

HARRISON TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
The Delong Company, Inc.
July 14, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Kelly Spriggs called the Public Hearing of July 14, 2025, to order 6:00pm at the Harrison Township Fire Department, 3625 State Route 752, Ashville, Ohio. Present were Kelly Spriggs, Ronde Cook Brushart, Matt LeMaster, Matt Rayburn, Austin Cline, and Sara LeMaster. Absent was Brock Riley.

Sara read the Public Hearing Order and Rules and the Legal Notice which had been published on the website and mailed to property owners within 500 feet, adjacent to, and directly across the road from the parcel(s) being addressed.

Kelly performed the swearing in of participants wanting to speak at the hearing.

Kelly then called for the applicant, or representative of the applicant to present.

Pat Pickett, attorney with Isaac Wiles in Columbus, was present to represent The Delong Company. Mr. Pickett shared that he represented The Delong Company about 15-16 months ago when they came in front of the board regarding the property just north of the property being discussed at this meeting.

Pat Delong and Criag Stevenson were also present. Craig Stevenson is the designer of the project.

Paul Johnson was present to handle some real estate aspects of the project.

Mr. Pickett went on to explain the proposal. They would like to change the zoning from Agricultural Land to Planned Business for a container storage lot. Approximately 28.084 acres will be split out of the north portion of the parcel D1200030022002. The lot will allow for 876 spaces for wheeled or stacked shipping containers, van trailers, and employee parking.

He shared that they met with the planning commission and Tim McGinnis stated that "this is the kind of use we want and the location we want it." The commission had a unanimous vote for approval, with the exception of one member who abstained.

Mr. Pickett stated they are not proposing any permanent structures on this property, therefore, there is no need to septic and/or water connection.

Mr. Pickett shared that the Design Review Board met, and Austin shared some suggestions they had for the application before presenting it to the board. The DRB suggested that mounding surrounding the property be of height between 10-12 feet, Green Giant Arborvitae trees dual rows, 5 feet in height, 5 feet spaced (on center) staggered, the existing mound on the current property to remain, and the tree line to the south of the property to be preserved. They also

requested that the fencing be black and no white lighting due to glaring on the roadways and adjacent properties. Lastly, the DRB requested that the south driveway entrance should be eliminated as it poses traffic concerns (i.e. school buses).

From those suggestions, Mr. Pickett shared that him, Mr. DeLong, and Mr. Stevenson met and they believe that they can address some of those concerns but moving the mounding from 6ft. to 12 ft., the existing mound is at an angle so it's being straightened out, black fencing is no problem, and non-white lighting (they can do amber or something similar). As far as traffic flow and the driveway concern, the state is still considering that and they haven't given any indication to believe that they have an issue with it. As far as traffic flow goes, the planning commission asked if access to the intermodal would ever happen internally. Mr. Pickett reported that Mr. DeLong is working on that and it has been in a lot of discussions with the new technology they have in that area. There would be an opening at the back of the prior northern lot. This will keep a lot of the traffic off SR 762.

Mr. Pickett shared that they have anticipated the fact that there might need to be right turn lanes, which Craig included in the plans. They would be at both entrances and then obviously SR 762 has the left turn lane already.

Mr. Pickett circled back to the DRB's recommendations and discussed the lower boarder/boundary that has the existing tree line, they anticipate removing about 10% of that and 50% will stay. A portion of it is on property owned by the Airport Authority so that won't be touched. So, most of it will be preserved.

As far as storm water drainage is concerned, it is basically going to go to the same place it's going now.

Ronde asked about the height of the stacked containers.

Mr. Pickett stated that previously they received approval for five high (about 46 ft. tall) but as of yet, the need to go that high has not happened. They are requesting the same for this property, although with more space, the longer it takes to need to stack them that high.

Matt Rayburn asked what the projected growth of the business is because he sees lots with hardly anything in it. He asked if they plan on building more grain bins.

Pat DeLong stated that the current grain yard, they could see someday adding on a grain silo for more storage. But when you drive by and see it fairly empty, the reason is, that yard is where the grain loading happens and they load the containers and store them. Their biggest months are during harvest and typically they get a lot of soybeans through the end of March. The summer months have less volume.

Kelly asked about acceleration and deceleration lanes, as well as why there are two gates...is there a specific in-gate and out-gate?

Mr. Pickett stated that they are trying to keep the trucks and the cars separated. So, the south entrance would be for employee passenger vehicles. They estimate that most of the traffic there will be from 7am-5pm.

Kelly asked where the employees are parking since there are no buildings.

Mr. Delong explained that there was a prior deal that it would be overflow parking for warehouse staff and they would bus them over from the lot but that is no longer a deal anymore.

Kelly asked about restrooms/water/sewer since there will be employees.

Kelly asked if they were going to need a “guard shack/booth” type place on this property because prior to this application, they came back and asked for one for the previous property.

Mr. Delong stated that he wasn’t sure, and it would be nice to have but they just don’t know.

Kelly asked if they are looking into moving into the RBD.

Mr. Pickett stated that yes, they are.

Kelly asked about the current drainage run off using the same as this lot but they’re also looking at putting in 28 acres of asphalt so where is all of that rainwater going to go?

Mr. Pickett pointed one out, stating that it is significantly larger than the prior.

Mr. Stevenson stated that it’s 3-4x bigger, so the new lot gets the same treatment as the prior lot so at the west end of the project, there’s an area reserved for a retention basin.

Kelly asked where they are proposing the lighting is going.

Mr. Stevenson stated that it’s perimeter lighting.

Kelly asked about additional signage.

Mr. Delong stated that they don’t think so at this time but if so they will take the steps to get it approved.

Ronde expressed her concerns about the restroom and the second driveway.

Mr. Pickett circled back to Kelly clarifying that she would prefer right turn only out of the south entrance.

The board and applicant all agreed.

Mr. Delong confirmed that if needed, he would make arrangements for temporary restrooms.

Mr. Delong asked about the fencing, stating that he's happy to do a black fence, but the fence around the existing yard today was about six figures to put in so would the board want him to replace the entire existing fence? Or if just the existing front facing east could be all black since that's mostly what people see.

The board agreed just the front along SR 762 would be good.

Kelly read the letter from the Pickaway County Planning Commission, approving the amendment.

Kelly asked who from the Planning Commission abstained from the vote and why.

Mr. Pickett stated that he believes it was Kevin Stewart and he believes that his company had done business with Delong in the past, so he felt it was a conflict of interest. He did not state that himself, but that was Mr. Pickett's perception.

Ronde asked about dust and smoke.

Mr. Pickett stated it's asphalt so they don't anticipate too much dust.

Kelly asked if the trucks will be idling overnight. She knows that is a concern for neighbors close by.

Mr. Delong stated that no there will not be.

Mr. Pickett stated that if that does happen, to let them know.

Kelly asked if there were any proponents.

Kelly asked if there were any neutral parties.

Kelly asked if there were any opponents.

Austin Cline asked if they could clear up the mounding/trees they discussed in the DRB meeting.

Mr. Delong stated that their preference is no trees on the mound. It'll be 12 ft., without trees.

Kelly expressed that the 12 ft. is not going to hide 46 ft. of trailers so that would be a concern down the road if they do get to stacking five high.

Ronde expressed the concern is just that it's facing residents and the trailer park so maybe there can be a compromise in the future.

Mr. Pickett stated that they would be happy to consider when or if they get to that point.

Matt LeMaster asked if the 9 ft. retention pond would be deep enough to withstand the 28 acres.

Mr. Delong stated one is 25 ft. so it's way deeper and he believes that is why it was done that way.

The board spoke amongst themselves to discuss a recommendation.

Kelly made a motion to approve as Planned Business, with the 12 ft. mounding, with future discussion based on stacking height of containers, black fencing surrounding the new property and the east side of the existing property, amber down-lighting around the perimeter, south driveway right turn only, and drives to be reviewed and approved by the state, keeping as much of the tree line to the south as possible, self-contained temporary restroom structure as growth increases.

Ronde made a recommendation based on the statement Kelly read approving the project. Matt LeMaster seconded the motion.

Kelly, yes. Ronde, yes. Matt Rayburn, yes. Matt LeMaster, yes.

Kelly thanked everyone for their comments and stated that Delong has always been good partners.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments and all matters attended to, Kelly moved, and Ronde seconded the motion to adjourn the July 14, 2025, Rural Zoning Commission Public Hearing with The Delong Company, Inc. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:54pm.