**BIGFORK LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Draft Minutes Thursday March 27, 2025**

**4:00 PM Bethany Lutheran Church – Downstairs Meeting Room**

Chairwoman Susan Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

**Present:** Committee member attendees: Susan Johnson, Shelley Anderson, Laura Perry Richard Michaud and Chany Ockert; absent was Jerry Sorensen, Public: 13 members; Flathead Planning and Zoning: Erin Appert

The agenda was approved (m/s, Ockert/Perry), vote unanimous

Minutes of the February 27, 2025, meeting were approved (m/s, Anderson/Michaud), vote unanimous.

**Administrator’s Report and Announcements:**

Sign-in sheet passed around. Approved minutes and documents are posted on the County website: flathead.mt.gov Click on Planning and Zoning/Meetings and Boards/Bigfork Land Use Advisory Committee.

FCU-24-27 was unanimously recommended by the Board of Adjustment (BoA) with the BLUAC recommended amendments to the Findings of Fact. The BoA changed Condition #3 to limit the number of people to 35 at any one time and limit the number of event days to 70 per year. The BoA added Condition #14 to add quiet hours between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. and Condition #15 requiring the applicant to obtain a building permit from the State of Montana.

**Public Comment:**

Deb Reppond-182 Moondance Trail, Bigfork, stated that there is a pending permit being considered by the DEQ for a gravel pit and concrete plant in the 100 home residential area at the junction of Highway 35 and Old Highway 35 in Bigfork. Only residents within half a mile of the proposed site were notified. There will be a public meeting on Monday April 7th from 5:45 p.m. to 8p.m. at the Bigfork Performing Arts Center to discuss this development.

Rene Troesh-310 Rocky Woods Lane, Bigfork, stated that she is familiar with the concrete business and the impact it has on a community. This business should be in a commercial area not a residential area. This will have a negative impact on Highway 35 traffic with all the trucks, impact on school bus safety, and on the environment. There should be an impact study addressing traffic, electric use, water use and pollution, dust, and noise.

Ben Reppond-182 Moondance Trail, Bigfork, stated that the impact on air quality, noise, water in Flathead River and Lake, and the aquifer is bad for Bigfork. Large trucks accessing that business on that section of the highway is too dangerous. He also feels that this project is being rubber stamped, and it is not good for the residents in the area.

**Application:**

**FCU-24-25** A request from Mark Campbell for a Conditional Use Permit for a ‘Tavern’ on property located at 7951 Highway 35 in Bigfork, MT. The property is located within the Bigfork Zoning District and is zoned ‘B-2 General Business’. The property totals approximately 1.03 acres and can legally be described as Tract 3 of Certificate of Survey No. 7379 in the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 25, Township 27 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County, Montana.

**Staff Report:**

Erin Appert presented the staff report. The proposal is for a tavern in an existing building. (Note: This building was previously Moroldo’s and Stonehill Kitchen) Montana Department of Transportation submitted comments that the project may impact their facilities during construction.

Q. Anderson: There is an existing building, are they proposing to construct a new building? A. Appert: I believe that in MDT comments they might not have realized that there is an existing building. Condition #7 requires that the applicant may need to obtain an updated approach permit from MDT.

Q. Michaud: There are multiple businesses that use that road off Highway 35.

Q. Ockert: What proposed Conditions are specifically “Tavern” based? A. Appert: #8 addresses fencing but it is not specific to a tavern, but it is discussed in the report.

Q. Anderson: The application is for a tavern/casino, why is there no reference to a casino in the application? A. Appert: The definition of “Tavern” in the zoning regulations states that a casino is a tavern.

**Applicant Report:**

None. The applicant nor a representative was in attendance.

Johnson asked staff to clarify if the applicant, Mark Campbell, owns the property. Appert replied that after the application was processed, Campbell took ownership of the property and Planning and Zoning has the documentation showing his

ownership.

**Public Agency Comments:**

None

**Public Comments:**

Rebekah King-Executive Director of the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce stated that the chamber supports an additional food and beverage business in Bigfork.

**Applicant Reply:**

None

**Staff Reply:**

None

**Committee Discussion:**

There was additional discussion regarding proof of ownership by the applicant. All agreed the documentation was adequate.

**Findings of Fact:**

Ockert moved and Perry seconded the motion to adopt the Findings of Fact. The vote was unanimous.

**Conditions:**

Perry moved and Ockert seconded the motion to approve the Conditions. The vote was unanimous.

**Committee Discussion and Vote:**

Anderson asked Appert to confirm that access to the business was a road and not an easement. Appert confirmed that it was not an easement access.

Ockert moved and Anderson seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the Board of Adjustment to approve FCU-24-25. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Adjustment will consider FCU-24-25 on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 6:00 P.M. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the South Campus Building located at 40 11th Street West in Kalispell.

**Unfinished Business:**

There was no significant update information discussed for the Bigfork Neighborhood Plan.

**New Business:**

Candidates for the open position on BLUAC, Dan Cotman and Rick Janisse, spoke to their interest in serving on the committee. A vote was taken, and the result was a tie. A second vote was taken, and the result was also a tie. The committee tabled the appointment until the April BLUAC meeting.

**Adjourn:**

Johnson moved and Anderson seconded the motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimously approved at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Anderson, member and acting recording secretary