



**Economic Development Commission
Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 5:00 PM
Room 112, Walpole Town Hall**

Meeting Minutes

Attending:

Members: Marc Romeo (Chairman), Donnell Murphy, Ken Fettig, Harry Brousaides, Brian Connor, John Hasenjaeger and Ashley Clark, Community Development Director

Absent:

Beth Pelick

Chairman Romeo called the meeting to order at 5:20 PM.

Review & Approve Minutes:

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the meeting minutes from the October 8, 2019 EDC meeting.

Mr. Hasenjaeger seconded

5-0-0

Approved: Fettig, Brian, Donnell, Romeo, Hasenjaeger

New Business:

Discussion on Site Specific Liquor License request from East Walpole business

Mr. Elie Nakhoul and Mr. Ronnie Nakhoul stated that they are interested in a beer and wine license for their business located in East Walpole.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that they would like to have an off-premise license in addition to their convenience store café/deli. He continued that their plan is to put a wall between the convenience store and convert the café deli into a liquor store.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that they've been at this location for about nine years and have not had any violations in the past five years. He stated that they are responsible business owners responding to their customer's request to provide beer and wine.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that they made one mistake in the past nine years. After the previous violations, they have not had any violations and have passed every health inspection. He stated that the neighborhood knows that they check IDS. He noted that even regular customers that come seven days a week know to bring their IDs because they will be checked.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that they would like to get a beer and wine license to make convenient for the neighborhood as there is nothing available in East Walpole. Their customers often go to surrounding communities to make their purchases.

Mr. Fettig inquired where the nearest location is to purchase alcohol.

The Board discussed locations in the surrounding areas such as on Route 1.

Mr. Fettig stated that south Norwood also has some locations.

Mr. Elie stated that they previously applied for a license but were denied because of the mistake that was made five years ago while he was out of town. He stated during that time someone sold to a minor. The previous owner sold the liquor license.

Mr. Elie stated that the violation was related to selling paraphernalia at the store while he was abroad taking care of family. He also noted that some people have connected police activity apprehending someone in the parking lot selling something to their business. He stated that they had nothing to do with this and no connection to this individual.

Mr. Hasenjaeger stated that he was at TMM during the previous round. He stated that the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen stated that the Selectmen were not in support of it but the business should try again in a few years if it did not pass.

Mr. Hasenjaeger stated that having a location in East Walpole would be very convenient.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that he asked for a license and was told there were none available. He waited and a license became available. Mr. Elie stated that during the paperwork process someone came out in opposition to the meeting. The license was subsequently sold to Stop n Shop.

Mr. Hasenjaeger stated that a convenience store is a viable business to serve the immediate community. He stated that it's the only resource in the entire area and that Mr. Elie Nakhoul is always there and is fastidious about keeping it open. He stated it's a tough business and this would probably support the business and keep it thriving in the neighborhood.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that in his previous business operations, they did not have any issues and were commended on their business practices.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that they have not had any violations since the one five years ago and live in Westwood.

Mr. Brousaides asked about the surrounding businesses hired an attorney. Mr. Elie Nakhoul affirmed this.

Mr. Brousaides inquired about the wall Mr. Elie Nakhoul mentioned installing.

Mr. Murphy stated that the wall will keep the kids on a separate side and no kids would be permitted where the alcohol is.

Mr. Brousaides stated that he would be behind this business getting a beer and wine license and encouraged them to join the Chamber. He noted this license and would benefit the community.

Chair Romeo stated that the last time they tried to obtain a beer and wine license there was a lot of neighborhood opposition. He stated that there were issues with pricing and complaints that their pricing changes day to day. Mr. Romeo noted, however, that for any small business to survive for 9 years is difficult and something should be said about it. He stated someone with not good character does not survive that long.

Mr. Elie Nakhoul stated that there will be two separate entrances.

Chair Romeo motioned to recommend favorable action on the East Walpole Market and Deli located at 196 and 198 Washington Street for a beer and wine license for the existing store.

Mr. Murphy second 5-0-0 in support.

Approved: Fetting, Brian, Donnell, Romeo, Hasenjaeger

Recommendation to the Select Board regrading Fiscal Tax Rate for 2020 (Vote)

The EDC discussed the 2020 Tax Classification. They noted their role in working to enhance the commercial tax base of the town.

Mr. Murphy motioned that the EDC should be in support of maintaining the existing tax base split between and that the EDC is opposed to increasing the tax burden on the latter tax classes. Furthermore, the EDC's position is that future tax classifications should be improved to better support the creation of new businesses and help maintain the existing businesses in Walpole who provide vital services to our community.

Mr. Hasenjaeger seconded

5-0-0

Approved: Fetting, Brian, Donnell, Romeo, Hasenjaeger

Affordable Housing articles

No discussion on this item took place.

Legislative delegation assist with water withdrawal permitting for Walpole

Mr. Hasenjaeger stated that there is an ongoing process trying to beat the state setting a lowering of the water withdraw permit. He stated that he is interested in trying to get the legislative delegation to intervene before the permit is set so we get a favorable setting.

Mr. Hasenjaeger suggested to continue the discussion at the EDC's next meeting.

Mr. Donnell motioned to adjourn at 6:00pm.

Mr. Murphy seconded.

5-0-0

Approved: Fettig, Brian, Donnell, Romeo, Hasenjaeger