

The Rural Retreat Town Council and the Rural Retreat Planning Commission held a Joint Public Hearing on January 9, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rural Retreat Town Hall Council Chambers.

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Timothy Litz
Vice-Mayor Jim Lloyd
Ed Schaack
Keith Crigger

Scott Mecimore
Jerrell Hall
Dale Yontz

ABSENT

NONE

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Raymond Matney, Town Manager
Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer
Robert Lewis, Police Chief

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Chairman Charles McMillan
Vice-Chairman Ed Schaack
James A. Hall

George Reasor
Peggy Hash
Brenda Atwell

ABSENT RURAL RETREAT PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Larry Lindsey

OTHERS PRESENT

Rev. Brian Burch, Harold Fogelsong
Mark Thomas, David Lee

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Litz called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

INVOCATION

The invocation was delivered by Rev. Brian Burch.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

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Mayor Litz turned the meeting over to Planning Commission Chairman Charles McMillan for the Joint Public Hearing. Chairman McMillan stated the purpose of a public hearing was to receive comments from the public prior to the Council and Commissions consideration for a conditional use permit for light manufacturing in a commercial general area. Chairman McMillan asked Mr. Matney to explain the request.

Mr. Matney stated that Scott Mecimore had approached the Town Council concerning putting a winery in a building he owns on Church Street. Mr. Mecimore is interested in manufacturing and selling the wine from this location, however; this would be considered light manufacturing which is allowed as a conditional use in a commercial general area. Mr. Matney asked Mr. Mecimore to explain what he is planning to do with the building and the winery.

Mr. Mecimore stated he is in the process of buying a winery in Honaker and would like to move the business to the Town of Rural Retreat. He further stated he is planning to divide his building into three areas, allowing room for manufacturing, tasting and retail. Also, the parking area will be expanded. Until the business begins to turn a profit, Mr. Mecimore is planning to keep it as a family business. He further stated that there will be some noise which would be from the use of a tow motor and delivery trucks bringing supplies but all access would be off of Church Street. Waste from the grapes will be hauled away and used as composting material.

Mr. Mark Thomas asked Mr. Mecimore about the manufacturing process and stated he was concerned with the traffic on Delp Avenue since it is a narrow one-way street. Additional concerns Mr. Thomas had was discharge into the air and the effect the business would have on future zoning. Mr. Matney explained to Mr. Thomas that the area is currently zoned commercial general which allows several businesses without having to go through the process of a conditional use permit.

Mr. Harold Foglesong explained he was concerned it would devalue the surrounding property. He then asked Mr. Mecimore is there would be an odor and what state agency he was working through. Mr. Mecimore stated there would be a smell during the fermentation process in the fall but the tanks must covered to meet requirement set forth by the federal and state ABC Board's.

Chairman McMillan asked if there were any additional comments. There being none the public hearing was closed. Chairman McMillan asked the Commission for comments or questions, there being none, he asked for a recommendation for the Council. Commissioner Hash made a motion to recommend to the Town Council to approve the conditional use permit to allow light manufacturing at 203 Church Street, second by Vice-Chairman Schaack. The motion passed with the following voting in favor: Charles McMillan, Ed Schaack, Peggy Hash, George Reasor and Brenda Atwell. James A. Hall abstained from the vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Keith Crigger, seconded by Councilmember Dale Yontz to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2006 meeting, motion passed unanimously.

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CITIZEN'S TIME

Mr. Thomas addressed Council and stated he was against the winery. He felt that Mr. Mecimore hadn't fully answered the questions he had asked. He further stated he agreed with Mr. Foglesong concerning the business devaluing their property.

CORRESPONDENCE

NONE

POLICE REPORT

Chief Lewis explained his activity report for the month of December.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

WDBJ 7 WEATHER BUG STATION – Councilmember Yontz stated he has received support for the weather station but no one is willing to give financial support. It was the consensus of the Council to not pursue this at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH DR. PEPPER – Vice-Mayor Lloyd stated he felt that it was not a good time of the year to contact Dr. Pepper. This item was tabled until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REQUEST – Councilmember Schaack made a motion to approve the conditional use permit to allow light manufacturing in a commercial general area with the stipulation that after one year and two months Mr. Mecimore must come back to the Council for review of the conditional use permit in regards to matters such as noise or smell. The motion was second by Councilmember Hall.

Councilmember Crigger stated that the citizens present disapprove due to environmental issues and property values. Councilmember Yontz said he understood the concern with property values but he asked what would affect property values more, leaving the building vacant as it is now or doing improvements to the building.

Mr. Mecimore stated it could possibly take him up to a year to get the winery established and to get the business moved and operational in Rural Retreat. Councilmember Schaack amended the motion to withdraw the one year and two month limitation. The motion was second by Councilmember Hall. Motion passed for (4) for: Dale Yontz, Ed Schaack, Keith Crigger and Jerrell Hall. Jim Lloyd and Scott Mecimore abstained from the vote.

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TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The Town Manager’s report is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes. The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

PRESSURE WASHER – Councilmember Crigger made a motion to purchase a new pressure washer not to exceed \$2,400. The motion passed unanimously.

RURAL RETREAT COMMUNITY CENTER – Mayor Litz appointed the Finance & Appropriations Committee to review the request made by Lisa Martin, Chairperson of the Rural Retreat Community Center.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills were read and approved for December 29, 2006 and January 9, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Mecimore.

Mayor

Clerk