

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
 Tuesday, October 21, 2025**

On Tuesday, October 21, 2025, a meeting of the Cuyahoga Falls Planning Commission was held at the Natatorium, 2345 Fourth St., Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, at 6:00 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 107 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Cuyahoga Falls.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Rice, Chair
 Rob Habel, Vice Chair
 Sandy Locascio, Secretary
 Alicia Harris
 Joe Siegfert

MEMBERS ABSENT: Colleen Kelly
 Jake Ricker
 Jeff Iula

COMM. DEV. STAFF: Rob Kurtz, Planning Director
 Lori Jones, Admin. Specialist

Mr. Dan Rice called the meeting to order at 6:046 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming, and asked that everyone silence their cell phones. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ms. Sandy Locascio read the agenda into record.

Mr. Rice then went over the meeting process, again thanked everyone, and explained that the Commissioners are all volunteers, and what their duty this evening is, and what their job is when looking at each file. He then opened the item to the City.

New Business

COP-25-00025

Project: COP-25-00023	Report Date 10-14-25	Meeting Date: 10-21-25
Application Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Major Site Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Conditional Zoning <input type="checkbox"/> Map Amendment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text Amendment <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Plat <input type="checkbox"/> Final Plat <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overlay Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Special Project <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Decision Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Direction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action	Initiated or Requested By <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Council
Applicant:	Planning Division	
Application Summary:	Scott Strayer of Helen Scott Custom Builders is requesting a recommendation on a concept plan to create a residential conservation overlay district on a 38-acre parcel (#35-02964) located on Bellaire Lane. The concept plan proposes eleven (11) lots.	
File Presenter:	Rob Kurtz, AICP, Planning Director	

Mr. Kurtz went over the staff report for the record, and he explained the process that this type of file will go through for approvals.

Mr. Rice closed the item to the City and opened it to the applicant.

Mr. Scott Strayer – Helen Scott Custom Builders – 4367 Buckingham Circle – stated that he is a custom home builder, and their office is in Barberton. He stated that they build about 15 homes per year, and that the company was started by his grandparents. He stated that he has done a few subdivisions, but he does them on large lots, and his last one was 28 homes on 55 acres. He spoke of finding this parcel, with radio towers on it, but made an agreement that if he purchases it, the towers must be removed. He stated that his engineers worked with the lots and finally came up with these plans. He introduced his Landscape Architect.

Tom Ludwig – 1310 Sharon-Copley Rd – Landscape Architect – stated that he is excited to have a builder who cares about the land and preserving it, and that is how it got to this conservation overlay. This will limit the development, while allowing them to build custom homes. He spoke of how their lots will act like part of the National Park that they are next to, and extend it as they buffer it. He also spoke of them allowing a public access point through the development. He then stated that they can answer any questions.

Mr. closed the item to the applicant and opened it to the Public for comments or questions.

Mr. Tom Raichel – 3969 Bellaire Ln. – questioned how the trail will be maintained, and if it will remain public property.

Mr. Strayer stated that they had started to have conversations with the National Parks about these things, and then the government shut down. He explained the conservations they have and that they will be owned by the HOA, and not individual owned, but they do not intend to pave it.

Mr. Rice questioned if the intention is to connect it to the Wetmore Trail, and Mr. Strayer stated that they are unsure, it is all just in the concept phase at this time, and they only show it running on their property.

Mr. Raichel questioned who will be permitted to use this trail, and Mr. Strayer stated that it will be open to anyone in the area.

Mr. Jason Scranton – 4085 Bellaire Ln. – questioned what stops people from driving to this location and parking and using this access point. Mr. Rice stated that is one of his questions also.

Mr. Kurtz stated there is legally nothing that can stop them, but there is a trail head 1.5 miles away.

Mr. Scranton stated that he is concerned that this location is a desired point on the trail that people will flock to if they know they can easily access it.

Mr. Jack Malin – 4145 Bellaire Ln. – questioned if there will be any tax abatements on this property, and Mr. Kurtz stated there would not be.

Mr. Malin asked about the wetlands, and if the Army Corps of Engineers will be involved, and Mr. Kurtz stated that there has not been any delineation yet, but that will need to be determined if this moves forward. If it is delineated, but no construction is planned near the areas, then they may not be involved. Mr. Malin questioned what happens if the builder doesn't disturb the property, but later the owner wants to build elsewhere on it.

Mr. Strayer stated that once they buy the lots, there will be deed restrictions set, stating that they cannot do anything in the green areas on the map.

Mr. Malin questioned the dust and dirt that will be kicked up during construction for the expensive homes that are currently on the street, and how they will mitigate that. Mr. Strayer stated that they will do their best to minimize it, and that they do not have a big production going on. He stated that they only build 1-2 homes at a time, so they will keep it clean.

Mr. Malin questioned what their road will be made of, and Mr. Kurtz stated it would likely be asphalt or concrete. Mr. Malin then questioned if they will have sewer and septic. Mr. Strayer stated that they will have City Water and septic. He stated that the septic systems were taken into consideration when staggering the lots and adjusting their sizes. Mr. Milan questioned if the utilities will be underground, and Mr. Strayer stated that they are all overhead on Bellaire Lane, but they will move to underground at their new street and to the homes.

Mr. Rice stated that all of these details will get determined if and when this file moves forward.

Mr. Ranzy Lardell – 4118 Bellaire Ln. – questioned the odds of this project actually moving forward.

Mr. Rice stated that this is just the beginning, and is only a concept, but then it would go to the next step. He stated that it depends on the marketplace. He then questioned if Mr. Strayer had any buyers at this time, and he stated that he did not, as it still very preliminary.

Mr. Strayer stated that people will look at home plans and then be given the option to purchase a lot, but there is not a flurry of activity. He stated that it could be 1 year before anything starts, because this all takes time.

Mr. Lardell questioned if that means there is a potential for this to take up to 5 years to finish, and of having trucks going up and down their road, and he asked for everyone to remember that they all live there.

Ms. Jeanette Scranton – 4085 Bellaire Ln. – stated that all of the homes are recently built, but the road is cheap, and it has gone to crap. She spoke of the chip and seal that has been used on it, and her concern about adding more traffic to it, and then construction vehicles. She questioned if there is a plan to not treat them so poorly.

Mr. Kurtz stated that these are all questions that need to be addressed with the City's Service Department, and that he can take it to them.

Ms. Scranton – stated that they have a bad road, and this will cause a hardship to them, and she questioned if it can be taken care of.

Mr. Rice thanked her for raising the issue.

With no further comments or questions from the public, Mr. Rice closed the item to the public and opened it to the Planning Commission members.

Mr. Rob Habel stated that a lot of times the concept of conservation is high density with conservation at the edges, but this is not that. He stated that this is the best of both worlds. It will not be high density, have an HOA and be a conservation area with big lots. He stated that the problem may be the cul-de-sac, and the way all the drives come off of it, and the road may need to move west a little, but these are nice lots. He asked if the HOA will own the path, and will they be able to restrict the cars that might park there to use it, because he agrees that he would not want that to happen, if he lived there. He stated that trying to do good could be a negative. He stated that wetland delineations could alter things. He spoke of the builder needing to work closely with the City in regards to the road to be sure damage is repaired, and stated that the City may want to pave it, but they need to keep the road nice. He stated that if this was his neighborhood and he had a choice of 5 radio towers or 11 high-end homes, ultimately, he would be pleased to have the expensive homes help increase my property values, so he stated that he supports this project.

Mr. Joe Siegfert stated that walking the trails is popular, and he questioned the trail connection length.

Mr. Strayer stated it is about 75 feet, but the conversation has not been completed yet with the National Parks, and they have not determined if they are or are not doing it. He stated it will be located between lots 4 and 5, and there will not be any signage promoting the access.

Mr. Siegfert then stated that lot 5 may have flooding issues because it is on a ravine, but Mr. Strayer stated that they situated the home on a section of the lot that is 20' higher because they were taking this into consideration when designing the layout.

Mr. Siegfert thanked the public for all of their comments

Ms. Alicia Harris stated that most of her concerns have been addressed, and she stated that she appreciates the builder saving the land. She questioned if they will sell the land first, or how the process goes.

Mr. Strayer stated they custom design each home, and he explained the process and how they design homes for the lots.

Ms. Harris questioned if they will have sidewalks in this neighborhood, and Mr. Strayer stated no.

Ms. Locascio stated that she feels that this is a great conceptual plan, and all of her questions have been answered.

Mr. Rice also stated that his questions have also been addressed, and then he asked if the towers are no longer being used.

Mr. Strayer stated that they are for an AM radio station from California, and they intend to move the coverage to another tower.

Mr. Rice then explained that the Planning Commission's job is to look and see how a plan fits the Code, and stated that it is not about putting their opinions into it. He stated that he applauds the design team, as this is a great conservation overlay plan that truly appreciates the land. He stated that he sees that they take this seriously, and that they paid attention to the setbacks. He then questioned who would hold the conservation easement.

Mr. Ludwig stated that they are talking about making it a deed restriction on each lot to only be able to build/disturb up to the dash line on the plot, and then signs would be posted to show these locations at the time of sales.

Mr. Kurtz stated that he feels this still needs to be flushed out further.

Mr. Rice stated that accountability is needed, and having an organization hold it provides that. He stated that as for the trail, no good deed goes unpunished. He stated that a connection to the National Park invites the public onto your property, even though you are not laying new ground, it needs to be done with intentionality. He also stated that he appreciates the resident's concerns.

Mr. Strayer stated that they too have had concerns, and they are open to conversations.

Mr. Rice stated that over his time in this field, he has observed that if you do not create a way for the public to access it, they will create a way on their own. He then stated that he appreciates all of the attention to details.

With no further comments or questions from the Commission members, Mr. Rice requested that a motion be made.

Ms. Harris made the following **motion**:

Based on the existing zoning, land characteristics, surrounding land use pattern, and the proposed concept plan, the Planning Division finds that **Project COP-25-00023** is generally consistent with the criteria set forth for Residential Conservation Overlay, and is recommending **APPROVAL** subject to the following:

1. Reduce the public road right-of-way width from 70 feet to 50 feet
2. Reduce the cul-de-sac to provide a 50-foot radius
3. The final development plan to be consistent with the concept plan
4. Additional consideration regarding posting signage for preserved areas
5. Additional consideration of limiting driveway widths and curb cut locations

The **MOTION** was **seconded** by Mr. Habel.

Mr. Rice stated that he would like to request that Mr. Kurtz and Ms. Colavecchio have someone look into the road condition.

Mr. Habel stated that he agreed with this, but did not feel that it needed to be added to the motion, and Mr. Rice agreed

With no further discussion, Mr. Rice requested a **Vote**:

The Vote to APPROVE the items: Yes- 4, No- 0. The MOTION is APPROVED with a vote of 4 to 0.

Minutes

October 7, 2025

With no comments or corrections, a **MOTION** was made by Ms. Locascio, and **seconded** by Ms. Harris to **APPROVE the minutes** from **October 7, 2025**. The **Vote: All Yea (4-0)**. **Motion carried.**

Other Business

None

Adjournment

With no further discussion, a **MOTION** was made by Ms. Locascio to adjourn the meeting, and it was **seconded** by Mr. Habel. With a **Vote of 4-0** the meeting adjourned at 7:13 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Lori Jones