

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
June 10, 2024

Mr. Hood called the meeting to order and announced the matters before the Board at 6:01 p.m.

Members present: Brady Hood
 Randy Kuvin
 Erick Reiners
 Scott Gravett

Ms. Cathy Walton, Zoning Director, presented the staff report for a zoning map amendment, located at 200 Stephens Road, Hamilton Township, OH 45039. The Property Owner is Church Venture. Legal Notice was published in the May 31, 2024, edition of *The Journal News*. Notices were mailed to all property owners within 200 feet, contiguous to, and directly across the street from the area of the proposed amendment.

The applicant, John Fonner has requested a zone change from R-1 Single Family Residence to R-1 PUD Single Family Residence. The zone change is intended to allow the property to be developed for mixed use. According to the Hamilton Township Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan, the designated area is earmarked for single-family residential use. Single Family Residential zoning typically entails residential developments with the intent of one dwelling unit per 2 acres.

This was heard at the Warren County Regional Planning Commission on May 23, 2024, where they recommended approval with conditions.

Mr. Hood welcomed the applicant, Mr. Fonner, to address the Board.

Mr. Fonner, a member of the Membership Team at Church Venture, is suggesting a mixed-use plan for the property. This plan entails a two-story community center incorporating a church, along with a detached low-traffic general business area situated on the south side nearest to Stephens Road. Additionally, there are plans to include pickleball courts, while ensuring the preservation of trees in the northern section dedicated for walking trails. Mr. Fonner aims to implement buffers around the property to accommodate surrounding properties. The overarching objective for the property is to address the needs of the expanding families within the community.

Mr. Hood wanted to be clear to the applicant that the Board can be very specific when it comes to the types of businesses that will be allowed if approved. Mr. Hood inquired with Mr. Fonner about the types of businesses he envisions for the property.

Mr. Fonner clarified that the commercial businesses are intended to generate revenue to support the costs associated with the community center. The specific businesses that will be established depend on the decisions made by Church Venture and any collaborating institutional partners.

Mr. Hood opened the floor to those who are in support of the rezoning.

Kerry Thrush, the head pastor of Church Venture and a resident of Hamilton Township, owns the property for which a zone change is proposed. His vision extends beyond a traditional Sunday worship experience; he envisions the church as a vibrant community hub accessible seven days a week. Church Venture enjoys a positive reputation within the township and actively participates in local events like the annual Township Tree Lighting Celebration. The proposed community center aims to host a variety of gatherings including HOA meetings, Boy and Girl Scout activities, concerts, and other social events, fostering a welcoming space for all residents.

Eileen Meeres, a resident residing in the Village on Green subdivision, expressed her support for the concept of a community center but voiced curiosity regarding the size of the commercial buildings.

Mr. Hood opened the floor to those who were against the rezoning.

Kathryn Rose resides directly northeast of 200 Stephens Road, where her property abuts the proposed site. She has expressed several concerns regarding the presented plan. These include potential reductions in wildlife due to development, concerns about businesses becoming vacant if owners struggle to secure tenants, anticipated increases in traffic along Stephens Road, worries about excessive noise and light pollution, and, notably, apprehensions about her privacy, particularly given the proposed nature trails near her home. Additionally, her family enjoys recreational shooting on their property and wonders if this right would be impacted by the construction of a church and playground on the adjacent property.

Mr. Gary Snell has expressed concerns regarding the potential increase in traffic and the associated risk of accidents that the proposal may bring. Additionally, he has raised issues about noise disturbances, noting that he is currently awakened by worship music as early as 8 am.

Ms. Collins also expressed concern about the anticipated increase in traffic, particularly noting existing difficulties accessing Stephens due to a dip in the road, which is already a community concern even without the presence of the community center. She questions the size of the church's congregation and if that has something to do with wanting commercial property.
(resident was not present during swearing in)

Mr. Tom Randall, a resident of Valley Vineyard and a friend of Mr. Snell, is discontented with the Township's development and the accompanying traffic it has brought. He believes this will only increase the frustration of the residents. *(resident was not present during swearing in)*

Mr. Hood invited the applicant to come forward to address any concerns that were raised.

Mr. Fonner reiterated the prerequisites set forth by the Regional Planning Commission for both Stage 1 and Stage 2, particularly emphasizing the necessity of conducting thorough traffic and storm-water drainage studies. His primary concern is to confirm that Church Venture's intentions

revolve around strengthening their ties with the community, with any commercial aspects of their proposal intended solely to cover the expenses of the community center.

Mr. Hood closes the floor to public comments.

Mr. Kuvin expressed concern about approving the PUD because the control over which businesses can operate on the property will occur during Stage 2 planning, rather than being determined by the vote at this meeting.

Mr. Hood expressed his dissatisfaction with the commercial aspect and questioned why the RPC decided to change the request from a Business PUD to a Residential PUD.

Mr. Reiners clarified that even if the proposal were presented as a Business PUD, he is uncertain whether they would support it, as the commercial aspect does not align with the area. He believes that having a business at that location does not conform to the Future Land Use Plan.

Mr. Gravett concurs with the consensus among board members that the proposal is not compatible with the surrounding area.

Mr. Reiners made a motion with the second from Mr. Gravett to deny the request for the rezone from R-1 Single Family Residential to R-1 PUD located at 200 Stephens Road, Hamilton Township, Ohio 45039.

Roll Call:	Eric Reiners	Yes
	Scott Gravett	Yes
	Brady Hood	Yes
	Randy Kuvin	Yes

Mr. Kuvin made a motion to adjourn.

All in favor. Aye.