

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Public Hearing

February 7, 2023

These minutes are not approved until our next meeting.

Chairman Little called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30 p.m. for the conditional use permit and site plan approvals for the New Leaf Native Plant Nursery.

Members present: Karen Flahie, Susan Ochs and Matt Little. Mike Bossory and Dan Schaible were both absent. Planner Rodney Nanney and Township Supervisor Larry Lindemann were also present along with Marcus McNamara.

Rodney Nanney gave an overview. He stated all plans had been submitted and were sufficiently ready for the Planning Commission review and Public Hearing. Chris Oesterling introduced himself and told what the nursery was all about.

Karen Flahie asked if they would have shoreline restoration plants. The answer was yes.

Mary Hershelman said she was confused about wholesale versus retail. Chris explained they would not be open to the public (retail). She asked how much traffic to expect. They limit pick ups to 30 minutes apart.

Don Day asked what the hours of operation would be. The answer was 8:00 - 5:00 Monday – Friday and 8:00 to noon on Saturday. Don said he has noticed more traffic already.

John Vincent feels this will devalue everything they have. He thinks he will never be able to sell his house.

Jennifer Vincent asked if there was more than one appointment at a time. The answer was only one at a time, no overlapping appointments. Chris stated they were not trying to do anything crazy. They are not looking to build a big corporate entity.

Don Day said so about 16 customers a day then? He asked what the lighting would be like.

Chris explained they don't sell just one plant at a time, it's by trays. Each tray holds 38 plants.

Valisa Bristle said the plan now is native plants and asked if that would change. The answer was no only native plants.

Larry Lindemann asked how many employees they have. Right now it is 4 full time employees. Their busy season is May to June, it slows down July to August and picks up a little again in September. They close in November.

Rodney Nanney said the ordinance section on Nurseries was 5.107

Valisa Bristle asked if the site plan showed parking for employees and for customers. She wondered if it showed lighting too. The answer was yes. She then asked if there would be signs stating that it was wholesale only. The answer was yes.

Mary Hershelman stated there was a little mistrust.

Larry Lindemann asked what facilities there were for employees in regards to restrooms. Chris answered they would be using port-a-potties for the time being.

There was no more discussion or questions.

Chairman Little said they would not be making a decision on this tonight but would have it at the next meeting.

Chris said they were already behind on taking orders and wondered if it would be ok to begin taking them even though the decision was not final. Little informed him that he didn't see a problem with the approval and it would be fine to begin taking orders.

Chairman Little closed the Public Hearing at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ann Huehl, Recording Secretary