

Newfield Township Planning Commission Meeting

February 16th, 2023,

Michael called public hearing at 6:40pm when a quorum was established.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Michael J. present

Mary H. present

Rick R. present

3 Members Present.

(Wayne F. enters meeting during correspondence)

Correspondence:

Haley W. & Bandon G, E-M20:

Concerned of farm expansion, and possible peaceful nature. The smell is awful

August- November.

Feel like there has been a loss in value of their property (salability) as a result of the farm.

Current status is against farm expansion.

Beckman Brothers: Previous owners of the lot have no objections for expansion.

There are issues with original permits and zoning issues. Recommendation that land be zoned residential.

Public Hearing; Special Meeting for HI-CLOUD LCC site expansion.

Applicant has 5 minutes to present

Public 2 minutes to address questions/ concerns

Applicant to have 1 minute rebuttal/ response

HI -Cloud LLC:

Site plan to add a pole barn which will assist in indoor functional lab. Having the ability to utilize indoor space will allow the ability to keep employees year round and not have to do layoffs.

It will allow plants to grow out if there is an opportunity to spread plants out more which allows for more product in the same amount of plants/permits that HI-Cloud already has.

The pole barn is needed for business and employment sustainability and success.

Rick R: So it is just a build then?

Wayne F: Do you want to expand more plants in the future? Does that state grant excess permits? You have 7 medical permits now.

Hi-Cloud: The market is not going any higher. I made a large investment and in order for my ROI I want to be able to spread my plants out wider for more production.

Wayne F: Are you going to fence in all 40 acres? Spreading these plants out is going to make the smell worse.

Jim D made comments about seeing campers on site and asked if they were in compliance with state law and health code.

Jake G: The smell is a huge concern, Haley and Brandon just had a baby which has breathing issues. Can you reduce the smell at all?

Hi Cloud: As far as processing there is no smell. The smell starts in August and goes until October, during harvest.

Jake G: Is it zoned residential?

Steve M (ZA): The commercial district runs north side of Hawley to south side of loop.(Village limit to 184th) Your son's property is zoned commercial. That is why all the propane companies, Herins etc are there, because it is commercially Zoned.

Jake G: (Addressing HI-Cloud) The houses to the East and West of the facility, could they be purchased out?

Hi- Cloud: It is definitely a possibility. I do have employees who are looking for houses. I am willing to purchase properties in the future and land contract them out for employees.

Joan D: You cannot have a parcel with two purposes. Statute, it has been zoned commercial for at least 20 plus years.

Jim D: What statute is that?

Joan D: You can look it up.

Michael J: Are there any more public comments at this time? If none, then we will call for Recess; 15 minutes of time.

Public comments: (none)

Rick R motions to adjourn hearing. Wayne F supports. Hearing adjourned passes 4-0

Return to Order by Chairperson Michael Jansma:

Approval of Agenda

Mary H. motion to approve, Rick R. support. Passed 4-0

Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 9th, 2023, Meeting.

Motion by Rick.Support by Wayne Passed 4-0.

Omission of correspondence as they have been addressed in Public Hearing;

Action Item: Hi-Cloud Site Plan proposal

Public Comments on Action Items:

Jim D: There is no shrubbery in place per ordinance requirements. This is a zoning issue. They are out of compliance with the variances. Recommends rephrasing in sub paragraph 3 of ordinance.

Michael J: Yeah the ordinance is not very clear, whether this is 100 ft from the plants themselves etc.

Hi-Cloud: I apologize if this is affecting you, we plan to hide everything with Christmas trees. I come from real estate. I have invested heavily, and for me to stay in business this is what it is going to take.

Jim D: The setbacks do affect the neighbors; trees on the sides. I am not saying it is your fault, but the ordinance was never followed.

Hi-Cloud: I am willing to work with everyone for what is needed.

Dennis D: Before Hi-Cloud bought that, it was a gravel pit, ugly. The property has always been unappealing.

Old Business: None

New Business: Hi-Cloud Side plan proposal

Wayne F: We need to address the setback concerns Jim D has brought up. Do we know if this has been addressed; measured?

Steve M (ZA): Yes, we have been out several times. I have measured, Jay P. has measured, Rick M. has measured. They are 100 ft plus to any plant.

Hi-Cloud: We have a security system and alarms. They are always going off. There are trucks pulling in all the time and dumping there. It looks like a dump site. I want to clean it up, fence it in. Maybe put a big gate on M20.

Michael J: The parcel that you intend to expand into; will you purchase it if approved today.

Hi-Cloud: Yes.

ZA Comments:

Steve M (ZA): JRB LLC- they are the owner and they currently have a special use permit. For Hi-Cloud to undertake business on the parcel they will have to file for a new special use permit pertaining to them.

We did not have any permit applications last month, but last year was a big year for us.

There is an issue with people just putting stuff up without permitting. Looking into issues with public safety ordinances, junk cars, etc. Its becoming problematic and I am working on that.

Planning commissioning review: communications for Board recommendations:

Michael J: I have had some time to go over a lot of this information. I have an issue with the ordinance that specifically says no growing is permitted on residential land.

Steve M (ZA): The issue is that we used to do spot zoning here.

Wayne F: How long has it been since we remapped the zone?

Steve M (ZA): 2019

Michael J: There is no question that the ordinance is muddy.

Mary H: This property has been permitted and operating and as commercial for over 20 years. That takes precedence. It's unfair to defer his ROI and put his employees future at risk due to a messy ordinance.

Rick R: I make a motion to accept the Hi-Clouds site plan. Motion supported by Mary H.
Motion passed (3-1)

Recommendation to the Township Board

Planning commission recommends that The Board approve Hi-Clouds site plan as presented.(Following special permit requirements as needed)

Michael J motioned for adjournment Rick R support. PC 4-0 to end the meeting.