

**MINUTES OF THE BEECHER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
(THE PZC)**

***Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
Beecher Village Hall
625 Dixie Highway***

At 7:00 p.m., Vice Chairman George Schuitema called the meeting to order.

All present joined in the pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL. Members present: Commissioners Eich, Gardner, Heim, Schuitema and Weissbohn.

Members absent: Commissioner Hearn and Serviss.

Administrator Barber introduced new Commissioner Charlie Eich, replacing Kevin Bouchard.

Staff present: Secretary Patty Meyer and Administrator Robert Barber.

Guests: Village President Marcy Meyer, Trustee Erik Gardner, and petitioners for Godfather Cigars and Tobacco, Mohannad Nassar and Ruhwada Abuhamdeh.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 22, 2023 MEETING.

Commissioner Weissbohn made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2023 PZC meeting as written. Commissioner Heim seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Gardner, Heim, Schuitema and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Eich.

Motion carried.

CONSIDER A MOTION APPROVING A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 30, 2024. Commissioner Heim made a motion to approve George Schuitema as Chairman of PZC for year ending April 30, 2024. Commissioner Weissbohn seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Eich, Gardner, Heim and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Schuitema.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Schuitema made a motion to approve Bob Heim as Vice Chairman of PZC for year ending April 30, 2024. Commissioner Weissbohn seconded the motion.:

AYES: Commissioners Eich, Gardner, Heim, Schuitema and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

WORKSHOP: CONSIDER A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR A TOBACCO STORE AT 997 DIXIE HIGHWAY: GODFATHER CIGARS AND TOBACCO (MOHANNAD NASSAR, MONEE) The applicant was present to explain his business plan and answer any questions of

the Commission. Submittals were provided in the packet for review.

Mr. Nassar and his wife expressed their desire to open their business in Beecher. Exhibits were provided to Commission for review.

Commissioner Weissbohn asked what criteria should be considered in this special use permit request. Administrator Barber summarized: 1) Is the proposed business compatible with other uses in the area? 2) Is it an appropriate use for this location? 3) Are there any conditions to make it any more compatible?

Commissioner Heim asked if it was their first store. Petitioner had a similar store where he worked with family.

Commissioner Schuitema asked what products would be sold. Petitioner stated 50% of products would be tobacco items, and they would have a walk-in humidor. In addition, they would sell vapes and CBD products.

Commissioner Schuitema asked about security cameras. There will be cameras upon entering building. Video backup would be available and Police would have access to cameras.

Commissioner Schuitema asked if petitioners had any ownership or interest in any other stores and they do not.

Commissioner Schuitema asked about number of employees. Petitioner stated that it would start with just he and his wife. They will do background checks on employees and will stress to employees the importance of prohibiting underage sales. Hours of operation would be until 10 p.m. They will advertise no entrance if under age 21. They won't be selling snacks, which tends to attract minors.

Commissioner Schuitema asked about insurance claims or any other police activity in the past. Petitioner had nothing to report.

Ruwada Abuhamdeh (petitioner's wife) wants to focus on humidor. Cigars could be special ordered.

Commissioner Weissbohn expressed concerns about what the front windows will look like. Petitioner stated it would be nothing too flashy -- cigar signs and open/closed signage.

Administrator Barber asked if there were covenants for Beecher Plaza. None were provided to petitioner.

Conditions that would be placed on the special use permit would be 1) Minimum 50% tobacco products; 2) Min 50% front window exposed; 3) No flashing front window lights; 4) Videos upon request by law enforcement; and 5) 21 and under not permitted inside unless accompanied by adult.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion to hold a public hearing on Thursday, October 26, 2023

to consider a special use permit for a tobacco store at 997 Dixie Highway, Godfather Cigars and Tobacco. Commissioner Weissbohn seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Eich, Gardner, Heim, Schuitema and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Notice of public hearing will be mailed to nearby property owners. After public hearing is held, the PZC will make their recommendation to Village Board. The Village Board will vote on Special Use Permit at their November 13th meeting.

WORKSHOP: CONTINUED WORK ON DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE. The Steering Committee has met twice since the last PZC meeting and has developed a framework for the drafting of a new ordinance. The handout from the first session was provided in the packet for review.

Next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for October 12th at 3 p.m. at the Village Hall.

NEW BUSINESS. Administrator Barber stated that Art VanBaren will begin mass grading next week. Engineer has signed off and they are awaiting one permit from Will Cook Soil and Water.

A Mexican grocery store has inquired about moving to Beecher.

Cannabis grower wants to meet with President Meyer in the next few weeks. State of Illinois has finally provided a license to the grower. Everything is grown inside and it would be a very secure facility.

Penfield Street, except for final surface, should be done this year. Orchard, Meadow and Country will be resurfaced in the upcoming weeks.

The Village is working with businesses west of bridge for inconveniences and loss of business caused by the Penfield Street construction.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the PZC is Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT. Commissioner Heim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Eich seconded the motion.


AYES: Commissioners Eich, Gardner, Heim, Schuitema and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Patty Meyer
Secretary