

**Minneola Planning & Zoning Commission
Minutes
May 1, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Minneola City Hall**

The City of Minneola Planning & Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairman Paul Giacalone. Also present were Vice-Chairman Jeff Henderson, Commissioner Oscar Trujillo, Commissioner Leonard Jackson, Alternate Member Nathan Focht, Councilor Debbie Flinn (Council Liaison), Mark Johnson (City Manager), Ramon Flores (Code Enforcement Supervisor) Scott Gerken (City Attorney), Joyce Heffington (City Planner), Heather Urwiller (City Planner), and Corey DeVogel (Planning Technician).

Commissioner William McCoy was absent.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Paul Giacalone called the meeting to order.

MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Commissioner Jackson**.

AGENDA REVIEW

Chairman Giacalone requested that the Item 4, Special Exception for Fat Chef be switched with Item 3 and switch Item 6 and 5.

MOTION by Alternate Commissioner Focht, SECONDED by Commissioner Jackson to Switch Item 4 Special Exemption for Fat Chef with Item 3 and switch Items 6 and 5.

AYE: Henderson, Trujillo, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

MOTION by Commissioner Jackson, SECONDED by Alternate Commissioner Focht to excuse Commissioner McCoy from the May 1st, 2023 P&Z Commission meeting.

AYE: Henderson, Trujillo, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Giacalone called for public comment.

No comments.

MINUTES

No comments.

MOTION by Alternate Commissioner Focht, SECONDED by Commissioner Jackson to approve the April 3rd, 2023 Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes.

AYE: Henderson, Trujillo, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Giacalone called for public comment.

No comments.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Scott Gerken swore in all that were going to speak.

Item 2: Resolution 2023-03 Fat Chef Variance

Scott Gerken read out Items 2 and 4.

Joyce Heffington described the onsite and offsite consumption code as well as the reason for the variance and special exception. She noted that the Fat Chef restaurant was requesting being allowed to sell alcohol within its establishment for on-site consumption with meals. She noted that the restaurant is within 300 feet of a church.

Andrew Cole (Applicant) approached the podium to speak to the commission.

Scott Gerken noted a state law that prohibits an establishment selling alcohol within 500 feet of a school but does not include churches. It also excludes restaurants where 51% or more of their sales are from food.

Andrew Cole confirmed that alcohol would only be sold for on-site consumption.

93 **Scott Gerken** noted that it would be preferable to vote on the variance and then the special
94 exception separately.

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96 **MOTION by Alternate Commissioner Focht, SECONDED by Commissioner Trujillo to**
97 **approve Item 2: Resolution 2023-03 Fat Chef Variance**

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99 **AYE:** Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo

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101 **NAY:** Henderson

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103 **MOTION PASSED: 4-1**

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105 **Item 4: Resolution 2023-07 Fat Chef Special Exception Use Permit**

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107 **MOTION by Commissioner McCoy, SECONDED by Alternate Commissioner Focht**
108 **approve Item 4: Resolution 2023-07 Fat Chef Special Exception Use Permit as written with**
109 **a modification that they always sell more food than alcohol.**

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111 **AYE:** Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo

112
113 **NAY:** Henderson

114
115 **MOTION PASSED: 4-1**

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117 **Item 6: Discussion on Hills of Minneola Town Center**

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119 **Joyce Heffington** introduced Richard Jerman of SunTerra to present and discuss the proposed
120 Minneola Town Center Conceptual Plan.

121
122 **Richard Jerman** presented a slide show along with a concept board and handouts of the proposed
123 concept plan. He noted that they can't send in a preliminary plat yet, because everyone wants to
124 know what they will do. He was there to establish a consensus so that they could move forward in
125 the process. They wouldn't be able to talk to potential tenants until they get some sort of blessing
126 from the council and commission. They would be open for suggestions and one of the issues has
127 been that everyone has a different conception of a town center and what its definition is. The site
128 in question is a 70-acre site on the East side where Citrus Grove Road and Hancock Road connect.
129 They detailed the restaurants and convenience store locations. He said that they do not anticipate
130 a big hotel, just a 120-room style hotel. The far east side is blank because they don't have uses and
131 they do not know who they are talking to yet. He noted that he thought Costco would possibly be
132 liked by the city. He noted the lifestyle center would have on-street parking, be functional for food
133 truck events, art festivals to close it off and have Saturday events. He noted a recreational area
134 surrounded by restaurants and shopping as well as a big green area to use for lifestyle events. The
135 last part presented would be the roundabout entrance. He asked for direction and consensus.

136
137 **Commissioner Trujillo** noted that palm trees aren't native, and he saw many of them on the
138 rendering asking it to be changed.

139

140 **Richard Jerman** replied that much of the architect's work is in California, which explained the
141 number of palm trees and that he understood what he was asking.

142

143 **Oscar Trujillo** noted the cohesiveness with the future commercial development on the east side.
144 He asked if it is the intention to extend the road into the future commercial development parcel,
145 noting that the council and commission are looking for cohesiveness to tie everything together.

146

147 **Richard Jerman** noted that it would lead to the Publix center and the neighboring residential
148 development.

149

150 **Oscar Trujillo** asked if the intention was to always keep the restaurant parcels as restaurants if
151 they do not meet the desired number of restaurants.

152

153 **Richard Jerman** replied that they are in talks with Darden and Chilis to name a few. Not every
154 parcel would necessarily need to be a restaurant.

155

156 **Oscar Trujillo** mentioned potentially putting a daycare in one of the restaurant parcels, noting the
157 benefit of having it in proximity to one of the office buildings.

158

159 **Richard Jerman** said there has been discussion with a potential daycare on going into one of the
160 locations.

161

162 **Oscar Trujillo** asked if he had any response to the comments of the planning review consultants.

163

164 **Richard Jerman** replied that they had incorporated a few of their comments, but not all of them.

165

166 **Vice-Chaiman Henderson** asked if there would be any golf cart parking around the town center.

167

168 **Richard Jerman** replied that they had not, but since it is so early, they can.

169

170 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** asked if four stories can be done.

171

172 **Richard Jerman** said that they can be four stories high for apartments.

173

174 **Joyce Heffington** noted that the Hills developer agreement allows certain heights for certain uses.

175

176 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** asked if the hotel would be an extended stay or more of a
177 traditional Hilton or Marriot hotel.

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179 **Richard Jerman** replied that of all of their discussions, none of them were extended stays, and it
180 does not meet the need for an extended stay.

181

182 **Oscar Trujillo** noted that based upon demographics and population, a Target might be interested
183 in the big box section.

184

185 **Richard Jerman** noted that they have a smaller version of Target too.

186
187 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** asked if it would be better to rotate the apartments so that they
188 buffer the rental single-family homes in the neighboring Cyrene development.

189
190 **Richard Jerman** replied that the city staff did not want it to go there.

191
192 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** said he would also like to see the dry retention pond as part of
193 the feature, such as Hancock for dining, overlooking the pond.

194
195 **Richard Jerman** replied that it would be a dry retention pond. It's current location would also be
196 the lowest point for best retention.

197
198 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** noted a large amount of parking. He asked what the detriment of
199 doing a parking facility similar to Winter Garden would be.

200
201 **Richard Jerman** replied that it would be a cost detriment and the price of a parking garage would
202 be extremely expensive along with finding someone to build one. Also, telling one of the big box
203 stores to help build one would provide a lot of trouble.

204
205 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** inquired about the safety of walking to the lifestyle center from
206 the parking areas.

207
208 **Richard Jerman** replied that there were walkability paths throughout the project in various areas.
209 There are paths in front of the office complex to the hotel as well as along Citrus Grove Road.
210 They will probably look into doing more.

211
212 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** said he wanted it to be a place people could spend time at, not
213 just going in and out quickly. He asked about how functional the gas station would be.

214
215 **Richard Jerman** noted that several Wawas had been built with much more difficult access. Due
216 to the turnpike authority restrictions, they could not create an entrance on Hancock Road.

217
218 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** asked if all buildings would be designed as though they were
219 intended to match or would they obviously not go together.

220
221 **Richard Jerman** replied that they would have to meet their architectural standards. He also said
222 that if they start talking to a hotel user, the city would see the architectural renderings before they
223 turn it loose.

224
225 **Alternate Commissioner Focht** mentioned that the green area and entertainment space in the
226 middle appeared to be quite small.

227
228 **Richard Jerman** replied that they could look into expanding the green section some. He followed
229 up saying pavers will be used along with the roundabout to slow down traffic. He also said that
230 there would be zero appetite to have apartments over retail, since apartments underwrite deals in

which if there is retail below the apartments, they underwrite it as zero. He noted that he believed there was more than they need in the center section.

Alternate Commissioner Focht noted that he was in favor of apartments if they can be controlled, made attractive and be a reasonable size. He also expressed that Clermont and other towns have done nicely with markets that promote startups, and asked if there was a way to get some businesses that are not chains, encouraging more mom-and-pop style businesses.

Richard Jerman replied that it would definitely be in one of the lifestyle centers.

Alternate Commissioner Focht asked if they would maintain control or move it off to a management company.

Richard Jerman replied that they would do a joint venture with a retail developer. He also asked that even though it is conceptual, there be a motion that can provide direction going to council. He stated that they originally started a trial run of having a Wal-mart that he did not like and that it was not the plan.

Oscar Trujillo noted that there was originally much more commercial and so lifestyle was put in with many new changes.

Chairman Giacalone called for public comment.

Denise Price (Resident of Overlook at Grassy Lake) inquired about Founders Ridge, asking if the Town Center being discussed was its replacement.

Alternate Member Focht replied that they are two separate developers and developments, while Founders Ridge was currently working on an updated concept.

Denise Price replied that two town centers would not be needed. She also noted concern about noise and increased traffic on Citrus Grove Road. She noted that she would like to see more upscale restaurants in Minneola like a Glass Knife in Orlando or a steakhouse. Somewhere adults could go, such as a Chilis. She followed up that soundwalls should be put up along the turnpike due to constant loud noise.

Susan Bermudez (Resident of Citrus Grove Road) expressed concerns for semi-trucks going through Citrus Grove Road at high speeds due to turnpike closures. She supported the project, but asked that they take light pollution and noise pollution into consideration.

Brett Dwyer (Resident of Ardmore Reserve) noted that affordable housing via apartments would be needed. He asked that no Target would be brought in since there is another Target further down Hancock Road. He noted that Founders Ridge was pushed forward with an Amazon distribution center. He recommended that the same be done due to the better family orientation of the proposed town center location.

Aruna Varma (Resident of The Hills of Minneola) liked the proposal, but did not like the placement of the residential apartments, thinking it would be better off to the side where the other homes were at. She also did not like the hotel due to the traffic with cars coming in and out since there is only one road going to Publix.

Chairman Giacalone asked what she thinks would be a better utilization for the hotel's location.

Aruna Varma responded that the office may be better for the coming hospital. She noted that she once lived behind the mall of Winter Garden Village. While she likes box retail, she also liked the convenience of shopping right there. The more growth, the more traffic there would be. She also noted that she does not like having to go into Clermont for everything like shopping, so she is excited for things coming to the Minneola area such as the hospital and retail. She would not like many box stores since they bring semi-trucks.

MOTION by Commissioner Trujillo, SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Henderson to approve the Conceptual Site Plan for the Hills of Minneola Town Center. Approve the plan with modifications and conditions. One of the conditions being the enlarging of the music center and park area in the middle. The other being to consider putting noise prevention barriers for the apartments, whether it be decorative walls or natural landscaping such as trees.

Alternate Commissioner Focht inquired as to why the layout changed for the apartment and commercial sections.

Mark Johnson noted that one of the main reasons was that the eastern retention area would act as a buffer between residential rental homes to the east due to the three-story apartments looking down into their yards.

Chairman Giacalone noted that the location would keep deliveries to the box store section away from the lifestyle center due to its location on the eastern side.

AYE: Henderson, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

Item 3: Resolution 2023-06 City of Minneola Library Variance - Quasi-Judicial

Scott Gerken read out Item 3.

Joyce Heffington detailed Item 3, noting that the reason for the variance was to allow for lap-siding that matched the Florida style of the Main Street area of Minneola.

No public comment.

Alternate Commissioner Focht expressed concern for requiring standards, and asking for a variance on the city's own project, hoping to not set a precedence where the city does not follow it's own rules.

Vice-Chairman Henderson expressed the same concern and asked if any other buildings in the area have a similar variance that was applied for.

Joyce Heffington replied that she did not believe there was, but if a code change were desired, it can be looked into in order to start the process to change it.

MOTION by Alternate Commissioner Focht, SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Henderson to approve Item 3: Resolution 2023-06 City of Minneola Library Variance.

AYE: Henderson, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

Item 5: Ordinance 2023-12 Tattoo Parlors

Scott Gerken read out Item 5.

Joyce Heffington detailed Item 5 on not allowing tattoo parlors on Citrus Grove Road and Hancock Road. Also limiting the number of tattoo parlors allowed in the city, based upon the population.

No public comment.

Alternate Commissioner Focht noted that he was not in favor of the ordinance asking why they would limit the free market.

Leonard Jackson asked if the reason for the ordinance was for a safety issue or for character of the City's vision.

Joyce Heffington responded that there had been issues with bright neon signs for tattoo parlors in the past.

Alternate Commissioner Focht responded that the issue should be addressed within the city sign code as opposed to following specific business types.

MOTION by Commissioner Trujillo, SECONDED by Commissioner Jackson to postpone the decision on Item 5: Ordinance 2023-12 Tattoo Parlors to review the current code to see how it can be potentially approved in the future.

AYE: Henderson, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo

NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

FINAL REPORTS

Councilor Flinn commended the Commission on the discussion, saying it will greatly help the city council. She also announced that on May 4th there will be a business after hours event at the Trailhead Park from 5:00pm – 7:00pm.

FINAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Denise Price supported the Town Center location and expressed concern with the Founders Ridge project.


MOTION by Commissioner Trujillo, SECONDED by Alternate Commissioner Focht to adjourn.

AYE: Henderson, Giacalone, Jackson, Focht, Trujillo


NAY: None

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

(Meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.)


Paul Giacalone, Chairman

ATTEST:


Corey DeVogel, Planning Technician