

## WHITEHALL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023

The Whitehall Planning Commission meeting of Thursday, February 2, 2023, was called to order by Chairman, Terry Anderson, at 6:31 p.m.

Chairman Anderson asked for a roll call.

Terry Anderson – Present  
Mike Brown – Present  
Denny Roberge – Present  
Barb Blake – Present  
Jackie Plank – Present  
Jason Thomas – Absent  
Zach Woodruff – Absent

Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to excuse the absent members. Mr. Roberge motioned. Ms. Blake seconded the motion. Voting was unanimous to excuse the absent members.

Chairman Anderson the asked for a motion to approve the minutes from January 5, 2023. Ms. Plank motioned. Mr. Brown seconded. Voting was unanimous to approve the minutes from January.

Chairman Anderson introduced Case 855. Asheber Belayneh, Mini Ethiopian Coffee House and Carry Out, 201 South Hamilton Road, parcel 090-000145, number of parking spaces variance. Ms. Jeanne Cabral, architect, presented Case 855. Ms. Cabral stated the parcels have been combined into one parcel with the plan to physically connect the two buildings. Ms. Cabral stated 24 spaces would be required by Whitehall code. Ms. Cabral stated they are seeking the variance, as they are five spaces short with 19 parking spaces. Ms. Cabral stated there would be additional street parking on San Jose. Mr. Belayneh stated he has been working hard to gain city support. Ms. Cabral further described the design of the building. Ms. Cabral stated the entrance would be one way from South Hamilton Road, exiting onto San Jose. Ms. Cabral stated the parking spaces would be the same with the exception of one space, requiring the parking space to be rotated due to traffic flow requirements. Mr. Brown asked what was in the existing business. Mr. Belayneh and Ms. Cabral stated that was the existing business, and 195 South Hamilton Road would be the building they plan to connect to Mini Ethiopian Coffee House with plans to make the **195 South Hamilton Road building into a bar**. Mr. Brown asked if the 195 South Hamilton Road location would require a separate liquor license. Ms. Cabral stated that the same liquor license, per the State of Ohio, would apply to both buildings. Ms. Cabral stated that food from the restaurant could be provided to the gathering space next door via the breezeway.

There will also be two business offices located in the back of the building of 195 South Hamilton Road. Mr. Brown asked if the intent would be to provide liquor in the 195 South Hamilton Road building. Ms. Cabral confirmed that is the intent. Chairman Anderson asked if there would be more than one business occupying the location. Ms. Cabral stated it would be the same business. Mr. Brown asked if the building to the south would remain a restaurant and the building to the north would then become a bar. Ms. Cabral, as well as Mr. Belayneh confirmed stating the restaurant portion is very small.

At this point, Ms. Miller made clarification to the square footage of the structures. Ms. Miller stated she measured approximately 3000 sq ft. Ms. Cabral disagreed giving a measurement of 2480 sq ft on the buildings without the breezeway. Ms. Cabral and Ms. Miller agreed on an estimate of 2555 sq ft.

Mr. Roberge asked for future plans for the back area of the building. Ms. Cabral stated that is designated as office space. Mr. Roberge also asked about the property behind the breezeway. Ms. Cabral stated that at this time, there are utilities located there with some grass. Mr. Roberge asked if there may be plans to build on that area. Ms. Cabral stated there are no plans at this time. Mr. Brown asked if Mr. Belayneh owned both properties. Mr. Belayneh confirmed that indeed he does own both properties, but no other properties within the city.

Kelsey Miller reviewed the staff report for Case 855, Parking Variance, 1123.19(d)(1)(8), amended by Ms. Miller February 2, 2023, to 1126.19(e)(8). Ms. Miller stated the two properties have now been combined to 201 South Hamilton Road as the official address. This property is one-third of an acre in the South Hamilton Road District. Staff recommends approval for the minimum number of parking spaces. Staff has also worked closely with Mr. Belayneh and Ms. Cabral on consistency of the building facade. Staff recommends a favorable recommendation. Mr. Roberge asked Ms. Miller if this business would require zoning variances. Ms. Miller stated the zoning is correct, but the parking for the business was the issue – being about seven to eight spaces less than what is required. Ms. Miller reiterated that this business is a permitted use, not requiring a special permit.

Mr. Brown inquired about the business hours for the restaurant and bar. Mr. Belayneh stated restaurant hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. but the bar hours are not clear at this time. **Mr. Belayneh stated he has a permit**, and he does not support late hours for the bar. Mr. Brown asked if additional signage is necessary. Ms. Cabral stated there is a pole sign in place with no plans to add additional signage.

Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to approve **Case 855**. Mr. Roberge motioned and Ms. Blake seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor to **APPROVE** Case 855.

Chairman Anderson asked if there was any further business. Ms. Plank motioned. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. All members voted in favor to adjourn the meeting. Therefore, the February 2, 2023, Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

**APPROVED** \_\_\_\_\_, **2023**, respectfully submitted,

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Terry Anderson, Chairman

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Lori Morton, Secretary