CITY OF CHARDON PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2025

Members Present:

Andrew Blackley, Chairman
Robert Emmons
Lene Hill
Dan Meleski
Dean Peska
Mary Jo Stark, Vice-Chairman
Colin Wantz

Members Absent

Also Present:

Dan Boyer
Kingsley Charles
Ben Chojnacki, Law Director
Rollin Cooke III
Doug Courtney, City Engineer
Ann Dunning, Architect
Jeff Henderson, TDA Architecture
Loudan Klein, Pride One Construction
Steven Kofol, Chardon Schools
Kyle Martin, Councilman
David and Vickie Nicohlas
Rebecca Repasky, Secretary
Allison Wilson, Geauga Maple Leaf
Ben Young, City Manager

Mr. Blackley called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Attendance roll was called. Mr. Blackley reminded all that were present to sign in and swore in City Staff.

Mr. Meleski made a motion to approve the September 23, 2025, meeting minutes. It was seconded by Mr. Wantz. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

PC Case #25-269/270: Mr. Blackley explained the applicant, Jeff Henderson, is requesting Final Development Plan approval for six (6) tennis courts and thirty-one (31) parking spaces. The requested variance is from Section 1147.03(b) to increase the fence height to 10 feet.

Jeff Henderson of TDA Architecture was sworn in.

Mr. Henderson shared a PowerPoint presentation. He explained the tennis courts will be oriented in a north/south direction. The only light on the site will be one light in the middle of the parking lot. There will be a 10’ landscape buffering all the way around and it meets the landscape requirement.

Mr. Blackley asked if there will be adequate handicap parking. Mr. Henderson said yes.

Mr. Blackley said the rear yard set back is met.

Mrs. Stark said the existing swale on the southwest side is to remain but the plants look to be in or located next to the swale. Mr. Henderson said they can move the plants to the left to keep the swale open. Mrs. Stark added the arborvitaes and junipers may not be tall enough for screening. Mr. Wantz asked if a fence would be permitted. Mrs. Stark agreed a taller fence would be better. Mr. Henderson said he considered a fence, but the trees will grow in to be dense. Mrs. Stark requested more landscape information and time to review the landscape plan.

Mr. Blackley asked if a fence should be added around the detention basin even though it is not a requirement. Mr. Chojnacki said there could be a potential nuisance if kids are playing around it and fall in. Mr. Blackley said there could be a fence instead of landscaping. Mr. Henderson said the detention basin by the football field is open. Mr. Blackley said there are adjacent properties with small children.

Mr. Wantz agreed a fence would be a better buffer instead of the landscaping.

Mr. Peska asked if the tennis courts are for matches only. Mr. Henderson said it would be open to the community to use weekends and evenings. Mr. Peska clarified there are no lights on the courts. Mr. Henderson said correct. Mr. Peska said he is nervous this will bother the neighboring residents. He asked if the courts could go from six (6) to five (5). Mr. Peska said he would like another barrier to keep kids/balls/equipment going into the backyards of the residents. Mr. Peska pointed out there is no seating for people to watch the matches.

Mrs. Stark asked what will happen to the existing courts. Mr. Henderson said they will stay. Mrs. Stark asked if the school will maintain them. Mr. Henderson said yes.

Mr. Steven Kofol was sworn in.

Mr. Kofol said they will keep up with the courts and maintain them for safety. They will be used for pickleball.

Mr. Blackley asked if they are open to using a fence instead of landscaping as a barrier and if going down to five (5) courts is an option. Mr. Kofol said it is not ideal to go down to five (5) courts. The space is currently used for football practice, and it is already noisy. He added a fence will help stop balls but will cost more. Mrs. Hill added she lives next to the softball field and balls end up in her yard. She said she does not feel the noise is bad. Mr. Kofol added matches are done before dark. Mrs. Hill said the current courts have lights and are used all the time.

Mrs. Stark asked what the details of the retaining wall are. Mr. Henderson said masonry – like the bus garage.

Mr. Peska asked if the courts will be locked. Mr. Kofol said they will post hours and it will be locked at night.

Public Comments

Mr. Dan Boyer of 210 Basquin was sworn in.

Mr. Boyer expressed concern over people parking in the fire lane. He requested a fence all along his property line starting at the fire hydrant. He requested the vegetation be cleaned up along the auditorium. Mr. Kofol said the intent of the parking lot will encourage people not to park in the fire lane. Mr. Blackley added for any property maintenance issues, to call the Planning and Zoning office and it can be cited.

David Nicholas of 406 North Street was sworn in.

Mr. Nicholas said the schools need to do a better job of maintaining the swale. He also shared his property is a cut through for kids. Mr. Blackley said he would like to see a fence in that area.

Mr. Chojnacki shared that the School Board is before Planning Commission as a courtesy. The applicant has demonstrated reasonable steps to comply with the zoning code and does have the ability to move forward with the project. Mr. Blackley agreed the School Board has always worked and continues to work with the City on projects.

Vickie Nicholas of 406 North Street sworn in.
Mrs. Nicholas asked why a different code was listed on the agenda. Mr. Henderson said that was an error. She requested a fence along the property line.
Mrs. Hill made a motion to correct Item 2A on the Announcement of Decision. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

Mr. Wantz asked if a condition of approval replacing the landscape buffer with a fence be added. Mr. Young said the applicant does already comply with the Zoning Code. Mr. Chojnacki asked if the applicant would be willing to make that change. The applicant said they are willing to replace the landscaping with a fence.

Mr. Wantz made a motion to approve the Announcement of Decision with the condition the landscaping will be replaced with fence. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

Mr. Meleski made a motion to approve the Announcement of Decision as amended. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

Draft Ordinance from City Council: Mr. Chojnacki explained the applicant, City of Chardon, is requesting a text amendment to the Planning & Zoning Code, Section 1133.11 to allow for the expansion and clarification of the rules with regards to accessory structures and uses related to the harboring of animals, and Section 1103.03 definition of “Livestock”. He said this came out of discussion with Steve Yaney and the Legislative Committee. In the past, it was difficult to enforce the code. He explained only half of this pertains to Planning Commission. This Ordinance will have clear setbacks for structures to house animals. This will protect neighbors if someone builds a structure on the property line. The definition of “Livestock” has been updated so that it can be regulated. This will be a recommendation to City Council which will then be a public hearing at the November council meeting.

Mr. Peska asked if the structure is to be permanent or can be moved around. Mr. Chojnacki said either as long as it is within the identified setbacks.

Mrs. Stark made a motion to approve the Announcement of Decision and recommend approval to City Council. It was seconded by Mrs. Hill. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

PC Case #25-201-202: Mr. Blackley explained the applicant, Ann Dunning, is requesting Final Development Plan approval for an auto dealership at 400 Water Street. He said the City Engineer and City Architect have no comments.

Ms. Ann Dunning was sworn in.
Ms. Dunning explained this will be for high end used car sales. The main building will be kept the same. A new roof was put on. The tree lawn has been restored and grading will remain the same. Drainage is to code. She said she is still waiting on the final lighting distribution report. There are benches for the public to sit on.

Mr. Blackley said there are no identified handicapped parking spaces. Ms. Dunning will add them. Mr. Blackley said he would like to see the edge of the parking lot and back of sidewalk moved 5’. Also, put the handicap space closest to the building on the east side of the building where the two (2) customer parking spaces are listed. Ms. Dunning agreed.

Mr. Young asked for clarification on the 10x18 parking spaces. Ms. Dunning said that is incorrect on the drawing. They will be to code.

Mr. Blackley said there may be utilities outside the public right-of-way and an easement may be needed.

Mr. Rollin Cooke III was sworn in.
Mr. Cooke was okay with looking into if an easement is needed. Mr. Blackley said the easement will be done at the City's expense.
Mr. Blackley clarified no additions are being done to the building. Ms. Dunning said correct.

Mrs. Stark said to make sure the measurements on A3 match C4 because they do not currently.

Mrs. Hill asked if the proposed conduit for lighting is underground. Ms. Dunning said yes. Mrs. Hill asked about the several flag poles shown. Ms. Dunning said there will be three (3) American flags. Mrs. Hill expressed concern for pennants being strung to each of them. Mr. Courtney said that is prohibited by code.

Mr. Blackley asked for the documentation for the fuel tank removals. Ms. Dunning said she will get that documentation.

Mr. Blackley asked about the photometric study. Ms. Dunning said she will be selecting a lighting contractor.

Mr. Blackley said these will be conditions will be part of approval.

Mr. Wantz asked what the purpose of the benches are. Mr. Cooke said he would be happy to remove them. Mr. Young said he is not concerned with liability because it will be on their property. Mr. Wantz suggested removing them from the site plan. Mr. Cooke agreed.

Mrs. Stark asked how long a variance is good for. Mr. Chojnacki explained use variances run with the land.

Revisions to the Announcement of Decision that Staff will determine where to insert:

1) Move east edge of parking lot 5 feet.
2) Provide easement to the City of Chardon for existing utilities – cost to be paid for by the City of Chardon.
3) Submit an acceptable photometric plan.
4) Final landscape plan submitted for review and approval.
5) Remove the benches from the site plan.
6) Provide required number of handicapped parking spaces.

Mrs. Hill made a motion to approve the Announcement of Decision. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. Roll was called. The vote carried 7-0.

Informal Discussion

Loudan Klein with Pride One Construction would like direction on a potential mixed-use development at 191 Meadowlands Drive. Mr. Klein explained this site is zoned C4. He is looking for feedback/thoughts to move forward with the project. It will be 100 units for rent at or above market value. Two (2) to Three (3) bedrooms that are 1,200 – 1,400 sq. ft single story. Two (2) car garage. There will be commercial lots. Strom water, landscape, etc. details will be provided later on. Mr. Klein said the idea later on would be to partner with a retailer.

Mr. Wantz said a similar project for ages 60+ was discussed at a previous Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Klein said this would not be age restrictive but does target 55+. It will have a clubhouse with pool, fire pits and pickleball courts. Mr. Wantz asked if these rented units are owned by Pride One. Mr. Klein said yes, they will construct, own and lease the units.

Mr. Blackley said this is an appropriate use for this lot and he has no major issues with this proposal. Mr. Wantz agreed and said this will be an improvement.

Mr. Emmons said the last developer with a similar concept did not have a space for snow storage and suggested a snow storage area for this site.
Mr. Peska asked if permission is needed from Walmart. Mr. Young said there are existing mutual access easements.

Mr. Courtney said they have met a few times and the City's comments have been taken into account.

OLD BUSINESS – none.

OTHER BUSINESS – none.

COMMENTS
Mr. Wantz shared that he is going to be moving out of the City and will need to resign from the Commission in December.

Mr. Peska asked when does the City's infrastructure get tapped out with all the new projects coming in. Mr. Courtney explained with DeNora Tech leaving, they were a high-water usage customer that is no longer there. The Sage property is no longer in the City. The plants should operate fine. The storm sewer is fine. He said all plans included full development in the City. Mr. Young added the plants are only at 25%/26% capacity.

Mr. Emmons shared Redwood has abandoned the idea of annexation because of the cost.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none.

ADJOURN
Mr. Meleski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mr. Wantz. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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ANDREW BLACKLEY, CHAIRMAN

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Rebecca Repasky, Secretary