73) square feet shall be permitted on the eastern façade of the building canopy where no wall sign is permitted.
- 2. Section 321.5 - That the freestanding sign for the development shall be permitted to be an electronic message center sign with one hundred percent (100%) of the sign area permitted to be electronic and that the building mounted sign on the eastern façade of the canopy portion of the building shall be permitted to be an electronic message center sign with one hundred percent (100%) of the sign area permitted to be electronic where only twenty-five percent (25%) of the freestanding sign is permitted to be electronic provided that all copy messages be displayed in forty-five (45) second minimum intervals.

MR. SINGLER seconded the motion and the roll call was as follows: Ms. Bucco - “yes”: Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘yes’ and Mr. Singler - ‘yes’.

OLD BUSINESS

JEFFREY REICHMAN stated that at the last meeting one of the issues addressed by the Commission was whether the Trustees where in favor of the changes to the zoning regulations. At the last Trustees meeting, President Phil Beck stated that he is all in favor of the change it makes common sense and Trustee Jodie Leis agreed with him.

Mr. Flynn made a motion to direct Symmes Township staff to review the text amendments related to changing the Zoning Code to have sidewalks be designed and developed with new developments in specified areas of the township as specified by the Symmes Township Sidewalk Plan.

MR. SINGLER seconded the motion and the roll call was as follows: Ms. Bucco - “yes”: Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘yes’ and Mr. Singler - ‘yes’.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MR. SINGLER made motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. MS. BUCCO seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - “yes”: Mr. Etter - ‘yes’; Mr. Flynn - ‘yes’; Mr. Kessler - ‘yes’ and Mr. Singler - ‘yes’.

Approved:

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Chairperson

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Zoning Secretary