



**CITY OF WESTMINSTER
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Tuesday, March 5, 2019, at 6 PM
City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane**

A meeting of the Westminster Board of Zoning Appeals was held at City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane in Westminster, Maryland, 21157, on March 5, 2019, at 6 PM.

Chair Ed Cramer, Vice-Chair Larry Berent, and Board Member Ken Bonner were present. Board Attorney Eric Blitz was present. City staff Andrew Gray and Bill Mackey were present. Ms. Tierney Dedmon of Al Betz & Associates, Inc. was present.

Fran Rock, Richard J. Slechter, Donna Dressel, John Dressel, Phillip Wright, and Rev. Ken Humbert were present and signed-in.

At 6:00 PM, Chair Cramer called the meeting to order. Vice-Chair Berent moved to approve the meeting summary of January 8, 2019. Board Member Bonner seconded. The motion passed.

Chair Cramer opened the public hearing for Case #19-01. The Chair stated the purpose of the hearing and read the title into the record. The Chair swore in all parties who wished to testify.

Mr. Gray summarized the main points in the staff memo, dated March 1, 2019, with a staff recommendation that the Board of Zoning Appeals carefully consider approval of the proposed Special Exception.

Ms. Donna Dressel described the security features currently present at the facility; how there were no specific industry standards in place for this type of use; that the Bureau of Alcohol Tabaco and Firearms would regulate the proposed use; and that security is up to the individual business owner.

The Board inquired about the legislative intent of Ordinance No. 903. Mr. Mackey responded that the City's adopted Ordinance provides a list of specific standards and requirements. The list specifies that requirements are to be met using industry standards. Applicants are expected to respond with (1) testimony by experts within the security industry regarding what the current industry standards are, and (2) evidence that the current industry standards are being met at the proposed location.

Vice-Chair Berent inquired as to what information the applicant had to present to the Board in order to show that the facility meets industry standards. The applicant mentioned some of the security features currently present at the facility.

Fran Rock – Mentioned that downtown was family-oriented and that is why she is here to object to the sale of firearms in the Downtown Business Zone.

Richard Slechter – President of the North Carroll Rod and Gun Club, mentioned that he loves the community and that he is in favor of the applicant's current proposal. He mentioned that there was a sports shop downtown at one point and inquired about how to define the term industry standards.

Pursuant to § 3-305 (b)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Board Member Bonner moved for a closed session to consult with and obtain legal advice on a legal matter from the Board of Zoning Appeal's Attorney Eric J. Blitz. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Berent. The motion passed unanimously. The closed session started at 6:43 PM and ended at 6:53 PM. It was held in the Mayor's Office, adjacent to the Council Chambers. Mr. Blitz stated for the record that the Board closed its session to discuss with counsel one question, which was how to arrive at industry standards. All three Board members were in attendance during the session. No actions were taken. There were no rulings on the evidence, and no deliberations occurred.

Chair Cramer mentioned that he would like for the applicant to return to the Board in April at the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting on April 2, 2019, at 6 PM. The Chair noted the applicant should be prepared to return with experts in the industry who can testify to the industry standards.

Board Member Bonner made a motion for a continuance of BZA Case #19-01 to April 2, 2019, at 6 PM, in City Hall. Vice-Chair Berent seconded. The motion passed 3-0.

Board member Bonner made a motion to adjourn. The Board adjourned at 6:57 PM.



Edward Cramer, Chair
Westminster Board of Zoning Appeals