



MEETING: Site Review Committee
SUBJECT: Hookah Lounge
ADDRESS: 65 Valparaiso Street

LOCATION: City Hall
DATE: February 26, 2008

**PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW
 IN ATTENDANCE:**

Craig Phillips, Planning Director	(219) 462-1161
Tyler Kent, Asst. Planner	(219) 462-1161
Dave Pilz, Engineering Director	(219) 462-1161
Jack Johnson, Fire Department	(219) 462-8325
Ed Pilarski, Water Reclamation Dept.	(219) 464-4973
Chuck McIntire, Water Dept.	(219) 462-6174
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner	(219) 462-1161
Steve Martinson, Parks Dept.	(219) 462-5144
Rick Walstra, Comcast	(866) 594-1234
Media	

PRESENTERS:

Joseph Cioe, Attorney
 219-477-6490
 jcioe@cioeandwagenblast.net
 Freddie Aridah, Business Owner

Email addresses for the above City of Valparaiso Departments can be found at www.valpo.us.

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting:

The Site Review Committee met to discuss a proposed Hookah Lounge.

Phillips stated that site review is not an approval. Rather, it is a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner. It is possible it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

Aridah explained he would like to have a hookah coffee shop in Valparaiso. Currently a hookah lounge is located in Hobart. The facility is a small coffee shop which carries coffees, cappuccinos, and lattes. A 70" television is within the establishment for enjoyment. In general, the hookah is a global culture of life. The flavored tobacco goes into what consists of 3 pots. The tobacco has many flavors with zero tar and .05% nicotine. People come into the coffee shop to socialize and have conversation. Unique sandwiches are also available.

Phillips clarified that this particular location is on the NE corner of Indiana Avenue and Valparaiso Street. There is at least one house between this location and the alley.

Pilz said there are no engineering issues. It was conveyed to Phillips that all of the parking on the site plan is existing with no changes.

Thrasher is aware that the establishment doesn't serve alcohol therefore; they don't have a liquor license. The City of Valparaiso has a non smoking ordinance. In order to receive an exemption, a liquor license is needed which enables the establishment to become a bar. A private club or a retail tobacco shop also can receive an exemption. The way this is presented, this type of business doesn't meet any of these requirements that would grant an exemption to the ordinance. Thrasher received prior comments from Bruce Berner concerning this. Berner's comments stated the only way this could be possible is to ask for the ordinance to be amended, and then go before the Council. Phillips advised speaking directly to Bruce Berner regarding this since he is in charge of the non smoking ordinance. Thrasher explained that currently there are only 3 ways to grant a waiver if building standards can be met. The Council will need to amend the

ordinance to allow for a 4th way of granting a waiver. At this point in time, the ordinance is not written to allow a waiver to be granted. Being considered a private club is something that is issued through the State. Thrasher mentioned this also doesn't meet the requirements for a retail store. Obtaining a liquor license will provide the ability to apply for an exemption because then the establishment is considered a bar. No one under the age of 18 can be employed or be a customer. Since the space is shared, following the HVAC of the smoking ordinance is required. Aridah added in addition to filtration added on the roof, the restroom will need some repair. The kitchen does not include any fryers or grills. The sandwich filling is prepared off site and then brought in containers to be refrigerated. When a sandwich is ordered fresh pita type bread is used. The kitchen includes a microwave. Thrasher added that signage will also require a permit.

Phillips stated that the use is permitted in the district which is C-3, general commercial district. Any trash receptacles on the property, between the residential units above and this facility, will need to be enclosed with a wooden or vinyl fence with gates. If a Building Permit is necessary, a Zoning Clearance will be needed. Signage is allowed on both the site and the building. Any ground mounted sign must be monument style only, not more than 6' in height and 5' back from where the right-of-way line is located. Three times the linear footage of the front of the property is allowed for building signage. Phillips stated that meeting with the Police Department is necessary to discuss any possible concerns.

Pilarski explained since food is being served the facility is considered a restaurant therefore; municipal code requires a 1,000 gallon oil and grease interceptor. Based on what was discussed, a waiver can be applied for and sent to Pilarski. A properly sized grease trap can be installed in the 3 compartment sink. There may be a grease trap that currently exists however; it may have been removed and it's essential to go through the process. Pilarski inquired how the cleaning process is done in reference to the utensils used. Aridah said there is foil on the top which is used and then disposed in the trash with nothing being reused.

Martinson is aware that the landscape will remain the same with no changes.

Walstra had no questions or comments.

Johnson stated the Building Commissioner will review the plans regarding the entrance, exit, storage detail, and part of the kitchen at this facility. Thrasher recommended prior to obtaining permits an inspection can be scheduled. Johnson added that since a monitoring system will be installed a Knox Box System will be required. The Fire Department is registered with the Knox Box Corporation and information is available online.

McIntire stated the building will be required to be brought up to backflow code with the installation of a backflow device at the water meter. For details regarding this, contact Daryl Brown at the Utility Department. The records at the Utility Department indicate this property is listed at 401 Indiana Avenue. Currently backflow protection is not indicated in the records.

Phillips added parking is not a concern since there is just one residential unit within the building.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

Detailed Site Plan

Sanitary/Sewer

Waiver

Backflow Prevention

Knox Box System

Site Improvement Permit

Building Permit

Zoning Clearance

Sign Permit

Contact Bruce Berner / Police Department