

**GREEKTOWN SSA#16**  
**November 11, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting Minutes - Final**

**Commissioners Virtually Attending**

Frank J. Caputo, (FC)  
Eve Moran, (EM)  
Nicholas Kriarakis, (NK)  
Anastasia Makridakis, (AM)  
Alex Theoharis, (AT)  
Mark Washor, (MW)

**Others Virtually Attending**

Rod Burch, (RB), Exec. Director WCA  
Dean T. Maragos, (DTM), Advisor  
Tia Angelos, (TA)  
Sara Barnes, (SB) Attorney for applicant  
Leo Louchios, (LL)

**Commissioners Absent**

Tom Paspalas  
Lorraine Rieff Liakouras

**From Herbal Care Center (applicant):**

Perry Manderla (PM), Mike Manderla (MM),  
Ed Ferel (EF) and Brendan Shiller (BS)

**I. Call to Order, Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m. A quorum was present.

**II. 222-224 South Halsted – Proposed Cannabis Dispensary** – Dean Maragos (DTM) per the SSA instructions sent Sara Barnes (SB) the attorney for the applicant a questionnaire that the SSA commissioners wanted answered. DTM informed SB that she needed to answer these questions in order to be able to meet with the Commissioners at another date to determine the Commission's decision on whether or not to support the Application for a Special Use for the dispensary. DTM also prepared for the SSA commissioners a detailed instruction sheet to oppose the dispensary per the SSA instructions. All written objections in the proper form were to be sent to DTM by noon on November 12, 2020. DTM would be getting these objection documents from the commissioners and the commissioner vote to not approve of the dispensary. DTM would then file those with the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). DTM informed the commissioners that if they wanted to speak they had to speak via Zoom available from 9:00 a.m. until the matter was called for a hearing by the ZBA.

The hearing is on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. until the matter is called. Once again, DTM stressed that the commissioners who are objecting and have submitted their objections must be present when the case is called.

DTM informed the commissioners that as he stated last week, if the SSA votes today to approve the dispensary or if there is no vote today to approve or oppose the dispensary that there is no need for the commissioners to attend the ZBA hearing on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The commissioners must attend the ZBA hearing on November 20<sup>th</sup> if they want to speak in opposition to the Special Use being granted to the applicant after a vote of the SSA to oppose the application.

DTM then left the floor open for questions or comments from either the commissioners or the applicant's attorneys and their clients.

SB stated that she would welcome commissioner comments on the matter. Frank Caputo (FC) stated that he believed that the dispensary would change the character of the Greektown area and he asked SB what the dispensary would do to benefit

Greektown. FC was also concerned that he had not received information on what other locations the applicant had reviewed prior to Greektown and why they didn't choose those locations. Perry Mander (PM) and Mike Mander (MM) stated that there were several other locations in the city that due to restrictions of zoning and other problems they thought that those parcels were not feasible for a safe and efficient operation. PM then stated that there were other locations at 810 LaSalle Street, a Fulton Street address, a Randolph Street address, a May Street address and a Madison Street address that they had all looked at. SB stated that the other locations had problems including that they did not meet the criteria for parking and ride sharing and there were patrons on the sidewalk. SB also stated that the current parcel chosen at 222 South Halsted was not the cheapest in price for the applicant to lease. Brendan Shiller (BS) stated that security, parking, City and other laws were prohibitive and that the zoning at 222 South Halsted was zoned DX-5 and was amenable for this use. Alex Theoharis (AT) asked if the applicant was buying or leasing the first floor only. SB replied that they are leasing the parcel. Eve Moran (EM) asked if the basement was going to be used. PM stated the basement is too low for use and needs other work and repairs. PM stated that he had asked the owners to buy the property and the owners of the property said they were not interested in selling. AT asked what was the term of the lease. PM stated to the best of his knowledge that it was 10 years plus two 10-year options.

PM stated he grew up in Greektown and that he is familiar with the area and that is another reason why he chose the area. Anastasia Makridakis (AM) stated that Greektown has changed in character and now there is a mixture of Greek and non-Greek food and other businesses. AM said it is imperative that we bring in new businesses and traffic because it is important to save Greektown because it has current difficulties. AM stated the community is not opposed to this application and that the character of Greektown is also taking on non-Greek businesses.

EM stated that she saw the exterior photo on the south side of the building facing a parking lot. EM asked if the applicant would have a mural on the south end of the building in keeping the Greek theme of the neighborhood. SB stated she would speak with the owners but that she was in favor of this mural. SB stated that she would be interested in getting local artists and working with EM on this project. SB said maybe there would be a temporary art project and EM said that would be excellent. Ed Ferel (EF) who is the security officer for the applicant stated that there would be external cameras recording the circumference of the facility. He was unsure how far the cameras could record in square footage in the community. EM said there was overlapping coverage and the vast majority of the block that the facility is on is covered. He said he would gladly work with AGB Security in protecting the community. DTM asked EF how long the recordings were stored and EF stated 90 days. EM asked if they could extend the camera coverage to Jackson and EF said he would look into that. EF said that he has been working with the Police and in response to DTM's question, if he had talked to the 12<sup>th</sup> District, EF said that he would definitely work with them as he has with the other Police Commanders in the City. EF stated he has also worked with the Illinois State Police and the Illinois State Police must review and approve the Security Plans.

Rod Burch (RB) asked if the cameras were attached to the OEMC contact. PM stated that under the Illinois law no access is allowed for the applicant's internal cameras to be attached to the OEMC for security purposes. EF informed us that to the best of his knowledge, there are no other cannabis security cameras that are attached to OEMC.

RB asked if there is internal security and EF stated that security would work with the community. RB said the parking lot on the south side of the building is a dangerous area. RB asked (if the parking lot on the south side is dangerous) have they spoken with John Abell the owner of 820 West Jackson to make sure there are no nefarious activities going on there. SB said she would speak with him once she gets the information to call him. MM stated that traffic control is a high priority and that reservations are not required normally to get into the facility. However, if there is an overflow, reservations will be given and the patrons will have to move off of the premises and not congregate there and possibly go into the restaurants and enjoy a meal. RB asked if there was an Operation Plan and SB stated that the Operation Plan is not disclosed for security purposes. She stated that she would discuss with DTM a smaller plan disclosing information that was not privileged.

Leo Louchios (LL) then spoke and stated the Greektown Chamber has strongly supported the dispensary to be coming to the 222 S. Halsted Street location. LL also stated that the Greektown Chamber wrote a letter of strong support and gave it to the applicant. LL stated that this location and this dispensary would help the disabled. He also stated that Greektown is going through a very difficult period and new traffic would help the local merchants and restaurants. LL stated concerning the mural, there are a lot of locations available for that and that the community would work with the SSA to decide where to put the mural. LL stated that he had spoken with many members of the community and that they were for the dispensary receiving the Special Use since it is a legitimate business and there are other businesses in the area that are divergent from the Greek theme specifically a hookah bar and a massage parlor. LL stated that the area desperately needs more foot traffic because it has materially decreased due to the construction on the expressway.

FC said that he liked the traffic study that was submitted by the applicant. FC also asked where the Operations Plan is and what would happen if there was a breach of the plan. BS stated that unlike other businesses, cannabis dispensaries are very highly regulated by the State and City. Police have access to the cameras of the applicant at all times. The Police will immediately know if there are any legal violations and City violations occurring and if there were violations there would be fines assessed and possible revocation of the license to operate.

RB asked if the Illinois State Police are monitoring outside of facility. BS said the Illinois State Police are not monitoring outside the facility concerning security purposes. BS stated that wherever there were dispensaries throughout the City there was a decrease in crime in those areas. EF said the decrease in crime was by double digits. SB stated the ZBA would require no lines to be allowed in front of the dispensary and there will be a lower occupancy allowed for security purposes.

AT asked if the security would be armed and EF said it would. FC asked if the applicants were thinking of a Hellenic theme for the artwork and mural. FC's question was answered by PM stating they would discuss it with their architect. RB then asked if the tenant is required to do the façade and SB believed that they would.

Nicholas Kriarakis (NK) asked if there was security on the alley side of the building since previously there was and currently there is in his opinion nefarious activity going on in that area. SB stated the external cameras will be all over the building and security will be

outside. EF stated under Illinois law there is no loitering near a cannabis area and that they would clear out the area.

FC asked are gummy bear candies sold with cannabis in them. SB said yes there would be. FC asked what would happen if people got high on cannabis. MM stated it takes 60 to 90 minutes for the gummy bears to have an effect on the body and that to the best of his knowledge there was no crime committed by people in the areas of the dispensaries.

FC said he was not happy with the presentation by the applicant to Greektown. He stated he did not think the dispensary should be granted the Special Use. There was a motion by EM and seconded by AM for a roll call vote on the approval or disapproval of the Special Use by the applicant at the meeting and that DTM is authorized to inform the ZBA of the vote whether the SSA voted to approve or disapprove the Special Use for the applicant. There was then a roll call voted called by DTM in accordance with the requests of the members of the Commission. The vote was yes NK supported the Special Use for the dispensary, AT voted yes on the Special Use for the dispensary, AM voted yes on the Special Use for the dispensary, EM voted yes on the Special Use for the dispensary conditioned upon the artistic requests of the SSA to be approved in writing by the applicant. MW and FC abstained. The motion passed unanimously. DTM then stated that the SSA Commission had officially approved and supported the application for the applicant's Special Use at the location of 222 S. Halsted, Chicago, Illinois. SB stated that she had received other groups in the community approving the Special Use including Artopolis Restaurant, Athena Restaurant, Green Street, the Telecom Company and Greektown Chamber. EM asked if anybody had any comments on her memorandum. AM stated that she read it and believed that there were valid points in the memorandum. AM said the questions posed to the applicant today addressed those concerns. EM asked the Commissioners if there were any other ideas for the community. EM also then said that she believes there should be a community benefit agreement and asked SB to hold on to the Hellenic transition and culture in this project. EM stated that at the Elysian Field she had artwork concepts.

EM stated she wanted an agreement for a donation to be made by the applicant for other cultural artifacts. SB stated the client would consider these. MM stated that he would definitely commit the dispensary to help the community on art projects. MM stated he would meet with the community to determine what these art projects are. SB stated she wanted EM to bring a proposal to MM and her and it will be approved for payment. SB stated the Special Use and the dispensary would benefit the patrons since those who have made reservations in waiting to go into the facility would be able to go and eat at the local restaurants, which will increase the patronage of the restaurants. She stated that added benefit is the program that EM wanted and SB supported concerning coupon programs to assist other merchants in the area. RB asked what the date of the opening would be and MM stated spring of 2021. MM stated that the Illinois Gaming Board is severely backed up in the approval process by two or three months. EM stated she wanted SB to draft the agreement and for her to review it. There was a motion by AM and seconded by FC to approve DTM to notify the ZBA that the Special Service Area Tax Commission 16 approved the Special Use application for the Herbal Care Center located at 222 S. Halsted before the ZBA to be approved by the ZBA at the next hearing on Friday, November 20, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. Adjournment – Next SSA #16 Commissioner Meeting is November 19, 2020 - At 4:00 p.m.** there was a motion by FC and seconded by EM, to adjourn the meeting. The

motion passed unanimously. The next SSA #16 Commissioner Meeting is November 19, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.