



**City of Willowick**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Monday, September 11, 2023 at 7:30 PM  
City Council Chambers

**ADA NOTICE**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) during this meeting should notify the City of Willowick at 440-585-3700 at least three working days before the meeting.

**MINUTES**

**Call meeting to order**

Chairman Carden called the September 11th, 2023, Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

**Roll Call**

PRESENT

Chairman Carden  
Mr. Houry  
Mr. Hren  
Mr. Foisel  
Ms. Raymond  
Mr. Urwin  
Mr. Fortney

ALSO PRESENT

Law Director Landgraf  
Councilman Phares

**Approval of Minutes**

Planning Commission meeting minutes August 14, 2023

Motion made to approve the August 14th, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes by Mr. Foisel, Seconded by Mr. Urwin.

Voting Yea: Chairman Carden, Mr. Houry, Mr. Hren, Mr. Foisel, Ms. Raymond, Mr. Urwin, Mr. Fortney

**Development & Plan Review Committee**

None.

**Rules Committee**

None.

**City Engineer's Report – Mr. McLaughlin**

None.

**Law Director's Report – Ms. Landgraf**

None.

**Architectural Review Board**

None.

**Community Reinvestment Area – Mr. Carden**

None.

**Public Hearings**

None.

**Public Portion**

Chairman Carden opened and closed public portion at 7:33pm with no public present.

**Remarks – Old Business**

None.

**Remarks – New Business**

Discussion regarding car repair shops in the retail districts

At the last Planning Commission meeting Councilman Phares advised the board that at the next Planning Commission meeting he would like the board to discuss more detailed ordinances regarding car repair shops in the retail districts. Councilman Phares provided some recommendations regarding revisions to the car repair shops in the retail districts ordinance. Chairman Carden asked Councilman Phares if he would like to speak on the recommendations he has provided while the board reviews the document, Councilman Phares advised that what he has provided are some rules and regulations that he obtained from other cities. Mr. Hren asked after reviewing the provided recommendations as far as the paving goes, the paving is straight across the board for any retail establishment. Councilman Phares stated that he is unsure. Mr. Houry asked for some clarification as far as the lot size, 40 square feet and 15,000 square feet, Councilman Phares stated that, that is a requirement for other cities as an example and doesn't necessarily mean that is something we will implement. Councilman Phares stated things like storing tires outside and storing disabled vehicles outside are things that we don't want. Chairman Carden asked the board if there is anything that jumps out that the board does not agree with, sounds repetitive? Ms. Raymond in response to disabled cars outside in the lots, she stated that she drives/walks down vine street regularly and resides in Willowick, when cars are in the lots of the six repair shops, she asked where else would the repair shops put these vehicles that they are repairing if not outside in the lot? The repair shops in the city are doing a good business. She asked of the car shops that are existing nothing will change for them, Councilman Phares stated that this would not be for the current car repair shops in the city but for new shops coming into the city. If a current shop closes and stays empty for 6+ months, then this would apply to a new business going into an existing closed car repair building.

Councilman Phares stated that he would like to get this established for future development, Ms. Raymond asked where exactly an auto repair shop would go as far as new development on Vine Street. Councilman Phares stated maybe if something gets torn down, however hard to tell as of right now. There was some discussion regarding the 6-month grandfather clause for a discontinuation of a use. Mr. Foisel stated that after reviewing what was provided from Councilman Phares there are a lot of contradictory points, and he is assuming that what was provided is strictly talking points. Councilman Phares agreed. Mr. Foisel stated that he would like to discuss a few of the points as he does have a few issues with a couple of the suggestions presented. The idea of the long-term work while it is agreed we do not want to have inoperable cars parked out in front for weeks/months for an extended period of time, Mr. Foisel believes that a one-week time frame may be a bit tight due to possibly supply issues of parts, therefore they may need to have a vehicle sitting for short time before the parts come in. What we don't want to happen is to lose businesses in the future because repairs shops would only have a week to work on a car, they may end up taking their repair shop to a different city. Mr. Foisel stated that he does agree with other points, such as the unsightly tires stored piled up outside. Councilman Phares provided the example of a repair shop in the city that follows the guidelines being presented already and provided some examples of how they follow the guidelines, that is the model that follows the rules. However, Mr. Foisel states that not all repair shops are going to have the ability to open up a 10 or 5 bay establishment and to tell a mechanic that he cannot operate on a car or take a car in due to the length of time of the repair being more than a week and not having the ability to have the car outside, is a big ask. Therefore, Mr. Foisel states that he has difficulty with the no overnight storage of vehicles. There was some further discussion regarding what would need to be revisited or changed on the suggestions being presented. Mr. Foisel stated that he doesn't want to limit the car repair businesses working. There was some discussion amongst the board regarding the appropriate length of time provided to the car repairs shops that cars would be able to be in the lots waiting for services. It was asked who would enforce the requirements that are looking to be implemented? There again was some discussion regarding lengths of time a car could be in a lot for, how many bays a repair shop has as well as the availability of parts. Mr. Fortney stated that he agrees with Mr. Foisel regarding a 30-day time frame for a car to be in a lot and it would not so much be who would enforce it rather than the car repair shop owner knowing that this is a requirement, that vehicles could not be in the lot for more than 30 days to prevent an eye sore. It was asked about the potential to advise the shops to have cars covered that are in the lot not being worked on, however the owner of the vehicle may not want a car cover to be on their car. Mr. Hren stated again that 10 days is not enough time, and it should be at minimum 30 days. Mr. Carden wanted to clarify that the bulk of the issue is the unsightly vehicles in the lots for long periods of time. It was advised that we just want to make sure that unsightly vehicles are not sitting for months and months. Mr. Carden asked Law Director Landgraf that essentially, we would provide a timeframe to implement, and it would go to City Council to put together the specifics of the ordinance and determine the penalty affiliated? Law Director Landgraf advised that Planning Commission would come up with the specifics and penalty, then the final approval would come from City Council. Chairman Carden asked of the board if it was agreed that car repair shops would need a duration for unsightly cars to be left in the repair shop lots. Ms. Raymond advised that in our city she does not see unsightly vehicles in lots for long periods of time. While she understands what the discussion is regarding. Chairman Carden asked Ms. Raymond if she sees a need to implement what we are discussing, she responded that she is all for making Vine Street look better, she believes it does need to look better. However, the cars that she sees in these lots are parked neatly. Chairman Carden stated that he believes that Councilman Phares wants to prepare for the future for things that may come up. Councilman Phares stated that these lots could stay there for another 30+ years but wants to prepare for the future having something set in place. Ms. Raymond stated that she would like to speak with the owners of the shop to see why a vehicle is just sitting in a lot for an

extended period of time. Also, it was stated that if the repair shop has the ability to park in the rear of the lot to do so. There was some discussion regarding speaking with the business owners regarding cars being parked for long periods of time with no work being completed. Mr. Urwin agrees with the rear parking if there is the ability to do so, he also agrees that something needs to be put together and in place. Ms. Raymond asked again who would enforce this, would it be the Building Department or the Police Department? Councilman Phares stated that the Building Department would do so, Law Director Landgraf advised that it would depend on the time of day, the board is going to create criminal penalties otherwise there would not be a reason to create this. It was stated by a board member that the first step would be speaking with the business owner to establish a reason the vehicle would be sitting for an extended period of time as all we are trying to do is make the city look good. Councilman Phares stated that Chief Brennan does that now with regards to violations. Chairman Carden asked the board if everyone is in agreeance in implementing something formal although we understand the value of speaking with the business owner first. Mr. Houry stated that we need to establish a criteria so that the ordinance is based on something tangible that we can act on. Mr. Hren advised that the existing shops are grandfathered in, and the ordinance would apply to future car repair shops. There was some discussion regarding the current ordinance in place for a retail district and it is agreed on that something needs to be in place for car repair shops. Councilman Phares stated that the list he provided he believes would be a good starting point in helping with what details to put into the ordinance. Law Director Landgraf advised that everything would need to take place during the public meaning so that the public can participate in the dialog. She stated that in other cities usually they start with a template ordinance, and then everyone goes back to the drawing boards to determine what they like and do not like about the template ordinance and the come back together at a future meeting to discuss and put together some drafts and having dialog about what would like to be put in place. Mr. Hren asked Councilman Phares with regards to the standards presented how many would apply to any other retail business on Vine Street, such as the paving, that is going to be standard to all retail businesses on Vine Street. He stated that most are auto repair specific. There was some further discussion regarding the specifics and difference between a car repair shop and a retail auto repair store, further discussion about property maintenance as well as the noise businesses cause. Councilman Phares stated that he has come across detailed ordinances about car washes in different cities as far as entrances being in the rear and the legalities along with it. Councilwoman Antosh addressed Chairman Carden and stated if you think about the 6 buildings, we have now how they face, all of this started because of Yano's and when you drive by, there are the same cars over and over, Chief Brennan has been there. They wouldn't be able to put any cars in the rear due to the lot. If they wanted to tear it down and rebuild since they are on a corner lot all of their doors are going to face something same thing with the one at Willowick drive and vine street, if they change, they are facing ice cream shop. There was some discussion on how to determine how long a car has been stored for.

Mr. Foisel asked if the city has received complaints with regards to car repair shops, Ms. Raymond asked the same question. Councilman Phares stated that there have not been any complaints, but Councilman Phares received a good response when he wrote a couple courier articles about vine street and what it looks like. He stated that about a half dozen people agreed with him that it looks terrible, and something needs done about it. Ms. Raymond stated that she agrees that vine street does not look great, but she understands repair shops have the need to have cars in the lot. It was stated that this is a retail district and Chairman Carden stated that other retail districts in other cities look much better.

Chairman Carden advised the board to take a look at what was discussed during this meeting and put together points for discussion for the next meeting to put something formal together. Councilwoman Antosh asked Councilman Phares how many cities have ordinances in place for car repair shops in Lake

County, Councilman Phares stated that he did a search of the entire Amlegal. He stated that he will get that answer for the next meeting. Mr. Hren asked what other businesses or retail establishments the city has specific guidelines on other than childcare and spa/massage services? Law Director stated that in the 700 sections of the ordinances there are some specifics for hot tub establishments, massage parlors, tattoo establishments, adult entertainment, event centers, etc. however there are not a lot of details. Councilman Phares stated this should have been done long ago when the car repair shops were gas stations which is why we want to get something in place now for the future. It was asked if the old car stations that are now repair shops still have the tanks in the ground. It was advised that we may want to look at adding something relating to that into the ordinance as well. Councilwoman Antosh asked if we are planning to put a limit on the amount of repair shops allowed in the city. Councilman Phares stated we are not. Chairman Carden stated that prior to the next meeting go through tonight's meeting and the proposal and make any necessary changes/recommendations. Ms. Raymond asked if it would be a good idea for the board members to speak with a car repair shop owner. Law Director Landgraf stated to keep in mind with regards to the regulations the size of the repair shop lot due to having a small retail district and a narrow geographical area, to make sure we are not zoning these businesses out of the community with the number of regulations.

### **Adjournment**

Motion made to adjourn the September 11th, 2023, Planning Commission meeting at 8:11pm by Mr. Hren, Seconded by Ms. Raymond.

Voting Yea: Chairman Carden, Mr. Houry, Mr. Hren, Mr. Foisel, Ms. Raymond, Mr. Urwin, Mr. Fortney