

City of Huron
Planning Commission
May 8, 2024, 5:30 P.M.- Special Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. in the Council Chambers at Huron City Hall, 417 Main Street by Acting Chairman Sam Artino. Members in attendance: Tim Sowecke, and Mark Cencer. Members absent: Gary Boyle and Jim Hartley. Staff in attendance: Planning Director Erik Engle, and Law Director Todd Schrader.

Audience Comments: None.

New Business

Firelands Scientific- Petition for Code Amendment

Petition & Code Amendment Description

In a joint effort with Firelands Scientific, the city was recently petitioned by Firelands Scientific to modify our Ordinances to permit at least one recreational marijuana dispensary in the city. Our Ordinances currently prohibit all recreational marijuana dispensaries, no exceptions (1121.08). Staff consulted with the Law Director as to the state law and procedure knowing recent state laws have shifted based on the most recent referendum permitting controlled recreational sales.

Mr. Artino introduced the petition from Firelands Scientific, 2344 University Drive, Huron OH, to rescind Ordinance 1121.08 and update other sections of Huron City Code to align with Chapter 3780 of Ohio Revised Code.

Mr. Engle read from the staff report: In a joint effort with Firelands Scientific, the city was recently petitioned by Firelands Scientific to modify our Ordinances to permit at least one recreational marijuana dispensary in the city. Our Ordinances currently prohibit all recreational marijuana dispensaries, no exceptions (1121.08). Staff consulted with the Law Director as to the state law and procedure knowing recent state laws have shifted based on the most recent referendum permitting controlled recreational sales. Mr. Engle stated that amendments to two sections of the code are being proposed, 1121.08 and 1126.16. He referenced the staff report for detail:

As per the recommendation of legal, the attached amendments to Sections 1121.08 and 1126.16 are proposed and attached as Exhibit B for both sections. The amendments are simple in nature. Essentially, 1121.08 re-aligns the selling of recreational marijuana with that of medical marijuana sales, limiting the dispensary to one establishment (1) city-wide being in an I-1 Industrial district (referencing Firelands existing medical marijuana dispensary). Added language to Section 1126.16 is simply a cross-reference back to Section 1121.08 allowing for one (1) dispensary establishment allowing for the sale of recreational marijuana.

Mr. Engle noted that since there are shifts in state statute, the city code is inconsistent with the state at this time. Staff is recommending approval by the Planning Commission with recommendation to City Council as proposed. Mr. Engle recognized Mr. Schrader and Mr. Jesse Gannon in attendance if the board had any questions.

Mr. Sowecke asked for clarity on the action that members can take. Mr. Artino and Mr. Engle noted that the Planning Commission is a recommending body, it can make recommendations to City Council to approve, amend, or deny amendments. Mr. Engle noted the Planning Commission may hold a Public Hearing if they so choose. City Council *shall* hold a Public Hearing and has the final say in the matter.

Mr. Cencer inquired about the proposed language to allow (1) city-wide, is that the only option on the table or do we recommend leaving it prohibited but with the exclusions listed in the State Law – should we match the state law to avoid any future loopholes? Mr. Schrader explained that the city does have the right to limit the number of dispensaries pursuant to ORC 3780.25 (A); but referenced ORC 3780.25 (B) (1) noting the major exceptions relative to: 1) Existing Cultivators, processors or dispensaries who already have a certificate of operation and are co-located on the same parcel or contiguous parcels 2) Existing Cultivators, processors or dispensaries who already have a certificate of operation but are not co-located on the same parcel or contiguous parcels.

Mr. Schrader noted that Firelands Scientific holds a medical license, and will be operating on the same contiguous parcels, and because of that, they will get a recreational license. Mr. Schrader said he believes that the amendment as proposed will send a message that this is what the city wants, unless the city feels otherwise, and wants to expand it, the city is embracing one and only one dispensary for now. He explained he believes it is a stronger statement to say that 1121.08 limits it to one and only one for now versus the city being open to whatever ORC 3780 may bring.

Mr. Cencer noted if this is the recommendation for the clearest and simple language, he was fine with this. Mr. Schrader referenced future challenges and/or petitions that may come into fruition going forward.

Mr. Schrader noted that there may be additional future state changes relative to dual licensing and until the city knows more, we are limiting the amendment to the proposed, however, in the future there may be additional amendments for this body to consider.

Mr. Artino asked about tax revenue projections.

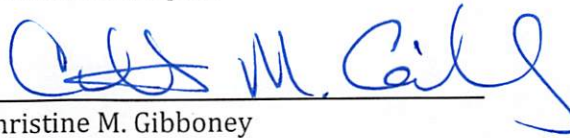
Applicant/Owner Comments: Greg Cozzens, & Jesse Gannon- Firelands Scientific
Greg Cozzens replied he would estimate \$500,000 of tax revenue for the City of Huron based on the new state law and what the industry is forecasting.

Motion by Mr. Cencer to recommend the approval of the proposed code amendments to City Council as submitted. Motion seconded by Mr. Sowecke Roll call on the motion:

Yeas: Cencer, Sowecke, Artino (3)
Nays: (0)
Abstain: (0)

With a majority vote in the affirmative, motion passes and recommendation to City Council to approve the amendment as proposed.

With no further business, motion by Mr. Cencer to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Hartley.
All in favor, motion passes, meeting adjourned at 5:25p.m.



Christine M. Gibboney
Administrative Assistant-Planning & Zoning

Adopted: 2/5/24

*Minutes prepared from audio recording