

MINUTES OF THE BEECHER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
(THE PZC)
Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Beecher Village Hall
625 Dixie Highway

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

All present joined in the pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL. Members present: Commissioners Barber, Eich, Gardner, Hearn (arrived at 7:02 p.m.), Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.
Members absent: None.

Staff present: Secretary Patty Meyer, Administrator Charity Mitchell and Pete Iosue of Teska Associates.

Guests: Village President Marcy Meyer, Trustees Erik Gardner and Todd Kraus, Superintendent of Public Works Matt Conner, Mike McDonnell from Castletown Homes, Joyce and David Counts, Vic Reato from Silver Screen and James Hess (his attorney), Dolores Swanson, Joyce Giroux and other people in support of Vic Reato and his business.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 22, 2024 PZC MEETING.
Commissioner Heim made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2024 PZC meeting as written. Commissioner Eich seconded the motion.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Commissioner Hearn.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Barber.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF RE-SUBDIVISION OF LOTS 49-51 ON SOMERSET DRIVE IN THE PRAIRIE PARK SUBDIVISION. Mike McDonnell from Castletown Homes was present and explained his request. Townhomes have not been economically viable and if these lots are not converted to single-family homes, Castletown Homes will not be building any more units.

Bill Hearn arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Joyce and David Counts were present representing the Prairie Park Townhomes HOA. They are totally against the lots being converted to single-family homes. An HOA agreement was created in 2018 and certain lots were designated to remain townhomes. The single-family homes do not pay HOA fees and they don't feel the development would look right with a mixture of townhomes and single-family homes on Somerset.

Clifton was amended from townhomes to single-family. The amendment said that the four lots would remain townhomes if Clifton was allowed to be single-family. The HOA allowed Clifton to

be converted to single-family homes. HOA members purchased their homes expecting townhomes on their street.

It was stated that if Castletown Homes sells the lots to another builder, that builder would still be required to construct townhomes on those lots.

Commissioner Eich made a motion to table the matter until the next meeting in order to allow the Village Attorney to review the information. Commissioner Serviss seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Barber, Eich, Gardner, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

WORKSHOP: DISCUSSION OF A SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST IN A B-1 HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT FOR A TOBACCO AND VAPE SHOP AT 759 W. INDIANA AVENUE. Application was provided in the packet for review. Vic Reato was present and provided a history of his business and how he has changed his products over the years based on customer demand. He no longer sells videos. He has had a cigarette license for several years. He stated that his sign contractor came to the Village a few years ago, and obtained approval for the “Vape Shop” sign. Mr. Reato stated that a few weeks ago he received a letter from Administrator Mitchell stating that he is operating his business in violation of Historic Downtown Business District zoning. He wants to continue on with his business, which is very successful.

A few patrons of Mr. Reato’s business stated that they are in total support of the products being sold. There were several supporters in attendance.

James Hess, Mr. Reato’s Attorney, stated that Mr. Reato wishes to obtain compliance with the Village.

Pete Iosue stated that the issue here is that certain uses are either allowed or prohibited in this zoning district. To comply with code, a special use permit would be required for the products that are being sold.

Commissioner Schuitema emphasized that the Village has no intention of shutting the business down. He read aloud the five conditions that were placed on the Godfather Cigars special use permit, some of which may not apply to Mr. Reato’s business.

Commissioner Heim made a motion to hold a public hearing on Thursday, October 24, 2024 at 7 p.m. to consider a special use permit request in a B-1 Historic Downtown Business District for a tobacco and vape shop at 759 W. Indiana Avenue. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Barber, Eich, Gardner, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD REGARDING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN / COMMERCIAL FACILITY LOCATED ON SOUTH PARK ROAD. THE PROJECT SIZE IS APPROXIMATELY 35.8 ACRES. Since the project is within 1.5 miles of

Beecher Village limits, the Village Board can submit a letter of objection or non-objection to be considered by the Will County Land Use Department. The applicant, Wild Cat Solar 4, LLC (New Energy Equity), was unable to attend the meeting on August 22, 2024 when the PZC recommended the Village Board submit a letter of objection. This project is still in the application process with Will County Land Use Department. Applicant was not present, therefore no discussion occurred.

DISCUSSION OF SURF INTERNET FIBER BUILD. Scott Franko and Jen Alvarez from Surf Internet were present regarding their fiber build proposal. Explanation of project and maps were provided for review.

Once installed, Surf Internet would maintain the fiber. There would be no cost to the Village.

Commissioners questioned how many cables does the Village want underground in addition to water, sewer, cable, etc. The Village would want to be fair with other utilities that may already be paying franchise fees.

Mr. Franko stated that the work included in the entire proposal could be completed within one year. The average cost for internet would be \$55-\$100 per month, and plan price would be locked for life.

Commissioner Barber asked about benefits to the Village to allow this project to proceed. They would have to work with the Superintendent of Public Works regarding location of the fiber. Surf Internet is willing to provide free fiber to all Village-owned properties.

Superintendent Conner asked about the depth of the fiber, which would be 24-36". Fiber to the home would only be about 1' deep.

Commissioner Serviss made a favorable motion to proceed and coordinate with the Village for Surf Internet's proposed fiber build with the following conditions: 1) coordinate with Public Works regarding placement and 2) service would be provided at no charge to all Village-owned properties/facilities. An agreement will need to be drawn up. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Barber, Eich, Gardner, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS. Pete Iosue provided an update on the revision of the Zoning Ordinance. The Steering Committee scheduled a meeting for Monday, September 30, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. at the Village Hall to discuss questions and concerns regarding the Zoning Ordinance draft.

NEW BUSINESS. It was reported that the School District has listed for sale their 33 acres located on Racine and Miller, which is in the TIF District.

Updates were provided by President Meyer on various businesses in Beecher.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the PZC is Thursday, October 24, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT. Commissioner Serviss made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion.

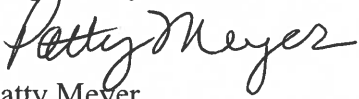
AYES: Commissioners Barber, Eich, Gardner, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Patty Meyer
Secretary