

Minutes of the **PUBLIC HEARING** of the Common Council of the City of Chetek held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the council chambers, 220 Stout Street, Chetek, WI.

Acting Mayor, Cliff Bronstad presiding.

Meeting was called to order. Roll call was taken.

Council Members in attendance: Cliff Bronstad, Bill Waite, Shirley Morley.

Absent: Mark Edwards

Also present: Attorney, Randi Osberg, Deb Jacobs, Merlyn & Barb Folz, Robert & Janice Peterson, Carol Russo, Shawn Flynn, Yvette Deflorian

The purpose of this hearing will be to discuss the proposed amendment to 118-129 of the City of Chetek Code of Ordinances to add section (d) Special Conditional Use to include no more than three (3) facilities City-wide for no more than ten (10) individuals for each facility who share a residence for a limited term each calendar year. Said Special Conditional Use may be further conditioned upon a set, but smaller number of individuals, for a set term of no more than two (2) years, and reasonable other conditions as determined by the Building Inspector and/or Zoning Administrator.

Properties that would be affected by the change:

1325 5<sup>th</sup> Street – Plat 1-1, Lot 1 Block 2 exc. W 41 FT Stewart’s addition, City of Chetek  
And 1202 W. Banks - Lot 6, Block 5, Fostvedt Manor, City of Chetek

Everyone wishing to be heard will be given an opportunity to speak. There may be a three (3) minute limit per person.

Attorney Osberg explained the Ordinance drafted is to allow by a special conditional use under “bed and breakfast establishments” up to ten (10) individuals to share residence at the two addresses listed. The ordinance further limits the number of facilities (houses) to no more than three city wide. This amendment is being requested by Aaron Nichols, property owner. He is the plant manager at ABC Truss. Their facilities has a high demand in the summer months and have been unable to fill the seasonal positions with local individuals. There is no ordinance that regulates a boarding-type housing situation. The workers need to be able to walk to work and the housing needs to be affordable.

Deb Jacobs asked what the wages will be for the seasonal workers. Aaron explained that they have to meet the prevailing wage for the workers and their wage is .28 cents per hour less than the regular workers. That wage is approximately \$14.00 per hour.

Deb Jacobs also asked how many bedrooms and bathrooms are in the house at 1325 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Aaron advised that there are five bedrooms – two of which are in the basement with egress windows. There are two bathrooms.

Janice Peterson stated there is a 5.3% unemployment rate in Barron County. She asked why ABC needed to hire workers from Belize. She is also concerned about the high pedestrian traffic in their neighborhood. There are mom’s walking with strollers and elderly people walking.

Aaron Nichols advised that 70% of their applicants are failing the drug test. They also have a hard time recruiting people due to the fact that they generally have 4 months of layoff. Most people need the benefits.

Shawn Flynn owns the 4-plex next door to the house at 1325 5<sup>th</sup> Street. He feels that allowing this type of facility will take business away from him. He has empty rentals and has difficulty filling the vacancies. He feels seasonal workers should be housed in hotels/motels. He stated there are plenty of resorts and motels for the seasonal workers. He feels that there is a conflict of interest since Aaron is the plant manager and the person that is renting the houses. He stated that if they are going to pass an ordinance to allow this then he wants them to increase the number of facilities to five (5). Why would they only allow three? If he or someone else wanted to use their house for the same type situation they wouldn't be able to apply for the same conditional use.

Carol Russo asked if they hire kids getting out of school. She questioned why they are hiring seasonal workers when there are plenty of unemployed people in the area. Aaron advised, again, that they have been hiring since 2011 and they pre-screen for drug and alcohol. They haven't been able to fill the positions. Hiring the seasonal workers is not a displacement of local workers.

Yvette Deflorian stated that she has 3 city blocks of single family mobile homes. She doesn't feel a boarding house situation is appropriate in a single family residence. She stated she thinks women may feel intimidated walking past a house that has ten men living in it. This would take business away from taxpayers. She feels the seasonal workers should be using the resorts and hotels/motels. She asked if the houses would have to be licensed by the state.

Bill Waite motioned to adjourn the hearing. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Morley. Carried.

Hearing Adjourned.

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Carmen Newman, clerk/treasurer