



The City of Brecksville

Resident Recommendation Committee

Valor Acres

Central School

August 21, 2019

Brecksville City Hall, Council Chambers

Committee Attendees: Mayor Jerry Hruby, Committee Chair Andrew Van Nort, Neil Brennan, Michael Benza, Paul Meler, Frank Talerico, Sue Schindler, Judy Jackman, Holly Little, John Syrone, Mike Paskert.

Committee Absent: Barbra Belovich, John Bibbo, Gretchen Corp Jones, Laura Hudak, Hrishue Mahalaha, Jen McMillin, Dan Spitzer, Maggie Stumpf, Nancy Woelfl, Michael Young.

Guests: Council President Mike Harwood, Councilperson Dennis Rose, Councilperson Lou Carouse, Councilperson Kim Veras, Councilperson Petsche, Joe Balog of Dalad Group, Kevin DiGeronimo of DiGeronimo Companies, Abbas Hasan, Director of Development DiGeronimo Companies, Brecksville Chief Building Official Scott Packard, Dominic Sciria, Planning Commission.

Mayor Hruby thanked everyone in attendance. He wanted to begin by addressing some rumors. For example there was a rumor that there would be eighty to ninety apartments placed in the Central School location. There were discussions by a developer that is interested in the property, and will be responding to the City's RFP at some point, that volunteered their time last meeting just to give the committee an idea of what could be built in this location, not what was or is going in this location. There was also rumors there will be three driveways off Route 82 and that strip will be a strip of retail. That was never said and as a committee we are not even near the point of final decisions. We would like to keep things factual, and let you know that no decisions have been made. Tonight we have Kevin DiGeronimo to give an update on Valor Acres and Joe Balog representing the Dalad Group to discuss the piece of property west of Valor Acres along I-77. Chief Building Official Scott Packard is here to discuss what the current zoning is on these properties and what really can be built on these sites. Mayor Hruby said a committee member came to meet with him and asked what this committee can really do. Mayor Hruby told the committee members there was a resident committee that was interested in what would happen on the Crow property, now the Dalad property. A developer came in and wanted to build a large clothing shopping mall. The people of Brecksville rejected that idea, a citizens committee formed and talked with the Planning Commission, talked with

Council and then led the charge against the development. Another citizen committee by the name of Town Center, formed in the downtown area worked with City Government and led the charge to redevelop the Public Square. Citizen Committees are in Brecksville's history and they have the power to shape and mold the decisions of the city along with the government. There are property rights that landowners have in the downtown. With that being said we hope this committee will be able to give us advice along the way and citizen input.

Mayor Hruby then introduced members of Council in attendance, Council President Mike Harwood, Councilperson Dennis Rose, Councilperson Lou Carouse, Councilperson Kim Veras, and Councilperson Jack Petsche. He stated Council is here to listen to the committee and residents, they are very interested to hear what the committee has to say and their ideas for the areas. He reminded everyone these meetings are public, anyone is welcome and encouraged to attend and interact with the Committee and Council and himself. The minutes will be taken and put on the City website.

Mayor Hruby then introduced Andrew Van Nort, the Chair of this committee meeting, as well as the other committee members present, Neil Brennan, Michael Benza, Paul Meler, Frank Talerico, Sue Schindler, Judy Jackman, Holly Little, John Syrone.

Mr. Van Nort said there will be a couple presentations about both locations then there will be a comments and discussion portion at the end of the meeting. He then introduced Kevin DiGeronimo and Abbas Hasan, Director of Development, from DiGeronimo Companies, the redevelopers of Valor Acres.

Mr. DiGeronimo thanked the committee and Council for having him back. He told the committee if they had any questions to feel free to stop him and ask. He began with an update for where they are now. He said in October of last year they began asbestos removal. That means they had to properly remove all asbestos to an asbestos landfill before demolition of buildings. This process is called abatement. That work was completed in May of this year. Demolition began on the south side of the property about March of this year and the only structure left standing is the stack at the north end. There has been some discussion on a marketing event to bring down this last structure. They are currently in the stage of foundation removal. They are ahead of schedule, the development agreement provides the company till next July to finish demolition and abatement, and they are forecasted to be complete the end of November.

Mr. DiGeronimo stated a question was sent to him asking for an overall schedule. There are a few things he needs to keep private because they are in negotiations with companies, so unfortunately he will need to be vague. He stated they are having great momentum with interested parties from general to very specific and those range from large to small companies. He has interest from little coffee shops and small retail to large companies looking to relocate.

He has interest from out of state, he has interest for geography purposes. The site is very centrally located between Cleveland and Akron. They have letters of intent from companies, which are non-binding, but show serious interest. They are very excited for things to come, he wishes he could share everything, but he can say schedule wise, everything is ahead of schedule. By this time next year the citizens will begin to see substantial changes whether it be grading, roads, or beginning structures. This is a multi-phase plan. The drawing that is being shown this evening is theoretical. Mr. DiGeronimo stated a resident contacted him about a building that looked close to their property, he wanted to clarify that again these drawings have not been approved by the CIC or the Planning Commission, these drawings are only theoretical.

Mr. DiGeronimo stated he was asked for estimated job creation. He stated they are estimating for Phase 1 to have 500-1000 new jobs. For the rest of the property it could fluctuate depending on what is created for those spaces.

A resident asked if the drawing was a rendering of the actual buildings that will be built or could it change. Mr. DiGeronimo stated it could totally change. One of the great things about this site is the amount of flexibility it has, so they are taking the planning of building location slow.

A resident asked Mr. DiGeronimo to compare Valor Acres to something around here for example Pine Crest or Croker Park. Mr. DiGeronimo stated it is not more like either or, and it is not intended to be. Both Pine Crest and Croker Park are very heavy retail. There will be a portion of that at Valor Acres, but significantly less. Croker Park is over one million square feet of retail, Pine Crest is over four hundred thousand. Both are very large. This will have more of a high quality business park feel with retail mixed in and greenspace to enjoy.

Mayor Hruby asked Mr. DiGeronimo to go over what percentages would be retail, business, greenspace, etcetera, because one of the questions and concerns we have heard is will the retail at Valor Acres shut down our retail downtown. Mr. DiGeronimo responded that greenspace is an amenity that people now want. Percentage wise, the community will see approximately 25% to 35% of greenspace remain. For Phase 1, there have been estimates of approximately one third of the space being utilized for retail, for the rest of the site it would be hard to say because of the flexibility of the site and again, will depend on what is created for those spaces, but he would guess that it would be even less than that. He said thoughts are most retail spaces will be at the south end leading into a more business park feel at the north. Mr. Hasan stated there are economic studies showing if you build retail in areas it increases the growth of existing retail in near-by areas, like downtown. Mr. DiGeronimo said it is being created to compliment Brecksville and current businesses not compete.

A resident asked what the total day time population of estimated shoppers and workers will be. Mr. DiGeronimo stated it will be heavily dependent on what the end mixed use becomes. Mr. Hasan said that in a half mile radius of the development there are approximately seven to eight

thousand employees. It is very hard to predict what the population would be because we don't know what retail would be there. Mr. DiGeronimo said Pine Crest is already a dense area and has been open for a year, they are just beginning to be able to track those numbers. It is certainly higher on a Friday night than on a Tuesday night. They are planning for fifteen to eighteen hundred parking spaces.

A resident asked if Scott Packard give an explanation of what the zoning of the development is today. He was under the impression that it could only be office buildings and not retail. Chief Building Official Scott Packard said currently the Valor Acres parcel is zoned Office Lab District as a whole. In 2016, it was voted on and approved to have additional conditional mix use overlay. Conditional uses are Manufacture Distribution, Office Building, Local Business, which is the retail component, and Motor Services which include hotels and or gas stations. There is a residential component, R-A, which is apartments with the theory that the local business would be on the first floor and the apartment on the second similar to the downtown area. As of today, that is the current zoning that includes what was voted on in 2016.

A resident asked if they could build and develop Valor Acres with one hundred percent retail if they wanted to. CBO Packard said by conditional use, Planning Commission, Developer Agreements, CIC, and City Council, the answer would be yes. Mr. DiGeronimo stated he can assure the resident that will not happen. Mr. Sciria, from the Planning Commission stated the same.

Council President Harwood asked CBO Packard to explain to the resident the steps that need to be taken for each conditional use. CBO Packard explained that after the Developer and the CIC make their agreements, the potential building as a whole, including uses, parking and style of the building all have to be submitted to the Planning Commission for reviews and approvals. Setbacks and other Public Hearings will be done through the Planning Commission. The next step would be the Planning Commission to recommend some type of approval to City Council for review and if agreed, approval.

A resident asked if the Planning Commission has an idea as to the spread between retail and offices. He asked are they looking at five percent retail, ten percent. He asked what the Planning Commissions thoughts are at this time. Mr. Sciria said based on his knowledge, retail is certainly never going to be the primary use there. The Commissions intention is to give the community flexibility in developing the property. The purpose is to bring good paying jobs to the City to fuel the great City services we have now. He said as you all know now, as much as we pay in property taxes, that is not what fuels the City, the majority of those taxes go to the County and the School District. It is income taxes that matter. With that, we do not develop the plan, that is the DiGeronimo Company. We would like certain amenities that will service the south side of town and help local businesses, such as restaurants, some retail and include some residential. Council President Harwood said there has never been a discussion to assign percentages that we are going to force upon somebody. We have heard from some of the businesses on the south end of town that they would like restaurant options for lunch events,

client meetings, and a few services such as retail components, but it is not about percentages. He believes the design and how it will be laid out is more important. The key element is to look at the mix of use and the flexibility. We do not want to see wide open parking spaces, we want to see greenspaces, and we want the buildings to interact with each other on the site and not be overdeveloped, so it really is more about design we should focus on, not percentages.

Mayor Hruby added a couple years ago the City met with a lot of larger business at the south end of town, and asked what they wanted to see developed in this space. TruNorth, House of LaRose, PNC, for example, all said they wanted restaurants. They want a grocery store, a coffee shop, and a hotel or conference center. The Planning Commission never looked at this site as a retail site. It was always seen as more business office with some amenities to go along with the larger office building. This was never thought to be a Croker Park or even a Pine Crest. Nor was it intended to be a manufacturing and warehouse district. Mr. DiGeronimo agreed and stated again, they are not looking to make this heavy retail.

A resident asked if there are any contractual restrictions on the uses of the property, or do you have the ability to put together any combination of uses that you would like. Mr. DiGeronimo said the only agreement off the top of his head that he can think of is a moral clause of restricted uses and entertainment clause. There is also an agreement for a half acre memorial park. Other than that, no we could put an office building right next to a retail space, right next to a residential space. That is what gets reviewed and discussed through Planning Commission reviews and approvals.

A resident asked that given the real estate market having the propensity to turn hot and cold relatively quickly, what is the likelihood we end up with large empty buildings. She asked Mr. DiGeronimo if they were thinking more of a "build it and they will come" model or more of a "build to suit" model. Mr. DiGeronimo responded it will be a hybrid of the two. The office spaces, for example, is going to be more of a build to suit, where the retail, once you get your anchors established, will be more build it and they will come. Nothing is recession proof to a full degree, if we went through what we went through ten years ago there could certainly be some empty spaces, but this is a very strong community and area.

A resident asked if the term about the property being centrally located is based on Miller Road becoming a full interchange. Mr. DiGeronimo responded, yes, it is by its self, centrally located, but it is also heavily dependent on that becoming a four way interchange.

A resident asked if the City offered any tax incentives to any large businesses. Mr. DiGeronimo responded they have not offered anything specific and have only spoken in theory and generalities.

A resident asked about infrastructure and road widenings along Miller and Route 21. Mr. DiGeronimo explained that they have thought about a connection road between the two properties, Valor Acres and the Dalad property, that would also possibly include a light. They

have also budgeted for and planned for utilities such as water and sewer lines. There has been a lot of infrastructure planning.

Councilmember Petsche asked Mr. DiGeronimo where on the map was Phase 1 located, and how many phases are planned. Mr. DiGeronimo explained on the map that the buildings that had what looked like finishes on them are included in phase one. The white blocked out buildings are future phases. There has been no determination for how many phases there will be, they are trying to remain flexible. Councilmember Petsche asked what the approximate size of this phase was. Mr. DiGeronimo responded approximately twenty five acres. Councilmember Petsche asked if there was a parking garage planned. Mr. DiGeronimo pointed on the map where a proposed parking garage could be. Councilmember Petsche asked for the orientation of the map. Mr. DiGeronimo pointed out north, I-77, Route 21 and Miller Road.

A resident stated she lives on Westview and this development will be in her back yard. She asked Mr. DiGeronimo how they are designing this to really minimally affect her house, her back yard, her children. She is concerned about traffic and more people in the area. It concerns her to let her kids go outside and play. She stated she has school aged children but she does not use the school system, so she is not tied to Brecksville. She said she is here because of the piece and quite. She would like to know what they are doing in planning to minimally affect the residents on Westview. Mayor Hruby responded one thing that has been done is to begin the development at the south end of the property, closer to Miller Road. This is where all the retail would be, as far away from Westview as possible. The conservancy land is up against you, and the residential land is up against you. There will also have to be retention systems in this development that will be closer to the north end, and the green space to accommodate that. The way this development is being planned is to have the least effect on Westview. The resident asked if there was going to be any additional safety measures. Mr. DiGeronimo said to start off, we are in a great community for safety. We are already starting off on a great foot. Secondly, on safety, they are aligned. The site needs to be perceived as safe, and be safe. He gave an example of Pine Crest as adding a development to the community, and adding safety. He said that Pine Crest is essentially an extension of Orange Villages Police force. They partnered with Orange so it is actually Orange Police patrolling. They are not renting a cheaper security service. He said when it gets to that point, he imagines that there could be similar conversations for here.

A resident stated at the last meeting, there was discussion of a possible police station being added. Mr. DiGeronimo said yes, at Pine Crest there is a mini Police and Fire station on site with vehicles kept there. There has been no agreement for here, however, he certainly supports the idea.

A resident who lives at Elm and Old Highland said that everyone uses that street as a cut through. It connects two major state routes that cuts off downtown. Everybody uses it. He has been there for twenty-three years, raised their children there, and safety has never been an issue.

A resident asked if the main entrance was going to be on Miller Road. Mr. DiGeronimo said yes, that is the proposed main entrance. The resident asked if a secondary would be on Route 21. Mr. DiGeronimo said the secondary would most likely be the ring road. There may be ancillary exits onto to Route 21 but nothing has been proposed yet.

A resident commented that she works off of Southpointe Parkway and it is already very busy there. She hopes they take that into consideration when everyone is leaving at 5:00 pm. Mr. DiGeronimo said that there have been informal traffic studies done, there will be formal traffic studies done and there will be post traffic studies done, because as a developer, traffic is seen as people not eager to be there and you want to stay away from that. The resident also asked Kevin to go back over how they figured out how much garage space is needed. Mr. DiGeronimo responded that they will use the time standard for parking, they will provide spaces for ride sharing such as Uber and Lyft. There is a mixed use standard that they will use for parking, for example the time between everyone leaving for work and people coming in for dinner is seen as the highest occupancy time and the most spaces you would need. Generally speaking it is very well thought through and studied. We do not want someone to come in and not find a space and turn around and leave. We also do not want a sea of empty spaces.

A resident asked if there will be additional traffic control devices. Mr. DiGeronimo said he imagines so, that it would most likely be at Southpointe intersection, and possibly another spot on Miller Road. The resident asked if there will be any additional traffic lights on Brecksville Road. Mr. DiGeronimo responded it has not been decided, however, it is a possibility.

With no more questions at this time, Mr. Van Nort asked Mr. Joe Balog of the Dalad Group to step forward.

Mayor Hruby said one of the jobs of the committees will be to complete a survey for uses at Valor Acres to see what the committees thoughts are on the development.

Mr. Joe Balog came forward and introduced himself. He explained to the residents almost twenty years ago they bought the approximately eighty-eight acres that is in a "L" shape next to Valor Acres on the west side that runs along I-77 and north along the top of the property, also referred to as the Crow property. The Dalad Group is now in discussions with the DiGeronimo Company and the City to develop the land. He said it makes sense to develop the properties together, they are aware of the concerns and believe they know the needs of the area. He said they own some buildings in the Snowville area and a key thing they hear from their tenants is that there is no restaurants or places to go for lunch.

Mr. Balog said the northern part of their property is zoned residential. A resident asked what type of residential zoning. Mr. Balog responded at this time it is zoned R-8 and R-16, which means it is mixed and allows both attached and detached homes. They do not have any plans for that particular property, but it is zoned residential and can serve as a buffer between Westview and Valor Acres. They are not talking about high rise apartment buildings, more townhouses and or detached homes. They have discussed catering more towards an empty

nester, or residents that want to downsize, but they have no set plans at this time. They have submitted their wetlands delineation plan, and they have received their permits to remove some of the wetlands from the property, and their requirements to leave additional wetlands in place. They have about thirty acres of the eighty-eight acres that are not going to be built on. Most of the land that will be cleared in the nonresidential area has been cleared already. The property along Miller Road is zoned motor services and retail, the middle is zoned office lab.

A resident asked where the green space will be located. Mr. Balog responded by pointing out on the map where the different green spaces will be located.

A resident asked if the Dalad Group is competing with DiGeronimo Company for tenants in the office spaces. Mr. Balog responded no, they are looking at working together, and as the property develops the businesses tend to lead the search. For example, there may be a user that requests being able to be seen from a freeway.

A resident asked about the clearing of property west of I-77. Mr. Balog responded it is not part of this development.

A resident asked about the ring road being part of their development too. Mr. Balog responded yes, it would make sense to share this road.

Mr. Van Nort thanked Mr. Balog and moved the meeting to discussions on Central School. He asked CBO Packard to explain the current zoning of Central School.

CBO Packard said where Central School is located is zoned community facilities. The school also owns the property just to the west which is zoned R-8A which is the same as the rest of Old Town. Community facilities allows for things such as schools, government offices, and or religious establishments. In order to develop this property it will most likely require a zoning change.

A resident asked CBO Packard to repeat what R-8A is. CBO Packard responded this means it is zoned for single family dwellings only, to do anything such as condos would require an R-8 or R-16 which would include attached or semi attached. The resident asked if zoning is the same for condos as it is for apartments. CBO Packard asked her to define her thought of condos. A resident said Brecksville West. CBO Packard explained that they started off as apartments, became an association and sold as individual condos. The reason why they are permitted in Old Town is they are preexisting.

Mayor Hruby said there was rumors going around that a property owner in Old Town had acquired a few properties and was going to tear it down and build apartments. The Planning Commission came up with R-8A and defined it as you could not build and or convert your homes into apartments or condominiums. If the City changes the zoning to allow condominiums on the parcel by the school, then there is an excellent argument to allow condos throughout Old Town. The other option is to discuss the zoning option of retail and tie it into

the downtown. This is when we need to hear what the residents want. Mayor Hruby said he has been asked his opinion, and that is to keep Arlington Street residential single family, and the rest needs discussion on if we want green space, retail, something unique, and so forth. This is why the zoning issue is very important.

A resident asked if parcels can be zoned separately, the Mayor responded yes, they can keep Arlington residential. The resident asked if the citizens have a say in the zoning. Mayor Hruby said the voters have the say. The Planning Commission makes the zoning change recommendation to Council, Council puts on the ballot for a vote and the voters decide yes or no.

Mayor Hruby said the City will supply zoning options for the committee at the next meeting.

A resident stated he believes that the Central School development in some aspects is more important than the Valor Acres property because the VA is already off to a great start. Central School, if not done right, could be a major pitfall or be a great opportunity. It really needs to be studied carefully. He recommends hiring a professional company. He said the same thing in January at a meeting and he does not understand why it has not happened. He said there are a lot of professional planning firms in northeast Ohio, we could issue an RFP, bring them in, talk to them and see what they have done for other communities. The money spent would come back tenfold in benefits. You will learn from the studies on adjacencies, on ratios, on densities, on uses, on the highest invest use, then you know what your development costs are, you know what your development return will be, and identify then whether any incentive is necessary to do the deal, then you put that package out as an RFP to developers, because you already know what you want to do then and you already know if it is feasible rather than shopping it because you don't pay these people anything because they are doing it at their own expense, but we all know you get what you pay for. So please consider hiring a real professional firm to do this and get a real master plan done and it will come back in tenfold in returns.

Mayor Hruby said what the resident suggested is exactly what the City will do when we become the owner of the land. However, the first thing we will have to do is have an environmental study done, and a RFP has been sent out for that. Whether we keep the building or tear it down, we have to have the environmental study completed first. The reason we have not moved forward in finding a planner, or to do anything further is due to the fact the school is still the owner of the property and because of insurance reasons we cannot go into the property and start doing things yet. Your suggestion is already the intent of the City, just like we did with the VA, however, it cannot be completed until we are the property owners. Everything with the VA was done with planning and putting together proposals. Mayor Hruby asked the resident if he believes this property is a good site for retail. The resident responded not stand alone retail, he would do office or apartments over retail. He said a light saturation across the front and intermixed, he thinks would work. Mayor Hruby again reiterated there will be a planner, and the City is scheduled to take over the property either October 1, 2019 or November 1, 2019.

Mayor Hruby said he would really like to hear from the rest of the committee what they would like to see on this property. A resident said no apartments and no banks. A resident said an extension of light retail along Route 82 makes perfect sense, and residential along Arlington Street.

Mayor Hruby asked if everyone has given up on the building. Some residents responded yes, some responded no. A resident spoke up and said she would not like to completely give up on the building because one of the slogans of Brecksville is looking to the future while remembering our past. She said there may be parts of the building that need to be demolished, but maybe not all of it. It has a lot of character. Maybe it could be something like what they do in Little Italy where they took an old school and turned it into an artist and specialty shops. She suggested something different that people would want to come to. Another resident said it seems like the Route 21 section of Route 82 and 21 is dilapidated and businesses come and go. Something should be done to protect that historic look and encourage a very well and vibrant downtown area. Mayor Hruby said he agrees and said the building owned by the Masonic Temple, and some of the other shops would not cooperate with the City to put a parking lot in to try to help the merchants. The pub that is going in will help and hopefully bring a couple more with it. If we could get the owners to invest in the properties, or sell them to someone willing to invest, but we can't force them to. Mayor Hruby said this property could be the catalyst to help redo the downtown.

A resident said they like how Chagrin uses the area around the water to do art shows, and other activities, Medina uses their square to do activities. She said to use the front space and parts of the building for activities like that. She also asked if the City put stores along 82 who would actually own that. Mayor Hruby said the City is acquiring the property through an agreement with the school. Much like the VA the intent is not to remain the owners, we would own it while it was being developed, that way we could control what goes there. He said there have been discussions about using the property to try to tie it into the square. The square is used a lot, we have concerts, Home Days, weddings, picnics, and other events, but it would be nice to have something more there, in the way of specialty shops to get people out and walking in the area.

A resident said that she is aware of the Brecksville Fitness Studio going in down town.

A resident asked if there was going to be an analysis done on the building to determine, structurally, what could be salvageable. Mayor Hruby said yes that will be done when we become owner. The school did a very quick study on the building to determine if it was safe to put the children back in the building, it was a three page report. . We will have a full blown asbestos and environmental study to see what the costs will be. The VA Hospital was over nine million dollars to clean it up and tear it down. Over three million was in asbestos removal alone. It is very, very, expensive. Through this study we will find out the possible costs as well as any structural issues.

CBO Packard was on site when the school did their study. He said they did a very preliminary study. We know from age there is an issue with asbestos, the study did not go into further detail. There was issues last year with the floor buckling, and some other movements, but the study did not even touch on those issues.

A resident asked what is being done to turn Old Town back into a neighborhood, in other words, making one entrance in and out. We were told over the years that because of the school, and safety services, there needed to be two entrance and exits. He said if you look at almost every neighborhood in Brecksville, there is one way in and one way out, and the neighborhoods that have two, there is no gain to cutting through. Mayor Hruby responded that traffic and traffic flow will definitely be considered.

A young resident suggested a store by the street, a dog park in the middle and a couple houses on the back. She would like to see something for the kids and the adults.

A resident asked if prior to engaging with the DiGeronimo Company with developing Valor Acres, if the City engage with a third party planner. Mayor Hruby responded the City talked to several companies before DiGeronimo was selected. DiGeronimo Companies was the only company that was willing to take over the cost of the cleanup and the environmental. There was a study completed many years ago, but no, nothing immediately before like we are going to have to do with Central School. The resident asked if we issued multiple RFP for the VA and Mayor Hruby responded yes.

A resident asked if the City has considered using some kind of TIF financing, or Community Block Grants, to revitalize the downtown. Mayor Hruby said Brecksville will not qualify for a Community Block Grant, however, there has been discussions on utilizing TIF monies for downtown and 82 East.

Council President Harwood said to respond to the resident about other developers, some developers came and said the only way to develop this property was full retail, movie theaters, and big box stores. The resident said the reason he was asking was during Mr. DiGeronimo's presentation there was a lot of uncertainty and he feels like some of that should have been dictated. Mayor Hruby said the voter of Brecksville dictated what could be there by passing the zoning changes for that area. The only thing the City dictated to the developers is we do not want a full retail use of that property, that has always been out of the question.

Mr. Van Nort said Mr. DiGeronimo did cover some things in the last meeting, such as some of the things depicted in the map would be higher end condos, an upscale hotel, office, retail, restaurant, it would not just be full retail and it would not be just offices. We ended up with an overlay district out there and the City will ultimately decide what goes there and what does not, we still have control as the owner of the property. Mr. DiGeronimo has to stay vague about specific businesses and possible moves, these companies might not be ready to go public.

A resident asked about parking downtown in the south west corner and recommended it be combined into one big parking lot, like the church parking is only used on Sunday, is there any way that could become public parking. Mayor Hruby responded no, the City has tried but the church does not want to be part of it and he understands, they have their uses and needs throughout the week also for weddings, funerals and other events. They did work with the City on the drive. Parking in the downtown is always going to be an issue, on the agenda there is a link to go online and see the Master Plan documents from the County. One of the things you will read is that we are over parked in the City of Brecksville and that we require too many spaces in the south end and downtown. Anything we do downtown we are going to have to also adjust for parking.

A resident said she would like to really emphasize any retail that goes into the downtown has to be unique. She referred to the term neighborhood show piece, as opposed to the banks, the nail shops. Mayor Hruby agreed but said if a person comes to the City of Brecksville, buys a piece of property, and they met the requirements, and they want to put a bank in, they get to put the bank in. The property rights are there, and a lot of Supreme Court cases to back it up.

A resident said that this is what he was referring to with the VA and there should be codes and rules, and that the City is acting like nothing could have been done about the bank downtown. Mayor Hruby said that the Planning Commission made the bank make their building look like a two story building, so they did, the City made the bank jump through so many hoops, and the bank jumped through all of them. The resident said you still could have found something in the code. Council President Harwood said that is not true at all. Councilmember Carouse said we have to keep in mind personal property rights, each owner has the right to do with their property what they want within the limits of our City Codes. The City can identify what type of zoning, such as retail, but they cannot decide what exact retail store goes in there. Some of you have been here long enough to remember when it was the joke that the City had all the real estate offices. I think this is just a perspective that a lot of people lose sight of when discussing these types of plans. Councilmember Rose added that the VA site is important to the City because that is going to generate dollars for the City, but the Central School location is important for the whole town, it is not going to be the biggest revenue generator for the City. He wanted to agree with Lou that you cannot just force people to do things, he also believes that the communities that were referred to, Medina, Chagrin, those are local people opening their own shops in town, we have to have people that do that, we can't force people to do that. He said Hudson is beautiful but they are having a hard time keeping their businesses. He is very interested in hearing what people have to say about downtown and the different ideas that are coming out of these meetings.

A resident suggested all single family homes and take care of the current retail that is already around it.

Councilmember Petsche said he really liked the woman's idea about using the property as an art school, and going back to Councilmember Rose's comment about not needing it to generate a lot of money, if we preserve the original school, maybe the city could charge very little to no

rent, we could fill it up with little art galleries. He said there is a small town in Central Ohio that did that. Maybe we could call it the Central Art School and even preserve the name. Mayor Hruby asked if he was referring to something similar to the Center for the Arts that we already have, but on a bigger scale. Councilman Petsche responded yes.

A resident said she was hoping when the McDonalds left that an art gallery would go in there, or a walking park with large art sculptures, similar to Peninsula. She would love to see something like that in Brecksville.

A resident said he has spent more time in that building than anyone else there he believes, and he is very eager and interested in hearing about the structural findings. He has a very hard time seeing anything good coming from that report. Mr. Van Nort said his daughter was in fourth grade at Central last year when they had some issues with the tiles coming up and he was very concerned about asbestos. He took a tour of the school with Chris Coad. There are parts of that building that are built like a tank and will probably continue standing for one hundred years, there are also parts he is surprised the wind did not blow down. The cost may play a larger role in this process.

Mr. Van Nort pointed on the screen where the original part of the school is.

Mayor Hruby thanked everyone for coming and let them know we will be notifying them soon of the next meeting.