

Honesdale Borough Council - Approved Electronic Version
Conditional Use Hearing: July 14, 2014
Brian Cobb / Irving Cliff Brewing and Bottling

A conditional use hearing was conducted on July 14, 2014, in Borough Hall, 958 Main Street, Honesdale, PA. Council President James L. Brennan, Jr. presided at the hearing, which was called to order at 5:32 PM. He said that the hearing will be referred to as CU2-2014.

Attending were Council President James L. Brennan, Vice-President Bill Canfield, Robert Jennings, Scott Smith, Juanita Pisano, and Harry DeVrieze. Other Borough officials attending included Borough Secretary Judith Poltanis, Solicitor Richard Henry, and Dan Hnatko, Zoning Officer. Barbara Kaiser was the stenographer. Councilor Dan Barnes arrived at 5:45 PM.

President Brennan stated that a stenographer was present and he asked everyone to speak clearly and loud so that it could be recorded. He stated that the applicant seeks permission to convert a portion of a T-shirt printing plant for use as a craft beer brewing, bottling, packaging and distributing facility. The property is currently zoned C-1. The applicant seeks Conditional Use approval due to the proposed change of use under the Ordinance.

Attorney Alfred J. Howell was the attorney for the applicant Brian Cobb. Attorney Howell stated that a narrative was submitted with the application which describes the proposed operation. There will be no bar in the facility or service on site. There will be distribution of the beer to local establishments and other sites in accordance with the PA Liquor Control Acts. He stated that in accordance with the Borough's ordinance, the people within the prescribed area were notified of the hearing. He entered the receipts and the personal service notices as exhibits. Attorney Howell stated that James Murray, retired from the PA State Police, could testify if Council wished.

President Brennan asked if there were any interveners who wish to speak in opposition of the application. No one was identified as an intervener.

Dan Hnatko, Zoning Officer was sworn by stenographer Barbara Kaiser. He stated that the application was received and went before the Planning Commission which provided a letter of approval.

Solicitor Henry asked that the Planning Commission letter be entered as an exhibit.

Brian Cobb was sworn in by the stenographer. Attorney Howell questioned Mr. Cobb about the proposed operation. Examples of beer bottles and labeling were shown to Council members. During the question and answer period, it was revealed that 7-8 people would be employed by the business; distribution would be statewide; description of any retail sales; availability of 15 parking spaces; the manufacturing of the special brew process was explained; waste product will be taken by farmers; and no excessive noise levels will be generated.

Councilor Smith asked that if tours were going to be offered, would there be sufficient parking. Dan Hnatko answered yes. Mr. Cobb stated that more parking could be added if necessary. Councilor

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Smith also asked that if there is a novelty shop there, could people purchase beer at the retail shop. Mr. Cobb answered in the affirmative. Councilor Smith asked about whether or not tasting of the beer would be allowed and isn't that consumption. Mr. Cobb stated that the LCB rules allow tasting which is a small amount. Councilor Smith asked what kind of batch sizes would be generated. Mr. Cobb stated that approximately 200,000 to 300,000 gallons several times a week. Councilor Smith asked about venting the CO₂. Mr. Cobb explained the process that captures the CO₂ and recycles it. Councilor Smith asked Dan Hnatko if NEIC raised any concerns with the building permit. Dan Hnatko said that when the permit application is filed then the review process will discover any out of the ordinary. Councilor Smith asked about any known safety concerns. Mr. Cobb stated that no concerns could be noted.

President Brennan asked if all the exhibits were presented to the stenographer.

Solicitor Henry asked if Attorney Howell would call Mr. Murray to testify for the record. Mr. Murray was sworn in by Barbara Kaiser. Attorney Howell questioned Mr. Murray about his credentials and the service he did by distributing notices to property owners. The return of service, mail return receipts, and affidavits were entered as an exhibits.

President Brennan asked Zoning Officer Dan Hnatko if there was anything to add to his testimony. He did not say anything detrimental to the application. Councilor Smith asked Mr. Cobb how many additional parking spaces could be added if necessary. Mr. Cobb replied approximately 5 spaces.

Attorney Howell stated that the tours is not the major part of the operation. It is the manufacturing that is important. Mr. Cobb can't get formal plans can be made until use is permitted.

Councilor Canfield thanked the applicant for his presentation and said he looks forward to touring the facility.

President Brennan stated that a decision would be made this same date at the regular meeting of Borough Council at 6 PM.

Scott Smith moved for adjournment of the hearing at 5:55 PM. Robert Jennings seconded the motion.

Judith Poltanis, Borough Secretary