

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
CITY HALL - COMMUNITY ROOM
JULY 11, 2022 – 6:30PM

The study session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Barnett at 6:31pm.

Council Members Present: Barnett, Boleware, Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Massey and Newlin

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Valentine, Police Chief King and City Attorney Joppich

LIQUOR LICENSE ORDINANCE AND POLICY REVIEW

Gary Mekjian, City Manager, stated that he wanted to bring this issue back to Council following discussions regarding the smoking lounges and not allowing liquor for those establishments and the fact that the city liquor license ordinance requires a license to be in conjunction with a bona fide restaurant.

Steve Joppich, City Attorney, stated that the city has an ordinance in place regarding liquor licenses as well as a policy, both of which were adopted many years ago. The requirement that the liquor licenses is in conjunction with a bona fide restaurant was mentioned at a previous meeting and it was suggested by Council that they consider eliminating that provision. In reviewing that change, it provided an opportunity to update provisions throughout the ordinance. When staff met to review those changes, more questions came from that meeting and the need for more direction from Council.

Mayor Barnett inquired about the possibility of creating social districts and the financial or legal ramifications of that and who would own the districts.

Attorney Joppich replied that the liquor licensed establishments would have the majority of the liability but the city could also have some liability depending on the incident that were to occur.

Discussion was held on the possibility of creating social districts, allowing for food trucks and temporary event licenses allowing for the sale of alcohol in city parks during summer concerts or at other events.

Police Chief King confirmed that one could apply to the State Liquor Control Commission for various temporary event liquor licenses within the same year on one application.

It was suggested that Council consider creating areas for these types of uses during the master plan discussions and perhaps allowing for these used through the zoning ordinance and special use permits. It was also noted that the special use permits could have certain restrictions to allow for some of the uses discussed such as tasting rooms, social district areas, wine bars, etc., but does not open it up entirely for large night clubs throughout the city. The city needs more direction on areas to target during the master plan discussions, which could be accomplished during the work group meetings that include both members of Council and the Planning Commission.

Council consensus was to move in this direction allowing for a community atmosphere and more social district areas as they feel the city has been too conservative.

It was mentioned that there are two separate issues being discussed and that was the ordinance and eliminating the need for a liquor license to be in conjunction with a bona fide restaurant and community events that would require only a temporary liquor license.

Discussion continued on the type of limitations that could be established such as hours of operation, size of the business, etc., which all led back to allowing for a special use permit through the zoning ordinance and incorporating this during the master plan process.

It was suggested that the city meet with the Michigan Restaurant Association or Food and Beverage Association and with developers to discuss the economics when considering restrictions to get a better idea of the location and size that would be successful.

Clerk Smith also mentioned that there is the city policy to consider for future quota licenses. Mayor Barnett added that the city also has a redevelopment district that was approved for redevelopment liquor licenses that do not come from the city's quota but require financial qualification. She felt that there was development within that district that may qualify.

City Manager Mekjian summarized that the direction from Council was for the following:

- Have the work group subcommittee comprised of 3 members of Council and 3 members of the Planning Commission culminate ideas and discuss areas for social districts with staff during master plan discussions
- Wait until the master plan is complete to modify the ordinance but research through other communities and through the Associations mentioned to gather information to be included in a future ordinance amendment
- Review and pursue options for temporary event liquor licenses

ADJOURNMENT:

The study session meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk