

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
April 12, 2022 – 6:00 PM  
Salem Community Activity Center**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The City of Salem Planning Commission met in regular session on April 12, 2022 at Salem Community Activity Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Rick McCullum. Members present were: Sandie Phillips, Kathy Matthews, Jim Milano, Jim Davis, Brad Heaton and Harold Hunzicker. Members absent: None. Also present was Cindy Eller, Recording Secretary, Bev Quinn, Zoning Administrator and members of the public.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES**

Minutes of the March 15 2022 meetings were presented for action. **Motion was made by Jim Milano and seconded by Jim Davis to approve the minutes as presented. Roll call vote: AYES: Sandie Phillips, Brad Heaton, Kathy Matthews, Jim Milano, Harold Hunzicker, Jim Davis and Chairman Rick McCullum. NAYS: None. Motion carried.**

**STAFF  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

None

**QUESTIONS BY  
COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS**

None

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

**Special Use Permit-Cannabis Craft  
Grow Facility**

Matthew Lowery, dba HTHF, 1220B W. Main St., Salem, IL, is petitioning the City of Salem for a Special Use Permit to develop a Cannabis Craft Grow Facility at #11 Carpenter Drive, Salem, IL.

Part of property identifies as Parcel No. 11-16-200-042 PT W1/2 SE NE & PT S PT N1/2 NE 92/5181m 92/61/12m 99/5767, 99/61/7

Petitioner Matt Lowery, 504 Holly Place, dba Hometown Heroes LLC, thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Lowery stated the Cannabis Grow Facility would bring jobs to our community, rebuilding our community.

David Belfiore, COO of Hometown Heroes, stated he is proud of all who attended the meeting. Belfiore told the Commission that everything they are setting out to do is about their name, Hometown Heroes. Belfiore added that the plan includes looking for investments from not just local residents, but local veterans. Tracy Murray, of Patoka, identified himself as the principal investor for 51% of the proposed development. Murray stated that as a veteran, he was approached and is excited to bring this to the community.

Dwayne Collier, 705 Ohio, told the Commission that very little tax dollars will be earned on a grow facility. Collier feels this is not what our community needs and asked the Commission to vote no on this Special Use Permit and send back to the City Council.

Connie Seymore, 516 W Allmon, that Salem is a faith-based community and God will judge our community for what we do. Seymore stated we need to ask ourselves "What would Jesus say or do?"

Terry Crompton, 321 Circle Drive, questioned whether any investors on the board were in our City Government. Crompton stated he has friends in this business and is concerned about corruption and knows what issues are they encounter.

Jason Howard, 109 Hickory Grove, stated as a dad he is concerned about his children and an increase in crime in the community. Howard stated that from what he has heard, the only benefit would be money for the investors.

Jennifer Murray, Patoka, stated that she was born and raised in Salem and cares about this community. Murray stated she uses cannabis for her RA instead of prescription drugs for he that were killing her body.

Leonard Ferguson, 1602 Hawthorn Road, stated he is opposed to this grow facility and stated Salem has gotten by this long without cannabis.

Cara Halfacre, Iuka IL, stated she works at a Head Shop in Salem and her kids will attend Salem High School. Halfacre stated she is in favor of the special use permit.

Jane Gaston, 901 E. Main, requested the Planning Commission refuse the special use permit. Gaston fears a grow facility could bring additional problems to the Community, could lead to a dispensary coming to the community and could open the door to someone else, if facility is sold, that may not have the same agenda.

Dustin Collier, 5124 Church Rd., stated the grow facility would be secure with a fence, gate with card reader for use by employees and law enforcement only, and will have inspectors from the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Collier added there will be no risk of anyone coming on the property and all grow marijuana leaves Salem.

Daniel Belfiore, 700 E 1<sup>st</sup>, Kinmundy, stated people are afraid of change but the opportunity is now and he believes this would be good for the community.

Amanda Collier, 5124 Church Rd., stated cannabis helps her anxiety but she uses topical treatment, does not take gummies or smoke.

Greg Strother, 750 Reel Ave, does not feel this would be good for Salem and should not happen.

Wyatt Colclasure, 3012 Hillcrest Dr, stated it may seem like easy cash but would have a negative impact on our small, wholesome community. Colclasure feels we need to look at the whole picture.

Mary Wegener, 322 Everglade Ln, stated she was “speaking from the heart” and is concerned this would be a “slippery slope” and is concerned about what happens once we open the door.

Whitney Lowery, 504 Holly Place, told the Commission that the plant was given by God and we know the effects and need to understand that this could be beneficial to many people.

Joan Kless, 2617 S Washington, stated she is concerned about the police department. Kless said we need to try to lighten their load instead of adding to it.

Ron Donoho, 4836 Edgewood, stated we do not need the revenue and he is against this.

Bob Helm, 305 Roddy Road, told the Commission he is against this.

Mark Purcell, 118 Airport Rd, stated that he feels it is being very hypocritical to grow cannabis here and send to another community since dispensaries were denied in Salem.

Janelle Smith, 904 Ohio, stated she has two children, is a volunteer coach and a contributing member of the City of Salem and she is in favor of the special use.

Tracy Timmerman, 120 Coventry Lane, is concerned about where the money is coming from for this project. Timmerman stated there is no public information so we don't know all the facts.

Daryl McGrew, 1111 W. Boone, questioned whether Salem will be sales tax off of this since the cannabis would not be sold in Salem.

Abbey Dice, 1300 W Boone, told the Commission she is against the Special Use..

Shayla Jean, 310 W Lake, suggested putting this on a ballot, but City Clerk Bev Quinn responded that we elect officials to make decisions on our behalf. Quinn stated the State of IL has made this legal and the only issue for the City Council was whether or not to make this a special use.

Curt Ferguson, 919 W Main, thanked the Veterans for their service and stated that we make choices but choices make us

James Barcroft, 2201 Foxville Rd, told the Commission that he is a recovering drug addict and alcoholic that has been over 2 years clean and he opposes this.

Elecia Martinez, 3279 Bryant Ln, feels that the people are against it are retired but the working class would like to see Salem grow.

Josh Dice, 1300 S Boone, wants people to come to Salem, not leave. Dice feels we need to use common sense, decipher right from wrong, and if you have to have a facility with all kinds of security that does not make sense.

Katie Helm stated she is opposed to this and feels that those opposed need to contact the Mayor and City Council.

**Motion was made by Jim Milano and seconded by Harold Hunzicker to recommend the City Council approve the Special Use Permit – Cannabis Craft Grow Facility at #11 Carpenter Drive. AYES: None NAYES: Kathy Mathews, Sandie Phillips, Brad Heaton, Jim Milano, Jim Davis, Harold Hunzicker and Chairman Rick McCullum. Motion denied.**

City Clerk Bev Quinn stated this recommendation to deny the request would go the City Council meeting on Monday, April 18, 2022..

**NEW BUSINESS** None

**OLD BUSINESS** None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** None

**ADJOURNMENTS** As there was no further business to discuss, ***the meeting was adjourned 8:20 p.m.***

Cindy Eller, Recording Secretary