



City of Vandalia Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Agenda

May 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Vandalia Municipal Building

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82724040735>

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance
3. Approval of Planning Commission Minutes
 - a. March 25, 2025
4. Swearing in of attendees wishing to speak before the Commission
5. Old Business
6. New Business
 - a. PC 25-0005 – Rezoning – 3320 Benchwood Road (RSF-1 to HB)
7. Communications
8. Adjournment

Next Scheduled Meeting – To Be Determined

Minutes of the City of Vandalia Planning Commission
March 25, 2025

Members Present:	Mr. Ron Atkins, Mr. Dave Arnold, Mr. Kevin Keeley Jr., Mr. Lucious Plant
Members Absent:	Ms. Kristin Cox
Staff Present:	Michael Hammes, City Planner
Others Present:	Jose Rodriguez

Call to Order

Mr. Atkins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Mr. Atkins noted that Ms. Cox had notified the Commission of her absence. Mr. Plant made a motion to excuse Ms. Cox. Mr. Keeley, Jr. seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes of the Planning Commission

Mr. Plant made a motion to approve the January 14th, 2025 minutes. Mr. Arnold seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Swearing in of Attendees Wishing to Speak at Meeting

The attendees were sworn in.

Old Business

Mr. Hammes confirmed that there was no Old Business on the agenda.

New Business – PC 25-0003 – Site Plan Review – 234 W. National Road

Mr. Hammes introduced Case PC 25-0003, a request for site plan approval for the property located at 234 West National Road. The proposal involves the construction of a business office and equipment shop structure. He added that the 0.845-acre property is zoned Office Service (OS).

Mr. Hammes described the vicinity of the site. He noted that the properties surrounding the site are primarily Commercial in nature, with some residential to the west and south. Dayton International Airport and the 40 West properties are located to the north.

Mr. Hammes referenced the proposed site plan, describing the 1,250 square foot office at the north end of the site and the 2,500 square foot to the south. He noted that a fence would be constructed at the southwest corner of the site to screen this project from the nearby apartments along Gabriel Street.

Mr. Hammes described the signage proposed for the site, including a wall sign on the office building and a monument sign along National Road. Permits would be required for both signs, and the monument sign would need to meet the setback requirements for the OS district.

Mr. Hammes noted that any exterior lighting proposed for the site would require a photometric plan. Similarly, any dumpsters installed at a future date would need to include an enclosure.

Mr. Hammes reported that the applicant had submitted a revised site plan that addresses some minor issues identified by staff. He then confirmed that the revised site plan meets the requirements of the code.

Hearing no questions for Mr. Hammes, Mr. Atkins invited the applicant to address the Commission.

Mr. Jose Rodriguez, of Rodz Builders, addressed the Commission. He confirmed that he had submitted a revised site plan that addressed the comments provided during staff review.

Mr. Atkins asked about the proposed monument sign. Mr. Rodriguez replied that the detailed schematics for that sign would be reviewed as part of the permit application for the sign itself. Mr. Hammes added that the location of the sign meets the relevant standards.

Mr. Atkins asked about the lack of a dumpster. Mr. Rodriguez replied that the office would not generate enough trash to warrant a dumpster.

Mr. Atkins remarked that it was good to see something being built on this property, since the site had been vacant for more than 50 years. He added that the fence at the rear of the site will help with screening the property from the apartments.

Mr. Arnold asked about the style of the proposed buildings. Mr. Rodriguez reported that the front office would block most of the view of the building in the rear. Both buildings would have the same style of metal roof, but the rear building would be constructed of steel.

Mr. Arnold asked about the property to the west of the site. Mr. Hammes confirmed that the property is zoned Office Service, but the use is currently residential. He explained further that the residential use triggers a screening requirement, despite the similar zoning. While other standards may apply in other circumstances, in this case landscaping between the business and the adjacent residential structure would be sufficient.

Mr. Keeley, Jr., asked about the specific type of business proposed for the site. Mr. Rodriguez replied that his company is a custom homebuilder. This is reflected in the style of the office building.

Mr. Atkins noted that there were no other members of the public present.

Site Plan Review Criteria

Mr. Atkins read the Site Plan Review Criteria into the record. Pursuant to Code Section 1214.04(d)(1) “Site Plan Review Criteria”, the Planning Commission shall not approve an application for site plan review unless it finds the following:

- (1) That the proposed development is consistent with this code, and other related codes and ordinances enforced by the City;

Staff Comment: Staff feels the proposed development is consistent with the Code.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

- (2) That the proposed development complies with the applicable zoning district regulations;

Staff Comment: Staff feels the proposed development will comply with Chapter 1226 (General Development Standards) and Chapter 1228 (Architectural Standards).

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

- (3) That the proposed development adequately provides for emergency vehicles access and circulation; and

Staff Comment: Staff feels this development will adequately provide emergency vehicles access and circulation, as shown.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

- (4) If the project is to be carried out in successive phases, that each stage of the proposed development shall comply with the foregoing criteria.

Staff Comment: Staff feels this criterion does not apply. This is not anticipated to be a multi-phase project.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

Mr. Hammes noted that every criterion does not necessarily apply to every project in the same way. He explained that criterion 4, relating to multi-phase projects, does not prevent the applicant from expanding the business later on, provided that they amend their site plan.

Mr. Atkins reported that staff recommended **approval** of the site plan for 234 West National Road as proposed, with the following conditions:

1. All landscaping and screening shall be installed in quantities and varieties compliant with Chapter 1232 of the Vandalia Zoning Code.

Mr. Plant made a motion to approve Case PC 25-0003 with the recommended condition. Mr. Keeley, Jr., seconded the motion.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission **Approved** Case PC 25-0003 with the recommended condition.

Mr. Hammes explained that the Commission's approval in this matter is final. He will submit a copy of the approval to the Building Department, which will allow them to approve permits and get the project moving forward.

New Business – PC 25-0004 – Code Amendment – Interstate Highway Sign Overlay

Mr. Hammes introduced Case PC 25-0004, a Staff-Initiated Code Amendment relating to the Interstate and Limited-Access Highway Sign Overlay District.

Mr. Hammes explained that billboards are not currently permitted in the City of Vandalia. Despite this, there are some legacy billboards that predate the current restrictions, including six billboards along Airport Access Road.

Mr. Hammes reported that the City leases a portion of two properties along Airport Access Road to Outfront Media. This company maintains a double-sided billboard on each of these properties. Recently, the company requested permission to upgrade the billboards to full-sized digital billboards.

Mr. Hammes noted that all existing billboards along Airport Access Road are nonconforming, due to the existing restrictions. Any structural alterations to nonconforming signs need to bring them into compliance with the code – meaning that a billboard would need to be reduced to 200 square feet, or less than a third of its current size. He added that only 70 square feet of the sign could be electronic, which would not work for a full-sized digital billboard.

Mr. Hammes observed that the Interstate and Limited-Access Highway Sign Overlay provides additional standards for signs found along various highways within the City. The boundaries of the overlay include a 400' area surrounding Interstates 70 and 75 and the Airport Access Road. Generally, the overlay allows for larger and taller freestanding signs than those permitted by the underlying zoning districts. The overlay permits both monument and pole signs, but does not specifically allow billboards.

Mr. Hammes noted that a code amendment would be required to allow existing billboards along Airport Access Road to be upgraded. He pointed out that amending the overlay, rather than the sign code, would allow the City to allow billboards on a limited basis in areas around major highways without impacting parcels outside the overlay.

Mr. Hammes described the Interstate Highway Sign Overlay, highlighting the areas included in the overlay. He explained that staff proposed dividing the overlay into three major areas, so that standards could be applied narrowly to one area without impacting others. As proposed, Area A would include Airport Access Road, Area B would include the east side of I-75 south of I-70, and Area C would include the east and west sides of I-75 north of I-70.

Mr. Hammes pointed out several areas where the Interstate Highway Sign Overlay overlapped other overlays. In Area A, two parcels along National Road fall into the National Road Sign Overlay. In Area B, the area west of I-75 and south of Benchwood Road would be in the Interstate Highway Sign Overlay if it were not already in the Miller-Benchwood Overlay. In both cases, the stricter overlay remains in place.

Mr. Hammes noted that there are no billboards in Areas B and C. He pointed out that there are multiple pole signs in Area B, but these signs comply with the current standards.

Mr. Hammes discussed the proposed standards for signs in the overlay. He noted that the only proposed changes would be the increase in maximum size for pole signs in Area A. This would permit billboards up to 672 square feet in size, with the full 672 square feet being digital.

Mr. Hammes added that no billboard would be permitted in Area A unless installing that billboard results in the removal of another billboard in Area A. This is intended to keep the number of billboards at the current level. This rule would not impact normal pole signs up to 200 square feet.

In summary, Mr. Hammes pointed out that no billboards along Airport Access Road can legally be upgraded or replaced under the current standards. The proposed amendments would allow some or all of the existing billboards to receive much-needed updates.

Mr. Hammes discussed one additional change proposed for the overlay. Larger Temporary Banners are permitted in the overlay if the underlying zoning is one of several industrial districts. In order to avoid confusion and make this provision more easily understood and enforced, staff recommends

Mr. Hammes clarified the rule requiring the removal of an existing billboard prior to the installation of a new billboard. He explained that the removal must happen within six months of the installation. In the case of double-sided billboards, both faces count as billboards – meaning that the removal of a double-sided billboard could result in two new billboards, whether or not they remain attached.

Mr. Atkins asked if this would result in additional billboards. Mr. Hammes replied that some double-sided billboards may become single-sided, since digital billboards must face toward the highway they serve. The removal of the second face could result in a new billboard elsewhere, so long as the permit for the new billboard is issued within six months.

Mr. Hammes also pointed out that Federal Highway Administration rules may dictate where billboards can be placed, due to the minimum distance required between billboards.

Mr. Keeley Jr. asked about rules regarding the brightness of digital billboards, which could cause concern for billboards facing residential properties. Mr. Hammes replied that electronic signs (including digital billboards) cannot face residential property. He added that the rules of the underlying district would govern brightness, transitions, and other standards for electronic signs.

Mr. Arnold remarked on trends in digital advertising, including the cost of leasing space on a digital billboard in the current economy.

Mr. Atkins asked if these rules would impact proposals such as the art installation at the I-70 / I-75 Interchange. Mr. Hammes replied that the ordinance could be adjusted to include such monuments if necessary.

Review Criteria

Hearing no further questions, Mr. Atkins read the Review Criteria into the record.

Recommendations and decisions on planning and zoning code amendment applications shall be based on consideration of the following review criteria:

1. The proposed text amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan, other adopted City plans, and the stated purposes of this code;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed amendments are consistent with policies adopted by the City and with the existing text of the code.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

2. The proposed amendment is necessary or desirable because of changing conditions, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions; and

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

Staff Comment: Staff feels that proposed amendments are necessary due to changing conditions resulting from improvements in technology relating to billboards.

3. The proposed amendment will promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed amendments promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff comment.

Mr. Atkins reported that staff recommended that the Commission recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the Zoning Code, as listed in the staff report.

Mr. Keeley, Jr., made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed code amendments. Mr. Plant seconded the motion.

By a vote of 4-0, the Planning Commission recommended **Approval** of Case PC 25-0004 as proposed.

The recommendation of the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the Council Study Session of April 7th, 2025.

Communications

Mr. Hammes noted that a training session with the Law Director had been suggested by Council. The training may involve the Board of Zoning Appeals as well, with topics and schedule yet to be determined. Mr. Hammes will notify the Commission of any plans, and asked that any suggestions for such a training session be sent to his office.

Mr. Hammes reported that there may be additional text amendments later in the year. He advised the Commission that his office attempts to make the narrowest change to the code possible to accomplish whatever goal is set forth by Council, which may result in multiple small code amendments.

Adjournment

Mr. Atkins asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Keeley, Jr., made the motion. Mr. Arnold seconded the motion. The vote passed 4-0.

Mr. Atkins adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Chairman

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Michael Hammes, AICP, City Planner
DATE: May 9, 2025
SUBJECT: PC 25-0005 – Rezoning – 3320 Benchwood Road

General Information

Owner: Richard Schott
3320 Benchwood Road
Vandalia, Ohio 45414

Applicant: Jonathan Wocher, AICP
McBride Dale Clarion
5721 Dragon Way, Suite 300
Cincinnati, Ohio 45227

Existing Zoning: Residential Single-Family (RSF-1)
Miller-Benchwood Overlay District (MBO)

Proposed Zoning: Highway Business (HB)
Miller-Benchwood Overlay District (MBO)

Location: 3320 Benchwood Road

Parcel(s): B02 01203 0169

Acreage: 0.919 Acres +/-

Related Case(s)¹: PC 19-14 – Record Plan
PC 16-25 – Rezoning (RSF-1 and GB to HB)

Requested Action: Recommendation of Approval

Exhibits: 1. Owner and Applicant’s Submittal Letters
2. Site Plan
3. Vicinity Map

¹ This parcel was split from the original 11.791-acre parcel in 2019. The remaining 10.873-acre parcel was later sold to New Life Worship Center and rezoned to GB - Gateway Business. Previous rezonings focused on the remainder of the site, rather than this 0.919-acre area.

Application Background

Jonathan Woche, AICP, with McBride Dale Clarion, and on behalf of Richard Schott, requests a change of zoning as previously established by the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Vandalia. The request involves one parcel totaling 0.919 acres +/- located at 3320 Benchwood Road. As proposed, the subject property would be rezoned from the RSF-1 Single-Family Residential district to the HB – Highway Business district.

3320 Benchwood Road is a single-family residential property located immediately west of Wright-Patt Credit Union, and the last residentially-zoned property along Benchwood Road. The applicant seeks to redevelop the site as a commercial use. Given the surrounding zoning districts and the mix of uses along the Benchwood Road corridor, the Highway Business zoning would be most appropriate.

The property is also in the Miller-Benchwood Overlay District, and would remain so if the proposed rezoning is approved. The proposed Highway Business zoning would not conflict with the MBO, and any future development on this site would meet the standards of that overlay.

Surrounding Zoning / Uses

The Benchwood Road corridor features a variety of uses, mostly commercial in character. These include restaurants and retail uses to the north and east. The property to the south is owned by New Life Worship Center. Several residential properties are located to the west, though these are already zoned as HB – Highway Business.

Surrounding zoning districts are as follows:

Direction	District
North	Butler Township PD-2 – Planned Commercial Dist., Butler Township RCS-1 – Regional Commercial Service
South	HB – Highway Business, GB – Gateway Business
East	HB – Highway Business, GB – Gateway Business
West	HB – Highway Business

Comprehensive Plan

The 2020 Comprehensive Plan lists this area as part of the Miller-Benchwood Area, with this specific parcel designated for “Commercial: Retail” uses.² The HB zoning would be consistent with that designation.

² City of Vandalia Comprehensive Plan, Page 55.

Review and Recommendation

Zoning Map Amendment Review Criteria

Recommendations and decisions on zoning map amendment applications shall be based on consideration of the following review criteria. Not all criteria may be applicable in each case, and each case shall be determined on its own facts.³

- (1) The proposed amendment will further the purposes of this overall code;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed rezoning furthers the purposes of the code.

- (2) The proposed amendment and proposed uses are consistent with the City's adopted plans, goals and policies;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the City's goals and policies, and particularly that it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

- (3) The proposed amendment is necessary or desirable because of changing conditions, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed rezoning is necessary due to changing conditions, namely the long-planned expansion of commercial uses along the Benchwood Road corridor.

- (4) The public facilities such as transportation, utilities, and other required public services will be adequate to serve the proposed use;

Staff Comment: While no specific use is proposed at this time, Staff feels that the site has adequate access to transportation, utilities, and other required public services to serve any likely future use.

- (5) The proposed rezoning will not adversely affect the economic viability of existing developed and vacant land within the City;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed rezoning complies with this review criteria.

- (6) The proposed amendment is not likely to result in significant adverse impacts upon the natural environment, including air, water, noise, storm water management, wildlife, and vegetation, or such impacts will be substantially mitigated;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed rezoning complies with this review criteria.

³ Vandalia Zoning Code, Section 1214.07(d) – Zoning Map Amendment Review Criteria

Review Criteria (Cont'd)

- (7) The proposed amendment will not constitute an instance where special treatment is given to a particular property or property owner that would not be applicable to a similar property, under the same circumstances;

Staff Comment: Staff feels that the proposed zoning is justified on the merits, and does not constitute special treatment.

- (8) The proposed amendment would correct an error in the application of this Planning and Zoning Code as applied to the subject property.

Staff Comment: Staff feels that this criterion does not apply.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Planning Commission issue a recommendation of **approval** for the proposed amendments to the zoning map.

The recommendation of the Planning Commission will be forwarded to Council for their review.



Surrounding Zoning – 3320 Benchwood Road (RSF-1) 0.919 Acres +/-

April 16, 2025

Mr. Michael Hammes, City Planner
City of Vandalia Development & Engineering Services
333 James E. Bohanan Memorial Drive
Vandalia, OH 45377

Via Email & Online Municipality Connect Portal

RE: 3320 Benchwood Road – Request for Rezoning

Dear Mr. Hammes,

On behalf of Richard Schott, property owner, I am submitting this letter and enclosed materials to request Rezoning of the 0.9-acre property located at 3320 Benchwood Road, in Vandalia, Ohio (Parcel Number: B02 01203 0169). The property is currently zoned RSF-1 Residential-Single Family District and is within the MBO Miller/Benchwood Design Overlay District. We are requesting to rezone the property from RSF-1 to HB Highway Business District to allow the property to be redeveloped as a commercial use.

The property is surrounded by commercial zoning, with HB District to the east and west, and GB Gateway Business District to the south. The properties to the north of the site, across Benchwood Road, are located in Butler Township and are zoned commercially. The City of Vandalia Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map identifies the property within the “Miller/Benchwood Area”, which is intended for a mix of transportation-related businesses and professional offices, alongside higher density multi-family and single-family residential uses. We believe the rezoning request is consistent with the land use recommendations of the Vandalia Comprehensive Plan and commercial character of the area.

To initiate this request, I am submitting PDFs of the following materials through the City’s Municipality Connect online permit portal:

- A completed Planning Commission Application;
- A Property Owner Authorization Letter;
- A Survey of the property;
- An exhibit showing the property boundaries; and
- A list of surrounding property owner addresses within 200 feet.

We will coordinate payment of the application fee once you have reviewed the application and an invoice is sent.

Please review the enclosed documents and contact me immediately if additional information is needed or if there are any questions. Please confirm that this request is scheduled on the

May 13, 2025 Planning Commission agenda. Please transmit the meeting agenda and staff report when available. I can be reached at jwocher@mcbrieddale.com or 513-561-6232.

We look forward to working with the City on this project, and believe the proposed Rezoning is consistent with the goals of the Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Woche". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jonathan Woche, AICP, LEED GA

MDC #5354

April 9, 2025

Mr. Michael Hammes, City Planner
City of Vandalia
Development & Engineering Services
333 James E. Bohanan Memorial Drive
Vandalia, OH 45377

RE: Authorization Letter for 3320 Benchwood Road

Dear Mr. Hammes,

I, Richard Schott, own the 0.9190-acre property located at 3320 Benchwood Road, in Vandalia, Ohio (Parcel ID: B02 01203 0169). I am requesting to Rezone the property from "RSF-1" Residential Single-Family District to "HB" Highway Business District so that the property can be redeveloped for commercial use.

I am authorizing McBride Dale Clarion to obtain the necessary approvals related to the Rezoning and associated development permits. I am also granting McBride Dale Clarion authority to make presentations and participate in required public meetings and hearings associated with requested approvals.

Please review and contact me immediately if additional information is necessary. I can be reached at 937-307-2270 or via email at dschott622@aol.com.

Sincerely,

<i>Richard Schott</i>	dotloop verified 04/10/25 3:25 PM EDT 5OLJ-MMVC-N7OL-1ZV7
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Richard Schott, Property Owner

cc: McBride Dale Clarion

**3320 Benchwood Road
Property Map Exhibit**



Butler Township
Commercially
Zoned

HB District

Subject
Property to
be rezoned
from RSF-1 to
HB District

HB District

GB District

