

**CITY OF MERRILL  
CITY PLAN COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, June 6, 2023**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**6:00 p.m.**

- I. **The meeting was called to order** by Mayor Hass at 6:00 PM.  
Members Present: Mayor Steve Hass, Alderperson Steve Sabatke, Kyle Gulke, Ralph Sturm, Melissa Schroeder, Alli Henkelman and Robert Reimann.

Others Present: Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, City Attorney Hayden, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel, Police Chief Bennett, Alderperson Fermanich, Todd Fredrick, Pat Semling, and Merrill Productions video operator.

City Clerk Anderson-Malm was excused

- II. **Minutes of previous meeting** – Melissa Schroeder made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 2nd meeting. Alderperson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

III. **Public Hearing:**

1. Public Hearing Notice:

City Attorney Hayden read the public hearing notice. Robert Reimann made a motion to open the hearing. Melissa Schroeder seconded and the motion carried. The public hearing started at 6:03 PM.

2. Frank Romano, Best Share Mining LLC, requesting a Conditional Use for Data Mining Center at 400 S Kyes Street per M.M.C. Sec. 113-100 located in the City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin. Legally described in pin #251-3106-182-0216.:

Frank Romano was remote and spoke at the public hearing. He asked what conditions are required by the city for him to operate within the original zoning requirements of industrial manufacturing. He was willing to answer any questions.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel asked how long Mr. Romano has been operating. Per Mr. Romano, all equipment has been moved in and ready to expand and waiting on approval from the City Planning Commission. Mr. Pagel stated nothing was to be moved in before getting approval from the city. Mr. Romano stated all equipment was moved in approximately 4-5 months ago. Discussion occurred between Mr. Pagel and Mr. Romano regarding moving in equipment.

Mr. Romano was asked if computers have been running, he stated yes, the computers have been running inside the building however no data mining has taken place. Alderperson Sabatke stated he's heard a distinct humming from the building. Mr. Romano said it is an exhaust fan. Mr. Romano stated he is more than willing to turn on the equipment to measure the decibel reading.

BIZA Pagel asked if any electrical work has been done inside the building. Mr. Romano stated shelving units and power distribution units have been moved in. BIZA Pagel asked if he has done nothing except plug in the unit in the existing power source without doing any changes to it. Mr. Romano said yes, that is correct and stated all equipment

is ready to go. The data mining procedure is very computer intensive but not internet intensive. The power usage is no higher than the previous SEMCO manufacturing plant.

Mr. Romano stated they are leasing 27,000 square feet of the building. Entire building is 150,000 square feet separated into 5 buildings.

Alderperson Fermanich was given floor privileges and stated this was supposed to be the first meeting regarding approving moving into the space for this business. However, it appears they are already moved in. She said there are rules that need to be followed and if this business is allowed to do this, others may follow suit. Ralph Sturm has concern regarding any changes that have taken place regarding wiring and moving in equipment.

BIZA Pagel stated he would like to inspect the building to see what is there since there has been conflicting information.

Todd Frederick stated he lives in the area and is concerned with the noise. He stated 75 decibels is pretty loud in a manufacturing facility.

Melissa Schroeder made a motion to close the public hearing. Robert Reimann seconded and the motion carried. The public hearing was closed at 6:52 PM.

Mayor Hass asked the committee members if they had any concerns regarding this request. Kyle Gulke stated he is against this type of operation so close to the River Bend Trail. Melissa Schroeder stated she is unable to make a decision because of the lack of information regarding this business. Mayor Hass stated he has concerns with the noise and the power grid.

After further discussion, there was a referral to move this to the next City Planning meeting after Mr. Romano meets with BIZA Pagel and additional information is provided to the committee.

- IV. **Continued discussion of Conditional Use Application form:**  
Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel explained the revised Conditional Use Application form. The committee had no concerns or issues with the revised form.
- V. **Public Comment:**  
There was no public comment
- VI. **Adjournment:**  
Melissa Schroeder made a motion to adjourn. Alli Henkelman seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Minutes prepared by Lori L. Anderson-Malm City Clerk using the video provided by Merrill Productions