

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY  
JUNE 13, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Jim Cook; K. Kary; Ben Capelle; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
**ABSENT:** S. Norris, Chairman; Tim Lannon, City Engineer  
**OTHERS:** Keith Pedersen, Asst. Law Director; Larry Puskas, Chief Bldg. & Zoning Official;  
Vicki Grinstead, Secretary

**Vice Chairman Wildermuth called the regular in-person meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Public Hearing Meeting Minutes**

**May 23, 2024**

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the Planning Commission Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for May 23, 2024 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

**ROLL CALL:**           Yeas:     Ben Capelle; K. Kary; J. Cook; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
                              Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                              Nays:    None

**Motion Carried:     APPROVED**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**May 23, 2024**

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes for May 23, 2024 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

**ROLL CALL:**           Yeas:     K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
                              Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                              Nays:    None

**Motion Carried:     APPROVED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**None**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Vice Chairman Wildermuth asked Ms. Thomas if she wished to proceed with only four of the five members present this evening and Ms. Thomas said yes.

**Lacreme Event Studio**  
1356 Lost Nation Rd.  
(Rep.- Kenya Thomas, Owner)

**Development Plan/EAS#8-4-24**

Ms. Thomas is representing a Development Plan/EAS#8-4-24 for an event studio for Lacreme Event Studio.

Mr. Kary addressed the EAS. The police department has no concerns with traffic. Parking lot does need to be marked as far as parking spots, signs for emergency vehicles etc. There should be pedestrian markings on the large apron. The city engineer has no comments or concerns. Noise, water, air pollution-no concerns because it is an inside business. No demands on school system. Hazardous waste-no concerns. Timeline-Fall of 2024. Ms. Thomas said they are making interior cosmetic improvements and hope to have those completed within 60-90 days. Mr. Kary asked if they are dealing with only the greenhouse property and not the home, and Mr. Merriman said this is correct, because the home is a rental property. He said they plan to stripe the parking lot but they wanted to make sure this proposal passes.

Vice Chairman Wildermuth said there really is no development with this property except for the striping of the parking lot which was addressed in the EAS. He said they need to identify where the striping will be and also label handicapped parking spaces, identify these with signage, and submit these plans for the next meeting. Mr. Kary said in her business description she states her hours will vary for private events. He said they will address this later in the meeting. She goes on to say in her description that in addition to public events our studio will also be available for private gatherings. She also says reserve the space for private functions and she uses the term private quite extensively in terms of her description. The land and the business are zoned retail business and based on this zoning he wants to make sure she would be allowed to hold private events. Mr. Puskas, Chief Building Inspector said it is not permitted. Mr. Kary said the art classes and instructional classes are allowed. Mr. Puskas said weddings and baby showers, which are private gatherings, are not permitted in this zoning. Ms. Thomas said this will affect her business model quite a bit.

Vice Chairman Wildermuth said they may have to go before the Board of Zoning Appeals to obtain a use variance for this property for having private events. Planning Commission cannot proceed with what Ms. Thomas wishes to use this property for without her first obtaining a use variance. Once she obtains this variance she could go back before the Planning Commission for her Development Plan/EAS and Conditional Use Permit.

Mr. Kary said she has two options; one is to change the business plan or two is to apply to the Board of Zoning Appeals to get permission to hold private events in an area that is not zoned for these types of activities. Mr. Puskas said an instruction studio is fine but gatherings are not.

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Mr. Merriman said he had a meeting with the city and they were told this could be approved and Mr. Puskas said they never said it could be approved as an event center. Mr. Wildermuth said the instructional studio is allowed conditionally, but once you request to hold events, such as parties etc., this is where the zoning code draws the line.

Mr. Kary said they are all for economic development at the north end of Willoughby. He said she can ask the Vice Chairman to table this application so this would give her time to apply for Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), and if BZA agrees to allow this type of business then she can come back before Planning Commission because she will still be on the agenda and they can move forward. If BZA denies the appeal then the Planning Commission would remove her application from the agenda permanently. Mrs. Grinstead suggested the applicant set up a meeting with the Building Department to discuss what Planning Commission suggested as far as an appeal with the BZA board and then move forward from there. Ms. Thomas asked to table her applications.

Mr. Capelle moved to table a Development Plan/EAS#8-4-24 for Lacreme Event Studio, 1356 Lost Nation Rd., Willoughby, OH 44094 per the applicant's request and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL:           Yeas:     K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
                          Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                          Nays:    None

**Motion Carried:     TABLED**

**Lacreme Event Studio**  
1356 Lost Nation Rd.  
(Rep.- Kenyata Thomas, Owner)

**Conditional Use Permit for an  
event studio**

Mr. Capelle moved to table a Conditional Use Permit for Lacreme Event Studio, 1356 Lost Nation Rd., Willoughby, OH 44094 per the applicant's request and Mr. Kary seconded:

ROLL CALL:           Yeas:     Ben Capelle; K. Kary; J. Cook; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
                          Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                          Nays:    None

**Motion Carried:     TABLED**

**Williams Glen**  
Hodgson Rd./PPN#24-B-0-00-004-0  
(Rep.- Joseph Conti, Owner)

**Development Plan/EAS#15-10-23(b),  
Major Subdivision for 12 homes**

Mr. Conti has asked to table his application until the next meeting.

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Mr. Capelle moved to table the Development Plan/EAS#15-10-23(b) for Williams Glen, Hodgson Rd./ PPN#24-B-0-00-004-0, Willoughby, OH 44094 and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL:           Yeas:     K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman  
                          Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                          Nays:    None

**Motion Carried:     TABLED**

**City of Willoughby**  
(Keith Pedersen, Law Dept.)

**Text Amendment- C.O. 1131.10**  
**Accessory Bldgs. and Uses**  
**Area of Accessory Bldgs.**  
**Fences**

Mr. Pedersen, Esq. said the two proposed text amendments came about from the joint work session meetings with City Council. He said the two main topics were square footage of accessory structures and clarification to fences. He said BZA requested the accessory structure size be increased from 600 sq. ft. to 800 sq. ft. because they have been inundated with these requests. He said the sections covering fences are to provide some clarification and make it more “user friendly” so these variances did not always have to be before the BZA for corner lots and things of that matter, and this is what this amendment is discussing.

Chairman Wildermuth said all of the underlined part is a whole new section. They removed comply with subsection 1131.10(i)(1) hereof but added that to the end of the new text and added subsection “B”. This is allowing 6’ fences instead of 4’ fences for corner lots.

Mr. Kary said is against this whole thing because he cannot tolerate fences on a corner lot. If you bought a corner lot, then you bought a corner lot, and you can have your backyard fenced but having a 6’ fence on a corner lot is aesthetically a travesty. Mr. Pedersen said it can only be 6’ if it is within 25’ from the right-of-way. Mr. Capelle agreed that this is not a good look. Mr. Pedersen said this is only a recommendation to city council and they would have the final say on changes to the code. Mr. Capelle said if it fails then it does not get recommended to city council and Mr. Pedersen said that is correct. Mr. Kary said the BZA chairman recommended this change because he did not like the ordinance as written. There was some debate on what is a front or rear yard for corner lots. Mr. Pedersen said BZA was dealing with people on a corner lot that basically had two front yards and people were upset and BZA was inundated with side lot requests. Vice Chairman Wildermuth said you basically have two front yards that front on two streets but the address side is the front yard and the other street is called the corner side yard. Mr. Pedersen said and as of now the corner side yard has to follow front yard standards. Vice Chairman Wildermuth said this proposed ordinance is trying to give the residents a little flexibility for their side yard that is on another street. He said he lives on a corner lot and it feels like he lives in a fish bowl. Mr. Cook said they should vote to recommend or not recommend. Mr. Capelle asked if they can recommend these as separate amendments. Mr. Pedersen said they were presented as one item, so if they want them separated then he

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recommends saying no and they can then propose them separately. Mr. Kary asked if they could present a rendering of what this fence ordinance would look like on a corner lot. Mr. Capelle said this could be very situational and some fences should be approved, some should not, and this is why the BZA exists. After more discussion Mr. Kary said he understands a little better in regard to the fence dropping down to 3' within 25' of the right-of-way. Mr. Capelle said BZA should review these because there are times when it makes 100% sense and other times it does not.

Mr. Wildermuth said the consensus is they will deny this because they would like these ordinances presented separately and resubmitted.

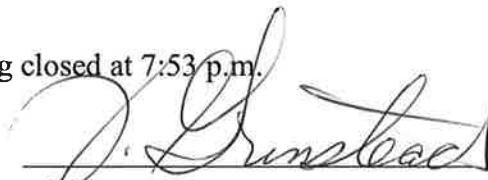
Mr. Capelle moved to recommend the text amendments to C.O. 1131.10 Accessory Bldgs. and Uses Area of Accessory Bldgs., Fences from the City of Willoughby, Law Dept., Willoughby, OH 44094 to City Council and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL:           Yeas:     None  
                          Absent:  S. Norris, Chairman  
                          Nays:    K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; M. Wildermuth, Vice Chairman

**Motion Carried:     DENIED**

There being no further business the regular meeting closed at 7:53 p.m.

  
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Mike Wildermuth, Vice Chairman

  
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Vicki Grinstead, Secretary