

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
OF THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS PLAN COMMISSION

A MEETING HELD ON:

May 22, 2024

Project Title: Spent Grain Brewery
Address: 17 N. Vail Ave.
Petitioner: Eric Lamkins
Address: 501 W. Wing St.
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Requested Action:

1. Special Use Permit to allow a Brew Pub in the B-5 District.

Variations Required:

1. Variation from Chapter 28, Section 6.12-1, to waive the requirement for a traffic and parking study prepared by a qualified professional engineer.

Attendees: Eric Lamkins, Spent Grain Brewery
John Sigalos, Plan Commissioner
Lynn Jensen, Plan Commissioner
Bruce Green, Plan Commissioner
Hailey Nicholas, Planning Department

Project Summary:

The subject property is located within the Downtown District on the Southeast corner of Vail Avenue and Davis Street, and is part of a larger multi-tenant building with LaTasca Tapas and the Domain on Vail Apartments. The subject unit was formerly occupied by Bangkok Thai Restaurant, but is vacant at this time. The unit is approximately 2,509 square feet in size with access to a 520 square-foot basement. The petitioner, Eric Lamkins of Spent Grain Brewing, has executed a lease for the subject unit at 17 N. Vail Avenue to open and operate a brew pub business. The preliminary floor plan includes a dining area, bar, and kitchen on the main level with a storage area and kegs for brewing in the basement.

The business operations would include brewing beer products, cooking food, and serving food and alcohol. Hours of operation would be 3:00pm-10:00pm Wednesday and Thursday, 12:00pm-11:00pm on Friday and Saturday, and 12:00pm-8:00pm on Sundays. They plan to have a about 10-16 employees in total. The business owner is licensed as a Class 3 brewer by the State of Illinois, and plan to obtain their Brew Pub license after receiving their liquor license from the Village.

Meeting Discussion:

Mr. Lamkins – we are proposing to take over the space 17 N. Vail Avenue. We are looking to open what is considered a nano brewery, brewing single barrels, which are 30 gallons. The entire system fits inside the kitchen and is ventless. It does not vent outside, so there's no concern for odors. It is a self-contained system that is kept in the kitchen, and will be fermenting down the basement. All of the main tanks and the walk-in refrigerator with the kegs will all be kept down stairs. The name of the brewery is Spent Grain Brewery. The very first part of the brewing process you create spent grain, buy soaking the grain in the water to create your mash. At that time, when you're done with those grains there, they are discarded, you can give them to a farmer or thrown away, and those grants are referred to as spent grain. In our case we actually reutilize, some of the spent grain, so we're using that name because we're going to represent that as part of our

food menu. We are looking at appetizers, a couple of soups, salads and then a light fair entree, meaning like a sandwich and chips, but not full dinners. Each of those things would have something that is made with spent grain. Bread is obviously the easiest to make with spent grains, but we can make granola and dog treats.

We are looking to develop more of a relaxed lounge environment, with 24 seats of dining inside, 14 seats and then another 24 seats of leather couches and chairs taking up the bulk of space to create that lounge environment. We are replacing the doors and having them move forward to flatten out and we will do garage door screens pretty similar to what Cortland's is using today, so that we can open up the outside. Outdoor seating during Alfresco, the space on the sidewalk would be permitted.

Ms. Nicholas - the petitioners of Spent Grain Brewing are requesting a special use permit to allow a brew pub in the B-5 downtown district. The subject property is located on the southeast corner of Vail Ave. and Davis St. which is part of a multi-tenant building with La Tasca restaurant, and Domain on Vail Apartments. The subject unit was formerly occupied by the Bangkok Thai restaurant, but is vacant at this time. The petitioner has executed a lease for the subject unit which is approximately 2500 square feet with access to a 520 square foot basement. Their preliminary floor plan includes a dining area, bar, and kitchen on the main level, with a storage area and brewing equipment in the basement. The business operations would include brewing, beer products, cooking food, and serving food and drinks. Hours of operation are tentative at this time, but they are expected to be closed Monday & Tuesday, open 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm Wednesday & Thursday, 12:00 pm to 11:00 pm Friday & Saturday, and 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm Sunday. They anticipate to have anywhere from 10 to 16 employees, and the business owner is licensed as a Class 3 Brewer by the State of Illinois and they plan to obtain their liquor license from the Village of Arlington Heights.

A Plan Commission application has not yet been received, but the petitioners will provide a written response to each of the three hardship criteria necessary for special use permit approval as part of the application. They will also provide a complete project narrative, which should include a detailed description of their business, including an explanation of the products and services that they plan to offer. The comprehensive plan classifies this property as appropriate for mixed-use land uses, and the proposed use is compatible with that. A traffic and parking study by a certified traffic engineer is required for this project. However, as the employees used to be occupying a former restaurant space with a similar seating capacity, staff is proposed is supportive of a variation request from that requirement. Additionally, the downtown street network has capacity to handle any additional traffic, and staff does not expect traffic generation from the proposed use to be a significant issue. Therefore, as part of their Planning Commission application, the petitioner will also need to provide a written response to the variation approval criteria. Additional details from the petitioner are still needed to calculate the exact parking requirements, however, since this proposal should be in the downtown area, there's no on-site parking, so the required parking will need to be met within the Vail Avenue public parking garage, which is allowed for users within the downtown district. Overall, the staff development committee is generally supportive of this proposal and has no major concerns subject to the submission of a formal application.

Commissioner Jensen - a great project.

Commissioner Sigalos - great to see that you had an elevation of the front. You're putting in these new windows that are going to open up. Will they just have to go to Design Commission then, because of the exteriors being changed?

Ms. Nicholas - it may, or a possible administrative design approval, but design planner will look it over, and determine whether or not that it will need to go to Design Commission.

Mr. Lamkins – essentially what we are doing, the lower stone that runs along the front right now is continuously level with the sidewalk, and we are going to do the same thing, we are bringing those two doors out to make it flush. The new door will be located to your right. The existing door that goes upstairs and new door would be relocated to give that flush straight look across the front. The door would match with the tremors, which is standard commercial doors.

Commissioner Sigalos - a great project, I'm glad to see you in this space, I think you'll do good business there, you will have traffic, especially in the summertime.

Mr. Lamkins – Five year lease with five year tenancy. We are the owners of Kilwins and have been working on this for two

years.

Commissioner Green – I think also it's a great project. One question, when you have a brewery, are there special things you can do, can people come in and not buy food and just taste the beer?

Mr. Lamkins – that would be our intention to have flights of beers where you could sample. We have got our liquor license already applied for. At this time, we do not have an answer if they will have to order something.

Commissioner Green – when you put it in smaller batches, what's the difference?

Mr. Lamkins – absolutely nothing. I brewed today 5 gallons, when I first started brewing it was one gallon. Then obviously you have people. It's not like a cake, you can't just double the recipe, but overall you can double it and all those little factors into how hops play into that, but it doesn't affect it. We are not looking to bottle and package. A Nano Brewery makes more sense. We're not looking to have an assembly landed bottling.

Commissioner Green – I think that would be interesting and I think it is a great idea. Waiving the traffic study, absolutely.

Commissioner Sigalos – when do you anticipate opening?

Mr. Lamkins – my best guess this fall. Reality is it will open probably be after all fresco ends. If construction is done the idea of pull paper off the windows and then people start looking and seeing what's there, but you have to be realistic new shop, new servers, new everything. You don't want to open for Harmony Festival, one of the busiest days downtown.

Public Comment

None

RECOMMENDATION

The Conceptual Plan Review Committee encouraged the petitioner to proceed forward with their application.

Bruce Green, Chair
CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
Kendra Maher, Recorder