

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
October 14, 2024

Chairperson Perrot called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, June 14, 2024.

ROLL CALL

Present: Crutcher, Gray, Kmetzo, Mantey, Perrot, Westendorf
Absent: Majoros

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Chris Weber, Assistant City Manager; Jeffrey Bowdell, Building Director, Beth Saarela, City Attorney, Brian Golden, Director of Media, Bonnie Murphy, Recording Secretary.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Westendorf, to approve the agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

A. July 8, 2024 Minutes

MOTION by Westendorf, seconded by Kmetzo, to approve the items on Consent Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

PROPOSED FAÇADE MODIFICATION FOR “LONE LIGHT SPIRITS TASTING ROOM”, 23622 FARMINGTON ROAD

Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Chris Weber, Assistant City Manager, stated that as part of the tenant improvements, Lone Light Spirits Tasting Room proposes to install new windows in the same size and location as the currently existing windows. The replacement windows differ from the existing windows because they will be capable of opening. The windows open in the same manner as the windows at The Heights, which is across the street. What the Planning Commission is being asked to evaluate is whether the plan meets the standards of Section 35-104.C.5 of the Zoning Ordinance which deals with windows. The requirements are documented in your staff report. The main requirements to be evaluated is number 5, which is the number, shape, size and spacing of the windows, shall be compatible with the established rhythm of adjoining or nearby buildings in the downtown. If the PC determines the windows meet the requirements, they can pass a

motion to that effect, if not, the DDA Design Committee and Planning Commission can consider modifying the standards. We have Joe Lordon in our audience today from Lone Light Spirits who will give a brief discussion about his project and answer any questions that the Planning Commission might have.

Joe Lordon, Proprietor of Lone Light Spirits Tasting Room, came to the podium. He thanked the Commission for accommodating his request to be on tonight's agenda. For those of you who don't know me I'm Joe Lordon, I am the founder and head distiller at Lone Lights Spirits, we are a craft distillery, our production building is in Ferndale and we are looking to open up our tasting room at 23622 Farmington Road. The tasting room concept is essentially a full service cocktail bar, mixed drinks, samplings, all that stuff but only using my spirits and then of course mixers sourced elsewhere but from an alcohol standpoint it will be only my spirits, there's not going to be any food at the location, they'll be able to bring food in, of course we are looking to become part of the Social District and be able to serve cocktails to go to be enjoyed elsewhere downtown. The façade improvements that we're looking to do and stated is basically the existing windows and upgrade them to something a little bit more esthetically pleasing, consistent with some of the other businesses in the area, namely The Heights, right across the street. Currently they are big single pane kind of mirrored glass that are clearly outdated, they're not very esthetically pleasing, they don't match any of the other store fronts on the street. They are, I forgot the term my architect said they are nonthermally broken frame or something along those lines, basically they are not energy efficient and in the wintertime it's not going to be cheap to heat them, so replace them with insulated glass and the frames will all be the kind of black that is also across the street at Heights, and some of the other businesses in the area, again, consistency down the street and then with the opening of the windows, there's obviously a lot of benefits to that. People will enjoy being able to have the fresh air in there in the warmer months, it will kind of connect it esthetically but also from a functional standpoint to the Social District and the street and sidewalk outside, it's just much more welcoming and inviting and enticing for people to come in when they can hear the people talking and music and I just think it will be a really nice upgrade for the space.

Perrot thanked Lordon for the summary and opened the floor with his question about the Lone Light Spirits signage, is it exterior or interior, the sign that's in the window.

Lordon replied it will be built into it, I believe there might some, the letters might be protruding just a bit but it will be built basically flush with the window system.

Perrot said my other question is that obviously you're going to benefit from the Streetscape that the City just invested in and that second block of business has gained sidewalk from the previous design, now these windows when they open, they open out, right? Lordon replied inward. Perrot said that was going to lead to my next question

which is if they were to protrude out, I'm guessing you're going to want some kind of outside seating at some point in time.

Lordon replied we had discussed that but yeah, I think you know maybe there's room for two tops, we didn't really look into that but we're not looking to apply for any kind of outdoor seating, like a license, so at this point we're not looking to do anything like that, but yes, the windows will be opening towards the inside.

Perrot asked if the upstairs is part of the suite and Lordon replied no, we don't share an entrance or anything like that, the entrance to that is just to the south. He then opened the floor for questions from the Commissioners.

Crutcher stated just as an observation, this is going on across the street at the Brewery because this may be part of future projects as well, but the noise generated through the neighborhood from neighbors, right now there are apartments above your unit, those are residential and Lordon replied yes. Crutcher stated the Brewery's windows are facing the commercial street, and these are facing towards the neighborhood behind, which obviously is a little ways away from there but is facing more towards the residential area, but I just want you to be aware that looking at it like this, that can increase the noise level on the street and we should probably take that into consideration when we're going to approve these applications or not, not just the esthetics of it, whether it's operable, whether it's blocking the sidewalk, what is going to be of some concern or produce some kind of noise problem with the neighbors. In this case I don't think it does.

Lordon replied I don't think it would, I don't have an official capacity at this point, but I can't imagine it's going to be more than what you know some of the gatherings at the park where there's music and all kinds of stuff that's even closer to the neighborhood.

Crutcher stated my point is other than the neighbor right above you, that's probably the one person that's going to be impacted by the noise from this in this location but if you went somewhere else, there also may be someone living across the street or down the street or in a closer proximity. Someone moving in above a bar, they should probably expect there will be some noise but if you're living across the street especially if they were there before you moved in. Lordon replied they're currently renovating it right now, so no one is going to be taken by surprise. Crutcher said other than that if you can put a tap in the unit upstairs, I'll take that unit.

Kmetzo inquired about the seating capacity and Lordon replied right now the number is about 41 seats including bar seating, there's a little bit of room for standing room but until we get our final inspection we won't know exactly what the capacity can be.

Crutcher stated I don't think the sidewalk is going to be wide enough for you to get sidewalk seating and Lordon replied I don't think it is.

Perrot opened the floor for a motion.

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Kmetzo, to move to approve façade modification for Lone Light Spirits Tasting Room, located at 23622 Farmington Road, as presented.

Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

Building Director Bowdell thanked Crutcher for his comments including the opening of the windows and because this was going to open to the street, my concern could do that by right and we could end up with a place very close to a residential neighborhood that if we let everybody else do it, then this gives you the authority to say no, your location, I don't think that's a good idea. So that was my major concern with not doing it by right and Mr. Crutcher hit it on the head.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT

Crutcher inquired if any new plans have been coming to town

And Weber replied there's several things being discussed but nothing to be revealed.

Crutcher then asked about the progress of Maxfield and Bowdell replied regarding the Maxfield Training Center, the building is very close to being completely removed, the foundations and all those things they're steadily working on, there's an underground tank that has to be removed yet and hopefully that will be done by the end of the week. Site work will probably start, water, sewer, things like that. We have not approved their building plan yet, they're still making some adjustments to that plan and once that's complete, we haven't issued a construction permit yet.

Perrot asked if there were any surprises and Bowdell replied no, not that he thinks besides little idiosyncrasies. The oddest thing they've had to deal with is you cannot drive to a front door so they're going to have addresses over the garage doors that you can't get in so the UPS man, the pizza man, so we had agreed before they even started that they would put addresses on both sides of the building so that somebody can figure out where they're going but they dealt with it right away and like I say we really don't anticipate any issues.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Kmetzo, supported by Crutcher , to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary