

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, OHIO  
Held in the Council Chambers at City Hall**

**7:00 P.M., MARCH 4, 2008**

Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m., March 4, 2008 and the following responded to Roll Call:

**PRESENT:** Gregory Kurtz, Mayor  
Vern Blaze, Vice Mayor  
Jerry Skuhrovec

**OTHERS**

**PRESENT:** Gregory J. O'Brien, Law Director  
Don Elewski, City Engineer  
Ron White, Economic Development

**ABSENT:** Dale Lytkowski, Chairman  
Jack Shallcross  
Jeffrey Markley, City Planner

**AGENDA:**

**Old Business:**

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Planning Commission Meeting held on February 5, 2008.**

- 1. The Meadows, Phase 2, Mackenzie Drive** – Preliminary plan to subdivide parcel into 7 lots and extension of Mackenzie Drive 150' with a cul-de-sac.

**New Business:**

- 2. 6801 Brecksville Road, Independence Technology Center** – Expansion of surface parking lot.
- 3. 6487 Brecksville Road, Barbara Grencewicz** – Proposed daycare for space formerly occupied by Independence Florist.

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Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze stated that there is no need for number 1, The Meadows, as the matter will be on the Agenda next month.

**6801 Brecksville Road, Independence Technology Center** – Mr. Jeff Jardine of Riverstone Engineering was in attendance on behalf of the applicant. Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze stated that the applicant had a request for expansion of the surface parking lot. The Mayor showed the renderings of the parking lot to the adjoining neighbors. Mr. Jardine stated that the applicant would like to add 100 parking spaces for temporary parking. In the future they are planning to have a large parking lot expansion and also build an addition. Mr. Jardine stated that the parking lot would be gravel to allow the water to infiltrate into the parking lot, and it should reduce the amount of run off compared to a paved parking lot. City Engineer Elewski asked if this was a temporary parking lot. Mr. Jardine stated that this is just a temporary parking lot for now. Mr. Jardine stated that when they come back with the full parking, they will address all the water quality issues. Mr. Jardine was asked what the definition of “temporary” is. Mr. Jardine stated that if the applicant does not go forward with the additional parking lot, it would be considered permanent; and the applicant will come back and address all issues with the City. Law Director O’Brien asked when the applicant would make the determination on the final parking. Mr. Jardine is not aware of that. Mr. Jardine stated that he has seen drawings and schematics of what Mr. Pace is planning to do. He just does not know when they are planning on doing that.

The Mayor asked how many existing parking spaces there were now. Mr. Jardine stated that there are somewhere over 400 parking spaces. The Mayor asked Mr. Jardine if the applicant wanted to add 100 more spaces. Mr. Jardine stated that was correct.

Mrs. Cafardi came up and presented a photograph of cars that are presently being seen from her yard. She stated that Mr. Pace put two little trees up and had stated he would put more up but he never did. Mr. Cafardi stated that they just wanted a few trees so that they don’t see the cars. Everyone began speaking at once. Mr. Cafardi stated that they would like to have a little more privacy. Mr. Dick Pace entered the meeting. Law Director O’Brien stated that landscaping was approved back in 2004 with the approval of the addition. Mayor Kurtz asked Mr. Pace how many spaces there were. Mr. Pace agreed that there were going to be 100 spaces added and there are 400 spaces now. The Mayor stated that the temporary spaces were going to be to the east of the existing parking on the north side of the building. The Mayor stated that one of the questions that came up was that in the previous approval there was supposed to be some additional landscaping, some trees along the north side of the property. The Mayor showed Mr. Pace a photograph showing where the trees were supposed to be. Mr. Pace stated that he did add three trees; Mrs. Cafardi stated that one was dying. The Mayor stated that Mr.

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Pace will add some more trees, and Mr. Pace agreed to do that. Mr. Pace asked if he should berm that area. Mrs. Cafardi stated that it wasn't necessary. Mr. Cafardi stated that he just wants to not see the cars. Mr. Pace agreed to do that. Mrs. Cafardi also had an issue with the time that the dumpsters are being emptied. Mr. Cafardi would like Mr. Pace to call the people who empty the dumpsters and have them come a little later in the morning. Mr. Pace stated that they have both BFI and Republic coming to empty the dumpsters. Mr. Pace stated that the dumpsters are emptied three times a week, and then the Clinic has scheduled pickups also. Mayor Kurtz stated that it has been done in the past, and it could be done in this instance. Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze feels that it is a reasonable request.

Law Director O'Brien suggested to the Mayor that the Commission limit the time on keeping the temporary surface of the parking lot. Mr. Pace stated that they can't get asphalt right now. It will be temporary because they can't get the asphalt. The second side is that they are thinking about another project; and if they do, they hate to put down asphalt to have it torn back up. Mayor Kurtz stated that the applicant has the temporary parking lot for six months; and in that time Mr. Pace will also put in additional trees and change the time for the pickup of the rubbish. Law Director O'Brien stated that it would be six months from this evening. Mr. Pace agreed that it is fair. Mr. Pace stated that before six months he will do the final paving on the lot. Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze stated that Mr. Pace should do that or submit plans for an expansion of the building.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze, to approve the temporary parking for a period of 180 days from March 4, 2008, subject to additional landscaping being done along the north side of the property with the approval of the City Planner and subject to the modification of the hours of rubbish pickup to be scheduled after 8:00 a.m.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Kurtz, Blaze, Skuhrovec  
                              Nays: None  
                              MOTION CARRIED**

Law Director O'Brien stated to the applicant that he may want to possibly get the landscaping in before he would start on the paving, weather permitting.

**6487 Brecksville Road, Barbara Grencewicz** – Barbara Grencewicz was in attendance. She is proposing putting in a daycare in the space where Independence Florist was previously. Ms. Grencewicz wanted to apply for a U-3 Special Use permit to have child care in the space. She stated that there is an acre of property behind the building that has tractor trailers and stuff like that on it. The landlord stated that he would remove all of that so that she can have the space behind there to make it an enclosed playground area.

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Mrs. Grencewicz will have a lot of children from the pre-school on Valley View Drive. Ms. Grencewicz stated that she has been babysitting in her home for five years. She has six kids. Right now she has from the six kids, other families that like the way she treats their kids, and take care of their kids. Ms. Grencewicz stated that if she gets her approvals, she will have at least 24 kids ready to go in there in the next four months. She has already contacted the State and it pretty much depends on what the City says. The landlord has given her four months to renovate the space with free rent because he knows she will improve the space because it hasn't been updated in a long time. The only thing that the State would require of Ms. Grencewicz is that that she would put in a bathroom for the kids. Ms. Grencewicz stated that the back and front doors are correct. They are wide enough for infants, which she would only have a maximum of five there. She is also required to have a wheeled crib for the infants in case of a fire. She stated that there are actually two front doors in the space and a back door. The State requires three foot high walls to be put up or those cubicle walls to be put up for each section. Ms. Grencewicz stated that she won't be preparing food there. It would be all the food the parents would bring in for their child. She would have a kitchenette area to clean and sanitize and a refrigerator to keep any food that needs to be refrigerated. She would also have a microwave as the State allows her to warm up food. There would be no stove on the premises, no toaster oven. She would not have a laundry facility. Her laundry will be sent out. Ms. Grencewicz stated that there is 2,200 square feet in the space. That would allow her to have over 50 children. She would not want to do that because she is not looking for that. She is not looking for major, institutional type daycare. It would be for small groups where she knows all the kids. Mr. Skurhovec asked Ms. Grencewicz if she was licensed. She stated that she can't get licensed until she gets a building. She is working with the State. Ms. Grencewicz does have all the paperwork.

Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze stated that Ms. Grencewicz does need a U-3 Special Permit. For the City to grant a Special Use Permit, a Public Hearing needs to be held. He would like to hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 1, 2008 at 6:15 p.m. for this matter.

Mayor Kurtz stated that there were some issues with regard to the building itself. The Mayor stated that they have had challenges with the property owner. Law Director O'Brien stated that the landlord is asking Ms. Grencewicz to do the renovations. Mayor Kurtz stated he is talking about the outside of the building. Ms. Grencewicz stated that she is not doing any exterior work. Mayor Kurtz stated that the problem is people keep coming in for utilization of those spots, and the owner never shows up. The City keeps telling potential tenants that the building needs to be upgraded. The whole outside of the building needs an upgrade. It then becomes a hardship. Ms. Grencewicz stated that the landlord told her that he would give her as much rent free as to go through the process to

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make sure that the interior and her space is taken care of. Mayor Kurtz stated that the owner needs to show up at the next meeting. The Mayor wants to see plans to upgrade the outside of the building. The Mayor stated that the Economic Development Director will have several programs that the owner can participate in where he can borrow money at a low rate to upgrade the facade of that building. There are several examples of other buildings that people have upgraded for their tenants. The City is not going to take much of a directional step until they meet with the owner; and he shows a willingness and an interest in participating and upgrading his building.

Ms. Grencewicz stated that she would rather have this in Independence than Seven Hills. She moved to Independence because it was a good city. If this hinges on her getting the building owner to do what he is supposed to do, she can't do that. That is nothing something that she can't do. The Mayor understands and that is why he is being very honest with Ms. Grencewicz up front. He has known for years now, especially in the last six months; he gave the City assurances that he would address the City and the building. They are just trying to be fair; but it is not reasonable to ask the City to always do something but them not do something in return. If the owner wants to call the Mayor's office or call the Economic Development Director, he can. Before the next meeting, he should place that call because he is leaving Ms. Grencewicz out on a lone island. The Mayor stated that they will do what they can to help Ms. Grencewicz, but it has to be a collective effort.

**A motion was made by Mayor Kurtz, seconded by Jerry Skuhrovec, to set a Public Hearing for this matter on Tuesday, April 1, 2008 at 6:15 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Kurtz, Skuhrovec, Blaze  
                              Nays: None  
                              MOTION CARRIED**

**There being no further comments or business, a motion was made by Acting Chairman Vice Mayor Blaze to close the meeting at 7:46 p.m.**

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**Vern Blaze, Acting Chairman**

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**Debi Beal, Planning Commission Clerk**  
Minutes Unapproved at Time Released 03/07/08

