

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 23, 2021, 7PM**

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Christopher Finn, Chairman; Melvin Jones, Vice-Chairman; Hulda Moffitt, Secretary; Howard Balzer; Nancy Daniels

Alternate Board Member: Kevin Dye

Township Staff: Connie Swisher, Zoning Inspector
Dana Scott, Zoning Specialist
Alicia Armentrout, Zoning Specialist
Cassady Critchfield, Field Inspector

Township Guests: Erick Cordero: 416 Evergreen Terrace, Columbus, OH 43228
OWNER: 264 Norton Rd., Columbus, OH 43228

Dean Bollinger: 41 Fellows Ave., West Jefferson, OH 43162
APPLICANT: Application No. 185-RZ-21,
264 Norton Rd., Columbus, OH 43228

VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

Alternate Board Members: Alec Milam

Virtual Guests: See **ADDENDUM I** (page 9) for complete list of virtual attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Christopher Finn, Chairman, called the public hearing, a special meeting, of the Prairie Township Zoning Commission to order at 7pm on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at the Township Hall, 23 Maple Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43228.

INSTRUCTIONS TO VIRTUAL ATTENDEES

Mr. Finn stated that because of health concerns related to COVID-19, the Zoning Commission public hearing will be held virtually. Board members, staff, applicants, and attorneys will be present in the Township Hall. All others are invited to join the hearing virtually.

Please visit the Township website, www.prairietownship.org, to participate virtually. Each attendee will be muted on entry to the web browser. If you want to address the Zoning Commission, please raise your hand by using the “raise hand” button feature. Attendees wanting to speak will be unmuted following the staff and applicant presentations. Please state your full name and address for the record prior to making public comments.

MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Finn asked for action to correct or approve as written the minutes for the January 26, 2021, Prairie Township Zoning Commission meeting.

Ms. Daniels made a motion to approve the January 26, 2021, meeting minutes as written. Motion seconded by Mr. Finn.

Roll Call:

1. Howard Balzer Yes
2. Nancy Daniels Yes
3. Hulda Moffitt Yes
4. Melvin Jones Yes
5. Christopher Finn Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS:**Application No. 184-RZ-21**

Owner/Applicant: Tom Parr, Parr Estates Ltd., 6106 Bausch Rd., Galloway, Ohio 43119

Ms. Swisher stated that Jack Reynolds, attorney with Smith & Hale LLC, submitted a request to the Township Zoning Department, on behalf of his client Tom Parr, owner/applicant of 6106 Bausch Road, to reschedule the hearing until March 23, 2021. The continuance is needed to secure approval from the Board of Health for an onsite septic system.

Mr. Finn said that the request to continue the application has been approved by the Zoning Department. The public hearing to rezone three one-half acre lots, fronting on Bausch Road, from a 43 acre-parcel from SCPD (Select Commercial Planned District) to R2 (Low Density Residential) for three single family home sites will be continued to Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 7pm.

Application No. 185-RZ-21**Applicant: Dean Bollinger, 41 Fellows Avenue, West Jefferson, Ohio 43228****Owner: Erick R. Cordero, 416 Evergreen Terrace, Columbus, Ohio 43228****Location: 264 Norton Road, Columbus, Ohio 43228**

Swearing-in Oath

Mr. Finn said that persons present in the Township Hall who wanted to address the Zoning Commission regarding this application would need to be sworn in. He asked all who intended to speak during the comments portion of the hearing to stand as a group and raise their hands. He added that attorneys were not required to stand.

Mr. Finn addressed the group and said, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Each person in the group replied, "I do."

Overview of Rezoning Application: Connie Swisher

(Ms. Swisher used a computer-generated video to accompany her verbal explanation of the rezoning application.)

Ms. Swisher stated that this application is a request to rezone 264 Norton Road, parcel #240-000887, from R-4, Medium Low Density Residential, Single-Family Homes, to R-8, High Density Residential, for seven buildings, each building containing two to three family units, for a total of 20 units.

The property is a 1.7-acre tract located on the east side of Norton Road, south of West Broad Street, and north of Sullivant Avenue. Adjacent properties to the north, west, and east are zoned R-4, Medium Low Density Residential. Zoning is R-4 in the city of Columbus, which is south of the property. Norton Road is a mix of business, multi-family, and single-family residences.

The zoning requested, R-8, High Density Residential, allows for 2-4 family and multi-family units. The applicant proposes to build a total of seven buildings, six with one townhouse and two flats, and one building with two flats, no townhouse. This will be a total of 20 units. The layout of the project is as illustrated in the photo of the Proposed Site Map.

The application proposes lighted parking; screening consisting of vinyl fences and trees on the north property line; and individual trash containers for each unit instead of dumpsters.

PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING RESOLUTION, SECTION 825

The R-8 District, High Density Residential, permits the establishment of 2-4 family and multi-family units not to exceed eight units per acre. This project will require a variance for six buildings because each of the six townhouses has a one-family unit.

PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Plan designates the eastern portion of the Township as “Existing Urbanized.” This area is serviced with water and sewer. It is currently developed at high-density residential single-family homes, apartments, and commercial. Infill and higher density redevelopment projects are encouraged in this area of Prairie Township.

FRANKLIN COUNTY ENGINEER

Norton Road has a 50-ft. right-of-way, which the owner will expand 10 feet to meet Major Arterial requirements of the 60-ft. right-of-way.

The change of use of the property will require a traffic study.

FRANKLIN COUNTY SANITARY ENGINEER

Accessibility: Water is located under the northbound lane of Norton Road. Sanitary sewer is within the easement behind 262 Norton Road.

PHOTOS RELATED TO PROPERTY

The photographic presentation began with a picture of the house at 264 Norton Road. This was followed by several photographic views related to the location of the property: looking north; looking south; south of property located in Columbus; across the street to the north; directly across the street; and across the street to the south.

Other photos included in the presentation were:

- ▶ Proposed Buildings Front Elevation: 2-Story Townhouse / 2-Unit Flats and 2-Unit Flats
- ▶ Proposed 2-Unit Flats Floor Plan: First Floor Flat and Second Floor Flat
- ▶ Proposed 3-Unit Buildings / 2-Story Townhouse and Flats Floor Plans:
First-Floor Townhouse / First-Floor Flat and Second-Floor Townhouse / Second-Story Flat
- ▶ Aerial photo of 264 Norton Road

In-Person Comments

Mr. Finn stated that comments from those at the Township Hall would be heard. He asked anyone who wanted to speak to stand, state their name, and proceed to speaker’s podium.

Dean Bollinger, applicant, stood, stated his name, and went to the podium. Mr. Finn told Mr. Bollinger that the board was ready to hear his comments.

Highlights of Comments by Dean Bollinger

He acknowledged that he had received copies of the three letters from Township residences in opposition to the 264 Norton Road apartments project. Two letters are from the same address, which is directly across the street from the project. He said that he was also aware of some

homeowner's concerns about recent crime in the neighborhood occurring at a nearby apartment complex on Hall Road.

Regarding the concerns about safety and security, we have addressed these in many ways.

The fire department will require a fire hydrant on the property. Because of the change of use of the property, the Franklin County Engineer will require a traffic study concerning ingress and egress related to the site.

The property will be well lighted with pole lights and individual security lights. Parking lot lighting will be directed toward the inside of the property so that it will not shine into the apartments. Parking spaces will also be on the inside of the property, and speed bumps will be installed if needed to enhance safety. People will be located on the outside of the parking area.

There is 50 percent open space on the site. This will allow separation of people and vehicles and prevent congestion. This project consists of multiple, separate buildings. Each of the seven buildings averages about 1/8 acre. Building A, the existing single-family-house at 264 Norton Road, will be remodeled into one townhouse and two flats, one above the other. The flats will be 1,100 sq. ft., and the townhouses will be 1,200 square feet in size.

There will be several different buffers on the site that will enhance the safety and appearance of the property: fences, grass, and trees. The buildings will buffer the parking spaces.

The overall design of the buildings in this project is to maintain the look and feel of single-family residences. No building is over two stories; no building includes more than three units; and the flats are single story. Concerning density, the buildings are 30 ft. apart. Stone and stucco building materials will be used in the construction, materials like those used in nearby homes. Each building will give the impression of a single-family residence.

The lot will be maintained. The fire department will require us to maintain the south property line to provide access for firetrucks and other emergency vehicles to the buildings.

The project puts residences in proximity to health care, Doctors Hospital and several medical buildings; a public library; banks; the COTA bus line; and grocery stores and numerous other small business. This enhances the feeling of community.

Our goal is to build a community feel within the project and with the nearby community.

Mr. Finn asked board members if they had any questions for Mr. Bollinger. There was none.



Erick Cordero, owner of the property at 264 Norton Road, stood, stated his name, and proceeded to the podium. Mr. Finn said that the board was ready to hear his comments.

Highlights of Comments by Erick Cordero

Mr. Cordero said that the primary objectives of the project were to improve the appearance of the immediate neighborhood and to provide housing for those who could not afford to purchase a single-family house.

Neighbors do not need to be worried about a large apartment complex. Only six buildings are being added to the site. The seventh building, which will be remolded, is the existing house. The buildings are 30 feet apart with lots of green space between them.

Virtual Comments

Mr. Finn said that comments from the public attending the meeting virtually would now be heard.

Alicia Armentrout from the Zoning Department conducted and voiced the online chat comments. Ms. Armentrout said that there were five comments heard in favor of the rezoning. She added that there were no comments heard in opposition to the rezoning as of this time.

See **ADDENDUM II** (page 10) for the written transcript of all chat comments.

Letters of Opposition to Rezoning

Mr. Finn said that the Township had received three letters of opposition to the rezoning. Copies of the letters as received were provided to board members to read. Mr. Finn summarized the contents of the letters.

*Dan Carl Gelfius / Carl D. Gilfius (two letters from same residence/property)
271 Norton Road, Columbus, Ohio 43228*

Principal reasons for opposition to the rezoning include the adverse effect of multi-family, rental units on property values in the neighborhood and the increased potential for violent crime caused by people who rent rather than own their residences, people who frequently move and have no community concerns or attachment.

*Matthew Barnett
323 Norton Road, Columbus, Ohio 43228*

Principal reasons for opposition to the rezoning that would permit multi-family buildings include a decrease in property values, an increase of congestion in the neighborhood that will change its appearance, and an increase in crime.

Questions from Zoning Commission

Mr. Finn asked if any of the board members had questions about the in-person or virtual comments.

Mr. Balzer addressed Mr. Cordero and asked what the anticipated rents would be for the units in the apartment complex.

Mr. Cordero replied that there had been no final determination on the price range, but that they would likely run from of \$1,200 to \$1,600 per month.

Ms. Daniels addressed Mr. Cordero and asked how many residences per unit did he anticipate.

Mr. Cordero replied that they expected two to three persons to reside in each unit.

Ms. Moffitt commented that the three-bedroom flats would likely have more than three residences in them.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Cordero what alternate plans he had if the rezoning was not approved.

Mr. Cordero replied that in some manner he would continue to rehab and make improvements to properties in Prairie Township because he was committed to living in the area as well as to the people who lived in the Township.

Action on Application No. 185-RZ-21

Mr. Finn asked if there were any more in-person or virtual comments or questions. There being none, he stated that a motion on the rezoning application was the next order of business. He explained that the board could have three responses to the motion: 1) Move to Approve, 2) Move to Deny, or 3) Move to Approve with Modification.

Mr. Finn asked, "Do I have a motion from the Board on Rezoning Application No. 185-RZ-21; a request to rezone from R-4, Medium Low Density Residential, to R-8, High Density Residential, for a seven-building apartment project consisting of 20 units on 1.7 acres located at 264 Norton Road, Columbus, Ohio 43228, identified as parcel number 240-000887, and owned by Erick R. Cordero. This recommendation is to be forwarded to the Prairie Township Board of Trustees for consideration, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 519.12."

Mr. Balzer made a motion to approve Rezoning Application No. 185-RZ-21 as stated in its entirety by Mr. Finn. Ms. Moffitt seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

1. Howard Balzer Yes
2. Nancy Daniels Yes
3. Hulda Moffitt Yes
4. Melvin Jones Yes
5. Christopher Finn Yes

Rezoning application No. 1850RZ-21 was approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Finn called for a special meeting, which will be a public hearing, of the Zoning Commission on March 23, 2021, at 7pm, at the Township Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Prairie Township Zoning Commission, Mr. Finn adjourned the public hearing at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Hulda Moffitt, Secretary

ADDENDUM I – VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

2/23/21 Zoning Commission Meeting
Virtual Attendance

Prairie Township	6:39 PM - 7:36 PM	57 mins	Desktop app
Prairie Township BZA	6:40 PM - 7:36 PM	56 mins	Desktop app
Frankie Anaya	6:53 PM - 7:36 PM	43 mins	Desktop app
Joe Meyer	6:53 PM - 7:36 PM	43 mins	Desktop app
Serene Canales	6:54 PM - 7:36 PM	42 mins	Desktop app
Marisol Enriquez	6:55 PM - 7:36 PM	41 mins	Mobile app
Yolanda Hernandez	6:55 PM - 7:36 PM	41 mins	Desktop app
Alec Milam	6:56 PM - 7:35 PM	40 mins	Mobile app
Arymir Perez	6:56 PM - 7:35 PM	40 mins	Desktop app
Duane Dellinger	7:01 PM - 7:35 PM	35 mins	Desktop app
Matthew Barnett	7:02 PM - 7:36 PM	34 mins	Desktop app
Andrea	7:06 PM - 7:36 PM	30 mins	Other
Andrea	7:06 PM - 7:36 PM	30 mins	Mobile app
Andrea	7:06 PM - 7:36 PM	30 mins	Mobile app
Andrea	7:06 PM - 7:36 PM	30 mins	Mobile app
Andrea	7:06 PM - 7:36 PM	30 mins	Mobile app
Juan	7:11 PM - 7:30 PM	20 mins	Mobile app
Karla Perdomo	7:20 PM - 7:35 PM	16 mins	Mobile app
Call-in User_2	7:01 PM - 7:13 PM	13 mins	Other
Cody Thompson	6:59 PM - 7:03 PM	4 mins	Web app

ADDENDUM II – VIRTUAL CHAT COMMENTS**2/23/21 Zoning Commission Meeting****Chat Comments**

February 23, 2021	7:01 PM	from Frankie Anaya to host (privately): Frankie Anaya Jr
February 23, 2021	7:02 PM	from Prairie Township to Frankie Anaya (privately): Thank you for joining us! If you have comments, please state your name and address for the record and your comments will be read in at the appropriate time
February 23, 2021	7:11 PM	from Prairie Township to all attendees: If you would like to address the Board, please raise your hand. When it is your turn, you will be unmuted. At that time, please state your name and address for the record, followed by your comments
February 23, 2021	7:12 PM	from Arymir Perez to host (privately): Arymir Perez - 382 Evergreen Terrace: I moved into this newly built home at the end of December and I couldn't be happier. My experience with Erick Cordero and the builders he works with (FA Construction) has been phenomenal. They did an amazing job with my home and used quality materials throughout my home. I think having newly built properties in that area would be absolutely amazing considering a lot of the homes in the area are older homes. It would bring a better curb appeal to the neighborhood and new housing for those who are not yet homeowners.
February 23, 2021	7:17 PM	from Prairie Township to Arymir Perez (privately): Would you like to speak to the Board, or have your comment read aloud on your behalf?

- February 23, 2021 7:18 PM from Arymir Perez to host (privately):
Please feel free to read my comment aloud on my behalf. I can speak if necessary or if there are any other questions for me. Thank you!
- February 23, 2021 7:24 PM from Serene Canales to host (privately):
My name is Serene Canales at 4843 Palmetto St. Columbus, OH 43228. I am in support of these townhomes and believe more housing is needed in the area. I think the provided photos and blueprints show a beautiful and organized plan.
- February 23, 2021 7:25 PM from Yolanda Hernandez to host (privately):
My name is Yolanda Hernandez at 308 Hiler Rd. Columbus, OH 43228. I am in support of these townhomes because I believe it will stimulate the local economy.
- February 23, 2021 7:28 PM from Marisol Enriquez to all panelists:
I live at 407 evergreen terrace. I've lived in this neighborhood for 7 years now, the blueprints seem to make sense and are well presented. This project could bring prosperity and an economic boost for the area.
- February 23, 2021 7:28 PM from Andrea to all panelists:
My name Andrea Aguirre on woodland Avenue, I just wanted to say I believe this project would be an amazing add on to this community. Bringing more housing, it's a beautiful project. I have seen F A constructions work in the past and they are amazing at all they do. It will improve this area a lot I am all for it
- February 23, 2021 7:29 PM from matthew barnett to all panelists:
installing 20 families where there is one is in no way blending with the existing neighborhood
- February 23, 2021 7:30 PM from Prairie Township to matthew barnett (privately):
If you would like to address the Board, please state your name and address for the record before making comments

February 23, 2021 7:30 PM from matthew barnett to all panelists:
none of the callers are bordered this proposal, it affects
bordered homes the most

February 23, 2021 7:31 PM from Prairie Township to matthew barnett (privately):
Would you like to address the Board?