

**Village of Gilberts**  
**87 Galligan Road - Gilberts, IL**  
**Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 14, 2018      7:00 PM**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Mills called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call/Establish Quorum**

Present were Commissioners Lateer, Page, Sullivan, Del Vecchio, and Chairman Mills. Absent were Commissioners Borgardt and McHone.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Sullivan and seconded by Commissioner Page to approve the minutes of December 6, 2017.** Vote: 5 ayes. (Commissioners Sullivan, Page, Lateer, Del Vecchio, and Chairman Mills). 0 nays. 0-abstain. Motion carried.

**Public Hearing**

**Request for a Special Use to Permit Residential Apiary Operations at 698 Tipperary Street.**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Lateer and seconded by Commissioner Sullivan to open the public hearing.** Vote: 5 ayes. (Commissioners Lateer, Sullivan, Page, Del Vecchio, and Chairman Mills). 0 nays. 0-abstain. Motion carried.

Petitioner/Resident David Varvara of 698 Tipperary Street came forward to address the Plan Commission. He explained that last year he had some bee hives in his backyard. He grew up with bees and was not aware he needed a permit or a license to operate. Due to the harsh cold temperatures last winter the bees all died. He is requesting permission to have ten (10) boxes for the bee hives this year, since some of them will not survive. The boxes are 20" x 18" and are set close together. To establish a colony in the spring it takes about two months to establish the hive to pollinate.

Commissioner Del Vecchio asked if the purchase for the bee hives is for her own personal use, or for commercial purposes, and Mr. Varvara stated they are only for his personal use. Commissioner Del Vecchio also asked about the life span of the bees and Mr. Varvara said if kept warm, about 80 degrees, they should continue to survive.

Mr. Varvara said he had noticed other people in the area having bee hives and that is why he did not realize there would be an issue in the town of Gilberts. He grew up with bees as his grandparents had them.

Commissioner Sullivan asked Mr. Varvara if he has any protection in place. Mr. Varvara said the bees do not bother people and do not attack people. Chairman Mills pointed out that there is an Illinois organization that serves as a bee network with information available online that offers free inspections. He handed Mr. Varvara information relative to this organization and recommended Mr. Varvara look into it.

Chairman Mills asked if Mr. Varvara has any water source and Mr. Varvara said he does have water available for the bees.

Chairman Mills asked if there was anyone in the audience wishing to address the Plan Commission.

Resident #1, Victoria Rodriguez, 726 Tipperary came forward. She said she is just concerned about her son when he is outside. Mr. Varvara explained the bees follow flowers, not people, and he does not feel there is a need to worry. He had children also and the bees never bothered them.

Resident #2, Bridget Hernandez, 697 Tipperary came forward. She said she lives right next door to Mr. Varvara. She recently saw on "You Tube" information relating to bees and honey. The video explained generally bees are not a bother, but there was also a mention of people that have been attacked by bees. Commissioner Del Vecchio stated that if people do not bother the bees, the bees will not bother people.

Mr. Varvara said the only thing he has learned is that loud noise disturbs bees and that they also tend to hide if there is smoke nearby.

Ms. Hernandez asked if Mr. Varvara has any emergency measures in place with insurance in the event someone is stung. Commissioner Del Vecchio stated she is legally not about to answer that question. Mr. Varvara pointed out that he only knows that if one was to consume honey that it would relieve allergy symptoms. Honey is an industry that many people are not aware of. His wife consumes the honey to help with her allergies.

Commissioner Del Vecchio thanked Ms. Hernandez for expressing her concerns and suggested that she talk to Mr. Varvara about any additional concerns she may have. Mr. Varvara agreed he would discuss this matter in more detail with her if she so desires.

Chairman Mills referred to the noise from when people would cut their lawns. Mr. Varvara stated the bees would not bother people; they would only hide, unless someone was to bother the bee houses physically.

Commissioner Del Vecchio asked if Ms. Hernandez expressed any issues last summer with the bees and Mr. Varvara said there were never any problems. Mr. Varvara said his only request is to have additional hives, about ten, since so many of them die because of the cold winters.

Commissioner Lateer asked if Mr. Varvara has a proposed site for the bees and Mr. Varvara said they would be located at least 20 yards, a good distance from the neighbor's property. Chairman Mills asked if Mr. Varvara's yard is fenced in and Mr. Varvara stated yes.

Resident #3, Jose Hernandez, 697 Tipperary came forward. He is concerned when his grandchildren visit he warns them to stay away from the fence. Commissioner Sullivan asked Mr. Hernandez if he had experienced any issues last summer, and Mr. Hernandez stated no. Mr. Hernandez worries about the close proximity of the bee houses to his property. Commissioner Page referred to the Google map of the property and wondered if a distance of 150' from the neighbor's fence was attainable. Mr. Hernandez pointed out he is allergic to bees and worries.

Commissioner Del Vecchio pointed out this is definitely an agricultural issue and it will be presented to the Village Board for final approval.

Resident #1, Victoria Rodriguez, 726 Tipperary came forward once about expressing her concerns about the pool water and worries the bees would be attracted to it. Mr. Varvara stated he has a bird bath in his yard as a water source for the bees and does not believe they would look for water elsewhere. Commissioner Del Vecchio said her husband is allergic to bees and there has never been a problem. Her friends have over 400 bee hives in their yard and nobody has ever been bothered by them. Bees are attracted only to flowers from what she understands.

Mr. Varvara mentioned he is aware of bee hive operations that are located on the tops of buildings, which they are housed in several locations, and he has never heard of any safety issues.

Chairman Mills stated that 2-3 bee boxes would be acceptable in his opinion, but 10 bee boxes seem to be too many and asked if Mr. Varvara would be willing to accept a total of 5 bee boxes. Mr. Varvara said there are means to protect bee boxes during the winter months by placing bales of hay around them to keep them warm. Ms. Del Vecchio asked Mr. Varvara what is the minimum number of bee boxes that would keep the bees alive. Mr. Varvara said last year he lost them all due to the cold winter. But there is also the possibility the bees would die due to viruses. He makes sure the bees are fed regularly and treated accordingly.

Commander Del Vecchio asked approximately how many bees are in a hive and Mr. Varvara said usually a young hive will have about 3 pounds, but that the hive can grow to as large as 10 pounds. She asked Mr. Varvara what would be the least number of bee boxes he would like to have, and Mr. Varvara said 8 would be sufficient; the queen bee lives about 5-6 years.

Jackie Rod, a concerned citizen, expressed her concern that bees would become aggressive while looking for nectar. She wondered if the Village of Gilberts would require inspections and maintain documentation that inspections take place. Chairman Mills pointed out that the State of Illinois is the organization that would be responsible, and he advised Mr. Varvara to register with them.

Commissioner Sullivan said that bees are an agricultural area, but that residents are required to apply for a Special Use with the Village prior to opening up an operation of this nature.

Resident #2, Bridget Hernandez, 697 Tipperary came forward once again pointing out to the Plan Commission the close proximity of the bee houses to her property and expressed deep concern.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Sullivan and seconded by Commissioner Page to close the public hearing.** Vote: 5 ayes. (Commissioners Sullivan, Page, Lateer, Del Vecchio, and Chairman Mills). 0 nays. 0-abstain. Motion carried.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Sullivan and seconded by Commissioner Del Vecchio to recommend the Special Use to the Village Board with the following conditions:**

1. No more than 6 bee hive boxes.
2. Bee hive boxes can be no further north than the northwest corner of the house.

Vote: 5 ayes. (Commissioners Sullivan, Del Vecchio, Lateer, Page, and Chairman Mills).  
0 nays. 0-abstain. Motion carried.

Administrator Sakas stated he will contact the Village Attorney to draft an ordinance to go before the Village Board for approval at its meeting on Tuesday, April 3, 2018.

### **New Business**

Administrator Sakas referenced a new issue that has concerned residents regarding billboards. This topic needs to be addressed by the Plan Commission. A quorum will be needed for the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Items for Discussion**

None.

### **Other Business**

Administrator Sakas said the Statement of Economic Interest is required after the first of May by Kane County. Kane County will e-mail the Statement of Economic Interest to those elected and appointed officials.

### **Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Sullivan and seconded by Commissioner Del Vecchio to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.** Vote: 5 ayes. (Commissioners Sullivan, Del Vecchio, Lateer, Page, and Chairman Mills). 0-nays. 0-abstain. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Dalke