

Public Hearing
Zoning Board of Appeals
Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 5:30 pm
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
150 N McKenzie Ave., Gillett, WI
AGENDA

Council may deviate from agenda as needed

Alderson Blaser called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

The committee was informed that the open meeting law had been complied with.

Open Public Hearing- The purpose of the hearing is to consider the request of Dollar General to rezone the properties located at 112 W. Pine St. Gillett, WI, 217 N. McKenzie Ave. Gillett, WI, and 209 N. McKenzie Ave. Gillett, WI from residential to commercial.

Public Input

Present were committee members: Steve Vandermause, Tom Wolfgram, Darlene Fleischman, Ruth Spang and Alderson Blaser. Also present were Mayor Josh McCarthy and Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson. Public present were From Dollar General Jim Lundberg and Todd Platt. Kathy Wocking, Kevin Smith, Chris Byars, Jon Gildemeister, Nanette Mohr, Jerry Luther, Katie Daul, Jayme Sellen from Oconto County Economic Development, Wendy Vorpahl, and Brenda and Wayne Couillard.

Kevin Smith asked if there are other spots available, Dollar General confirmed this is the only spot that meets their needs. Couillards' say they do not want to see a parking lot, asked if there will be a fence; Dollar General said there will be a 6 foot privacy fence. Concerns that house values will go down, over by Seneca, the house values have always gone up. Luther stated he supported Dollar General and happy they want to be in Gillett and the location is great. He can see other companies wanting to buy near that spot as well along the highway. He said it is an anchor store; we need to be willing to expand and its always going to be by someone's house. If you say no now, do not expect the city to expand. Looking at a million dollar expenditure from Dollar General. The developers get very clear direction from Dollar General for a specific spot and other requirements and cannot waiver from that directive. Dollar General will be good for the community, creating 6-10 jobs and significant economic expansion. Jayme from Oconto County Economic Development stated- more businesses, more people, more opportunity. Dollar General is a good partner for rural communities. Economic impact for the county is estimated at \$700,000 for sales output, and more in salaries. Its great progress. Todd added Dollar General is a great employer, for benefits they offer medical, dental, and life insurance and good pay. It would be great for our tax base. Todd stated he appreciates the comments and concerns, and they are sensate to those concerns. That corridor (State HWY 22) is always going to be looked at for commercial use. A question was brought up if they can they move the driveway from Pine to HWY 22, Department of Transportation says it should be on a side street and not a highway if possible for safety. The two houses being purchased by Dollar General are rental houses, or already looked at as commercial by the owners because its a business. Changing the zoning to commercial isn't that much of a change, looking at it from that perspective. 10-15 cars per hour is what Dollar General expects, which is not a large traffic generator. 5,000 cars a day for Gillett traffic count on the HWY from the DOT, which is high for a small city. Dollar General looks at visibility- meaning location- in the heart of the city, which are great requirements to strive for. Luther said Oconto Falls was against Dollar General as well, but now are pleased and has brought more business to the community. Byars said as you bring in business, it lowers residential tax and subsequently highers commercial taxes, can help us on that end, we would have better services, more jobs, and help us grow. They pursued this location; they have asked nothing more from us, which is unbelievably great. What signal do we want to send to other businesses who want to come here. Gildemeister said he owns the real estate agency in the city, and it would be good for the city,

people look for convenience even in a small town. He said property values raise when near the commercial businesses. Kevin Smith said he lived in a location exactly like we are taking about (residential mixed with commercial). He said it was a non-issue living in an area like that. He agrees we need to attract more business, and feels Dollar General has worked hard in the process. Highway locations are going to be facing more pressures and opportunities to redevelop as a commercial. We need to think if and how we want to accommodate that, so we are not shifting all the burden and concerns on a small number of people every time we are here for a community advancement. Are we ready to start McKenzie as a commercial area.

Discussion and Possible Action on closing public hearing

Motion by Tom Wolfgram, second by Steve Vandermause to close the public hearing, motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on rezoning 112 W. Pine St. Gillett, WI, 217 N. McKenzie Ave. Gillett, WI, and 209 N. McKenzie Ave. Gillett, WI

Motion by Tom Wolfgram, second by Fleishman to rezone the properties as commercial, to go council.

Roll Call vote, Spang aye Fleishman aye Blaser nay Wolfgram aye Vandermause nay, motion carried.

Set next meeting date: N/A

Motion by Spang, and Vandermause to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson