

XENIA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUATION

July 7, 2016

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 held a public hearing on June 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Xenia Township Trustees Office, 8 Brush Row Road, Xenia, OH, 45385 with the following members present:

Attendees: Scott Miller, Chair; Susan Spradlin, Trustee; Steve Combs, Trustee; Sheila Seiter, Fiscal Officer; Alan Stock, Zoning Inspector

Mr. Miller called the hearing to order at 6:02 p.m. Mr. Miller advised that this was a continuation for the hearing held on June 16, 2016 for the rezone requested by Central State University. Mr. Miller said that the public comments section of the hearing commenced and had been completed. Mr. Miller said that the Trustees heard both the pros and cons of the request and that the Trustees were now going to have their deliberation to discuss the matter. Mr. Miller opened up the discussion for the Trustees to ask questions, make comments, and share their concerns.

Mr. Combs said that, during the last hearing, Chief Fox expressed safety concerns for this facility and its possible future location. For clarification, Mr. Combs asked Chief Fox to outline what his concerns were. Chief Fox expressed that he believed he was a bit confused at first. Chief Fox said at first, he was led to believe that students would be involved with this new facility. He said that later on during the hearing, it became clearer that students would not have a big impact on this facility and that most of the patrons would be driving to it. Chief Fox shared that he still held that stance that if students are or were going to be involved with this facility and crossing U. S. State Route 42 to get there, then he would see that as a bad idea. Chief Fox said that if students were to be involved and have to cross the road without proper signals in place, then that could cause serious problems. Chief Fox shared that if the students are not going to be involved then he had no issues with the facility regarding safety concerns. Mr. Combs clarified that his concerns lied with the possible foot traffic. Chief Fox agreed and said that a car travelling down the road at fifty miles per hour with students trying to cross poses a huge problem. Mr. Combs said that he shared the same safety concerns as Chief Fox. Mr. Combs said that after hearing the whole presentation, it did not sound like there would be much foot traffic. Mr. Combs informed that this was one of his main concerns.

Mr. Miller shared that the Trustees have heard many different pros and cons in several different ways. Mr. Miller advised that there have been communications with Central State internally, and then through Central State back to the Zoning Board and the Trustees throughout this process. Mr. Miller said that they have had many meetings looking at and discussing the land within Xenia Township. Mr. Miller said that when it came down to the land around Central State, and these two parcels were looked at, it was Central State University's desire to have student enmities in place to support them. Mr. Miller advised that the thought he had during this whole process was that Central State University has a nice campus, and there is a large amount of land that is on that campus. Mr. Miller shared that any support they could provide in terms of student enmities for the campus of the community he was in favor of. Mr. Miller said to extend the tax exempt portion of land outside of the existing campus he is not in favor of unless Central State was at a point of no growth status on the existing land. Mr. Miller advised that to the west of the campus, there is a large amount of State owned land that had been set aside for the purposes of Central State University. Mr. Miller advised that he would classify most of that land as agricultural today. Mr. Miller said that the facility they want to put up has agricultural purposes. Mr. Miller advised that it made more sense to put the facility on the existing campus. Mr. Miller said that putting an administration building across the road would not mix well with the residential community. Mr. Miller shared that he thought there should be a tremendous amount of effort made from the Central State Community, the Wilberforce Community, and the local government to make things happen. Mr. Miller advised that he did not think anyone had spoken negatively against the project or the Land Grant Status that the university had achieved. Mr. Miller shared that he believed the issue was the location of the facility. Mr. Miller said that they will never get a one hundred percent buy in from the community when the project involves this many people, but there needs to be a great effort put forward to try. He advised that he did not believe that took place. Mr. Miller advised that the safety mentioned do apply if students were to be crossing Route 42, but he does not believe it applies in this case.

Mr. Combs said that he believed it was important for Central State University to have the backing of the Xenia Township and the Board of Trustees, which they do. He said that, however, in this situation, if there were no other options, he would be all for putting the facility on the parcels in question, but he believed there were better options to be considered.

Mrs. Spradlin said that she had read every letter that was sent, she had listened to everyone, spoken with people, visited the site in question, and review the minutes from the previous hearing. Mrs. Spradlin said at the first public hearing held on June 16th, some comments were made that she wanted to address. Mrs. Spradlin said that Harvey Johnson had stated that if Central State University were to annex from the Xenia Township, the Township would lose millions of dollars. Mrs. Spradlin advised that this was not true and said that Central State University was a government facility and we do not receive money from Central State totaling millions of dollars. Mrs. Spradlin said that the extent of the revenue we receive comes from our fire inspections, which she said we would lose if they chose to annex. Mrs. Spradlin advised that a few people had called this spot zoning, and she informed that this would not be spot zoning. Mrs. Spradlin advised that the area was already a mixed use area of Xenia Township. Mrs. Spradlin advised that Dr. Nedunari had said that Central State recognized asking for two facilities on two parcels of land was not very liked, so that was why Central State decided to ask for one facility on two parcels of land instead. Mrs. Spradlin said that she would return to this topic because she acknowledged that Central State was only asking for one facility, but some other statements that were made during the previous hearing led her to believe there real intent was to eventually have two facilities. Mrs. Spradlin said that she heard sustainability from a lot of people. Mrs. Spradlin said that she recognized that Central State University is looking for ways to sustain themselves within the community and to make the university more feasible financially. She stated that they were looking to improve the appearance of the campus and to do outreach work and expand their possibilities. Mrs. Spradlin said that the three things needed for sustainability are economy, society, and the environment. Mrs. Spradlin advised that none of these components can exist without the other, all three are needed. Mrs. Spradlin shared that Dr. Sri had said that research and extension made it necessary for Central State to seek out space to complete their missions, and that Central State University cannot support this new facility on its existing campus, and that Central State University needed additional space to accommodate these new facilities and these new missions. Mrs. Spradlin advised this was the first time “these new facilities” was mentioned. Mrs. Spradlin said that Chris Widener had said he felt it was important that the Zoning Commission and the Board of Trustees got an idea of the planning and the process that was going into building the new facilities. Mrs. Spradlin said that it could have been a misstatement, but there was not just one facility mentioned. Mrs. Spradlin said that Eric Browne, of E & C Services, who shared the site plan, had said it was in place to have the facility in a place where you can see the facility coming down Route 42 before you actually reach it. She advised he had said that it would act as a gateway for Central State and would act as a landmark for non-local community visitors. Mrs. Spradlin quoted him saying, “it will be the monument that lets people know Central State University is a Land Grant facility and you have just arrived to it.” Mrs. Spradlin does not see why it would be important to come down Route 42 and see a monument letting normal travelers know Central State is a Land Grant university. She applauded the University for their Achievements, but said that she did not feel the general public would know what a Land Grant facility was. Mrs. Spradlin said that traffic on Route 42 flows both ways so it could just as easily be visible both ways. Mrs. Spradlin shared that she believed they could accomplish the same goal with property further down the road. Mrs. Spradlin advised that Eric Browne had also said the idea was that the facility could be entered and exited onto Route 42 and entered and exited onto Wilberforce-Switch Road to minimize traffic and to give people the option of not having to exit onto Route 42. She quoted him saying, “because it can be very busy.” Mrs. Spradlin said there is an electrical line that runs through the parcel that prevents them from building one large facility. Mrs. Spradlin said that another option they had was to build a community garden or a conference center, which Mrs. Spradlin pointed out was another instance in which another facility was mentioned. Mrs. Spradlin said Chris Widener spoke after Eric Browne and said that Central State University needs to build these facilities on a sustainable piece of land that will allow the University to maintain its growth and continue its research. She said he had advised these two parcels of land on a “slightly busy road” gave the community easy access to the facility and remains the most ideal space for the facility. Mrs. Spradlin shared that Eric Browne said “thirty parking spaces were planned, but that would not be enough if Central State decided to build the conference center.” Mrs. Spradlin said the Greene County Engineer and the Ohio Department of Transportation did a study on Route 42 in June of 2003. The study was called the “Intersection Safety and Accidents Study”. Mrs. Spradlin said she was told, after speaking with someone from the Ohio Department of Transportation because she wanted to

know about the traffic on Route 42 and what happened with the study. Mrs. Spradlin advised the study was completed in September of 2004 and was closed out and completed in December of 2008. Mrs. Spradlin said the study alone cost \$268,000. Mrs. Spradlin said the study recommended to the president of the Wilberforce Community at the time to place two roundabouts on Route 42 and at the intersections of Brush Row Road another at Bickett Road and that the necessary funding was not available to also straighten out Brush Row Road and connect it to Bickett Road and put two roundabouts in there. Mrs. Spradlin said that the need to put in roundabouts tells her that the traffic needs to be slowed down. Mrs. Spradlin said this project never moved forward because it was going to cost twenty-six million dollars. Mrs. Spradlin said of that, they wanted eighteen million to come from the Xenia Township and the Greene County Engineer Department. Mrs. Spradlin advised that the Xenia Township does not come close to containing that amount of money. Mrs. Spradlin returned to what Dr. Sri had mentioned about accommodating “these new facilities and these new missions”. Mrs. Spradlin advised again this was not the only time more than one facility was mentioned. Mrs. Spradlin said that she heard people mention the increase in the traffic and noise and the increase of bright lighting. Mrs. Spradlin advised that one her way to visit the site again she passed the Greene County Career Center and saw a sign advertising that it was the home of “the Greene County Agricultural Research Center” that was and is developed by the Greene County Career Center. She said that the area of land they have their facility built on is much larger than the 2.8 acres of land Central State is looking to build their facility on and she thought that the Greene County Career Center had gotten it right. Mrs. Spradlin advised the parcels in question are zoned residential, and that when you buy a parcel of land there is no guarantee that you will ever be able to have the zoning changed. Mrs. Spradlin advised that you are buying the parcel knowing what the zoning is and accepting it for what it is. Mrs. Spradlin said that the Trustees have to make the best decision based on all of the information they had received. Mrs. Spradlin shared that the Zoning Commission has recommended that the Trustees approve the request, while the people that live within the community around Central State have asked them to deny it. Mrs. Spradlin said the Greene County Regional Planning Commission has suggested and overlay for this request.

Mr. Miller said that there are a lot of long ranged plans, safety wise, for Route 42.

Mrs. Spradlin added that she had heard that ODOT had been doing a lot of work with Central State. She learned they are doing a lot of maintenance work for the site and were addressing a drainage issue that is coming from a field and on to Route 42. Mrs. Spradlin said that ODOT has suggested making the area a wet garden. Mrs. Spradlin was advised that no more of an acre of the one hundred thirty-eight acre parcel would be affected by this drainage issue.

Mr. Miller asked if there was anything further, there was nothing further. Mr. Miller made a motion to grant the request to rezone two parcels located at 1481 U.S. Route 42 East, parcel numbers M36000200391001400 and M36000200391001500 to change the zoning from R-1 to IG, Mr. Combs seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mr. Miller – Nay, Mrs. Spradlin – Nay, Mr. Combs – Nay. Rezone DENIED by vote of 0-3. Mr. Miller asked for anything further before the meeting was adjourned.

Mrs. Spradlin thanked everyone for coming, and assured that she went over and reviewed everything she heard very carefully. She recognized that one side was going to be unhappy and the other side was going to be very happy. She gave the advice that more work needs to be done to create communication with the community. Mrs. Spradlin advised that she thought that would have made the decision a lot easier to make.

Mr. Miller reiterated that the project itself was not seen as a negative by the community, but rather the location that was in question. Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn the public hearing, Mrs. Spradlin seconded the motion. Roll Call: all voted aye. Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

XENIA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Resolution #

Scott Miller, Chair

Date Approved

Susan Spradlin

ATTEST:

Sheila Seiter, Fiscal Officer

Steve Combs

SLR