

Testimony of a Public Hearing of the Town of Union Planning Board held relative to an application by Robert Grannis for a Special Use Permit for the retail sale of cannabis products at 1635 Union Center-Maine Highway, on January 9, 2024, at 7:34 p.m.

PRESENT: Members present: L. Miller, Chairman
M. Jaros
C. Bullock
G. Ksenak
T. Crowley
N. Sarpolis

Others present: Marina Lane
Sandra Cragle
Tara Pittarelli
Dave Kudgus
Robert Grannis
Ryleigh O'Connor
Rachel Blodgett
Aiden Huften
Aleandro Lopez
Leo Russell
Tim LaBarre
Jozy Breen
Jonah Conklin
Ally Stank

MS. MILLER: We will open the Public Hearing, and I will read the public hearing announcement.

The Town of Union Planning Board will conduct a public hearing relative to an application by Robert Grannis for a special use permit for the retail sale of cannabis products at 1635 Union Center-Maine Highway (tax map number 125.13-1-11). The property is zoned General Commercial in a Cannabis Business Overlay District, and the sale of cannabis products requires a special use permit. Because the retail facility is existing and no changes to the site are planned, the action is a Type II Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and no further environmental review is required.

The public hearing will take place on January 9, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Town Board Meeting Room on the second floor of the Town of Union Office Building located at 3111

East Main Street, Endwell, New York. The application is available for review in the Town of Union Planning Department during normal business hours (8 AM to 4 PM).

Individuals with special needs requiring accommodations should contact the Planning Department at (607) 786-2926 at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled public hearing.

Lisa B. Miller
Planning Board Chairperson

MS. LANE: I think Robert wanted to ask a question or say something?

MR. GRANNIS: When we get ready to open the doors, we can just open up the doors?

MS. LANE: No, but we will go through that in a minute.

MS. MILLER: Anyone have any comments, questions?

MR. KSENAK: I have a question. How much cannabis do you plan on having there once it's harvested?

MR. GRANNIS: I plan on keeping the inventory tight because it does expire. It's got 12 to 18 months, but at the same time I don't want to overbuy. They deliver as I need it. So, to answer your question, quite a bit. Because there are going to be a lot of different products, but not a lot of one item. Does that help you?

MR. KSENAK: Yes, it gives me a pretty good idea. I'm just trying to base the volume vs. the amount of traffic and business. Let's say you're going through a ton a month, well, you're going to have a lot of business, a lot of car traffic, things like that; you're going to need parking spots. If it's going to be a lot less than that, then there is really no concern for that kind of review. Even though it is done for parking and things like that. I don't know how popular it's going to be. I was wondering if you did a marketing plan. Like to say we expect x amount of customers to come in. Just curious, because it is sort of on 26 and it's a 2-lane road and there are other activities there, especially in the spring.

MS. LANE: Let me answer that for you. So, there is going to be a maximum occupancy. They will have a maximum occupancy of how many people can be in that space at a time. And generally, you go in, and they check for your ID, but they've only got a certain number of people waiting. You don't all just go in and mill around and start looking around. They are going to limit who goes in and make sure that they can handle the capacity safely. And so, if somebody has to wait

outside, they will have to wait outside. And the way it's going now, there are plenty of these retail stores that – or deliveries – I don't know if they plan to do deliveries...

MR. KSENAK: Will you be doing deliveries?

MR. GRANNIS: I'm planning on it. So, to get an idea of what I'm going to be like is right next door to Red Lobster. It's very professional, it's a nice store. And I want to basically make myself better than that.

MS. LANE: It's upscale.

MR. GRANNIS: It's beautiful, they have a beautiful platform to start. It's the flagship store of the old building and it's got a big rock face. I'm not going to be as fancy on the outside, but I want to make a nice bright, cheery...

MS. PITTARELLI: If you can imagine going into a jewelry store with glass cases and you're looking down at all the things in the glass cases. I know it sounds totally opposite of what you have in mind, but you're going to look at some items, or even a cell phone store. You go in, see the things laid out. They have one item laid out, you can look at it, you can see it, maybe see the information about it, but there is nothing you can get into. It's almost like...it's contained. There doesn't have to be too much of anything out. You don't need to have it all out.

MR. CROWLEY: It's a showroom.

MR. GRANNIS: Essentially, it's like a restaurant. The order gets put out; it's processed in the back of the house. That is where all the product is kept, in a storage/locked room with a double locking door that I had to have. Only x amount of employees will have access to that room. It's going to be more of an Apple store layout, is basically what I'm creating.

MR. KSENAK: That helps me.

MS. PITTARELLI: Unless you put posters up with cannabis leaves, this and that and all these things that generate in your mind, you might walk in and not even know "what do they sell in here?" "What is this?" It's all dependent on how it's decorated and generally I don't think that is his plan.

MR. GRANNIS: A lot of it is a learning curve for me. The concentrates, the edibles. I know what they are, I'm very familiar, but at the same time there is a lot to learn and I'm going to educate the consumer as well.

- MR. KSENAK: And just my own personal opinion, everything I read about retail theft, I'm just hoping you don't experience it there like a lot of your neighbors.
- MR. GRANNIS: I've experienced it - 37 years I'm under a tent, I've been doing business under tents. I can't wait to have a front door that I can lock.
- MS. LANE: Not cannabis. Produce.
- MR. GRANNIS: Fruits and vegetables.
- MR. KSENAK: Another question: At the last meeting didn't you say you were going to bring samples? (Laughter)
- MR. GRANNIS: Next meeting. Chocolate bars, cookies...
- MR. JAROS: He's got you there doesn't he!
- MS. LANE: What teacher sent you to this meeting? [Directed towards students in audience]
- MS. MILLER: Will you only have product? No like, pipes, this and that?
- MR. GRANNIS: I'm allowed to sell...I'm all about quality and high-end type atmosphere. I'll have hand-blown glass pieces from a person I know very well in Ithaca. He produces very, very fancy stuff. I'll have functional stuff that's hand-blown. I've already established myself with a company out of Austin, Texas that's hand-blown. So, I'll have some different types of pieces that go with what we're selling. I'll have some apparel to kind of brand myself and my business, trays – rolling trays. Today's market, they're not even going to be rolling their own. They're going to be buying what are called "pre-rolls". Myself, I wouldn't spend the money on a pre-roll.
- MR. JAROS: Like with Chianis and Anderson, are these things we need to know?
- MS. LANE: Not really, we're just educating everyone.
- MR. KSENAK: We're just curious. Hey, they are making a lot of revenue on this.
- MR. GRANNIS: I would love it if you guys took a look at the store next to Red Lobster. Go in there, it's an experience.

MS. LANE: Sacred Bloom.

MR. SARPOLIS: What is the age, how old do you have to be?

MR. GRANNIS: 21 and up.

MR. SARPOLIS: It is 21, ok.

MR. GRANNIS: It's just like beer.

MR. SARPOLIS: Well, everything is 21 now, right? Tobacco, etc.

MR. KSENAK: What will be your process? Just out of curiosity? For checking ID's.

MR. GRANNIS: They're going to be scanned. When they come in the door...and over there at the parkway they don't have the double door. The JC guys wanted an adult bookstore feeling like I'm doing something wrong still. I don't want that atmosphere. I want the open plan like Vestal. There are going to be floaters. And when customers come in, we will bring them over to the check-in desk, we will scan their ID. If we start to have problems, we will have to do a double door process. Over there, I don't think we will have too many problems.

MS. PITTARELLI: What he is saying is that some of the designs at some of these dispensaries is you come into the building from the outside and there is almost like, imagine like a foyer, and you cannot get past that foyer into the space to even shop or talk to anyone until somebody standing there at a desk or whatever is like "hi, can I have your ID, how are you doing today?"

MR. SARPOLIS: Like a security pass through or check point.

MS. LANE: Like the one on State St. in Binghamton.

MS. PITTARELLI: Some of them are more strict; others are just open, you walk in, it's like a retail shop. But there is still going to be a desk, you still have to be checked in to see "how old are you?" "Can I help you with anything?" before you can kind of wander in and try to get a good idea of what you're there for.

MR. GRANNIS: In Binghamton I think they have security. I might have to have security. I have two cousins that work for Broome County Sheriff and Tioga County Sheriff. I'm all set. They are both sheriffs. So, I have my security in-house.

- MR. KSENAK: So, when you say 21 and over, if a parent comes in and has their teenage son with them, their daughter, they cannot actually enter the store?
- MR. GRANNIS: Correct. They will have to wait in the car.
- MS. PITTARELLI: I think the state, if you look it up, has a couple of categories of what they clear as like the design for this, so they give you some guidance. They regulate that
- MR. GRANNIS: No cartoons, you can't have anything cartoon-like in my logo. I wanted to make a cartoon character of myself holding a tray of the goodies, that's a no-no. I can't have any cannabis leaves visible from the road. Once you come in my door, I can have a big cannabis leaf with my name or something if I want it, but that's not really my thing. I haven't decided, I haven't gotten that far yet – how I'm going to brand myself, and I haven't gotten to my logo yet. I need to get going on that too.
- MR. JAROS: Through the state, are you allowed to do any of the processing? Or everything has to be done when it's brought to you?
- MR. GRANNIS: From the state, I chose the retail side of it. I'm allowed to do a retail store, delivery, and consumption.
- MS. PITTARELLI: He can't grow, produce, bag...
- MR. JAROS: But are you able to roll? Or you're not able to do any of that? You can't bring it in in bulk?
- MR. GRANNIS: Per the state, we will never touch the product. The farms and the producers and growers all package it to the weight accordingly that we're going to sell it. It's all pre-packaged and we can't even touch it. Basically, if I opened a package to show someone, I have to keep that package. I'm not able to sell it. No one is allowed to leave the store with an open package. The flower part, the actual marijuana, I'm going to have in cases. I want to display the buds because there are all different strains and types, so I want to display the buds in a case. No one can actually touch them.
- MS. PITTARELLI: Can you smell them?
- MR. GRANNIS: There are pods where you can push a thing to push air through them and smell them, but I'm not going that route. I think I'm going to have

like a jewelry case where they are just out on a card with the farm - it will show the percentages, who produced it, and the type of strain that it is.

MR. JAROS: So, you're going to be the Tiffany's of cannabis for the Town of Union?

MR. GRANNIS: I am, I want to be, yes.

MR. JAROS: It's going to be the Tiffany bag with the logo.

MS. LANE: Does it have to be a black or opaque bag?

MR. GRANNIS: I'm not sure about that. I'm sorry. I was out to Vegas for an expo for this, and I toured a few of the dispensaries. They were in a sealed tamper-proof bag for me to take home.

MS. PITTARELLI: See-through, or no?

MR. GRANNIS: No, black and tamper-proof. And so, when you got back to your hotel, you had to open it like a Ziploc. I was impressed. They're looking to doing that here. Here, they're like, "here you go".

MS. LANE: Not even in a bag?

MR. GRANNIS: In JC I don't believe so, but I don't know, I don't...

MS. LANE: Shop around?

MR. GRANNIS: Yeah, I don't shop much. They've given me samples; I don't need to be buying anything. Every grower and farm are reaching out to me, and they want you to buy their product.

MR. KSENAK: Just out of curiosity, I went to multiple schools in the 70's, etc., what is the cost? On average?

MS. LANE: I don't think we can ask that. We can't ask that.

MR. KSENAK: Just out of curiosity.

MS. LANE: I don't think we can ask that kind of question.

MR. KSENAK: Every question we have is out of curiosity.

- MS. LANE: I don't think we have the right to discuss. It's just like apartments, when people say to us "how much rent are you going to charge for those apartments in that new multi-family building?" I always say we can't ask that.
- MR. GRANNIS: It's going to be expensive. It's more than I want to pay.
- MR. SARPOLIS: You're more about the experience than the destination.
- MR. GRANNIS: It's the convenience of it. Especially when you're traveling. Not that we're going to get a lot of tourists here, but it's very convenient. I'm learning, because I'm trying these samples, it is clean and safe. I've become a believer on that. It definitely is. So that is going to take us into a new realm, a whole different world. Because I'm hurting myself without even knowing it is how I feel now. Because what I'm consuming now is so much cleaner and it's a fact. I have the printout sheets.
- MR. JAROS: Are you only able to purchase from New York farms and dealers at this time?
- MR. GRANNIS: Yes.
- MR. JAROS: So, going out to Las Vegas, you can't connect with any of the dealers there and have anything brought into NY?
- MR. GRANNIS: No. See, I went there to learn. I need to learn the business; I need to learn where am I buying my display cases? What POS do I get for cannabis business? Because it's not a restaurant POS, point of sale system. Five weeks ago, I knew nothing. I've come a long way in five weeks.
- MR. JAROS: So, in your delivery, somebody calls up there and has an established agreement with you to begin with? And then they call up and order it and then you just deliver it to their home? Like I get a wine shipment.
- MR. GRANNIS: It's kind of like that. It will be e-commerce. So, you will be going through my online website. You will order online and pay.
- MS. PITTARELLI: It's like Grubhub if you're going to order up food from somewhere.
- MR. GRANNIS: It will go directly to my POS and then I'll send my driver out and deliver it. That's what I want to do.

MR. KSENAK: Is that just within the state? Or do you go out of state?

MR. GRANNIS: Within the state. I don't think we're going to be able to go to Pennsylvania. I don't know. That's a good question because PA is right there.

MR. SARPOLIS: So, there are e-comm platforms already for this?

MR. GRANNIS: Yes.

MR. SARPOLIS: And they're viable and approved for New York State?

MR. GRANNIS: Yes.

MR. SARPOLIS: Really? What are they called?

MR. GRANNIS: Dutchie is the POS system, and me being a card holder, they're giving me two years for free. And then this Bio Track is already tracking pharmaceutical pills for the whole country; I think they started in California. Bio Track will be my compliance company that will be reporting to New York State to keep me compliant. So, every Sunday night it will be reported which links with the POS.

MR. SARPOLIS: So Dutchie is the POS, and they also handle the e-commerce portion?

MR. GRANNIS: Correct.

MR. SARPOLIS: So, who delivers it? People can sign up to be a Dutchie driver?

MR. GRANNIS: I'm going to hire you.

MR. SARPOLIS: Oh, so you have to hire the drivers.

MR. GRANNIS: Yes, I'm going to be like Dominos.

MR. JAROS: So instead of seeing the Dominos on top of the vehicle, it's going to have a big leaf.

MR. SARPOLIS: I'm in the POS business, so this is my action plan. That's what I do is POS, so now you've got me thinking. This is wild.

MR. GRANNIS: I might need your help. I need to hire someone to help me program my POS.

- MR. SARPOLIS: This is wild, ok. So Dutchie...
- MR. JAROS: Ok, you can't vote on this you know.
- MR. GRANNIS: I want to do a café on the other side, so you can help me with the POS on the other side. I'm going to need a café POS too down the road.
- MS. MILLER: So, on the delivery, who does the screening process? How do you screen the buyers?
- MR. GRANNIS: That is uncharted waters for me. It's very simple, are you 21? Anyone can push yes, right?
- MR. JAROS: That's what happens when I buy my wine out of California. It will come, but I have to have an ID to show them when it arrives.
- MR. GRANNIS: Oh, you do?
- MR. JAROS: Yes, because they don't just...
- MR. GRANNIS: Who does the ID verify? The UPS driver?
- MR. JAROS: Yes, actually it's FedEx.
- MR. GRANNIS: I have to say it would be more...for you to get delivery, you have to come into my store and get established as a customer first and I know you're of age. So then...if you've never had Tony's pizza, you're not going to call and have them deliver you a Tony's pizza, you want to get to know them first.
- MR. JAROS: No but let's imagine my daughter gets a hold of the site, she goes on and has it delivered, so you probably have to be careful there.
- MR. GRANNIS: New York State is protecting us on that, I'm sure. Like I said, I think you already have to establish yourself as a customer before you can start getting online.
- MS. PITTARELLI: It's almost like using a club membership. You get an ID card with an ID number specific to you. So, when you're ordering, and they see ABC123...

- MR. SARPOLIS: When you order alcohol through Walmart grocery delivery, they come to your house, they actually take a picture of the front and back of your ID.
- MR. GRANNIS: That's what I'll be doing. Just like alcohol, they have to scan your license now before you get alcohol; we come in the door, your license is getting scanned.
- MR. JAROS: Just like you said, where they're checking your ID at the house with the delivery?
- MR. SARPOLIS: Yes, and in this instance, they're going to cross check. They'll have a copy of the ID already, and when they get to the residence, they'll be able to see the copy they have on file and see it there.
- MR. JAROS: So, it would have to be my ID that you have to see upon receipt.
- MR. GRANNIS: But I don't think we're sending out unless we already verified in store that you're of age. So then if you daughter is somehow there at the door collecting delivery at the door, you ordered it for her, or she went through your phone.
- MR. JAROS: Yes, and that would be the problem. It's not like it could never happen.
- MS. PITTARELLI: I think this is new to NY too and I think they're on a short little bit of a learning curve on that before they get comfortable. I bet it's going to be watched a little bit and change as this kind of hiccups come up, they're going to say "uh, uh, that isn't working". You're going to see it change. It's probably going to drive people crazy, because he's going to try it and then it's going to be changing and evolving all the time until they get it right or feel it's working.
- MR. JAROS: The last thing we want is for you being the first one to get any bad press or have any kind of issues.
- MR. GRANNIS: I don't want any; I plan on doing everything by the book.
- MR. JAROS: Because the plan is to expand the concept.
- MR. GRANNIS: Absolutely, because this is my lottery ticket to be honest. I don't want to jeopardize that.
- MR. KSENAK: So, if I order it and you know it's me, and I'm a known customer, and I live right next to St. Anthony's and I said I'd like you to deliver this to

my house. So even though I'm within 500 feet of that and your truck is specifically used for transporting cannabis...

MS. PITTARELLI: You've already purchased it at the place, you're not purchasing it there...

MR. KSENAK: Can you come near a school? Or can you come near a church? Or a library? Or a hospital?

MS. LANE: It's only the location of the retail facility. Nothing else.

MR. KSENAK: Ok, I'm just asking.

MR. JAROS: If you've got kids, you can't have them deliver Dunkin Donuts when you're getting out of school...I'm joking here.

MS. LANE: I want to say something really important to our audience. The reasons the Town of Union moved forward with approving cannabis retail is to try to protect consumers who are going to buy it somewhere. By having, as Robert has been saying, a safe, quality product. And that is really important to me because of the people that I know that have either had an overdose, or their family member had an overdose, or whatever. So, in everything, whatever you're learning tonight, besides how the business works, please make sure in the future lives of yours that you use products that are safe and legal.

MR. KSENAK: If you choose to, we're not promoting it.

MS. LANE: Not the corner store right over here that they're selling behind the counter, and you don't know what the quality is. We've all heard about Fentanyl, etc. I just don't want to see people...

MR. GRANNIS: Half the carts for those vape pens, it's just vegetable oil. You can eat it; you can smoke it. It doesn't hurt you. You don't know. When you inhale something, you're going to get high, I don't care what it is. That's a big problem with those vape pens. There are so many problems.

MR. KSENAK: Well once the technology catches up and they get all the data points. The same thing happened in the chemical field. Things that were considered safe, 15-20 years later they're carcinogenic materials, they'll kill you, they'll give you all kinds of cancer, and that's what they have to learn about this.

MR. GRANNIS: If it's not from Nanticoke Gardens, which is one of the best producers, I wouldn't buy it. They're doing a great job over there, those boys.

MR. KSENAK: They could be inhaling pesticides, you don't know.

MS. MILLER: Ok, if there aren't any more comments or questions, we will close the public hearing.

Public Hearing concluded: 8:00 p.m.

I, SANDRA E. CRAGLE, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of a Public Hearing of the Town of Union Planning Board is a true, accurate, and complete transcript of my stenographic notes/tape taken at the above time and place.

SANDRA E. CRAGLE