

MINUTES  
CITY OF DEKALB  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
November 2, 2020

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a meeting on November 2, 2020, at the DeKalb Public Library in the Yusunas Meeting Room, 309 Oak Street, DeKalb, Illinois. Vice Chair Doe called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Vice Chair Doe stated she wanted to thank everyone for being here tonight. She mentioned for those attending, the meeting room has been set up to meet the CDC recommended distancing guidelines and the Executive Order from the Governor.

A. ROLL CALL

Recording Secretary Aaron Walker called the roll. Planning and Zoning Commission members present were: Ron Klein, Bill McMahon, Steve Becker, Trixy O'Flaherty, and Jerry Wright. Vice Chair Doe attended the meeting remotely by video conference. Chair Maxwell was absent. Principal Planner Dan Olson was present representing the City of DeKalb.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Additions/Deletions)

Vice Chair Doe requested a motion to approve the November 2, 2020, agenda as presented. Mr. Klein motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. O'Flaherty seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. October 19, 2020 – Vice Chair Doe requested a motion to approve the October 19, 2020, minutes as presented. Ms. O'Flaherty motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Open Floor to Anyone Wishing to Speak on Record)

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Public Hearing** – A petition by Randi Hoffstead for a special use permit to establish a video gaming establishment (CJ's Gaming) at 2022 Sycamore Road.

Randi Hoffstead, the owner of CJ's Gaming, advised the business is currently located at 1406 Sycamore Rd. She noted she is requesting a special use permit to move her business just up the street to 2022 Sycamore Rd. She advised CJ's Gaming is a gaming café open to all ages. She mentioned they have a full menu and kitchen, as well as six video gaming machines. She stated there are other activities on site including darts, board games, and family dining. She advised they host dart leagues, support local businesses, and support NIU by employing students.

Ms. Hoffstead said the new location would offer more space for events and will be able to host more customers. She noted CJ's Gaming contributed more than \$30,000 in gaming revenue to the City of DeKalb and approximately \$8,000 in just the last three months. She advised CJ's Gaming was the top video gaming establishment in the City in 2019 and is projecting to do the same in 2020. Ms. Hoffstead added she works closely with the CDC and Health Department Covid-19 guidelines to ensure the facility is safe for her customers.

Principal Planner Dan Olson went through the staff report dated October 29, 2020. He stated CJ's Gaming is looking to relocate from 1406 Sycamore Road to 2022 Sycamore Road and will take up the entire first floor. He noted the business is a video gaming establishment per the UDO with accessory uses, such as the café and dining area.

Mr. Olson mentioned the petitioner plans to move into the new location by January 2021. He noted the proposed operating hours will match their current hours, which is 8AM-1AM Monday thru Wednesday, 8AM-2AM Wednesday thru Saturday, and 10AM-1AM on Sunday.

Mr. Olson advised the City's Municipal Code has a limit of 10 stand-alone video gaming establishments, however, CJ's Gaming is only relocating so there is no need for the City Council to consider amending the Code. He reiterated CJ's Gaming had the largest net terminal income of any video gaming establishment in the City of DeKalb from January 2020 to September 2020.

Mr. Olson mentioned the UDO requires a minimum distance of 500 feet between video gaming establishments and the nearest video gaming establishment is approximately 1,125 feet away from the proposed site. He stated the total square footage for CJ's Gaming tenant space is approximately 1800 sq. ft. He noted the floor plan indicates six video gaming machines, kitchen, bar, snack bar, and seating area.

Mr. Olson advised CJ's Gaming will share a parking lot with 2020 Sycamore Rd, which was formerly a Hertz car rental business. He noted there is an internet auto sales operation proposing to locate in the building at 2020 Sycamore Rd. He mentioned CJ's Gaming will also share the parking lot with

the two apartments located on the second floor of 2022 Sycamore Rd. He advised the parking formula found in the UDO requires 2.5 spaces for every two-bedroom unit and one parking space for every 250 feet of floor space in the video gaming establishment. He advised this would result in nine required parking spaces for 2022 Sycamore Rd. and the proposed internet auto sales operations would require two additional parking spaces. He noted there are 17 parking spaces on site, which is more than adequate for the 11 required spaces.

Mr. Olson advised previous special use permits for video gaming establishments, such as Maisy's along S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Chip's located at 122 E. Hillcrest Drive, have language restricting the operating hours and signage requirements of the establishments. He advised no alcohol sales could occur before 10AM and signage could not have advertising related to the sale or presence of alcohol or video gaming. He noted the restrictions were required based on the proximity to nearby property owners. He mentioned the special use permit approving a video gaming establishment, Athena's Palace, located at 1704 Sycamore Rd did not have restrictions on operating hours or signage because they weren't near any residential properties. He advised staff recommends no additional restrictions on the operating hours or signage for CJ's.

Mr. Olson advised staff recommends approval with conditions, which includes placing a handicap sign in front of the handicap space by the building and screening the trash dumpster with a 6-foot high sight proof fence. He noted staff recommends both conditions be addressed within 30 days of approval by the City Council. He stated the City received no citizen feedback or response forms regarding the petition.

Mr. Olson went through the findings for a special use. He said the subject property is zoned "GC" General Commercial and exceeds the minimum separation requirement in the UDO of 500 feet for video gaming establishments. He stated the proposed special use will not have a detrimental effect on adjacent properties and will enhance the appearance of the subject site. He mentioned data from the Police Department has indicated there is no increased crime concerns or higher demand for public safety resources for stand-alone video gaming establishments in the City.

Vice Chair Doe gave the public an opportunity to speak. There was none.

Vice Chair Doe gave Commission members an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Klein stated he had concerns regarding parking for the subject property. He advised with 4-5 people occupying the second-floor apartments, the proposed video gaming establishment, and the possible business in 2020 Sycamore Rd,

the parking lot will not have enough spaces. He advised he drove by the property, and even though it meets the minimum requirements, parking will be very tight. He noted there is no street parking nearby and has concerns where the overflow parking will go.

Ms. Hoffstead advised they will only have one employee at the site at a time and with only six video gaming machines, there aren't many vehicles on site. She stated spaces could be assigned to the apartments on the second floor, to ensure residents won't have to park off-site. She advised there typically isn't more than six vehicles at any given time for CJ's Gaming based upon their current location.

Mr. Olson reiterated, based off the parking formula, the parking provided exceeds the number of spaces required per the standards listed in the UDO. He mentioned with the limit of six terminals and only having one employee, there shouldn't be any issues with the parking.

Mr. Wright questioned if there has been a video gaming establishment located in a mixed-use building with both commercial and residential spaces. He noted his concern for any residents and children that might be living in the second-floor apartments. Mr. Olson advised this is the only one he is aware of and the apartments have a separate entrance from the video gaming area. Ms. Hoffstead advised you cannot access the apartments from the inside of the video gaming area.

Mr. Wright inquired if the signage includes video gaming advertising. Mr. Olson advised there will be no additional restrictions on signage, much like Athena's Palace. He stated the proposed site is in a commercial district with no residential properties in the immediate area. He noted the Commission could recommend special conditions or restrictions if they so choose, but staff is not recommending it.

Mr. Wright questioned what the expected traffic flow is for the internet auto sales business. Mr. Olson advised they will have very minimal traffic with approximately 5 vehicles on display. He noted all sales are done on the internet or by appointment and it is a permitted use in the "GC" zoning district.

Mr. Becker advised he had noise concerns for the apartments above the video gaming establishment. Ms. Hoffstead advised this hasn't been discussed, but if they need to adjust operating hours to accommodate the residents, she is more than willing to do that. She mentioned they promote a quiet setting in their business and keep music volume to a minimum.

Vice Chair Doe questioned if there is any additional sound proofing available to help the residents on the second floor. Ms. Hoffstead advised she hasn't

researched any soundproofing and doesn't know if it's possible, but she is willing to look into it.

Vice Chair Doe questioned if the dart boards and gaming machines are directly below the bedrooms of the apartments. Ms. Hoffman advised she doesn't know, but overall her business is very quiet and they don't have many people come in to play darts, except during their dart leagues.

Mr. McMahon questioned how many people play during dart leagues. Ms. Hoffstead advised there is anywhere between 4-8 people playing. Mr. McMahon advised parking will be an issue during dart leagues. He mentioned with eight people playing darts, six people on the machines, three cars for the apartments, and vehicles for the online auto sales, there will be more spaces needed than the 17 spaces provided. He questioned where overflow parking will go. Ms. Hoffstead advised she didn't have an overflow plan at this time. Vice Chair Doe advised there are commercial parking lots to the south that could handle overflow parking. She mentioned Ms. Hoffstead would have to verify there aren't any parking restrictions for those lots.

Mr. Becker moved the Planning and Zoning Commission forward its findings of fact and recommend to the City Council approval of a Special Use Permit for a Video Gaming Establishment at 2022 Sycamore Road per the conditions as indicated on Exhibit A of the staff report.

Mr. Wright seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Klein – Yes, Ms. O'Flaherty – Yes, Mr. McMahon – Yes, Mr. Becker – Yes, Mr. Wright - Yes, Vice Chair Doe – Yes. Chair Maxwell was absent. Motion Passed 6-0-1.

## F. REPORTS

Mr. Olson advised the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was November 16, which would include two public hearings. He stated the first is for a special use permit for an existing U-Haul rental business on Hillcrest Dr. He noted the seconded is a text amendment related to the special use request. He mentioned the next Commission meeting on November 16 will be held at the DeKalb Police Department in Training Room #203 due to a conflict with the City Council/FAC meeting on the same day at the DeKalb Library.

Mr. Olson advised the City Hall block rezoning was approved by the City Council on October 26, which included changes to site plan and architectural elevations. He noted there will be three buildings instead of four and they will be maintaining the community garden area. He stated the total amount of units

decreased from 76 to 57 and the building elevations were also changed based on resident comments.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. O'Flaherty motioned to adjourn, Mr. Klein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting adjourned at 6:39 PM.