

**CITY COUNCIL – ZONING COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT
COUNCIL VARIANCE**

APPLICATION: CV25-073
Location: 7801 & 7089 OLENTANGY RIVER RD. (43235), being 5.82± acres located on the west side of Olentangy River Road, 370± feet south of Clubview Boulevard (610-101154 and 610-146455; Far Northwest Coalition).
Pending Zoning: L-AR-12, Limited Apartment Residential District.
Proposed Use: Townhouse development.
Applicant(s): 7809 Olentangy River Road LLC; c/o Molly Gwin, Atty.; 250 West Street, Suite 700, Columbus, OH 43215.
Property Owner(s): 7809 Olentangy River Road LLC; 7220 Campus Lane, Columbus, OH 45242; and Charlene K. Fairman; 7801 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, OH 43235.
Planner: Alyssa Saltzman; 614-645-9625; ADSaltzman@columbus.gov

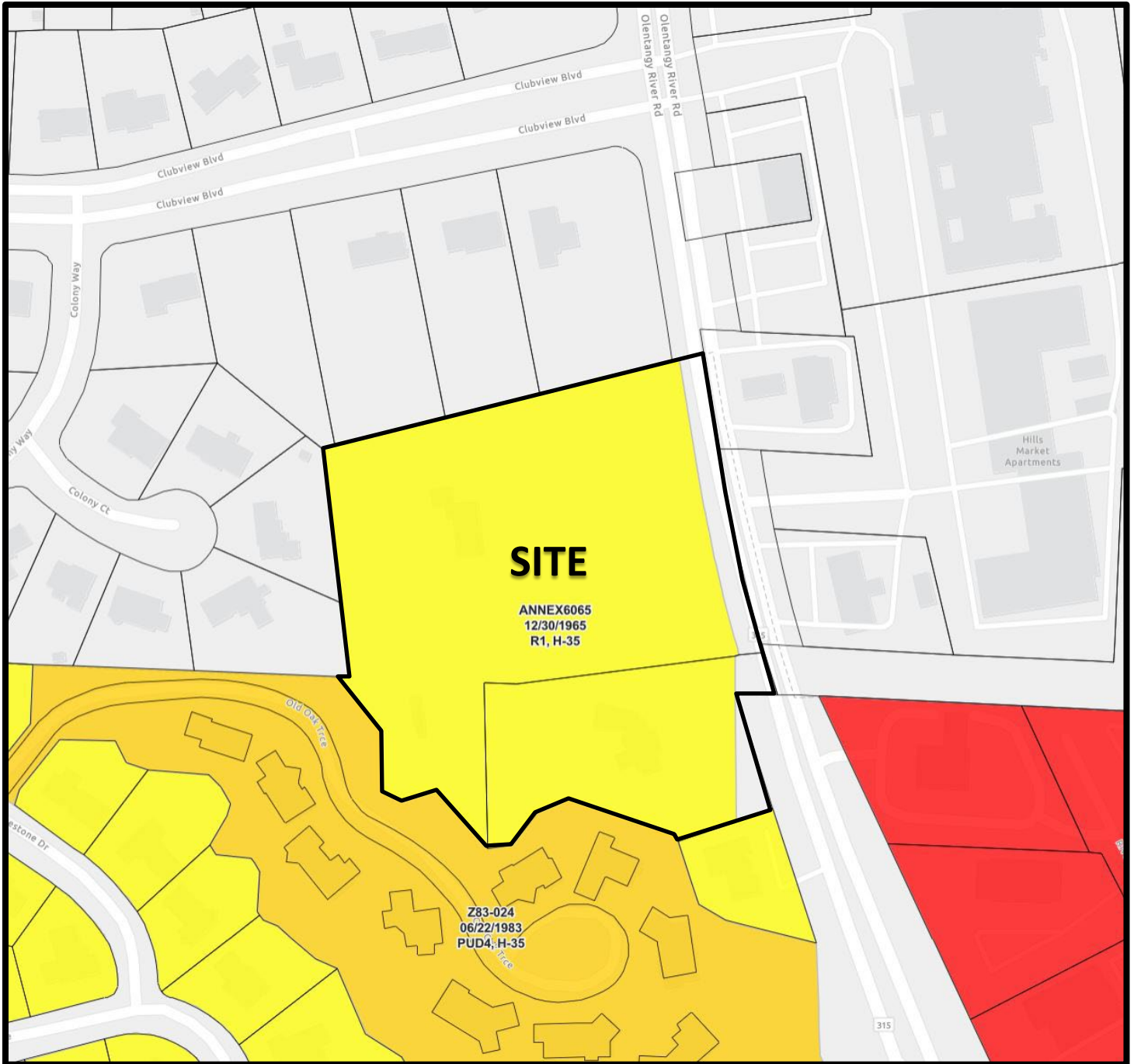
BACKGROUND:

- The site is pending zoning to the L-AR-12, Limited Apartment Residential District with concurrent Rezoning Application #Z25-038 (ORD #1035-2026). This concurrent Council variance is included to allow a 26-unit townhouse development. A use variance to reduce the minimum number of townhouse units in a run from three to one, and development standard variances to reduce the minimum number of townhouses in a row from three to one, and development standard variances to allow individually platted townhouses on private streets, to reduce the front building line, and to reduce the side yard setback are included in this request.
- North and west of the site are single-unit dwellings in the R-8, Restricted Urban Residential District of Sharon Township. South of the site are single-unit dwellings in the PUD-4, Planned Unit Development. East of the site are offices and a gas station, and Senior Living apartments in the PSC, Planned Shopping Center, and EU, Exceptional Use Districts of Sharon Township.
- The site is partially identified on the *Columbus Growth Strategy (2026)* map with the recommended land use of “Mixed-Use 1”. The other portion of the site is within the planning boundaries of *The Northwest Plan (2016)*, which recommends “Low-Density Residential” land uses at this location.
- The site is located within the boundaries of the Far Northwest Coalition, whose recommendation is for disapproval.
- Staff concurs with the Applicant’s analysis of the seven practical difficulties in achieving this proposed development and support the requested variances.

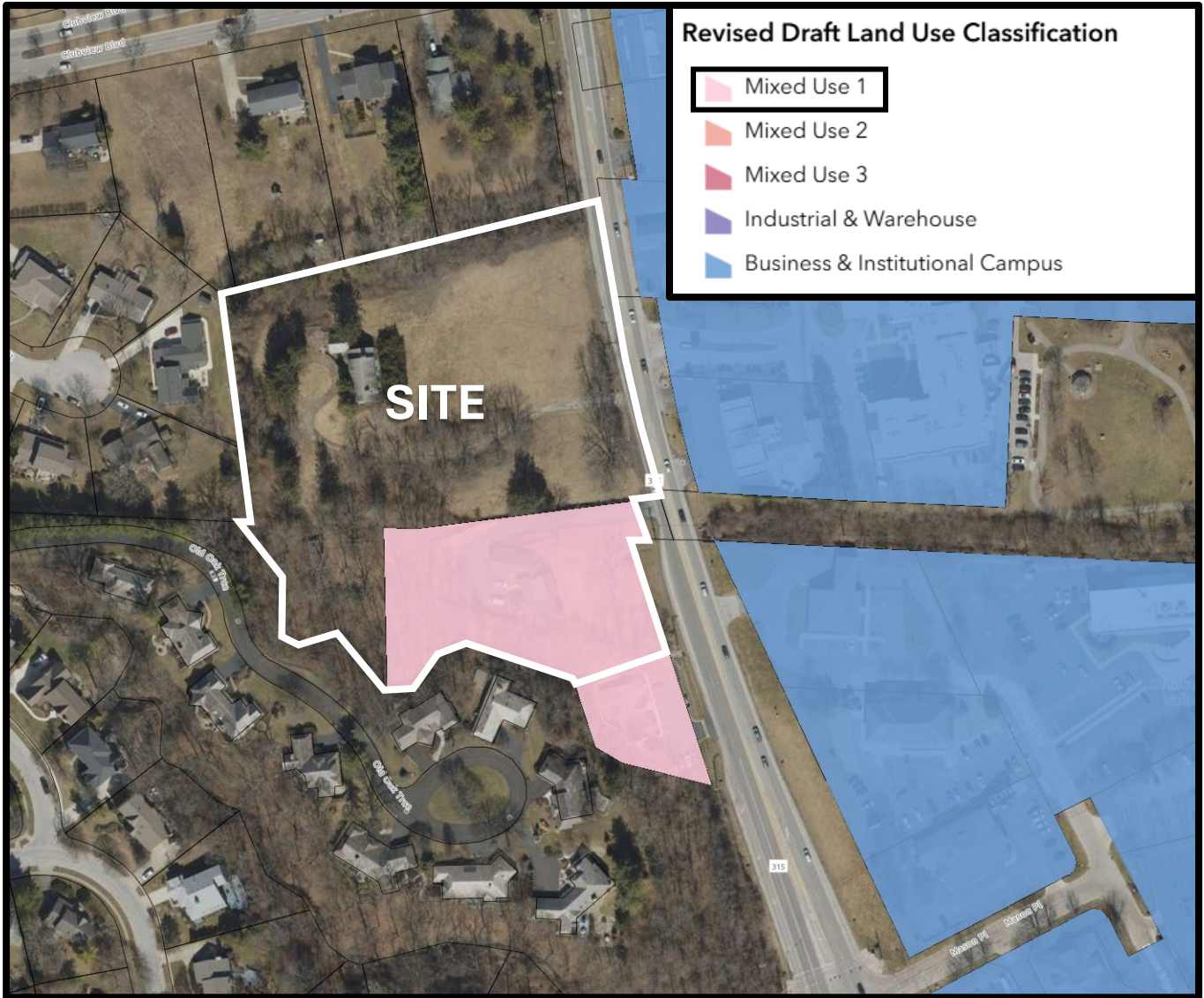
CITY DEPARTMENTS’ RECOMMENDATION: Approval

This Council variance request includes variances to vary the minimum number for townhouses

in a row from three to one, to allow individually platted townhomes on a private street system, and to reduce the building line and side yard setbacks. Staff notes that the provided building elevations, site design, and commitment to preserve mature trees along the site perimeter as being consistent with the *Columbus Growth Strategy's* (2026) design guidelines.



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Approximately 5.82 acres



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Council Variance Application

111 N Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215
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STATEMENT OF HARDSHIP

Columbus City Code Section 3307.10 - Variances by City Council.

City council may grant the following zoning variances:

- A. Permit a variation in the yard, height or parking requirements of any district only in conjunction with a change in zoning or a use variance and only where there are unusual and practical difficulties in the carrying out of the zoning district provisions due to an irregular shape of lot, topography, or other conditions, providing such variance will not seriously affect any adjoining property or the general welfare.
- B. Permit a use of the property not permitted by the zoning district established on the property if such use will not adversely affect the surrounding property or surrounding neighborhood and if council is satisfied that the granting of such variance will alleviate some hardship or difficulty which warrants a variance from the comprehensive plan.

Before authorizing any variance from the Zoning Code in a specific case, city council shall first determine that such variance will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to the adjacent property, unreasonably increase the congestion of public streets, increase the danger of fires, endanger the public safety, unreasonably diminish or impair established property values within the surrounding area, or in any other respect impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals or welfare of the inhabitants of the city.

In granting a variance pursuant to this section, council may impose such requirements and conditions regarding the location, character, duration, and other features of the variance proposal as council deems necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code and to otherwise safeguard the public safety and welfare.

The following factors shall be used in determining whether the applicant has encountered practical difficulties in the use of the property. Respond to the following statements:

1. Whether the property in question will yield a reasonable return or whether there can be any beneficial use of the property without a variance.

Yes No

See attached.

2. Whether the variance is substantial.

Yes No

See attached.

3. Whether the essential character of the neighborhood would be substantially altered or whether adjoining properties would suffer a substantial detriment as a result of the variance.

Yes No

See attached.



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4. Whether the variance would adversely affect the delivery of governmental services (e.g., water, sewer, refuse service).

Yes No

see attached.

5. Whether the property owner purchased the property with knowledge of the zoning restriction.

Yes No

6. Whether the property owner's predicament feasibly can be obviated through some method other than a variance.

Yes No

7. Whether the spirit and intent behind the zoning requirement would be observed and substantial justice done by granting the variance.

Yes No

see attached.

List all sections of Code to be varied and explain your reasoning as to why this request should be granted.

NOTE: It is the applicant's responsibility to identify all variances required for the project. If any necessary variances are not included, a new application (and applicable fees) will be required.

I have read the foregoing and believe my application for relief from the requirements of the Zoning Code contains the necessary hardship, will not adversely affect surrounding property owners, and will comply with the variance(s) requested as detailed below (use separate page if needed or desired):

Signature of Applicant

DocuSigned by:
Eric Kmetz
EB8CD19CC07A49C...

Date 8/8/2025

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF VARIANCES AND STATEMENT OF HARDSHIP

Application: Z25-038

Location: 7801 & 7809 Olentangy River Rd. , being 5.24+/- acres located on the west side of Olentangy River Road, 370 +/- feet south of Clubview Boulevard (610-101154; Far Northwest Coalition).

Existing Zoning: R-1, Residential District

Requested Zoning: L-AR-12, Limited Apartment Residential District (H-35)

Request: the Applicant proposes development of the site with fee simple townhomes on platted lots. The Applicant requests certain variances to allow for the platting of the town homes on private streets.

Applicants: 7809 Olentangy River Road, LLC co/o Molly Gwin, 250 West Street, Suite 700, Columbus, Ohio 43215

Property Owners: 7809 Olentangy River Road LLC; 7220 Campus Lane, Columbus, Ohio 45242; Charlene K. Fairman; 7801 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, Ohio 43234.

Planner: Alyssa Saltzman

Date: February 10, 2026

This statement is submitted in support of the Applicant’s request for variances to allow for fee simple platted townhomes on private streets, and to allow for development of high-quality town homes, consistent with the character of the area and subject to ARLD design standards. The 5.82 acre parcel is located adjacent to residential and neighborhood commercial areas. The Applicant is proposing 26 total units. The property is located in the Far Northwest Area.

The property has substantial grade change and topographical features, and in order to permit development of the Property, the Applicant is requesting the following variances:

1. Code Section 3333.41(h)

The Applicant is seeking a variance to allow for the sale of fee simple town homes as defined under 3333.41(h) to be individually platted on private streets. The Applicant seeks this variance concurrently with the request to allow for a rezoning of the Property from R-1 to L-AR-12. The proposed town home development will have the following:

Unit Type	Width	Depth	Number of Units
A	32	64	17
B	38	54	9

While the Northwest Land Use Plan recommends low density <4 units per acre, the proposal is for single family townhomes, with approximate square footages ranging from 2,863 square feet up to 3206 square feet, as set forth in the attached examples. As set forth in the Land Use Plan,

It is recognized that large lots and undeveloped lots, particularly those that are located along primary corridors, maybe subject to development proposals inconsistent with the land use recommendation in terms of use or and/or density. Alternative proposed uses and/or higher density proposals may merit support if they are compatible with adjacent land development.

(Land Use Plan, pg. 30). Here the Applicant intends to follow the Land Use Plan and required design guidelines. The high quality, upscale town homes are proposed for single unit residential uses, but a slightly higher density, specifically 4.46 units per acre. Such homes are compatible with the adjacent residential Worthington Hills subdivision and consistent with neighborhood commercial uses, located across Olentangy River Road.

This is a variance of section 3333.41(h) to allow for individually platted town homes on private streets, consistent with the fee simple, for sale homes that surround this use. The variance will not substantially impact the surrounding properties. The surrounding properties are residential in nature. This product is consistent with surrounding uses, allowing for high quality, fee simple town homes. The character of the neighborhood will not be substantially altered. The town home product is consistent with neighboring residential uses and is intended to be sold “for sale.” Nor will the variance impact the delivery of governmental services. The provision of private streets will not add additional municipal responsibilities to the obligations for street maintenance. Finally, design standards for the town homes will not be negatively impacted with the presence of this variance. The town homes will be for sale homes, located on individually platted lots.

2. Code Section 3333.41(h).

Code Section 3333.41(h) provides in pertinent part, “**Each town house lot shall have a minimum of 15 feet of frontage on a dedicated public street except that those lots which are separated from a street only by common space shall have a minimum of 15 feet of frontage on such common space.**” Here the Applicant is proposing private streets and therefore requires a variance for the provision of frontage on public streets.

3. Code Section 3333.02(5).

Columbus City Code Section 3333.02(5) provides in pertinent part,

Within an AR-12, ARLD or AR-1 apartment residential district, no buildings or premises shall be used and no buildings shall be erected which are arranged, intended or designed to be used for other than one or more of the following specified uses...Town house development, as defined in [Chapter 3303](#), C.C., containing no more than eight town houses in a row and no fewer than three town houses in a row, and in accordance with town house development standards;

4. Code Section 3333.41(j).

(j) A building line shall be established no less than 25 feet from the front lot line irrespective of the orientation of the building.

Here, the Applicant is requesting the building lines be adjusted to permit the building line to be reduced to be a minimum 20' back from the front property line. Once again, the variance is not substantial and will contribute to the neighborhood feel of the units with increased walkability, and connectively to a provided asphalt path. The variance will not impact the delivery of governmental services and meets the spirit and intent of the zoning ordinance.

5. Code section 3333.41(i)

Based upon revisions to the site plan to provide for individual units, each unit is considered an end unit and therefore, a variance is requested to allow for 5' side yard, with 10' total between buildings. The proposed setback meets the requirements for residential.

Respectfully Submitted,

Molly R. Gwin

FOR USE BY: AREA COMMISSION / COMMUNITY GROUP / HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
(PLEASE PRINT)

Case Number: CV25-073
Address: 7801 & 7809 OLENTANGY RIVER ROAD
Group Name: FAR NORTHWEST COALITION OF COLUMBUS
Meeting Date: OCTOBER 23, 2025

Specify Case Type:

- BZA Variance / Special Permit
- Council Variance
- Rezoning
- Graphics Variance / Plan / Special Permit

Recommendation:

(Check only one and list basis for recommendation below)

- Approval
- Disapproval

NOTES:

BASED ON THE APPLICATION, THE APPLICANT'S PRESENTATION AT THE HEARING, AND FEEDBACK FROM PROPERTY OWNERS AND NEIGHBORS, THE BOARD OF THE FAR NORTHWEST COALITION OF COLUMBUS RECOMMENDS DISAPPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION.

Vote: 0 TO APPROVE - 3 TO DISAPPROVE - 1 ABSTENTION

Signature of Authorized Representative:

SIGNATURE

PRESIDENT

RECOMMENDING GROUP TITLE

202-631-3370

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER

Please e-mail this form to the assigned planner within 48 hours of your meeting day; or FAX to Zoning at 614-645-2463; or MAIL to: Assigned Planner, City of Columbus, Department of Building & Zoning Services, 111 N. Front St, Columbus, OH 43215.



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PROJECT DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

APPLICATION #: CV25-073

Parties having a 5% or more interest in the project that is the subject of this application.

THIS PAGE MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY AND NOTARIZED. Do not indicate 'NONE' in the space provided.

STATE OF OHIO
COUNTY OF FRANKLIN

Being first duly cautioned and sworn (NAME) Molly Gwin, Ice Miller, LLP
of (COMPLETE ADDRESS) 250 West Street, Suite 700, Columbus, Ohio 43215

deposes and states that they are the APPLICANT, AGENT, OR DULY AUTHORIZED ATTORNEY FOR SAME and the following is a list of all persons, other partnerships, corporations or entities having a 5% or more interest in the project which is the subject of this application in the following format:

For Example: Name of Business or individual
 Contact name and number
 Business or individual's address; City, State, Zip Code
 Number of Columbus-based employees

<p>1. Campus Lane Holdings, LLC Eric Kmetz - 859-307-2026 0 Columbus employees 7720 Campus Lane Montgomery, Ohio 45242</p>	<p>2. Granvilla Holdings, LLC Megan Schaffernocker - 614-203-1306 0 Columbus employees 1149 High Grove Dr. Columbus, Ohio 43235</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>4.</p>

Check here if listing additional parties on a separate page.

SIGNATURE OF AFFIANT Molly K. Gwin

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence this 11th day of Aug., in the year 2025

Alexandra Petrillo
SIGNATURE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

never
My Commission Expires

Notary Seal Here

ALEXANDRA M. PETRILLO
Attorney At Law
Notary Public, State of Ohio
My Commission has no expiration date
Sec. 147.03 R.C.

This Project Disclosure Statement expires six (6) months after date of notarization.