

## Planning & Zoning Meeting Minutes

28 July 2021

Members Present: Rebecca Marasco, John Willard, Jilana Wilson

Absent: Luke Thomas, Corinne Hofmann

Town Staff: Roseann Lamar-Town Clerk, Chief Martin Willey

Public Attendees: Jim Fennemore, David White, Eric White, Sean Marcus, Albert Salame, Raj Mikherji, Mike Marasco

Presenter: William DeCoursey University of Delaware

Meeting called to order at 6:34 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

**Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by John, Second by Jilana, all in favor

**Adoption of Minutes:** Motion by John, Second by Jilana, all in favor

**New Business:** Informal discussion in reference to the property at 204 Southern Blvd with Mr. Raj Mikherji. Property is currently zoned Light Industrial (LI). Mr. Mikherji is looking into purchasing the property from Mr. Albert Salame with the intentions of turning it into a Cultivation Facility for growing and manufacturing cannabis to be supplied to local medical marijuana dispensaries. Particularly the Dover and Georgetown locations. The cannabis is all grown in house, this will not be grown outside (via-pot farm). There are six cultivation facilities in place, and they are all lab like centers all run thru the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). There are currently a total of ten dispensaries in Delaware. The property at 204 Southern Blvd consists of a seventy thousand square foot lot. There are currently two entrances into the property one at Southern Blvd and one at Greens Village Drive, they will close off access from the Greens Village Drive location. The current building on this lot will more than likely be demolished and a new one constructed due to age and not being utilized in the current condition. The same footprint of where the building will be utilized. A project such as this they are looking at putting in somewhere between eight to twelve million dollars if not more to bring everything up to code. Question regarding to the smell coming from the plant. Mr. White stated that the facility uses special odor carbon filters that are placed throughout the HVA systems to filter most odors out. Mr. White and Mr. Mikherji stated that they must follow very strict guidelines pertaining to codes from both DHSS and OSHA regulations. Currently Mr. Mikherji has a cultivation facility in Woodbridge NJ and in Newark DE. Mr. Mikherji and his team helped to set up the cultivation facility in Lakewood PA. The facilities are all climate and humidity-controlled environments. There is no cash on site, there is 24/7-armed security in place as well. Mandated by DHSS a full alarm system, cameras, glass break censor, motion detectors and inferred protection. Camera footage is backed up for forty-five days and all security systems must be on a back up generator incase of a power outage. The facilities like to build relationships with the local community first responders, federal DEA, and local police. Mr. Mikherji head chief security officer is a retired DEA agent.

The building would have thirty to thirty-five square feet for production space use. Possibility of renting a portion of the building out, would be very particular with who would be a potential rental. They are required to get six different licenses and DHSS comes to the facility once a week to do a batch test. From plant to harvest it runs in five-month cycles. Once harvested it will be transported to dispensaries in unmarked vans. Question regarding disposal of unused product after harvest? DHSS has strict guidelines regarding disposal they usually spray with bleach and chop it up in a woodchipper with some cardboard. Question regarding expansion down the road? No plans for this plant to be used as a dispensary, will only be used as a manufacturing facility. Hours of operation will consist of 7:00 am – 7:00 pm. Most work is done during the day. Question on how soon Mr. Mikherji and his team like to would start this project? Would like to start on this as soon as approved they would be looking at seven to eight months to one year to make it operational. Mr. Mikherji stated that property vales do go up with these types of facilities. This is a growing industry. This would bring new job openings to the town initially thirty to forty would be created and over time they would acquire sixty to seventy employees. Its important that they hire within the community, they offer benefits, retirement plan and apprenticeships. This is a UFCW union company. Question regarding health concerns on the workers in the plant with the cannabis plants? There was a study done and there were no significant findings to be made that this caused any health concerns. Precautions are taken, regulated by OSHA eyewear, respirators boots. Question about landscaping? Mr. Mikherji stated that they will put some trees and plants and make it look nice around the building. Next step is to check with other municipalities regarding effect of these facilities and to schedule a trip to NJ to visit Mr. Mikherji operation. Chief Willey will follow up with surrounding police departments and get a perspective as to any problems they have had regarding these facilities.

Comprehensive Plan review chapter 11 review with BJ, make any changes if needed. Set up Public Workshop for Wednesday August 25, 2021 @ 5:30 pm for BJ to set up maps and for public to come in and discuss and ask any questions they may have regarding the updated Comprehensive Plan. Sent to surrounding towns Camden, Dover and Kent County for review waiting for feedback. End of August will be submitting the final draft to Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) for review.

**Old Business:** None

**Next Regular Meeting:**

Public Hearing: Ordinance # 59-21, Rezoning of Railroad property @ 6:00pm

August 26, 2020 @ 6:30pm

**Public Comments:** None

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm Motioned by John Second by Jilana, all favor