

REGULAR MEETING  
AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION  
STATE OF OHIO  
COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA

DATE: August 19, 2014  
TIME: 6:30 P.M.

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**WORK SESSION – 6:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - a. Approval of Minutes of the Work Session of July 15, 2014
  - b. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 15, 2014
  - c. Approval of Minutes of the Public Hearing of July 22, 2014
4. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - a. Thomas Wayne, 740 Adams Street, Bedford, OH is seeking to build a flat roof garage - Chapter 1913.07 (c)
  - b. Marilyn Wise, 25901 Emery Road, Suite 114, Cleveland, OH 44128 is seeking to utilize 90 Woodrow Avenue, Bedford, OH as a group home – Chapters 1927.02 / 1915.24 (e)
5. **MISCELLANEOUS**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

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**(Planning Commission Minutes and Agendas posted at [www.bedfordoh.gov](http://www.bedfordoh.gov))**

Bedford, Ohio

August 19, 2014

Planning Commission met in a Work Session at Bedford City Hall on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 6:04 P.M.

Present: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Absent: None.

Also Present: Secretary Lorree Villers and Building Commissioner Calvin Beverly.

The Commission had no issues with both the July 15, 2014 minutes and the July 22, 2014 Public Hearing minutes. (Clerk Villers corrected the misspelling of Mr. Pilla's last name.)

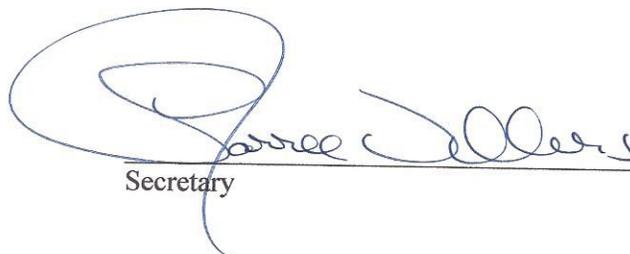
Thomas Wayne, 740 Adams Street, Bedford, OH is seeking to build a flat roof garage - Chapter 1913.07 (c)

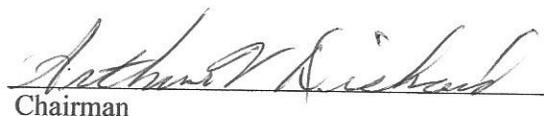
Mr. Beverly explained there was a misunderstanding of what type roof Mr. Wayne wanted. Mr. Wayne was using the word "flat roof" when it was actually a "modified salt box shed roof". After clarification, it was determined Mr. Wayne did not have to come before the Commission for approval so the application was withdrawn.

Marilyn Wise, 25901 Emery Road, Suite 114, Cleveland, OH 44128 is seeking to utilize 90 Woodrow Avenue, Bedford, OH as a group home - Chapters 1927.02 / 1915.24 (e)

Mr. Beverly explained the City was contacted by a couple neighbors after Ms. Wise had purchased the home for this use. There were some questions of concern from the neighbors that the City could not address because it was not aware of the business in the home so this was why it was on the agenda this evening. These ladies in this group type home were already recovered from their addiction and not seeking treatment. Any necessary attention these ladies needed would be done elsewhere. There was discussion of the number of ladies that would be in the home at one time, the size of the rooms, the duties of the House Manager position and if they were going to sleep while on duty and a question if there was going to be a curfew. It was suggested maybe the City should send letters to the surrounding residents with a brief explanation of the concept of the home. There was concern of the location of the home since there were six bars in the immediate area; some of the ladies would be recovered alcoholics and drug addicts. Mr. Dickard mentioned in the 1960's this area was known for a lot of drug activity but it wasn't like that anymore. The Commission had concerns but this type of service was needed in this day and age.

Work session adjourned at 6:27 P.M.

  
Secretary

  
Chairman

Bedford, Ohio

August 19, 2014

Planning Commission met in Regular Session at Bedford City Hall on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 6:30 P.M. The roll was called. Present: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Absent: None. Also in attendance was Building Commissioner Calvin Beverly.

Motion made by Dzomba seconded by Mallis to approve the minutes of the Work Session of July 15, 2014. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Briggs seconded by Dzomba to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 15, 2014. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Mallis seconded by Dzomba to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing Meeting of July 22, 2014. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Dickard informed those present that according to a ruling by the Law Department, anyone wishing to speak at a public hearing is to rise, raise their right hand and the following oath administered. “Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the statements you are about to make are the truth.” Then give your name and address for the record.

Thomas Wayne, 740 Adams Street, Bedford, OH is seeking to build a flat roof garage - Chapter 1913.07 (c)

Mr. Beverly explained this application was withdrawn because Mr. Wayne was using incorrect terminology. The roof would be a modified salt box shed type roof; not a flat roof per the application.

Marilyn Wise, 25901 Emery Road, Suite 114, Cleveland, OH 44128 is seeking to utilize 90 Woodrow Avenue, Bedford, OH as a group home – Chapters 1927.02 / 1915.24 (e)

Present: Marilyn Wise, 25901 Emery Road, Suite 114, Cleveland, Ohio and representing Ms. Wise was Attorney Chris Soukup, Ziegler Metzger, Attorneys and Counselors, Cleveland, Ohio.

Attorney Soukup, having previously been sworn in, passed out a packet for the Commission to review. (See attached). He asked the City of Bedford to make a reasonable accommodation as required under the Nations Fair Housing Act to grant a conditional use permit for the group home owned by Marilyn Wise located at 90 Woodrow Avenue. The group home would provide a long term sober family like living arrangement for 6-7 sober ladies now in recovery who need a sober living environment to obtain long term and permanent sobriety. Bedford had several group homes in existence so he wouldn't belabor the requirement of the Fair Housing Act and the need not to discriminate against Disabled people which these people certainly qualified under the code. They were handicapped and they would not be using drugs or alcohol while they were in the group home. By the time these ladies reach the group home, they would be certified for 30-days as addiction free. Other ladies in the home might suffer from anxiety, depression or eating disorders. The goal was to have a family type atmosphere in the home to enable these ladies to fully recover from their addiction and reintegrate themselves into the community and become a productive member. The home would not house more than eight (8) people which included a House Manager. The House Managers would work shifts and the home would be supervised 24/7. Random testing would be performed and if they fail the test they were no longer permitted to stay in the home.

These ladies would sign agreements as a commitment for approximately a three (3) month period, there would be no treatment in this home. The treatments would be performed at the facility in which Ms. Wise worked. A House Manager would be on site at all times. There were various activities each and every lady would be expected to assist in their recovery. The home would provide a compassionate, consistent support system for people who could be in a fragile vulnerable physical and emotional condition. In some cases the person had to return to the environment that enabled them to fall off the wagon. This home was a much supported environment plus they would be around other similar situated people who would help encourage them to pursue their recovery. Concerns that were often raised were whether the group home would affect surrounding property values or security. In the attached packet there was a summary of studies that had been conducted that showed no impact of a group home that affected property values, increased traffic and/or security issues. Mr. Soukup emphasized this was a family situation with eight (8) people under one roof. He noted there were other homes with eight (8) people in them that have more problems than what they would have in a group home that carefully screened the ladies that were allowed to live there. Also in the packet was information and definitions of a group home, boarding house and nursing homes. He pointed out the list of activities that were involved in a group home so these ladies could be incorporated back into society in a productive way. This group home/house was not a luxury but an absolute necessity for those who were getting back into the main stream of society and continued to stay drug and alcohol free. This was the type of nurturing that was needed to win the war against addictions if homes like this weren't available. He said besides talking about all the Codified Ordinances, Fair Housing Act and Zoning Codes he didn't want to lose track of the fact they were dealing with people's lives. Ms. Wise was a licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor; she was dedicated to the well-being of the people she treats. She was obtaining her Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Kent State University. She had years of experience in the field and had gathered an impressive group of people who were similar minded to assist her in this process regarding business plans, security, programming and so on. He felt this was not only a group home but a healing home. These people probably have gone through quite a bit before moving to Bedford; this was a long and arduous task and they should not be cut off and given an opportunity to live in a fairly normal type setting. In closing, he asked the Planning Commission to fairly consider reasonable accommodations necessary to allow this group home to exist and prosper in Bedford.

Marilyn Wise, having previously been sworn in, was available for questions. Mr. Mallis asked if this was strictly for women. Ms. Wise replied, yes. Mr. Mallis asked how the screening was addressed and if they were screened for criminal type backgrounds. Ms. Wise said if these ladies had a criminal record such as a felony or any type of personality disorders they would not be able live in the home because they would not be a good fit. These ladies were carefully screened as to how the group would fit together as a whole and being aware of any risks. She had spent most of her life getting educated on all types of addictions and why and how it happens. People who get addicted to anything were suffering from a brain disorder which can be seen on brain scans. There were several avenues that could be taken to address these issues because not every patient was treated the same; different things work for different people. Her approach had always been individualized. The Bedford area was a great proximity to the park and downtown area; they use art therapy, yoga, a 12 Step Program to name a few. At their Open House visitors from the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospital, Glenbeigh Hospital and stock brokers were all very impressed with Bedford.

Ali Rinni, 40 Falls Creek Circle, Moreland Hills, Ohio, having previously been sworn in, stated she was a drug addict in recovery. She had been sober for six months and was on the team as part of the staff for various projects. She went to treatment in Sundance, Utah in February 2011. The first few months were super fragile, however, when addicts were going through rehab they were on their best behavior. Part of the 12 Step Program was to give back to the community constantly to right a lot of their wrongs and try to become reprogrammed to become the best you can be. When a person elects "sober living" they were not forced into it as opposed to some in-patient rehab. She was originally from Beachwood and those of her friends that have visited Bedford were impressed. She was available at any time for questions and/or

concerns about the process or recovery. She was hoping to find a grant that would help a Bedford resident to live at this location that had an addiction problem in order to give back to the community. The rooms were decorated all very differently for a cozy, relaxing feeling. Morning meditation was very helpful for everyone to keep them on the right track. The Open House had 50 visitors which was a very positive scene. This type group home was the first of its kind in the Cleveland area. It was nice that they did not have to live in Utah to get the assistance they needed; they could be closer to home. Mr. Mallis asked how many managers there were to cover the shifts and if there was a curfew. Ms. Rinni replied three managers and the hours were 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. There were several rules for the home that had to be followed; keys would not be passed out to any of the ladies, they would have to be let in and out by the House Manager and boyfriends were off limits in the home.

Mr. Mallis explained this item would go before Council for final approval. He informed Ms. Wise she would have to contact the Building Department to make sure the home was in compliance before a Certificate of Occupancy was issued.

Mr. Beverly asked for clarification regarding the House Managers. Ms. Wise said there were three managers that would be somewhat flexible with eight (8) hour shifts 24/7. The managers were solid trained/qualified people.

Michelle Martin, having previously been sworn in, explained there were no treatments in the home; the treatments would be at the facility where she worked. She had worked with Ms. Wise for 10 of the 14 years she knew her. Mr. Dickard felt this group was doing it right, he wished them well and was happy to have this type of program in Bedford. He urged them to call the City if they needed some assistance. Mr. Dzomba asked how the ladies would be transported. Ms. Wise said she was in the process of buying a van. It was pointed out the Bedford Automile would be more than happy to sell her a van. Ms. Wise replied, she had previously purchased three cars from the Automile.

Mrs. Briggs asked if the third shift/overnight shift manager would be awake while the ladies were sleeping. Ms. Wise explained this particular manager would be in the downstairs bedroom and all the ladies would be in the upstairs bedrooms. They were going to install cameras, window and door alarms. These house guests would sign a contract and if unsuitable behavior was an issue then they would have to leave. The goal was to seek middle income people who needed assistance.

Susan Acevedo, 723 Washington Court, having previously been sworn in, a resident of 59 years was in support of this group home. She was very impressed with Ms. Wise and considered her now as a friend. She had a sister that was handicapped and witnessed the hell her sister had to go through on a daily basis because people were cruel and nasty. She felt everybody needed a second chance in life. She urged the Commission/City to support the group home because these ladies needed a second chance in life. She apologized for being emotional but it meant a lot to her knowing how she fought for her sister.

Motion made by Mallis seconded by Dzomba to approve the request to utilize 90 Woodrow Avenue, Bedford, Ohio as a group home subject to compliance with all City Codes and Ordinances. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

It was announced the decision of the Planning Commission would go to City Council for final approval on Tuesday, September 2, 2014 at 8:00 p.m. The Commission urged someone to be present in the event there were questions or concerns by Council.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Briggs seconded by Dzomba to adjourn. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Dickard, Dzomba, Powers, Briggs, Mallis. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 P.M.

  
Secretary

  
Chairman