

CITY OF CHARDON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2025

Members Present:

Andrew Blackley, Chairman
Robert Emmons
Dan Meleski
Mary Jo Stark, Vice-Chairman

Colin Wantz

Members Absent

Dean Peska
Lene Hill

Also Present:

Ben Chojnacki, Law Director
Doug Courtney, City Engineer
Stephanie Cordes
William Hoffstetter
Jonathan Holody, Community Development
Administrator
Chuck Krejsa

Michael & Joyce Perrico
Rebecca Repasky, Secretary
John & Gwen Sheehan
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.

Mrs. Stark made a motion to approve the October 28, 2025, meeting minutes. It was seconded by Mr. Emmons. Roll was called. The vote carried 5-0.

Mr. Holody was introduced to the Commission. Mr. Holody shared his career background. He said he is thrilled to be in Chardon and looks to address growth and development sensitively.

NEW BUSINESS

PC Case #25-328: Mr. Holody explained the applicant, Abruzzo Investments, LLC is requesting a variance to use the ground floor of 107 Center Street as a residential apartment unit. Mr. Young passed out the Announcement of Decision and staff analysis to Commission members. Mr. Holody explained one (1) unit on each floor will be used as an apartment. Staff has no issues with granting this request.

Mrs. Joyce Perrico at 408 Chardon Avenue was sworn in.

Mrs. Perrico explained there is a proposal and purchase agreement with the property owner in place contingent on the approval of the use variance. She said this site is not an ideal site for commercial use and the other apartments she owns on the Square are never vacant.

Mr. Blackley reviewed the nine (9) Findings of Fact.

Mr. Chojnacki explained Planning Commission makes a decision based on these Facts if the applicant meets the standards. Planning Commission has the ability to question if more information is needed if the Commission feels more detail is needed for the Finding of Facts.

Mr. Blackley asked how long this property has been vacant. Mrs. Perrico said one (1) year.

Mr. William Hoffstetter at 9990 Hawthorne was sworn in.

Mr. Hoffstetter explained in the 2000s it was a successful business and was beneficial to be zoned commercial. Due to the courthouse project, parking became non-existent and hurt the business.

Mr. Wantz clarified the building is currently vacant. Mrs. Perrico said yes. Mr. Wantz asked if both floors are to be residential units. Mr. Blackley said the second floor is already zoned residential – the variance will be for the first floor. Mr. Wantz asked if there was any residents on the second floor. Mr. Hoffstetter explained from 1984 – 2000 the whole house was residential but was not successful as it was when it became commercial. Mr. Wantz asked if there are renters on the second floor in the last two (2) decades. Mr. Hoffstetter said no.

Mrs. Stark asked if Center Street is residential. Mr. Blackley said he believes it is – this property is on the western boarder of the C2 District. Mrs. Stark said if the rest of the street is residential, she is comfortable with this request. Mr. Wantz clarified the zoning is not changing, Planning Commission would be granting a variance to operate as residential. Mr. Blackley said yes.

Stephanie Cordes at 111 Center Street was sworn in.

Ms. Cordes said she is the property adjacent to this and said she does not think parking is suitable and believes renters will park on the street. She added having two (2) tenants is a big change. Mr. Blackley asked if this will be more so than when it was a business. Ms. Cordes said they just moved in and were not there when it was a business. But there was no overnight parking and two (2) families will be an issue.

John Sheehan at 143 Center Street was sworn in.

Mr. Sheehan said he believes there are health and welfare and safety concerns from the Findings of Fact. He asked if any review has been given consideration whether this property does provide the minimum square footage for family residences based on the ordinance which is 1,350sq. ft/family. He added the code requires two (2) parking spaces/family that are convenient and orderly. He said he believes this does not exist. He wants the Commission to review the parking standards and requirements. He would also like the Fire Marshall to review proper exits from each apartment independently.

Mrs. Perrico said additional parking is in the alleyway. She said she has not measured the parking spaces but there is ample space in the garage. She shared there is an overnight parking ban on the Square for snow plowing. There is additional parking in the gravel lot behind the theater. She said she has tenants in the apartments on the Square that have two (2) spaces each. As far as the square footage in the apartment, the Square apartments are under 1,000sq. ft. and she was unaware this was a standard. She uses Gilmore Security for fire protection and every guideline is followed with proper inspections. Mr. Sheehan said for the Commission to exercise its prerogative to check with authorities regarding these issues and check against the code.

Mr. Blackley asked about any issues from the renters they have on Court Street and those neighbors. Mrs. Perrico said there have been no issues and they screen applicants. She added 107 Center Street does have a privacy fence and there is no side entrance. Ms. Cordes said that is her privacy fence and if this goes through she will extend the fence as far as she can.

Mr. Wantz reminded the Commission the request is for a use variance for the property and not addressing building and fire codes. Those are addressed through the County Building Department and other county agencies. The applicant will have to comply with those conditions regardless of the use variance decision. Mr. Chojnacki said there is a fine line with this. Mr. Chojnacki said Planning Commission can grant approval based on the approval of the other authorities. He is not sure the Planning Commission has enough information or detail to make a decision this evening for this case. To obtain a variance, one of the threshold issues is whether the variance is going to adversely affect public health safety and welfare. Mr. Chojnacki

said there is enough questions raised at the moment that he is not certain the Commission has enough information to appropriately determine a decision.

Mrs. Gwen Sheehan at 143 Center Street affirmed confirmation.

Mrs. Sheehan said her biggest concern is it being two (2) rental units with limited parking which will cause cars to need to be maneuvered. She said the parking spaces behind the lot belong to the county. Mr. Blackley added that is why it is not a viable commercial property.

Mr. Blackley suggested tabling this case until the next meeting so Planning Commission can review the issues raised. He requested the applicant provide answers at the next meeting on issues raised. Mr. Meleski agreed. Mr. Wantz asked if Planning Commission will get a review then. He added most of the code raised by Mr. Sheehan is based on full development plans/new construction. He said he is trying to understand regarding a use variance with no renovation plans. Mr. Blackley said that will be clarified in Mr. Holody's analysis for the next meeting.

Mr. Blackley made a motion to table the request. It was seconded by Mr. Meleski.

Mr. Hoffstetter shared that when Marianne Goodwin converted the building to the Tea Room from residential, she had to comply with all the building codes and it was a significant process. He said all tenants had to be up to speed on safety codes and were held to more rigorous safety codes.

Mr. Sheehan agreed with what was said but still wants non-conforming items addressed because it will come up in the future.

Mr. Michael Perrico at 408 Chardon Avenue was sworn in.

Mr. Perrico asked when the next meeting is. Mr. Blackley said December 16th because of the holiday. Mr. Perrico asked what all needs to be addressed. Mr. Chojnacki said regarding the Findings of Fact, Planning Commission's decision is based solely on the assessment of these criteria based on the evidence that is presented under oath by yourself and anyone else that is presenting on this. What is typically expected is a submittal of these nine (9) factors and City Administration will work with the Fire Department and anyone at the County so when the Commission gets these materials, proper code review will take place to make sure all boxes are checked to make a well-informed decision. Mr. Perrico asked if he will receive a copy of the nine (9) factors. Mr. Chojnacki said it is in the codified ordinance and staff can provide that as well. Mr. Emmons said this has been a single-family residential unit for almost 200 years, has there been any consideration to making it back to a single-family unit. Mrs. Perrico said that is an option but larger rentals have less interest. She added two families bring more to enjoy the restaurants and shops.

Roll was called. Mr. Emmons abstained. The vote carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Blackley asked about plans for the tennis courts. Mr. Courtney said conditions are met and it is under construction. Mr. Emmons added they are hoping to pave before the plants close.

OTHER BUSINESS –

Mr. Blackley said there are two (2) vacancies coming up for 2026 on Planning Commission. Mr. Wantz is resigning and Mr. Peska is letting his term expire. He said they are seeking qualified persons. Mr. Young added there is an application on the website.

Mr. Holody said the next meeting will be moved to: Tuesday, December 16, 2025 due to the following week being Christmas.

COMMENTS – none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none.

ADJOURN

Mr. Meleski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Mrs. Stark. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

ANDREW BLACKLEY, CHAIRMAN

Rebecca Repasky, Secretary