

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

***Thursday, October 24, 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, Heim, Schuitema and Serviss.  
Member absent: Commissioner Hearn.

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

Guests: Village President Marcy Meyer, Trustee Erik Gardner, Larry Brogan, Vic Reato and his Attorney James Hess, Dolores Swanson, Joyce Giroux, Kenny Hon and others in support of Silver Screen Vapes.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 MEETING.

Commissioner Heim made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2024 PZC meeting as written. Commissioner Eich seconded the motion.

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC – None.

PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDER A SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST IN A B-1 HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT FOR A VAPE AND SMOKE SHOP AT 759 W. INDIANA AVENUE. Due notice has been published and letters were sent to the adjoining property owners. Commissioner Serviss made a motion to open the public hearing at 7:01 p.m. Commissioner Gardner seconded.

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Petitioner Vic Reato spoke regarding his special use permit request to continue selling his vape and tobacco products in his store. Attorney James Hess stated that all of the standard requirements for the special use permit have been met. Mr. Reato wants to be in compliance and has no issues with any conditions that may be placed on his special use.

Kenny Hon provided testimony that he is in support of small businesses and has been a customer of Silver Screen since 2008. Mr. Reato continues to help and serve the residents of Beecher. Mr. Hon reported that many people's lives have improved due to use of products sold at Silver Screen. He reported that Godfathers Cigars sells a lot of the same products that Silver Screen does. He stated that Mr. Reato has never given up on Beecher and its residents.

A resident spoke about Vic Reato's character, how he really wants to help people and that his products help many people. He stated that Mr. Reato is deserving of approval of his special use permit request.

Commissioner Schuitema stated that the PZC has no intention of shutting Silver Screen down.

Pete Iosue clarified special use permits and the uses allowed in the Historic Downtown Business District.

Commissioner Barber asked about the current signage. Mr. Reato is willing to update his signage to something similar to the sign at his Manteno store. A picture of that sign was provided for review.

Commissioner Barber read the conditions on the special use:

1. No one under the age of 21 permitted into the establishment unless accompanied by an adult over 21 years of age;
2. The establishment must maintain a video surveillance system, and allow such video surveillance system to be accessible upon request to law enforcement;
3. Minimum of 50% exposed glass on exterior windows for law enforcement;
4. There shall be no flashing string or rope lights - solid colors only. Neon lighting is permitted, but LED is not. Light levels of any signage, window or door dressing cannot exceed normal brightness of neon as determined by the Zoning Administrator;
5. A new sign shall be erected within a reasonable timeframe to replace the existing wall sign on the building, similar to the exhibit presented at the public hearing.

There being no further testimony to be heard, Commissioner Serviss made a motion to close the public hearing at 7:13 p.m. Commissioner Eich seconded.

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

CONSIDER A MOTION OF RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD ON THE REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT. Commissioner Barber made a motion of recommendation to the Village Board on the request for a special use permit in a B-1 Historic Downtown Business District for a vape and smoke shop at 759 W. Indiana with five conditions listed above. Commissioner Heim seconded.

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL SOLAR FARMS LOCATED WITHIN 1.5 MILES OF BEECHER VILLAGE LIMITS. Pedro Rodriguez from Seaboard Solar was present to discuss a few parcels they are looking to purchase and develop into solar farms. Seaboard Solar has no legal interest in any parcels at this time, but are asking for the PZC's input since properties are within the planning jurisdiction. Copies of aerial views of potential properties were provided for review. Mr. Rodriguez stated that most of the properties they are hoping to buy are much larger than what the solar farm will occupy.

Commissioners asked questions regarding maintenance of properties, properties located in flood plain, lifespan of panels, number of poles (versus underground) and fixed versus moving panels.

Pete Iosue's concern was that the solar farms would not block future development.

It was the consensus of the PZC not to support properties #1 and #2 which were the closest to current Village limits.

DISCUSSION OF ZONING ORDINANCE REVISION. The most recent draft was provided for review. Pete Iosue made the changes that were discussed at the final Steering Committee meeting.

The Commission discussed more changes to the provided revision and Pete Iosue made said changes.

Pete Iosue will put together a memo noting major changes made to the Zoning Ordinance.

DISCUSSION OF THE NOVEMBER MEETING DATE. The next regularly scheduled PZC meeting falls on Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, which is Thanksgiving Day. Commissioner Heim made a motion to hold the next PZC meeting on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Serviss seconded.

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS.

Administrator Mitchell reported that Lennar Builders obtained a concession that will allow them to comply with the 60% brick requirement. They also want to reverify that the Village owns the pond in Hunter's Chase East and that we will continue to maintain it. Commissioner Heim mentioned that Staff will need to keep an eye on the minimum square footage for homes when plans come in.

NEW BUSINESS. – None.

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

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

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patty Meyer  
Secretary