

MINUTES
Advisory Commission on Labor and Development
Thursday, April 7, 2022, 9:00 AM
Village Hall of Tinley Park – Council Chambers
16250 S. Oak Park Avenue
Tinley Park, IL 60477

Members Present: Josh Weger, Chairman
Frank DiGiovanni, Commissioner
Tony Janowski, Commissioner
Mike Lafferty, Commissioner
Henry Malinowski, Commissioner
Tom McGrath, Commissioner

Members Absent: Larry Nichols, Vice Chairman
Dan Ahern, Commissioner
Mike Macellaio, Commissioner
Mike Uylaki, Commissioner

Staff Present: Kimberly Clarke, Community Development Director
Hannah Lipman, Assistant Village Manager
Carolyn Mitera, Business Retention and Marketing Specialist
Paul O’Grady, Village Attorney
John Urbanski, Public Works Director

Also Present: Lucas Hoefflicker - Ascend Illinois, LLC
James Andrus- The Andrus Group
Taofik Lasisi – Project Director, Innerform

Item #1 – CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the Advisory Commission on Labor and Development Meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM.

Item #2 – CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON LABOR AND DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022- Commissioner DiGiovanni pointed out an error within the first paragraph of Item 3 that was subsequently noted for correction. Motion was made by Commissioner Lafferty to approve the minutes as corrected for the Advisory Commission on Labor and Development special meeting held on Thursday, February 10, 2022 and seconded by Commissioner McGrath. Vote by voice call. Chairman Weger declared the motion carried.

Item # 3 –DISCUSS ASCEND CANNABIS DISPENSARY REDEVELOPMENT: Community Development Director Clarke stated that the Ascend redevelopment would occur in an existing building on Harlem Avenue that formerly housed a Bandana’s Bar-B-Q location. Ms. Clarke mentioned that when the State of Illinois cannabis laws changed, the Village examined existing zoning codes and identified the potential for dispensaries to be zoned via special-use classification. She went on to introduce the Ascend redevelopment members present, and estimated that over a million dollars would be invested to cover State requirements and additional security resources.

Lucas Hoefflicker, Director of Strategy at Ascend, announced that the former Bandana’s building was acquired just after January 1st of this year and confirmed that Ascend’s plan was to gain site approval to

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open an adult-use cannabis dispensary at that location. He explained that Ascend's project management and architectural teams have finalized the design and renovation plans and invited the Board to direct any questions to them.

Commissioner Lafferty requested a summary of the planned changes to the existing structure. Taofik Lasisi introduced himself as the project director and a resident of Tinley Park for over 18 years. Mr. Lasisi stated that the existing structure originally housed an Applebee's location that was renovated prior to Bandana's subsequent occupation, but that the existing architecture remained unchanged. He mentioned that the main and Harlem façades would be completely renovated, some existing brickwork demolished, and a new storefront constructed. With regard to the building's interior, Mr. Lasisi explained that the floor would need to be leveled and the ceiling would be opened; only the structure of the restroom area would remain the same with flooring and other cosmetic upgrades.

Chairman Weger inquired about the engineering firm responsible for the project, to which Mr. Lasisi replied that his firm, Innerform, was responsible for interior/exterior design and that Accent was the firm tasked with interior structural engineering. He went on to name Mr. Brian Lawson as the structural engineer of the exterior redevelopment, and emphasized that the project would be out to bid for general contractorship in the near future.

Commissioner Janowski asked if the estimated \$1 million cost of the project reflected only the construction costs. Mr. James Andrus replied that the total investment amounted to approximately \$2.8 million for the full exterior and interior renovations planned. Mr. Andrus went on to specify that the finished location was designed to be a dispensary and emphasized that no cultivation would take place on the premises.

Commissioner Janowski inquired about storage procedures for inventory. Mr. Lasisi replied that public and private areas were distinct and separately contained and controlled. Initially, customers would present ID and be screened before gaining entrance to the main area of the facility. A rear, secured location would contain restricted employee areas, including a reinforced storage vault. This employee-only area would contain additional security measures, including multiple cameras.

Commissioner Janowski asked whether consideration had been given to a local, community-based labor force at this juncture. Mr. Andrus replied that zoning and design documents were presently being worked through, and that there was no current, outward communication regarding labor during this phase, emphasizing that any feedback or suggestions would be welcomed.

Chairman Weger inquired about the availability of the Class 7a tax benefit reclassification for this project that was applied for by the previous owner. Mr. Hoefflicker responded that he had recently spoken with a local attorney who is presently investigating how to move forward with application requirements. Chairman Weger emphasized the additional responsibilities that accompany such benefits.

Counselor O'Grady advised that this project was going before the Planning Commission later that evening, and that a motion on this item was not required, as the Advisory Commission on Labor and Development's review was for informational purposes only in this instance.

Commissioner Janowski requested the estimated start time of the project. Mr. Hoefflicker replied that the planned opening would be in Q4 of this year, contingent on the status of the state license pertaining to the Tinley Park location.

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Commissioner Weger asked Mr. Hoefflicker to give a synopsis of Ascend's business model and operations. Mr. Hoefflicker stated that Ascend presently has 21 dispensaries and 5 growing facilities in 5 states. He went on to explain that in every state in which Ascend operates, they are vertically integrated, which means that inventory is grown, processed, transported, and then sold at retail within individual states. Ascend is based in New York, has approximately 1500 employees nationwide, and was listed on the Canadian Stock Exchange last spring.

Item #4– RECEIVE COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: Chairman Weger asked if anyone from the public would like to comment.

A member of the public inquired what Ascend's plan was for using Union labor in Tinley Park. Mr. Andrus replied that the project would fully use Union labor and would be soliciting bids in the near future. Mr. Hoefflicker added that all Ascend retail and cultivation employees have been offered the opportunity to unionize, and that two (2) of the four (4) Chicagoland dispensaries and nearly all cultivation centers have already done so.

Item #5 – OTHER BUSINESS: Commissioner Weger asked if any Commissioners or staff had other business to discuss.

Community Development Director Clarke mentioned the new Starbucks location on LaGrange opening on Saturday, April 9, with a ribbon cutting to follow at a later date. Ms. Clarke went on to observe that the new construction of the strip mall south of the 7-11 on Harlem is progressing well with a projected July completion. Additionally, she noted that Floor & Décor was given occupancy clearance to start stocking product; a May public opening, in spite of some weather challenges, has been projected. Lastly, Ms. Clarke related that the industrial park on Harlem and Vollmer are submitting for Building 2 to the Planning Department and are expected to gear up for construction shortly thereafter.

Commissioner Janowski inquired about the status of the Magnuson project, and Ms. Clarke replied that they are planning to submit revised drawings within the next couple of weeks in accordance with their obligation under Special Use. Once the permit is issued for the project, Ms. Clarke continued, construction is required to commence within 60 days.

Commissioner Mc Grath requested the identity of the building inspector responsible for the adherence to building codes in new construction projects. Ms. Clarke replied that Mr. Michael Coleman, Manager of the Building Division and an architect by trade, performs inspections as well as most plan reviews. During backlog periods, Ms. Clarke explained, plans are additionally reviewed by a third party, Lakeside Consulting. Ultimately, Ms. Clarke, concluded, Mr. Coleman undertakes final inspections and reviews, including pre-planning meetings with Planning Department staff and all involved trades in larger projects. Lastly, Ms. Clarke announced that the Planning Department is seeking a building inspector, and will be re-posting the position in the near future.

Item #6 – ADJOURNMENT:

Upon the mention of this portion of the meeting, a citizen addressed the Commission and inquired if the Magnuson project would have proceeded more efficiently if this commission had been involved at that time for review, as well as how the Commission would operate in the review process moving forward. Chairman Weger mentioned that he was not familiar with the Magnuson project, but that it was his hope in general that the Commission would add value in the review process of proposed projects and help to assure that future developments will proceed efficiently, smoothly, and with high-quality labor and materials.

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Motion to adjourn the meeting of the Advisory Commission on Labor and Development Committee was made by Commissioner McGrath and seconded by Commissioner Malinowski. Vote by voice call. Chairman Weger declared the motion carried and adjourned the meeting at 9:28 AM.

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