

PLANNING, ZONING & BUILDING COMMISSION

CITY HALL

December 11, 23

The City of Cortland Planning, Zoning & Building Commission met on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 6:40 P.M. at the City Administration Building, 400 N. High Street, Cortland, Ohio. In attendance were the following board members: Chairman Curt Moll, Sally Lane, Don Fatobene, Brian Hodor and Frank Daugherty. Also present were Mayor Deidre Petrosky, Law Director Patrick Wilson, Service Director Kim Blasco and the following individuals:

James Piper	110 Dornoch	Cortland
Brandon Freeman	291 Fowler	Cortland
Robert Freeman	105 S Colonial	Cortland
Michael DeToro	250 Cricket	“
Sarah Lewis	650 S High	“
Abraham Isaac		
Lawrence Herrholtz	300 Hillman	Cortland

Curt Moll: I'd like to call to order the Cortland Planning, Zoning & Building Commission for a Public Hearing. **45-23** –The purpose of the hearing is to consider a variance request to allow 2 signs on a wall at 650 S High St. Is there someone here to explain what you are going to do?

Sarah Lewis: I work with Ashraf and his father. They are currently managing that location at 650 S High St. and they were the original people who renovated the building and then opened it after it was closed for many years when it was formally McQuaid's. We are trying to have two different signs. One on 1 side of the building which is facing South High Street and the other side facing the corner. Since it is a triangle, we have one facing towards the road and one on the side of the building. We did previously have a sign on the side of the building, but it was about food. As most of you know, if you have been to the store, the kitchen has been closed. That sign is useless. They have changed the name of the business as now Ashraf is now managing it instead of his father. As many of you probably know, there are multiple businesses in the City of Cortland that do have multiple signage that have been approved previously. Off the top of my head, McDonald's has multiple signs, Greenwoods have multiple signs, I have a list over there.

Curt Moll: Yes, well there has to be a good reason for it. The purpose of the two signs would be to expose it to Warren-Meadville and South High.

Sarah Lewis: Yes, exactly.

Mayor Petrosky: Is there any other sign facing Warren-Meadville?

Sarah Lewis: No, that's the drive-thru area where cars pull up so it's not conducive for signage on that side of the building.

Mayor Petrosky: I felt like there was another sign. A sign sitting on a sign frame and another sitting right beside it.

Don Fatobene: Right in the front.

Sarah Lewis: There was a Valley View sign previously, that is now replaced with the new sign. That is over the Valley View sign.

Mayor Petrosky: Are you changing the use of the building?

Sarah Lewis: No, it's still going to be a gas station, convenience store.

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Curt Moll: Is there anyone here to speak in favor of the extra sign? Anyone to speak against the sign?

Mayor Petrosky: This sign doesn't let you know that this is a convenience store.

Sarah Lewis: The issue is that we are leasing this location, we sold it back in 2021. We are operating the building but we are not the owners of the property. They are still deciding on what they are going to go with as far as fuel branding. To make a long story short, the people that were operating the building went bankrupt. The new owner is still trying to figure if he is going with branding like BP, Sunoco or if he will keep it as unbranded. At the moment, nothing is set in stone. Once that happens, of course there will be another request for signage.

Patrick Wilson: Who is the owner of the building?

Sarah Lewis: It's a corporation, they were previously a Mountain Express...

Mayor Petrosky: Is it D and S, LLC?

Patrick Wilson: But on your application under owner, you write Valley View. You are actually the tenant.

Sarah Lewis: Correct, we would have been the tenant.

Patrick Wilson: That needs to be cleared up.

Sarah Lewis: I notified the owners; they are aware that we are here.

Patrick Wilson: Is Valley View your corporate name?

Sarah Lewis: No, 1992 Elm Road, LLC

Patrick Wilson: You are doing business as Vally View?

Sarah Lewis: Currently yes; we are doing business as Valley View.

Patrick Wilson: All that needs to be clear when you are making an application.

Sarah Lewis: I apologize for messing up on that.

Curt Moll: The sign that you are going to talk about later doesn't say anything about gas or anything else.

Sarah Lewis: Correct, again we don't know yet what we are going to be.

Curt Moll: So, they are going to change this sign.

Sarah Lewis: I'm assuming that they are going to have a sign listing what the gas station is going to be along with the canopy itself.

Mayor Petrosky: Is there any time frame?

Sarah Lewis: Honestly, I'm not 100% but they are in talks and hoping to have everything settled by the end of this year. It has been going on since August, so I don't want to say for sure. Their goal is to have everything settled by the 31st.

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Curt Moll: Any other questions from the Board? Since no one has spoken for or against, I will call to adjourn this Public Hearing.

A motion was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Sally Lane** to adjourn the 45-23 Public Hearing.

Chairman Moll called to order **46-23** – Public Hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to consider a variance request to allow an electronic message center sign on Lakeview High School property. Do we have someone to speak for this?

James Piper: I'll start, my name is Jim Piper, the one that made the request. I have been working with Larry and Mike since late September, early October about putting an electronic sign for Lakeview in memory of my late wife as a donation. Mike and Rosalie will be doing the work if there are any questions. Originally, we talked of putting it at the corner of Hillman and 46, where the current sign is. There are issues with the right-of-way, putting it on church property, and different things like that. So, talking with Larry and Mike, they told me of future plans for the school. We thought that it might fit best at the east end of Hillman, right as you enter into the parking lot.

Curt Moll: Does someone want to talk about the details, how it's going to be operated?

Lawrence Herrholtz: The details, I am unsure but, I'm Larry Herrholtz, the high school principal for Lakeview, with me is Michael DeTorro, Assistant Principle.

Michael DeTorro: We currently have that sign at the bottom of Hillman across from Burger King. We utilize our Communications Class; the students actually get a grade for changing the messages on that sign. That sign predates me, and I've been here 20 academic years at this point. It's older styled with manual changing letters. We had looked a couple of different times to go electronic and we just haven't. When Mr. Piper came and introduced a plan to us, it was too perfect of a scenario not to take advantage of it. We would continue to have our students be a very big part of the messaging that goes on the board. We would still obviously control the messages that are going out and we would fall in line with whatever you guys have in terms of... We know that there are neighbors there and want to be a good steward to that neighborhood and if it has to be turned off at 8:00 at night or whatever it may be, we are willing to do that. As planned it would be a one-sided sign, facing incoming traffic to the High School. As you approached, heading east on Hillman, you would see the messaging. We would have some Lakeview branding in the L star, and we would have landscaping around it. At some point in time, in the Spring, if this were to get approved, we would work with the church to pull out our old sign and leave it as a green space for that church.

Lawrence Herrholtz: With our current setup, we have difficulty getting messages out. Plus, when you are driving by, with the single letters, I'm not sure how much you are actually reading. We think that we would be able to increase the effectiveness of communication, which is always the goal of Lakeview Local Schools. That is the main access for parents, they would be able to read what is going on for the week and we would also be able to congratulate and recognize some of our students on their accomplishments more than we do now. Just so you know what our students do, the hardship of changing the sign. It is our Communications Class, they come down and ask, what do you want on the sign? We go through our calendar, figure out what to put on the sign, and the kids walk down regardless of temperature and conditions. Our messaging doesn't change very frequently. We are not recognizing as many students as we could with a digital sign. With The Piper Family and their generosity, we were humbled by this. We believe that the location that we selected would be permanent for many years. We are trying to honor Mr. Piper's family to select a spot that is not only ideal for our parents and our students but also be kept as a permanent structure.

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Curt Moll: We have a set of guidelines that we like to have people that get variances for these types of signs to follow. Those are available from either the Mayor's Office or the Service Director's Office. Basically, they focus on keeping the sign rather consistent mostly because of the speed of traffic. You don't want to have too many messages flashing on it so that people are distracted and that they get at least one whole message while they are looking at it. It would probably be a little different in your situation because it is coming onto your property, the speed is extremely slow. It would be an opportunity to communicate with your students and their parents, which you don't have now. You can still use our city sign for events that you have going on. I know that you do that now.

Lawrence Herrholtz: Yes, I'm getting a lot of pressure from drama club to make that happen for our musical. So, I better make that plug now, it's going to be a big one.

Don Fatobene: I'm going to assume that the use is similar to the Middle School.

Michael DeTorro: Yes, right. We are not going to put up video highlights of the soccer match.

Lawrence Herrholtz: As Mike has so eloquently stated, we want to be good neighbors. We want to respect and not have light pollution or interrupt their activities in the evening. Whatever we would have to abide by, we would make sure that we'd do that.

Curt Moll: That is a concern that we don't have in other situations where we put these signs up. They aren't going to shine into someone's bedroom window. Is there anyone else that would like to speak in favor of the sign variance? Is there anyone that would like to speak against the sign variance? Hearing none, can I have a motion to adjourn the public hearing?

A motion was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Sally Lane** to adjourn the 46-23 Public Hearing.

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The City of Cortland Planning, Zoning & Building Commission met on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. at the City Administration Building, 400 N. High Street, Cortland, Ohio. In attendance were the following board members: Chairman Curt Moll, Sally Lane, Don Fatobene, Brian Hodor and Frank Daugherty. Also present were Law Director Patrick Wilson, Mayor Petrosky Service Director Kim Blasco and the following individuals:

James Piper	110 Dornoch	Cortland
Brandon Freeman	291 Fowler	Cortland
Robert Freeman	105 S Colonial	Cortland
Michael DeToro	250 Cricket	“
Sarah Lewis	650 S High	“
Abraham Isaac		
Lawrence Herrholtz	300 Hillman	Cortland
Jackie Graham		
Karen Angelo		

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, here; Sally Lane, here; Curt Moll, here; Frank Daugherty, here; and Don Fatobene, here.

Curt Moll: The first item on the agenda is **Approval of Commission Minutes for November 13, 2023 regular meeting.** Can I have a motion.

A motion was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Sally Lane.**

Roll Call: Don Fatobene, yes; Sally Lane, yes; Brian Hodor, yes; Curt Moll, yes; Frank Daugherty, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Curt Moll: The first item of new business is **48-23 – Variance Request** – The request is to consider a variance to allow 2 signs on a wall at 650 S High St. Can I have a motion please.

A motion for **48-23** was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Brian Hodor.**

Curt Moll: Can you come back up and talk about what you want to do for the record? We had a public hearing for this and there was no discussion against it.

Sarah Lewis: I am Sarah Lewis and I am representing the previous Valley View, 650 S High Street in Cortland, Ohio. We would like to add additional signage to better represent who we are as a company so that people can now know what our store is going to be called. In addition to that, we are going over the sign that was there representing that we sold food which we currently do not.

Curt Moll: The primary purpose of the variance is so you can have a sign on two streets. I wanted to make that clear.

Sarah Lewis: Correct.

Curt Moll: Any further questions on this? We can have a roll call please.

Roll Call: Sally Lane, yes; Brian Hodor, yes; Don Fatobene, yes; Curt Moll, yes; Frank Daugherty, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

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Curt Moll: The next item is **48A-23 – New Sign – Wall Sign (front) – 4’x8’, 32 sq.ft., non-lit; 650 S High St.**

Patrick Wilson: We touched on this in the public hearing that this might be premature; what the content of the sign is going to be.

Sarah Lewis: No, that will be our sign on both sides of the building. We are not sure of the gas station portion, the canopies and the pole sign, but that is the set sign for the convenience store.

Curt Moll: I would like a motion for both, **48A-23 – New Sign – Wall Sign (front) – 4’x8’, 32 sq.ft., non-lit; 650 S High St.** and **48B-23 – New Sign - Wall Sign (side) – 4’x8’, 32 sq.ft., non-lit; 650 S High St.**

A motion for **48A-23** and **48B-23** was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Frank Daugherty.**

Sarah Lewis: It’s going to have a picture of (inaudible), it is a cartoon drawing of his face. It is a representation of the other businesses that he currently has in Howland which is Big Daddy’s Smoke Shop which the sign will state.

Curt Moll: It’s basically another location for an existing business.

Sarah Lewis: Well partly, it’s more of a mini site because it is a lot smaller than his current location.

Mayor Petrosky: At the other Big Daddy Smoke Shop, do you sell convenience...

Sarah Lewis: No, no, that’s strictly a smoke shop.

Mayor Petrosky: That is why I’m having a problem. If you go to their other location, it’s just the smoke shop. If you come to this location, it’s more than a smoke shop and you are not advertising your convenience store items.

Sarah Lewis: We will still have the light up lottery sign in the window and things like that and we have cigarette signs on our fence and at the pumps. Once we know what kind of gas we will be selling, we will have gas branding on a pole sign and the canopy. This is just for the convenience portion of the store.

Mayor Petrosky: Are they allowed to have signs on their fence?

Sarah Lewis: They may not anymore actually, they used to. I believe that they were removed. I’m sorry, we have multiple locations, so I get things mixed up. I apologize.

Mayor Petrosky: Is this sign already up?

Sarah Lewis: Yes, they did put those up without permission.

Mayor Petrosky: This sign was placed on the frame of the other sign.

Sarah Lewis: Correct, that was a temporary placement.

Mayor Petrosky: So, you are going to take that off of there?

Sarah Lewis: I believe that they are removing the Valley View sign completely and putting the new back up.

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Mayor Petrosky: Perfect, that will look a lot better.

Curt Moll: Any other questions? Roll call.

Roll Call: Curt Moll, yes; Frank Daugherty, yes; Sally Lane, yes; Don Fatobene, yes; Brian Hodor, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Curt Moll: 49-23 - Variance Request – The request is to consider a variance to allow an electronic message center sign on Lakeview High School property. Motion please.

A motion was made by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Sally Lane.**

Curt Moll: We had a public hearing for this and there was no one against this and the sign was explained.

Lawrence Herrholtz: My name is Larry Herrholtz, principal of Lakeview High School, address is 300 Hillman Dr. We are looking to increase our communication with parents and to recognize our kids on a more rapid basis than we currently do.

Curt Moll: We talked about this in the public hearing. They are mainly asking for a variable message sign, electronic, on high school property at their entrance.

Patrick Wilson: I want to add that the city notified what is considered adjacent property owners and no one came to either the public hearing or this board's hearing.

Curt Moll: We do have guidelines. Make sure that we include the guidelines with the sign permit. The guidelines are citywide.

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, yes; Sally Lane, yes; Frank Daugherty, yes; Don Fatobene, yes; and Curt Moll, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Curt Moll: The next item is 50-23 – New Sign – Ground Mounted sign – 8' x 4', 32sq.ft., non-lit; 2001 Liberty Blvd.

A motion was made for 50-23 by **Brian Hodor** and seconded by **Sally Lane.**

Jackie Graham: My name is Jackie Graham, property manager at Pauni Apartments. We have been doing a lot of work on the property and the owner would like to change the sign. The old one is falling apart. He is going to be changing the name to Tzafari Oasis Apartments. There is electric out there. Down the road we would like to have lights on the sign.

Curt Moll: There is no permitting process for external lighting. Any questions from the board? Replacing one that is going to pieces is a really good idea.

Roll Call: Brian Hodor, yes; Sally Lane, yes; Curt Moll, yes; Frank Daugherty, yes; Don Fatobene, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Curt Moll: Thank you, good luck. The next item is 51-23 Modular Home Discussion and it does not require a motion. Do we have someone who wants to talk about this?

Karen Angelo: Hi, my name is Karen Angelo, I moved to Cortland two years ago with hopes of finding a home and I can't. I've been looking at properties to build, possibly a modular home. I want to see if I can get approved for some of the properties that I am looking at before I go out and buy one. I have printed out some of the property pictures and where they are at. I have Elizabeth Ct., Adams Ct., and I wanted to see about St. Andrews. I thought, what the heck, while I'm here I may as well ask.

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Don Fatobene: This company does both manufactured homes and modular homes. You are looking specifically at modular?

Karen Angelo: Yes, modular. I checked all over but I haven't physically gone yet because there is no point in me doing all of this extra work if I don't know if I'm able to build. You are my first step.

Curt Moll: How does this differ from what we had built on St. Andrews?

Don Fatobene: It does not. If it's truly a modular home, again; these are considered stick-built homes that happen to be built off site and brought in. This is no different than any other stick-built home.

Patrick Wilson: There was no problem with the one before. Not everyone agreed but...

Curt Moll: The issue is, is it built to Ohio code which we use here. If that's the case, whether it is built in a factory or on site, from what I've been told by people in this business, ones that are built in a factory are better quality than ones that are built on site. You don't have the weather to deal with and things are square.

Karen Angelo: So, you are saying that I'd be approved to do this?

Curt Moll: We have no regulations that would restrict...

Patrick Wilson: Right, we have no prohibition against what you are asking.

Karen Angelo: When I do find the one that I would choose, I would bring it in for approval?

Don Fatobene: The key is going to be the difference between module and manufactured. They can look exactly the same. The manufactured comes with almost like a car title that you would have to surrender to the county to place it on property. These modulares do not, they are truly a stick-built home.

Curt Moll: We have more than one of them in town.

Karen Angelo: So Tami Ct. is okay also because they are all modular back there.

Mayor Petrosky: Yes. I just want to advise you, I don't know if you were in town when this happened. There was a huge uproar from the people on St. Andrews.

Karen Angelo: I heard about it.

Mayor Petrosky: Just be aware, even though it is allowed, you might have upset neighbors.

Karen Angelo: That might not be the place I want to go then.

Curt Moll: The house sold extremely well. It finished before the house right next door to it.

Karen Angelo: Yes, it is very nice, I saw the inside of it, you would never know. Thank you.

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James Piper: Can I make a statement? I happen to live on Dornoch and I am speaking totally my feelings. Talking to a lot of my friends down there, they probably feel like they overreacted.

Mayor Petrosky: Okay, that’s good to know. Thank you.

Curt Moll: I appreciate that.

James Piper: I’m not saying that everyone feels that way but a lot feel that maybe they overreacted.

Curt Moll: Thank you. Anything else to come before the board? Can I have a motion to adjourn please?

A motion was made to adjourn by **Don Fatobene** and seconded by **Sally Lane**.

Roll Call: Sally Lane, yes; Brian Hodor, yes; Don Fatobene, yes; Curt Moll, yes; and Frank Daugherty, yes. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Meeting Adjourned: 7:17 pm

Chairman

Date

Secretary