

**XENIA TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
ZONING MAP AMENDMENT 1260 SHORTER AVE
M36000200270006800
RESIDENTIAL (R) TO NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (B-2)
February 1, 2024
THESE MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF THE EVENTS OF THE
HEARING AND ARE NOT A WORD FOR WORD ACCOUNT OF THE
DISCUSSIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE.**

The Xenia Township Board of Trustees scheduled a public hearing on February 1, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Xenia Township Trustees Office, 8 Brush Row Road, Xenia, OH, 45385 with the following members present:

Attendees: Steve Combs, Trustee, Chair, Scott Miller, Trustee, Jeremy VanDyne, Trustee, Absent, and Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector.

Mr. Combs called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Stock advised of the exhibits:

Exhibit 1: Application Packet with Zoning Public Hearing Identification

Exhibit 2: Letter of Conveyance, Resolution and Minutes from the Zoning Commission Public Hearing

Exhibit 3: Verification; Sign, Website, Newspaper Notifications

Exhibit 4: Greene County Regional Planning and Coordinating Recommendation

Exhibit 5: Agenda

Exhibit 6: Public Comment

Mr. Stock advised that the requirements for the Ohio Revised Code had been met, so the Trustees can proceed with the Public Hearing.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave. stated that he did not grow up in Wilberforce, but that his family did and that he has been around the world, but Wilberforce is where he wants to stay. He went on to state that his company does mergers and acquisitions and he wanted to do something with his hand, so he purchased 1287 Brush Row as a fixer upper. Mr. Johnson then stated that the President of Wilberforce University asked him to build ten (10) dorms on campus and that partial payment would be 1260 Shorter Ave. He then stated that they have been cleaning up the property to have a restaurant, daycare, and that Central State wants to have vertical farming on the property.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked if the primary focus of the projects is with Central State, Wilberforce University, or both.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that he is only building dorms for Wilberforce University, and that they gave the property as payment. He went on to say that Central State and he has a MOU for students to do vertical farming in the gym.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, asked if he intended to use the existing structures on the property.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that they do intend to use the current structures, that they are sound, just in need of renovation.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, asked what types of crops would be grown there.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that they would grow leafy greens.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, asked what the square footage of the building is.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that the building is 16, 000 square feet and that you grow up with vertical farming and would not be a huge operation.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, asked what the other buildings on the property would be used for.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that one would be a daycare and the other would be a restaurant.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, asked if the building would pass code for a daycare?

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that the building would need to be updated to pass code, but the building is sound.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that they would need to meet all codes to acquire occupancy.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that when they received the land, that he went to Mr. Stock to talk about the process to be legal.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, opened Public Comments at 6:23 PM.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked for Public Comments for Clarifying Questions.

Leslie Jackson, 1186 Wilberforce-Clifton Rd, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that in the first meeting, that plan for the gym was for entertainment, and asked if that was still the case.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that they hope not to, and that the plan is to only do vertical farming in that building.

Judy Williams, 1241 McGinnis Dr. Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, asked if Mr. Johnson intended to keep the property and pass it down to the family.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that he would like to have his great-great grandkids run the restaurant someday.

Sherry Partee, 929 Coleman Ave, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, asked if they could see the MOU with Central State since they do not have any other business plans in writing.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that an MOU is not for public viewing unless it is a public business. He went on to state that Dr. Katempe is present to speak on Central States' behalf. He further stated that he is asked for business plans, but plans are not necessary to clean up a property. He then stated that they have cleaned up a lot but stopped spending money on the property awaiting the outcome of the rezone. He also stated that he did not need houses on that property.

Wilber Jameson, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, stated that Central State is a public business and can show the MOU, and that he wants to find out, in writing, the business agreement. He then asked if the Trustees were provided with the B-2 uses list and that he had asked for the list at the last meeting.

Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector, stated that this is about area and use, not building new buildings, but to utilize the existing buildings. He further stated that anything listed in the B-2 uses may be used in any of the buildings.

Wilber Jameson, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, stated that once this zoning is changed, it will always be changed unless someone else rezones it. He then asked where the uses for B-2 are written because he would like to see them.

Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector, stated that the information is on the website, and that it was also presented at the first meeting in Exhibit 1/C and in the Zoning Resolution Section 407.2.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, read Section 407.2, Permitted Principal Uses in B-2 from the Zoning Resolution.

Yvone Craft-Harshaw, 1280 Wenofred Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that they know what Exhibit 1/C said and that is what is frightening. She went on to say that Mr. Zweber, Zoning Commission stated that if someone else were to purchase the property, the use of the buildings could change to any one of the B-2 uses. She went on to say that there are three (3) higher learning facilities within Wilberforce Village that are separate from the Village, and it is the people of the Village that are concerned. She then stated that there are so many B-2 Uses that they would not want to see there.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked Ms. Craft-Harshaw if she had a problem with what Mr. Johnson had proposed for the property.

Yvone Craft-Harshaw, 1280 Wenofred Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that they do have a problem with the entertainment part, but that Mr. Johnson said that they do not want to do that now. She went on to say that she did not have a problem with the daycare, restaurant, or vertical farming.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked Ms. Craft-Harshaw if she meant by entertainment, she meant video games and such.

Yvone Craft-Harshaw, 1280 Wenofred Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated yes.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave., stated that they used to party in the gym and that he does not want to have parties there.

Yvone Craft-Harshaw, 1280 Wenofred Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that there were a lot of things to do in the village, restaurant, swimming pool, bowling alley and that the Universities would interact with the citizens. She went on to say that in the 60-70's, students got cars and wanted to live off campus and leave for their entertainment.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked for Public Comments for Opposition.

Wanda Kelly, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, showed pictures of debris on Shorter Avenue. She then stated that Shorter Avenue is a small street, and they are requesting to put more activities on the street with nothing about widening the street or placing a traffic light. She went on to say that the street is always full of trash and debris.

Mr. Combs, Trustee Chair, asked Ms. Kelly if she was worried the situation would worsen if this passed.

Wanda Kelly, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, stated that yes it would be because more people would be on the road. She went on to say that the students are rude and dirty, and she did not want them in her neighborhood.

Wilber Jameson, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, stated that he wanted to see some type of restrictions on the B-2 Uses to eliminate what is not wanted there. He then stated that he was not necessarily against the restaurant. He further stated that there is already people double parking on the street, and they must call the Sherriff about. He again asked if restrictions could be placed on the rezone and that he could live with the daycare, restaurant, and vertical farming, but he did not want a filling station or strip mall.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked Mr. Stock if the Trustees could place such restrictions.

Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector, stated that only the BZA could place restrictions on Conditional Uses, not Permitted Uses.

Sherry Partee, 929 Coleman Ave, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that there should have been a study done to see if there was a need for a daycare. She went on to say that she was concerned that this would turn into something they did not want there.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked for Public Comments for Favor.

Judy Williams, 1241 McGinnis, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that the new dorms on Shorter are for families, so there will be a need for daycare. She went on to say that the issues of trash, parties and double parking has been going on for a long time and the fact that someone wants to bring back life to Wilberforce is impressive. She then stated that there are many people in Wilberforce that are running businesses out of their homes and wonder why that is not an issue. Ms. Williams then stated that with Mr. Johnson going to Mr. Stock before doing anything shows integrity. Ms. Willimas stated that she is in favor of this rezone.

Cordelia Hill, 1189 Wilberforce-Clifton, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that she has been a resident of Wilberforce since 1937 and she is in favor of the rezone. She went on to state that a business will not cause enough traffic to impact Shorter or cause damage to the road because US 42 and Brush Row would be the main roads used. She then stated that from 1946-1989, the restaurant was a landmark for Wilberforce and that in 2008, WCPOVA had planned to renovate the restaurant. She went on to say that the history of the restaurant should not be lost and with the opening, people would not need to go into Xenia for a meal. She then stated, rezone and open up.

Dr. Katarpe, Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that he is the director of immigration and technology transfers for Central State, and he is for the rezone. He went on to say that the MOU may be accessed because Central State is a public university, and the MOU states the list of intentions for collaboration with Mr. Johnson. He then stated that the Land Grant is for preserving rural communities and that vertical farming will be used for educational purposes. He lastly stated that even without the rezone, there would be traffic issues.

Wilber Jameson, 1285 McGinnis Dr, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, asked when the MOU would be available for viewing.

Dr. Katarpe, Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that it would be available at the end of the month.

Neelia Jackson, 1186 Wilberforce-Clifton Rd, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated the properties intent since the 1940's has been business and that the property was rezoned in the 1960's, but was not recorded correctly. She went on to state that the property has never been used as residential, so this would be changing to the correct zone, not a rezone. She then stated that traffic would not be impacted more than the new dorms on Shorter has caused and that the property could have five new homes on it that could impact traffic.

Johnny Johnson, 1211 Turner Place, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, stated that he works for Wilberforce University, and that the people at work have a want and need for daycare. He went on to say that they had cleaned up the property but did not want to put money into it without first talking with Mr. Stock. He went on to say that they could have surveyed the people of Wilberforce, but that they did not think this would cause such an opposition.

Leslie Jackson, 1186 Wilberforce-Clifton Rd, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384, stated that he is in favor of the rezone. He stated that half of the students are transients, and some are young parents that need a close place to take their children while in class and that there are also young residents in Wilberforce that could benefit from the daycare. He then stated that Wilberforce has a gas station and other businesses, so he does not see anything wrong with the overall project being approved.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that the dorms on Shorter are not student dorms, but non-traditional housing. He went on to state that he runs in the area and has seen turkeys and deer, but little traffic on Shorter. He then stated that he has spoken with neighbors and had been thanked for cleaning up the property and asked if the daycare would open first.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, Closed Public Comments at 7:33 PM.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that the Zoning Commission recommended approving the rezone and that he had heard a lot of good points for and against the rezone. He went on to say that it had been said that it had been mentioned that the Trustees do not live in Wilberforce, but Wilberforce is in Xenia Township, and that he takes seriously anything that goes on in Xenia Township, including Wilberforce. He stated that Mr. Johnson living and working in Wilberforce says something and that he seems like an honest, sincere gentleman.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, stated that he has been a Trustee for 20 years and that people once wanted to resurrect the restaurant, but it did not happen. He went on to say that Central State is in the process of annexing into the city, so if this is passed, some will not be happy, but if denied, it would be easy to annex the property into the city also. He then asked for the community to work together to make Mr. Johnsons vision a reality. He then stated that the daycare would be needed with three (3) campuses and the kids that live in Wilberforce. Mr. Miller asked Mr. Combs to recess and delay the hearing until March 7, 2024, to let residents get together with Mr. Johnson and Central State to see the plans for the property.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that they had heard the residents' concerns, and that Mr. Johnson is also a resident and needs to be trusted.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, stated that any discussion he has about Wilberforce asks what can be done to bring businesses in to benefit the community. He went on to say that the parcel has had businesses on it in the past, and the residents should allow something to happen there that will benefit the community. He then reiterated that Central State will be annexed, and it will be easy to also annex this property.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that if annexed, there would not be anything that could be said about it. He then stated that Central State is growing, and we should not try to impede that, and that people do not like change, but change is inevitable. He further stated that a daycare and restaurant would work well there. Mr. Combs stated that he is ready to vote tonight, but they can vote to continue since Mr. VanDyne is absent.

Thomas Johnson, 1268 Hughey, Wilberforce, Ohio, 45384, owner of 1260 Shorter Ave, stated that he would like to oppose continuing the hearing.

Mr. Miller made a motion for a continuation until March 7, 2024, 6:00 PM, Mr. Combs seconded the motion.

Mr. Combs called for a vote for a continuation until March 7, 2024, at 6:00 PM

Steve Combs AYE
Scott Miller AYE

Continued until March 7, 2024, 6:00 PM

CONTINUED FROM FEBRUARY 1, 2024

March 7, 2024

Mr. Combs called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

Mr. Combs asked all in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendees: Steve Combs, Trustee, Chair, Scott Miller, Trustee, Jeremy VanDyne, Trustee, and Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, asked Mr. VanDyne for verification of his intent to participate in the proceedings, and for verification of listening to the entire previous meeting and reviewing all provided documents.

Mr. VanDyne, Trustee, state that he had listened to the audio, read the minutes, and looked at the documents. He went on to say that he had some questions. He asked for clarification of the property in question was given by Wilberforce University as payment for the new dorm construction.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that Wilberforce University gave the property to Mr. Johnson, Petitioner, as payment.

Mr. VanDyne, Trustee, asked if Central State had anything to do with the property.

Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector, stated that Central State and the Petitioner have a MOU as part of a Land Grant to do vertical farming in one building only. He went on to state that originally, they wanted t vertical farming and some sort of entertainment in the building, but the Land Grant will only allow it to be vertical farming. Mr., Stock then

stated that there are three (3) buildings on the property, one will be for the vertical farming, one a daycare, and one a restaurant.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that since there have not been any discussions with the petitioner and the residents, the Public Comment section will stay closed that had been closed on February 1, 2024. He went on to say that the Trustees will a discussion and then a vote.

Mr. Miller, Trustee, stated that Wilberforce as a whole has a tremendous number of properties that are well maintained, a well-maintained community, with only a few properties that are not cared for. He went on to state that it is time to go back and use building that are in disrepair instead of building new. Mr. Miller stated a personal opinion that he did not see how the daycare building could be brought up to today's standards, but that was only his observation. He then stated that the location is good for a daycare, but was not sure about bringing it up to standards. Mr. Miller then stated that he likes seeing the efforts made to rejuvenate Wilberforce and would like to see it continue to grow.

Mr. VanDyne, Trustee, stated that he has taken everyone's considerations into account, and that the biggest issue he heard was the property being sold and it becoming something that the community doesn't want there. He went on to say that he did not see any issues with what is being planned on the property. Mr. VanDyne further stated that they would have to trust the word of Mr. Johnson to revitalize the property.

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, stated that there has been a lot of growth in Wilberforce and that it will continue to grow and change, that this request is just a small portion of that is to come in the community. Mr. Combs then stated that this is a nice community and that there is a lot of attractions to Wilberforce.

Mr. VanDyne, Trustee, stated that he lives in Amlin Heights, and that he grew up in the same area. He went on to say that he remembers what the neighborhood was like and what it is now. He then stated that he applauds someone wanting to put money back into their community. Mr. VanDyne stated that he remembers going to the restaurant and going to community picnics in Wilberforce, that it was once a lively place and would like to see it that way again, within reason of the people that live there. He lastly stated that he hopes that the revitalization is good for the community, and does not become something not wanted there.

Trustee Deliberation was closed.

Motion to approve the rezone of 1260 Shorter Ave M36000200270006800
Residential (R) to Neighborhood Business (B-2) was made by Trustee Combs, and
seconded by Trustee Miller.

Steve Combs	AYE
Scott Miller	AYE
Jeremy VanDyne	AYE

Mr. Combs, Trustee, Chair, closed the Public Hearing at 6:15 P.M.

ATTEST:

Alan D. Stock, Zoning Inspector