

Newfield Township Public Hearing Meeting
March 10 2022 at 6:30PM

Meeting to start at 6:30, due to change of location, Chairperson Jennifer Sherburn offered a 10 minute delay for late arrivals.

Roll call, Wayne Ferris, Jay Peasely, Mary Hopkins, Jennifer Sherburn, Mike Rosema, Rick Roberson, (Jan Wilson unable to attend), 6 members present.

Jennifer Sherburn announced the recording of the meeting. Public Hearing purpose which was to allow three Marihuana Grow Facilities to present their applications, along with residential & public comments and questions to follow each presentation.

Applicants have 3 minutes to present followed by 5 minutes of public comment per presentation.

Applicants include the following:

RQMI- 22 S 176th Ave Requesting 18 class C permits, 1 processing permit

Preeminent Labs- ,7400 E M20 Requesting 2 class C permits

CCGC- 703 E Loop Rd. Requesting 2 class C permits

First Presenter

RQMI/ Oceana Gardens: 22 S 176th Ave. Presented site plan and processes. Provided information of soil erosion permits pulled. Explained surveillance is a high priority state law camera footage requested 30 days, RQMI stated they keep footage for 4 months.

Peoples Comments

Dan J- Inquire what 18 permits equates to. Inquire if the proposed facility is able to hold that many plants.

RQMI stated- In order to grow cannabis per state a permit is required, a class C permit entitles the bearer to 2,000 plants per class C permit. The cultivation will be outside on the property not in the building.

Joed B. - Inquired when the zoning permit was applied and approved.

RQMI- stated- I do not have the documents in front of me, I am unaware of specifics.

Jim D.- Inquired if the facility is close to Blodgett Lake. With 18 class permits, how is this smell going to affect residents?

RQMI stated- I cannot speculate

Jim B- Inquired for the proposed facility how many employees do you plan to have? Do you plan to employ locals or bring workers in? Will they have their own homes? What type of marijuana is this, where does this go after, does it go across state lines?

RQMI- stated- 15-20 full time employees, seasonal will total around 50. Yes, it is more cost effective to hire locals. All employees hired so far have their own homes. Medical Marijuana, no federal laws do not allow high THC cannabis to cross state lines, it is for MI only.

Sherita P. Inquired- This is the second location? Are you only buying land here? Did you already have pre approval? I see fencing up, wouldn't that be a waste of money if you didn't know?

RQMI-stated We do have one location currently, this proposed facility would be our second. I believe Newfield township is a wonderful location to live and work. If there was any pre approval, I don't know about it.

Bryan S. - point of order for the board- last planning committee. There was one excess permit last meeting which was originally thought to be Class C, there are 18 permits remaining not 17.

Kristen O- stated I have children and understand concerns. I was originally against the farms. Please ask questions to these people, prior to judgement.

RQMI- stated- This lady is right, we are keeping everything local and seeing the effects already.

Gail V- inquired- What are you going to do about the groundwater being contaminated, that seems to be an issue in Colorado?

RQMI- Unsure why that would be an issue related to the facilities of cannabis farms. All products used at facilities are organic. Drip irrigation is used, fertilizer is only directly on the plants, and runoff is drastically minimal.

Nicole M. - inquired are you monitored by DEQ or environmentally.

RQMI- stated- Absolutely, yes, the proposed property would be.

Jim C. inquired- Is cannabis taxed differently than other crop farms?

RQMI stated- Yes, 45 percent income tax, no standard deductions, along with special sales tax. One license is 40,000 permits at the township are \$5,000 each.

Jim C stated- I thought that was the case, I wanted to make a statement that there should be justification from the state to be taxed more than anyone else.

RQMI- stated if a dispensary is within the township, revenue share is possible at 10 percent.

Richard R- Supervisor in Shelby. Stated his wife had cancer and was prescribed medical marijuana products the last months of her life which improved her quality of life and wanted to thank the growers.

RQMI- Thank you.

Ruth B- Why did you come all the way here from Shelby, and talk about your wife? You didn't have to do that?

(unintelligible crowd banter)

Second Presenter

Preeminent Labs: 7400 E M20. Presented a site plan. Explained they are interested in buying homes and hiring locals. Stated they are committed to the community and follow all ordinances. The plan is to grow hybrid. Start the plants outdoors and move inside greenhouses for the winter. Expect to have at least 10 employees. Stated they follow all MRA security and recording for 30 days. Plan to use an irrigation control system.

Peoples Comments

Scott P. stated. I have 35 acres next to this, which I camp with my family. Are we going to be on surveillance on our own property?

Joed B. What is MRA?

Preeminent Labs stated – MRA is Marijuana Regulatory Agency, it is essentially the Michigan governmental Agency which regulates cannabis.

Dan J Inquired- you mentioned you have a water system. Do you have water collection systems you can incorporate with your irrigation for rainfall?

Preeminent Labs stated this plan does not have a water harvesting plan, it is an irrigation well currently, but this is something we can look at.

Joed B. Inquired- Did you purchase this property? When did you purchase this property? Have already started digging wells and getting permits for the property? Were any zoning permits pulled? It seems like quite a bit of risk to dig wells and purchase property if you haven't gotten permission. I question why you spend the money without knowing.

Preeminent Labs stated – I do not personally own the property but Preeminent does. I believe it was bought last year. We did get permits for the well, though I do not believe it has been dug yet but I would have to confirm. We are zoned commercially so no zoning permits have been needed. We have not spent a great deal of money.

Irene. Inquired- What happens if you do not get your permits? So, it could be a wasteland? So, can someone else move in that we do not want?

Preeminent Labs stated: We have no plans yet. I am not the personal owner of the property so I can not make the decision for the owner.

Steve M. stated- Industrial Hemp is only controlled by the state, not by the township. If permits are not granted to any of these facilities Hemp could come in and grow without any of our control.

Third Presenter

CCGC Charles: 5703 E Loop Rd. Site plan provided in packets to the board. Explain site plan. Has plans to remedy and mask the odor. Stated he has reached out to neighbors to try and be a good neighbor. Picked the location due to not being a busy road and surrounded by trees. Plans to hunt on land not being used for cultivation.

Peoples Comments

Kathleen B. : Do you own this property? I live almost directly across the street, and it is very residential.

Tom B: I have talked to the neighbors, and you would have to give me the names of who wants this here. They all enjoy watching the deer in that field.

CCGC Charles: I do not own it. I plan on hunting the back, I do not plan on disturbing the wildlife. I will have to get permits from the DNR to show I am not disturbing wildlife.

Amanda H: Inquired You said 2,000 plants, is this medical or recreational? It is 1,500 for recreational, 2,000 for medical.

CCGC: stated It is the other way around, 2,000 for adult use recreational, and 1,500 for medical.

Joed B. Inquired- Do you plan to buy, or lease, and how long? Is there a timeline? Do you plan to buy it all?

CCGC: stated I plan to lease until the end of the year, and then buy. I plan to buy it all, and hunt and conserve the wetlands. A lot of the property will be undisturbed.

Janey Inquired- Do you plan to bring jobs to the area? Are you an equal opportunity employer?

CCGC: stated Absolutely.

Nicole M. inquired- Are you separate from all the other facilities?

CCGC: Yes.

Toby M. Inquired- You said you guys are going to recommend, is it the township you make the call, or is it a ballot?

Jennifer S. stated- We have an ordinance in place that states the Planning Commission recommends to the Township Board.

Irene Inquired- You said 10 percent revenue could be brought to the township if there was a dispensary here. Would a dispensary come into the area?

CCGC: It is not the ordinance for Newfield township for a dispensary.

Jennifer S. stated: There are seven different types of permits. Over months of public meetings and discussions in 2019, we only opted to allow permits for agricultural purposes, no retail.

Joe- You are not at all retailing it? You have to sell your product to another area? People are not coming to you to buy then?

CCGC: No, this is cultivation only. We will grow it and have a secure licensed individual come and pick it up and transport it to a retail store.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Hopkins