

Plainfield Planning Commission Minutes

Monday May 1st, 2023

Present: Will Colgan and Karen Storey. Brian Voigt from the CVPRC and Kayle Hope attended as guests

Approval of Minutes: Karen made the motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting and Will seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Will summarized the situation with cannabis. Cannabis is not agriculture as defined by the state, so it needs to be described in the zoning to be permitted. Will suggested having it be a Cottage Industry in all zones and to have retail cannabis be a conditional use in the village. Brian said allowing retail cannabis in the village district does make sense. Cannabis cultivation can also include wholesale, production and testing. Allowing large-scale processing in the village could limit other uses that could be more beneficial for a village center.

Kayle Hope mentioned that there is no state mandated zoning conditions and agricultural conditions don't apply to cannabis putting it in a gray zone.

Karen said the security requirements (fences, cameras etc.) that are required for tier 1 make it a zoning issue.

Kayle said she was a tier 1 grower that is zoned as a home occupation in Plainfield.

Odor, nuisance, lighting can all be an issue on larger operations. Brian said cannabis cultivation should be regulated like other businesses. The only extra conditions are those of the Cannabis Control Board (CCB).

Karen said there is no option in the current zoning for outdoor "nonagricultural" use in Cottage Industry. The issue is inside vs outside uses so that needs to be resolved in the new draft.

Brian said the regular conditional uses in the zoning can manage the nuisance issues. The DRB would have an impact on the initial town permit. Brian said it's important not to single out cannabis for unique restrictions on the local level. One question is how big an operation the town wants to allow in each zone. Testing facilities could be a small operation so it could fit almost anywhere. It could be more like an office than a factory.

Will proposed putting cannabis outdoor and indoor cultivation as an added use in the definition of cottage industry. One condition would be "meeting the minimum conditions of the CCB regulations for each tier". Cottage Industry would allow for tier 1 and 2 and Light industry would allow for tier 3-5. Retail sales would be a conditional use in the village district.

Kayle asked about an operation below 1,000 sq ft needing to comply with local zoning. Karen said that guidance is for the state definition of home occupation. The town home occupation in Plainfield is different.

Brian would ask Claire about whether this new language would be a substantial change that would mean the Select Board would have to re-warn their hearing on the draft zoning. They will get back with the opinion to Will.

The meeting adjourned at 8 pm.