

# CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION

## MINUTES FOR THE MAY 14, 2025 REGULAR MEETING

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At 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, a regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers in City Hall.

### PLANNING COMMISSION

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Jessica Cohen, Chair  
Michael Gaynier, Vice Chair  
Judith Miles  
Robert Brown  
Ken Surratt  
Jessica Wobig

### PLANNING COMMISSION

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Leonard Horowitz

### STAFF PRESENT

Justin Hines Assistant Law Director  
Christy Lee, Recording Secretary  
Karen Knittel Assistant Director of Planning & Development  
Brooke Siggers, City Planner

### COUNCIL PRESENT

None

### CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. She welcomed the audience to the May 14, 2025, regular Cleveland Heights Planning Commission meeting.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 2025 Minutes from the Regular Meeting were approved 6-0.

Assistant Law Director Hines swore in all staff, the public, and applicants.

Ms. Cohen explained to the public the order of the agenda will be changed, and that the places of worship Proj. No. 25-12 will be presented first.

## **PROJ. NO. 25-12 PROPOSED ZONING CODE AMENDMENT**

Ms. Knittel introduced and provided information regarding the Livable Neighborhood Initiative including places of worship (Ordinance No. 055-2055) for review and recommendation per Code Chapters 1111, 1115, & 1119.

Ms. Knittel provided information regarding the history of the places of worship ordinance to explain how it has moved through the different bodies for the necessary City approvals. She let the public know that they can find recorded work sessions on YouTube for further clarification. Ms. Knittel went through the positive impact of the proposed zoning amendment. She further detailed the parking requirements associated with additional places of worship, which is to be reviewed by both Police and Fire.

Ms. Cohen expressed her agreement with the parking amendment requirements for the places of worship legislation.

Ms. Wobig asked if it was necessary to make an amendment/regulation to the emergency language. She also expressed concerns regarding how legislation will consider how people pray, worship, and live within the same dwelling.

Mr. Zamft interjected that emergency language is needed because once this adopted it can go into effect. Given the length of time it has taken to bring this forth for a vote, it's important to keep this language. Mr. Zamft explained the role of the Planning Commission as far as the advancement of this legislation.

Ms. Cohen asked if there was a motion at this time.

Ms. Wobig made a motion to strike the first two (2) clauses in the legislation being reviewed.

The motion was approved 6-0.

Mr. Gaynier motioned approval of Proj. No. 25-12: Proposed Zoning Code Amendment regarding the Livable Neighborhood Initiative including places of worship (Ordinance No. 055-2055) for review and recommendation per Code Chapters 1111, 1115, & 1119. With the two clause amendments added.

Mr. Surratt second the motion, and it carried 6-0.

## **PROJECT NO. 24-33 [SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES], PARK SYNAGOGUE S-2 DEVELOPMENT (PPN 684-34-014, 684-34-015, 684-35-025)**

Ms. Cohen reminded the public that the next case before them will not require a motion or action; this will just be a preliminary review of the project regarding the 'S-2' development plan.

Ms. Knittel interjected that the height of the project is especially important because it is in line with the zoning code recommendations.

Ms. Cohen added that anything that is shown or presented during this presentation is still in the development stages. The development plan's approved uses doesn't mean that the use will definitely take place on this site, but it allows flexibility for current and future owners of the property to operate various uses.

Ms. Siggers introduced the case, the review of the Park Synagogue Development Plan and work session on 'S-2' Planned Development Standards recommendation to Council per Zoning Code chapters 1111, 1115, 1119, 1141, 1145, 1151, 1153, and 1166.

Mr. Craun gave a Power Point Presentation and provided a description of the project.

## **REPORT 1: 'S-2' DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **CONTEXT:**

The development site includes three parcels (PPNs 684-34-014, 486-34-015, and 684-35-025). Mayfield Road is to the site's north. East of the development site along Mayfield Road is zoned 'MF-2' Multiple-Family and to the south of the first property are residential properties with Compton Road addresses zoned 'A' Single-Family. South of the development site are residential properties with Euclid Heights Boulevard addresses zoned 'A' Single-Family. West of the development site is a parcel zoned 'C-3' General Commercial, and to the south of this are residential properties with Ivydale Road addresses zoned 'A' Single Family.

Parcel A, Permanent Parcel Number 684-34-014, is adjacent to Mayfield Road. There are two entry drives from Mayfield Road into this development site. The Charlotte Goldberg Community Mikvah is located along the western side of this parcel. In January 2025, Planning Commission granted a conditional use to the Mikvah. This parcel is 12.47 acres (measurement excludes the land in the Mayfield Road public right-of-way). This parcel has the former school district bus parking lots along Mayfield Road. The balance of the parcel is mostly comprised of natural landscaping.

Parcel B, Permanent Parcel Number 684-34-015, is the parcel with the historic temple and school wing located on it. In January 2025, the historic temple was granted a conditional use to permit this nonresidential building to be used as a visual and performance arts and education center with an accessory use as a place of worship. The building will also host events, which is typical of its historic use. The Dugway Brook is a prominent natural feature of this parcel. An enclosed walkway bridge extends over the stream to the Kangesser Wing. The land surrounding the Dugway Brook is a natural landscaped area.

Parcel C, Permanent Parcel Number 684-35-025, is the southern-most parcel with the southern property line shared with single-family residences on Euclid Heights Boulevard. A daycare center is located in the southwest corner of this site. An entry/exit drive connects the development site to Euclid Heights Boulevard.

**MATERIALS SUBMITTED:**

**Attachment A:** Development Plan Submission Checklist – dated April 11, 2025

**Attachment B:** Site Plan Survey-Boundary Control – dated September 11, 2023

**Attachment C:** Lot Split & Consolidation Plan – dated December 6, 2024

**Attachment D:** Site Plan Survey-Existing Conditions – dated September 11, 2023

**Attachment E:** Site Plan Survey – Utilities & Topography – dated September 11, 2023

**Attachment F:** Site Plan Survey Vegetation & Trees – dated September 11, 2023

**Attachment G:** Wetland Delineation Report – August 2021

**Attachment H:** Arborist Appraisal Report – dated September 19, 2023

**Attachment I:** Tree Preservation Plan – dated August 21, 2023

**Attachment J:** Development Plan -Existing Conditions – dated May 14, 2025

**Attachment K:** Development Plan Future Phases – dated May 14, 2025

**Attachment L:** Proposed Site Sections (note: this plan assists in understanding height) – dated May 14, 2025

**Attachment M:** Traffic Impact Study – dated February 18, 2025

**Attachment N:** Parking Demand Study – dated February 18, 2025

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

In April 2025, City Council approved the map rezoning request made by Sustainable Community Associates to change the zoning of the three parcels (PPN 684-34-014, 486-34-015, 684-35-025) to S-2 Mixed Use. Ordinance Number 245-2045 requires that the final approval of the S-2 Development Plan shall be approved by City Council.

Sustainable Community Associates is creating a campus-like development that will enable the historic Parks Synagogue to be renovated and reimagined as a visual and performing arts and education center with accessory uses as a place of worship with events typical of its historic function. The Mikvah will continue to operate as will the daycare center.

Sustainable Community Associates has announced that Oberlin College will lease a portion of the space in the former synagogue for an extension of its BFA program. Colorful Minds Studio, a non-profit organization, will also have a working arts studio for adults with developmental disabilities.

The 27.8-acre development site includes six (6) development zones.

**'S-2' DEVELOPMENT PLAN REGULATIONS:**

Section 1145.01(a) defines the purpose of the 'S-2' Mixed-Use District as providing an opportunity for modern and imaginative architectural design, site arrangement, and city planning in areas which offer unique development opportunities.

Section 1145.01(b) encourages higher density commercial and/or residential development provided that such development which exceeds the intensity permitted by right under the standard regulation is developed according to an approved Development Plan.

Section 1145.01(c) states that an 'S-2' Planned Development is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) To offer incentives for creative high density commercial, residential and mixed-use development projects in areas that have special characteristics or special redevelopment opportunities;
- (2) To ensure that this development occurs in a unified manner; and
- (3) To encourage sustainable development practices.

The minimum project area for an 'S-2' Planned Development is two (2) acres.

The 'S-2' Planned Development may include any combination of principal and conditional uses permitted in the 'MF-2' Multiple-Family and 'C-2' Local Retail Commercial Districts. Accessory Uses shall be permitted in association with a principal or conditional use subject to the regulations in the respective multiple-family and/or commercial districts.

Section 1145.04 regulates the Development Standards for an 'S-2' Planned Development stating that the 'S-2' development standards approved as a conditional use shall be determined by applying the objectives set forth in Chapter 1141 and 1145.01. The standards may vary from the applicable standards of the 'MF-2' and 'C-2' Districts as follows:

- a. The maximum density for residential dwelling units in an 'S-2' Planned Development is fifty-eight (58) dwelling units per acre.
- b. The front, side, and rear yard requirements may be varied to accommodate a variety of structural patterns, clustering designs, and housing types, provided that projects adjacent to substantially developed single-family neighborhoods construct buildings maintaining the established building line of the adjacent property when within fifty (50) feet of a single-family property.
- c. The height of a proposed building shall be limited as follows by its location on the development site in relationship to adjacent properties:
  - (1) The maximum building height shall not exceed one-half (½) the distance from the building to any property line in an 'AA', 'A', or 'B' District.
  - (2) The maximum building height shall not exceed twice the distance from the building to the property line in an 'MF' District.
  - (3) Buildings may be approved up to the property line when adjacent to a commercial district.
  - (4) The maximum heights of a building as set forth in subsections (c)(1) and (2) hereof shall be measured from the average grade of the adjacent property.
  - (5) Additional site-specific development requirements formulated to achieve the objectives of the 'S-2' District shall be established at the time the conditional use request and Development Plan are reviewed. Any

dimensional specifications adopted with such plan become binding land use requirements for the proposed development.

Section 1145.08 states that the Planning Commission may approve the Development Plan pursuant to Section 1115.09 (Review of Development Plans) for an existing or proposed 'S-2' District. Such approved plan shall be the basis for developing the property provided that The Applicant submit a project plan for all or part of the area within the 'S-2' District and receive a conditional use permit before a building permit may be issued. The Applicant may elect to develop only a portion of the area encompassed by the Development Plan, which may be an area less than the required two (2) acres, provided that the proposed development complies with the sequencing established by the adopted Development Plan.

Enclosed with this report is a Draft 'S-2' Development Standards document. As described above, this document will be used to guide the development of the site.

Ms. Cohen asked for clarification regarding the May 28, 2025, Planning Commission meeting and if they can bring forth a recommendation for approval of this project at that time.

Ms. Knittel clarified that that is correct.

Ms. Siggers requested that public comments be heard before the work session on the project begins.

Adam May on Compton Road affirmed the oath. Mr. May went on to express his concerns pertaining to the project and how it would negatively affect his property. He also raised questions regarding the parking and lighting of the potential project that abuts residential properties. Additional questions were asked that audio failed to capture.

Ms. Knittel again discussed the process before the Commission and Public, and explained that all concerns would be addressed as well as considered. However, at this time this is only a review session. Final approvals will be discussed at the May 28, 2025 meeting.

Ms. Siggers went through the standards document to highlight what sessions of the development plan would be reviewed for possible change or amendments.

Ms. Knittel stated that sites A1 and A2 are currently shown as future sites for development, and only represent general locations of potential structures. Additionally, all potential uses of any proposed structures are described in the standards document. They are all conditionally permitted and only represent what is permissible and in compliance with the development standards; they are not confirmed as uses that will take place on-site. This is an opportunity for the Commission to review potential uses, consider what may need changed, and to provide input for what would work best for the site and the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Zamft interjected that this should be an educational process for both the Planning Commission and the public.

Mr. Brown added that it makes sense for the Mayfield Road end of the site to accommodate larger-scale buildings.

Ms. Wobig asked about Parcel B regarding height, function, and programming. She wanted to understand how this project was going to protect historical features.

Ms. Knittel interjected that the developers have been working with the National Parks Service, which has defined a historic viewshed that needs to be maintained in order to preserve the visibility of the historic Park Synagogue from the rear end of the properties on Euclid Heights Boulevard and Compton Road.

Ms. Cohen encouraged all members to take a look at the plans and take note for the next meeting so that all ideas and concerns will be considered for final approvals.

Ms. Knittel gave a brief overview of maximum density and how it relates to the development plan.

Mr. Zamft added that all of the maximum density ranges are general density measurements. Ms. Knittel explained that Code permits fifty-eight (58) dwelling units per acre for residential dwelling units that are part of an 'S-2' Planned Development. That doesn't confirm that there will be that many, but that is the Code-conforming maximum. The development standards limit Parcel A's maximum density to twenty-nine (29) units per acre which allows a maximum of 361 dwelling units on the 12.47-acre parcel. The development standards limit Parcel B's maximum density to four (4) dwelling units per acre; resulting in a total maximum of thirty (30) units on this 8.015-acre parcel. The development standards limit Parcel C's maximum density to nine (9) dwelling units per acre; resulting in a total maximum of 65 dwelling units on this 7.3267-acre parcel.

Ms. Siggers spoke of the urban design and concepts that are attached to the design of the development. The standards reaffirm the requirement to maintain the historic viewshed on the property as defined by the National Park Service for as long as the synagogue stands in order to maintain the viewshed past the historic tax credits timeframe. Additionally, the road will consist of multiple transportation methods including cars, pedestrians, bikes, etc., so the standards seek to ensure that landscaping and buildings create a comfortable and safe environment.

Ms. Knittel interjected speaking further regarding the position of the buildings along Mayfield Road. They plan to orient them toward the center of the site, but will still have a significant presence on the Mayfield Road side abutting the sidewalk and street. This will provide more of a campus feel to the development, nestling it within the site and in the surrounding community.

Ms. Cohen asked if it was necessary to keep parking garages in the standards to allow it as a permitted use. Ms. Siggers added that it is necessary for it to remain as a potential use, as there will be parking requirements for future potential residential uses.

Ms. Wobig asked about the site's natural landscape and environment as a whole. She wanted to understand the possibility of adding language discussing the protection of wildlife within that area.

Ms. Knittel stated that the wildlife that is there is protected and should be considered while developing.

Mr. Craun came forward to further explain development intentions pertaining to height, landscape, wildlife, and urban design of the project.

Ms. Cohen asked the actual height of the proposed.

The question was answered however the audio was unable to pick the response up.

Ms. Siggers gave an overview of the parking and loading section for both residents, guest and services parking. She also discussed the further consideration of spacing for electric vehicles and scooters, along with requirements regarding bike storage. She further explained the need for designated spacing for parking for delivery vehicles with easy to use wayfinding signs.

Mr. Zamft interjected that having spacing and ports for electric vehicles should be strongly considered, and that the city is looking for a way to allow residents of multi-family buildings with electric vehicles to have the availability to charge and park at their multi-family residential properties in addition to the potential addition of public charging stations.

Ms. Cohen raised the possibility of not having a parking garage on site.

There was public comment, however the audio was unable to capture.

Ms. Siggers also discussed the preservation of the natural environment of the site, the developer's desire to maintain a campus atmosphere, and that any new plants should positively impact the surrounding ecology. New development abutting the surrounding areas should have screening such as fencing or landscaping. Buffers for parking lots, dumpster locations, and any mechanical equipment is also preferred.

Ms. Cohen asked that each member take the site into consideration and how this will affect the community as a whole.

There was a response given, however, it wasn't picked up by the audio.

The Commission went on to speak about lights, access for the public to have safe walkways, parking plans, and wayfinding signage.

Ms. Cohen opened the floor for public comment.

There was a question raised regarding the zoning classification of 'MF-1', 'MF-2', and 'MF-3.' They also wanted clarification regarding townhomes.

Ms. Knittel gave a brief over of the different zoning classifications. She explained that 'S-2' Developments permit both 'MF-2' and 'C-2' zoning standards. The development standards document identifies the applicable standards being imposed by this plan. The townhomes,

though referred to as such by the development team, are actually just multi-family apartment buildings according to the Zoning Code definitions.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Knittel announced that the Planning Commission would be getting an update on park planning at the June regular meeting regarding Horseshoe Lake with which Cleveland Heights shares with Shaker Heights.

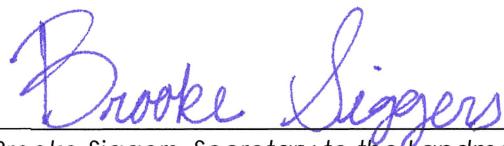
## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

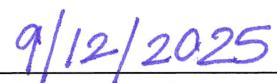
## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Brooke Siggers, Secretary to the Landmark Commission



Date

Approved,



Jessica Cohen, Planning Commission Chair



Date

