

**CITY OF HIGHLAND HEIGHTS, OHIO
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING - FEBRUARY 27, 2023
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Commissioners Vince Adamus, Brad Hull (arrived at 7:05 p.m.), Joe Mercurio, Sean Milroy, Bill Urban; Recording Clerk Susan Olson; Fire Chief William Turner

ABSENT: Building Commissioner Dale Grabfelder; Assistant Law Director Tim Paluf; Law Director Mike Lograsso

Chairman Adamus called the regular meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

MOTION ON THE MINUTES: The Commission dispensed with a reading of the minutes of the regular meeting held February 13, 2023. Mr. Milroy moved to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Mr. Urban.

FURTHER DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Ayes all; motion carried.

MOTION ON THE MINUTES: The Commission dispensed with a reading of the minutes of the public hearing for LaRich's Pizza held February 13, 2023. Mr. Urban moved to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Mr. Milroy.

FURTHER DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Ayes all; motion carried.

**SUBJECT: TURNDEV , 625 ALPHA DRIVE
PZ23004 VARIANCE TO ALLOW SELF-STORAGE UNITS WITHIN A WHOLLY
ENCLOSED BUILDING IN A P-C-M DISTRICT**

Jon Pinney, principal attorney, and Thomas Flynn, both representing TurnDev, 3900 Park East Drive, Suite 200, Beachwood, Ohio 44122, appeared before the Commission to request a variance to allow a proposed self-storage facility to operate in the existing building owned by Progressive Insurance Direct Company, located at 625 Alpha Drive, Highland Heights, Ohio 44143. Progressive Insurance is vacating the building.

TurnDev is a real estate development company that specializes in commercial and retail development and redevelopment, and currently has a purchase agreement to acquire the Progressive building, and proposes to invest \$8 million dollars in this project, including the purchase price and necessary renovations, to convert the office building into a self-storage unit facility. TurnDev will remain the real estate holder and will partner with a third party who will run the business. The application submitted by Mr. Flynn specifically states "I am requesting section 1131.04 in PCM District allow Section 2B to have maintenance & storage within wholly enclosed building per your main & accessory use." Mr. Flynn said the proposed self-storage facility would meet the purposes established under HHCO Section 1131.02 "INTENT" within a P-C-M District, and the guidelines outlined in HHCO Section 1340 "Mini-Storage Warehouses", and conform with Fire guidelines outlined in HHCO Section 1507.27.

Commissioner Mercurio is an employee of Progressive Insurance. Mr. Adamus asked that Mr. Mercurio recuse himself from the discussion and to be seated with the public to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Mr. Mercurio agreed.

Mr. Flynn stated the following:

- The 52-year-old office building is one-story, 77,000 square feet with 10-foot high ceilings.
- The building will be converted into 1st-floor, climate-controlled self-storage units with an average unit size of 100 square feet.
- The central atrium is lit with natural light and will remain because it is an architectural element and will maintain the aesthetic appearance of the building.
- There will be no demolition of the building.
- The only change to the exterior of the building being considered is the addition of a canopy at the east building entrance.
- The exterior of the building will not visually imitate the appearance of traditional self-storage facilities that consist of rows of buildings.
- Only two bathrooms in the building are needed.
- Customers will carry their items to be stored into the building and then take them to their individual units.
- Customers will not be allowed to use the existing loading docks on the property.
- A self-storage facility is a good fit for this building that does not fit the needs for manufacturing use due to its low, ten-foot ceiling height.
- The building is of no need to companies, who for the most part, are no longer housing hundreds of employees in a building.
- A storage facility is a good asset to the community.
- There will be very little traffic and no noise.
- There will be four (4) employees.
- Typical customers will be suburban homemakers and week-end warriors moving items for family and friends into the facility, with a traffic peak of four to five people daily.

In response to Mr. Hull's inquiry if any sort of maintenance will occur at the facility as listed in variance code section 1131.04(f)(2)B, Mr. Flynn replied no, and it will be strictly personal (not commercial) storage, with estimated 90% personal storage and 10% storage from local businesses. In response to Mr. Hull's inquiry if the proposed construction of the self-storage facility in Mayfield Heights will impact the storage facility in Highland Heights, Mr. Flynn no, and stated the traffic generated by this use will not be a detriment to the community. In response to Mr. Urban's inquiry if the nature of what is being stored can be controlled, Mr. Flynn replied yes, by using a contract that lists permissible items, and the building security features that include camera monitoring at the three touch points when entering the parking lot, entering the building and exiting the building. In response to Mr. Urban's inquiry how Mr. Flynn knows that information, Mr. Flynn replied the data is gathered from camera monitors located at other self-storage facilities. In response to Mr. Urban's inquiry if there will be outdoor bays, Mr. Flynn replied no. In response to Mr. Adamus's inquiry as to rental terms, Mr. Flynn replied rental terms are monthly.

Fire Chief William Turner said the proposed project violates HHCO Section 1340.04(e)(3) “Mini-Storage Warehouses; MINI-WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS”, that establishes no structure falling under the provisions of the code shall be located less than 500 feet from any residential dwelling, school building, day care center, hospital, nursing home or public building. He said there is a licensed adult day-care facility at 675 Alpha Park that is within 500 feet of the building at 625 Alpha Drive. Chief Turner stated that if the variance is approved, and TurnDev moves forward with the storage facility project in the same building, the current fire suppression and fire alarm systems will be required to remain and may need to be modified due to the increased hazard. In response to Chief Turner’s inquiry as to how the applicant will maintain site access and parking control, Mr. Flynn replied the property will be gated and that fencing will be installed to manage traffic flow on the property. Chief Turner said the building is nice inside and that the interior of the building and bathrooms have been remodeled inside within the past five years with an investment of \$5 million.

Mr. Adamus suggested the appropriate code section for this matter may be HHCO Section 1113.09 “DETERMINATION OF OTHER SIMILAR USES”, to determine if a self-storage facility is of a reasonably similar use to the code’s list of permitted uses in a P-C-M District. His reasoning is that HHCO does not allow the Commission to approve use variances. He also pointed out that HHCO Section 1131.04f(2)B addresses uses for accessory (not main) buildings and uses, whereas the applicant is proposing a storage facility as the main or primary use. Building Commissioner Grabfelder replied that Law Director Lograsso is in the process of obtaining a copy of a lawsuit filed by LifeStorage, located at 355 Bishop Road, Highland Heights, Ohio 44143, a P-C-M District. The City representatives will then meet with Law Director Lograsso to better understand the situation. Mr. Adamus advised a public hearing will be held March 13, 2023 if it is determined that it is needed.

Mr. Pinney, principal attorney for TurnDev, made the following closing comments:

- A self-storage facility is a good use for this 60’s vintage building that is obsolete with a low 10-foot ceiling height and filled with cubicles.
- The building will be remodeled to high standards, with state of the art entry systems and extensive security and cameras for a total building value of \$8 million, which is twice the current value.
- The exterior of the building will remain the same and unnoticeable as a self-storage facility.
- Traffic volume will be very low.
- The project adds to the community and does not detract from it.
- The facility will not be intensive on city services.
- The location off of I-271 is convenient.
- TurnDev was the only bidder on this property.
- The long-term tax yield of 13% from property taxes for this building that will be renovated to institutional standards is substantial. Chief Turner replied the City’s property tax portion is roughly between 3% and 4%.

SUBJECT: NICK PINZONE, 282 MINER ROAD
BBZA22022 VARIANCE TO ALLOW A SECOND ACCESSORY BUILDING -
DETACHED GARAGE ON THE PROPERTY

Mr. Adamus reported the appeal filed by Nick Pinzone, 282 Miner Road, Highland Heights, Ohio 44143, was heard by the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals on February 15, 2023. The Board voted unanimously to uphold the decision of the Planning and Zoning Commission made December 12, 2022, that denied Mr. Pinzone a variance to allow a second accessory structure/detached garage on the property. The appeal was denied.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business before the Commission, Mr. Adamus asked if anyone wished to make a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Milroy to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Hull. Ayes all; motion carried. Mr. Adamus declared the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Susan M. Olson, *Recording Clerk*

Vince A. Adamus, *Chair*