

REEB-HOSACK/STEELTON VILLAGE CIVIC
JUNE 5, 2023
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS ON PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF
FERTILIZER PLANT AT 5 MERRITT STREET

April 17, 2023 - received notification, from the Zoning Committee of Columbus South Side Area Commission (CSSAC) that a BZA application had been submitted to establish a fertilizer plant at 5 Merritt Street.

Plant Owner - John Jordan (Winchester Gardens)
Property Owner - James Lantry (Rosie LLC)

Request for Special Permit to allow the manufacture of fertilizer from phosphate or organic matter and to reduce the residential buffer for more objectionable uses from 600 feet to 145 feet.

April 19, 2023 - Kathy Green coordinated a visit to the Canal Winchester current facility for May 1, 2023. Civic members who visited were Lillie Banner and Johnny Davis. Both commented on how dusty it was inside the operation, no data sheets available for view with regard to safety, chemicals, emergency procedures, etc.

Questions from the civic as a result of the visit were:

- what modifications will be done to the building

NONE

- what amount of outside storage will be needed

There will be some storage outside such as a flatbed trailer, box truck and some equipment until we can get it setup inside. There will be no fertilizer stored outside.

- will there be any chipping pulverizing

Yes , there will be pulverizing inside the building. However, Mr. Jordan will have a small dust collector just outside the building if needed.

- if some fertilizer compounds/ingredients are toxic to the skin - how are workers protected and why come into an urban area when the wind will blow particles into the area

“It is not toxic if you get it on the skin. If particles do get outside, weeds and plants just grow faster and become greener. Most is AG and food grade which is used in everyday consumption or product use. There will be no volatiles like nitrates or liquid ammonia. I use basic ingredients. Major and Minor food ingredients. Fertilizer gets a bad wrap because of volatiles and the association to herbicides and insecticides.”

PPE:

Workers have a choice, depending on the ingredient. It is standard to wear a mask if working with certified organic dolomitic limestone - It's more of a lung hazard since it's crushed magnesium and calcium. Full protective suits are available for employees to wear if they want. "One of the employees is a chemical engineer; she knows we are just working with simple salts."

May 8, 2023 - Comments from City Staff Review

**Staff Review/Traffic indicated a right-a-way dedication of 50 feet from the centerline of S. High Street will be required (CCC 4309.17) as it is believed that this requirement would result in a gross inequity. An exception may be requested.

**Staff Review/Planning indicated support of request but had not comment on special permit request.

**Staff Review/Sewers and Drains indicated parcel has access to existing 8" sanitary sewer - no further comments

**Staff Review/Columbus Department of Health indicated no issue with request other than operation would need a license through Ohio Department of Agriculture to manufacture fertilizer.

**Staff Review/Zoning Clearance indicated variances may be included to conform existing conditions of the site such as the lack of parking and building setbacks. Those variances are suggested - not required.

May 9, 2023 - public meeting for those concerned with proposed establishment of fertilizer plant at 5 Merritt Street. Meeting was contentious with the following established

* Mr. Jordan currently does not have a license to operate a fertilizer plant within the State of Ohio

* Mr. Jordan indicated he sells "boutique" size fertilizer plants that are safe for human consumption even though "cooked chicken poop" is one of the ingredients

* Mr. Jordan could not fully explain or document what safety measures are currently in place at current plant location in Canal Winchester

* Mr. Jordan wants to relocate closer to his residence in Upper Arlington and that is why he selected this site

* Mr. Lantry refused to acknowledge the current conditions of 5 Merritt Street and the code violations on adjoining buildings that have not been addressed

* Mr. Lantry indicated all that was needed for the fertilizer to relocate to his building would be a coat of paint.

* Mr. Lantry agrees to allow Zoning Committee view the interior of 5 Merritt street at site visit

* Attorney for owner distributes some data sheets for plant operations, civic requests all, most of which were provided at a later date.

May 12, 2023 - Vote by Reeb-Hosack/Steelton Village Civic

15 NO votes from individual residents

1 NO from from The Fort

1 NO vote from Holy Ground Church

1 NO vote from Resurrection Baptist Church

May 20, 2023 - CSSAC Zoning Committee site visit to 5 Merritt Street - Committee Votes against request

May 22, 2022 - Comments from Katherine Cull, Carly Maggio and Kathy Green who were invited by BZA staff to meet regarding 5 Merritt Street. BZA staff in attendance were Dane Kirk, Jamie Friese, Shannon Pine and Tony Celebreeze. No public notice was given as BZA have such a short notice about meeting request. Recommendations to the owner will include special text to read:

The following conditions will also be recommended to the Board for consideration:

- 1) No storage of product or materials outside of the building.
- 2) All operations will take place inside the building. The applicant may later look into installing a prefab greenhouse of approximately 100 square feet, subject to any required city permits.
- 3) There may be temporary storage of equipment/machinery outside of the building until it has been installed inside the building.
- 4) The applicant shall take best measures to reduce the distribution of dust to the exterior of the building and will utilize a dust collector.

May 23, 2023 - CSSAC approves request for 5 Merritt Street. Owner announces that he now has a license to operate a fertilizer plant.