

**TOWN OF SOMERS
ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, June 22, 2020
6:30 PM via Teleconference**

CALL TO ORDER: meeting was called to order at 6:32pm. Jill Conklin, and Jennifer Roy present; Karl Walton, Lucas Cherry, Dan Fraro and Paige Rasid present via teleconference.

I. PUBLIC HEARING Continued from May 18th, 2020:

1. #20-004: Mark and Karen Murdoch, 24 Gulf Road, Somers, CT. Proposed text amendment to Somers Zoning Regulations sections 214-4 Definitions, 214-44 Prohibited uses, 214-87 Alcoholic Beverages and 214-98 Schedule of permitted uses; to allow Farm Winery/Brewery as a permitted use in all zones.

Mark Murdoch, 24 Gulf Road, Somers, presented petition signed by residents in favor of wineries in Somers.

The following spoke via teleconference:

Sarah Maskill, 335 Mountain Road, Somers – in favor

Jennifer Phillips, 17 Gulf Road, Somers – in favor

Brad Gawron, 30 Haas Road, Somers – opposed

Eleanor Lebine, 9 Mountain Road, Somers – opposed

Tim Welch, 168 Mountain Road, Somers – in favor, with some changes to the text and restrictions

George Schober, 98 Rocky Dundee, Somers – opposed; presented the following exhibits:

Exhibit 1 – Planning minutes from East Granby as an example of problems regarding winery in that town.

Exhibit 2 – Personal statement regarding petition.

Ken Prior, 364 Mountain Road, Somers – opposed, Exhibit 3 – articles from the Journal Inquirer regarding Worthington Pond, as well as minutes from commission meetings in December 2000.

Ken Prior commented on additional exhibits missing. Jennifer Roy spoke; explained there was a misunderstanding as to which emails/documents Mr. Prior wanted submitted for the record. Ms. Roy will add to the record, screen shot from social media regarding Mr. & Mrs. Murdoch with a display at a bridal expo.

Ken Coehlo, 605 Stafford Road, Somers – in favor of wineries, but opposes what has been submitted for the text amendment. Also concerned about banquet facilities in a residential zone.

Attorney Sean Clark, attorney for the Murdoch's addressed the commission regarding public act 08-187 concerning wineries, and the regulations the state places on farm wineries.

George Schober addressed the commission, commented that if any regulation is approved for wineries, it should be a requirement that it be on a state highway.

Patrice Carlson, 6 Camp Road, Somers; questioned exactly what text is being considered.

Jennifer Roy advised that the commission had considered some text, but what the applicant submitted is what this public hearing is for and being considered.

Karl Walton made a motion to close the public hearing for application 20-004 Mark and Karen Murdoch. Lucas Cherry seconded the motion, all in favor, public hearing closed 7:49pm.

II. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION:

1. #20-004: Mark and Karen Murdoch, 24 Gulf Road, Somers, CT. Proposed text amendment to Somers Zoning Regulations sections 214-4 Definitions, 214-44 Prohibited uses, 214-87 Alcoholic Beverages and 214-98 Schedule of permitted uses; to allow Farm Winery/Brewery as a permitted use in all zones.

Brief discussion was held.

Karl Walton made a motion to deny application 20-004 Mark and Karen Murdoch, 24 Gulf Road to add Winery/Brewery as a permitted use, due to lack of substance, and that the commission re-approach this a similar text amendment as quickly as possible. Dan Fraro seconded the motion. Rasid, Walton, Fraro and Conklin in favor, Cherry opposed. Motion carried by 4-1 vote.

ADJOURNMENT: Karl Walton made a motion to adjourn. Paige Rasie seconded, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Roy