

Public Hearing for Fourth Street Books - Pearl House Collective (H-2023-0010) by EV Studio, located at 909 NE 4th St.

- A. Request: Rezone of 0.080 acres of land from the R-15 zoning district to the O-T zoning district.
- B. Request: Conditional Use Permit for an outdoor arts, entertainment or recreation facility.

Seal: All right. At this time I would like to open the public hearing for Item No. H-2023-0010, Fourth Street Books - Pearl House Collective and we will begin with the staff report.

Hersh: Mr. Chair, Commissioners, the applicant has submitted a -- for a rezone for Fourth Street Books. The site consists of 0.157 acres of land and it's currently zoned R-15 and it's located at 909 Northeast Fourth Street. There is no current history on the property. Comprehensive Plan FLUM designation is Old Town. The applicant is requesting to rezone the 0.157 acres of land from R-15, to -- to Old Town to operate a retail use for a bookstore on the subject property with an ancillary outdoor patio space. Fourth Street Books will sell both new and used books and offers a micro cafe concept, which includes a small selection of coffee, tea, beer and wine with an outdoor patio space. The applicant will also be promoting local authors and artists through their curated workshops and activities. The proposed 800 square foot bookstore will be located in the downtown area within the Meridian Urban Renewal District. The building, which is over a hundred years old, was renovated in 2004 and is slated for further improvements to meet city code requirements and enhance the customer experience. The front porch and patio area will be expanded to include an ADA ramp and more seating, with the outdoor patio predominantly utilized during the warmer months. The backyard area will be transformed into a community space encouraging customers to read, socialize and enjoy a picnic, with seating provided by picnic tables. The applicant is proposing to use the backyard space to host author signings, poetry readings, book clubs and other planned activity events that require online registration, including free events with limited tickets. For more significant events Fourth Street Books plans to collaborate with other local businesses with larger spaces. Furthermore, Fourth Street Books intends to participate in downtown Meridian activities, such as Art Week and Meridian Main Street Market, while promoting literary and creative programming throughout the Treasure Valley. Due to the close proximity of neighboring residential property, staff acknowledges the potential for noise to travel and also has received some public testimony regarding noise and use from adjacent neighbors. To host any outdoor events the applicant is required to obtain a temporary use permit from the clerk's office that is valid for 106 days per calendar year. Once the adjacent properties develop into commercial uses in the future, the applicant can apply for a conditional use permit for an outdoor entertainment activity space. The proposed hours of operation would be from Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 to 10:00 p.m., with the bookstore likely opening with a reduced schedule from Thursday to Sunday from 12:00 to 9:00 p.m. for the first 12 to 16 months. Access is provided via public street on Northeast -- or Northeast Fourth Street and an alleyway to the west. The existing home has a driveway off the alleyway that contains one employee parking stall. There is

currently no off- street parking on the site. Customers can walk, bike or ride the bus as another option to bypass parking availability. Parking is available to customers in nearby public parking lot to the Masonic Lodge located between Second and Third Street approximately two blocks away. There is also on-street parking available along Pine Avenue and Northeast Fourth Street. Staff recommends the applicant install no parking signs along the alley. The applicant has provided a parking plan, as you can see in the center, as a guide to helping address where people are able to park in red. The applicant is proposing additional landscaping, a small selection of shrubs and ground cover, around their proposed outdoor event activity space to reduce the noise in the adjacent residential district. In order to help alleviate any undue noise and light disturbances to the nearby residential uses, staff recommends the landscape plan be revised to include additional landscaping along the western, southern and eastern fence line. Staff recommends the applicant incorporate some columnar trees or taller shrubs around the fence line in addition to the shrubs and ground cover proposed on the landscape plan to help mitigate concerns raised by the adjacent neighbors. All fencing is existing and should meet UDC code. Building elevations. Conceptual building elevations and perspectives were submitted for the existing bookstore structure as shown. The building consists of siding, fascia trim, asphalt roof shingles and new composite deck with railing and ADA -- ADA ramp. As stated in the staff report the only new addition to the structure is the front entry and back patio for outdoor space. The proposed elevations are not approved with this application and will be reviewed with the design review application for consistency for -- with our standards, but full compliance with the ASM standard is not required based on the limited scope of work for this project. There was written testimony -- one from Becky Logue. Parking concerns. Tom McGoldrick. Noise and traffic concerns. Kristen Roberts. There is a great need for a bookstore within walking distance of downtown. Looking forward to it. Empowered Chiropractic. Looking forward to having a quiet place to relax and read. Staff did recommend -- does recommend approval for the rezone from R-15 to Old Town per the findings and conditions in the staff report. And that concludes staff's presentation and I stand for any questions.

Seal: Thank you very much. Would the applicant like to come forward? Good evening. We will need your name and address for the record, please.

Buzzini: I'm Ashley Buzzini with EV Studio. The address is 725 East Second Street, Meridian.

Major: Hi. I'm Chelsea Major, owner and curator at Pearl House Collective slash hopefully Fourth Street Books. I live in downtown Meridian area and my address is 1029 Northeast Third Street.

Seal: Thanks very much.

Major: I'm going to kick it off and, then, I will pass it to Ashley as well. So, good evening, Mr. Chair and Commissioners. Thank you for taking the time to review this project today. I know this is how you spend a lot of your time and I know it takes a lot out from your other life and activities. So, thank you. I am Chelsea Major, as I mentioned. Daughter of an

English teacher, a Meridian citizen living nearby, and with my husband Chase and I'm also a volunteer with the Meridian Library Alliance. I'm excited to be here today and representing my small business Pearl House Collective and what is hopefully to come -- become Fourth Street Books. If it doesn't go on this property that would be a little odd of a name. So, Stacy did a great job explaining the staff report and I just want to add some additional color about the vision and background for our bookstore. How do we switch the slide? There should be a PDF. But if not I can keep going. I will keep going while maybe you find them and, if not, that's fine. So, just a little background around the bookstore. We created Pearl House Collective in 2021 as a hybrid bookstore, so I have been hauling books around and selling them at markets, at breweries, basically anywhere anyone will have -- have me and we really focus on bringing community into local areas and supporting our local artists, writers and makers. We also host a monthly book club of various businesses, such as Truffles Etc. in downtown Meridian and The Roosevelt, Loose Screw and -- and other lovely venues as well and continue to partner with locally produced -- or local makers to share their goods and wares as well. We really love being a part of this community. The vision for this bookstore is to take that to the next phase of this project. You know, I think understanding what people really want in a community is really important and we have spent a lot of time out and actually in places where people already have been to -- to validate that this is a need and a want. The bookstore brick and mortar will serve as a gathering place where people can connect over their shared love of reading and -- and of learning. So, the goal is to make it a bookstore first, but, then, have additional reasons why people will stick around, hang out, work on a business idea, find a good book, that sort of thing. This will hopefully help to foster a continued sense of community in our downtown area, bringing more people together to create a vibrant social atmosphere. Ashley is going to go in a little bit more addressing some of the comments that Stacy had mentioned in the staff report and, then, I will add additional color as well related to some of the concerns that were raised.

Buzzini: You guys -- as you kind of saw on the screen -- if we are unable to pull up our presentation -- maybe Stacy can share it again. Oh. Perfect. But we created a parking exhibit, because we acknowledge the concern and the worry about parking and traffic for that area. So, within our parking exhibit what we did was we tried to find near locations that could encourage people maybe to park in the public parking areas in downtown Meridian and, then, walk. There is also room for two parking spaces in front of the property and, then, one parking space for employees in the back of the property off of the alley. So, that way the employee can park behind and not take away parking from any of the neighbors or anyone who may want to park to come to the bookstore. Okay. Cool. Thanks. This is the history. We already talked about that. And this is the vision. This is kind of the backyard space as we envision it with the seating in the front as well. And in addition to some of these parking areas and using the public parking that downtown Meridian provides. Chelsea has also created some wonderful incentives for customers and I will let her dive into that as well.

Major: So, I think one of the things that was asked in the comments as well was, you know, how will we educate and inform our patrons on where to park. So, part of that is to make sure we have clear guidelines around what's available today and I know that

downtown Meridian already has several areas that we have seen on the map as well. And, then, there is something that's not new here, but off of State and Third Street there is also the Meridian Gathering and Resource Center -- was previously a church and they came in last year. They are also willing to share their eight -- I believe eight parking spaces as well with us. So, we have additional options within, you know, two to three blocks of walking. In addition to that we had planned to use social media to share parking guidelines regularly, have clear signage within our lot and, then, we do put out a monthly e-mail newsletter. Today it's about 300 customers. This will be included in those communications, as well as having printed material on hand at our events, whether those are, you know, off site or when customers come in as well. Another piece would be training employees. Of course initially this is going to be me. I'm training myself at least for the first year, let's just be honest. But, then, as we hopefully bring in one or two additional staff members, those would be trained up as well around the policy and they would be adhering to that, setting a good example, as well as encouraging that every time a new patron comes in. We also talked about incentivizing, too. So, I don't know if you all have been to the botanical gardens and if you have carpooled or car shared there, they offer like a free ticket for the next time you come back. So, we would do reward programming for loyalty for doing alternative transportation and that would be included in the plan as well. And, then, I think, you know, continuing forward I -- as I mentioned I live in the downtown area. So, we would want to have a continued dialogue with our neighbors as they have feedback, how are things going as we move through, you know, the first six, 12, 18 months.

Buzzini: So, this image kind of shows those two front parking spots that I spoke about, along with the employee parking stall in back. These images are just to show kind of the parking options on a mid-day Saturday along Pine near Fourth.

Major: And even from the third photo -- the photo on the right you can see from kind of Third Street where the parking lot is across Pine, which is a lot that you could park in for public parking as well.

Buzzini: So, this is kind of moving into the area of experience and how people will interact with the site and the building and Fourth Street Books. So, as Stacy mentioned in her report, we are showing our ADA ramp coming up to that extended portion of the deck to allow for clearance and accessibility to that portion and to the front door as well. The back area we are showing our patio tables and seating options, along with that landscaping, and we do agree with the plantings request and to include more planting and maybe higher planting taller stuff, so -- to help mitigate the noise and control that there. And then -- oh. We have string lights that would go across that back patio area, just to help with the ambiance and the fun environment, you know, as you are enjoying your book in the evening. So, this is kind of a schematic design of the floor plan and how it would be now. So, we are showing some of the furniture, the bookcases, some seating options and we have a little pop-up room there in the back, which would be for local artists and merchandise. So, people can come, enjoy that, purchase things and support those people. The cafe area is very small. There will be no cooking or baking in this area. It will all be outsourced.

Major: You wouldn't want me cooking that for you.

Buzzini: Chelsea will not be cooking. So, just -- that is another item to address. Another -- just to kind of conclude. I got a fun phone call this morning from a resident who used to live across the street. He grew up and knew the original owner of the home. Her name was Nancy Mary Sage and she was actually Meridian's librarian for 70 years and she was also awarded Woman of the Year -- I want to get it right. 1972. And she had a really big passion for books and literature and I just thought it was a super fun thing to share, since Chelsea's bringing it kind of back to her original home, so --

Major: Thank you so much for your time and we will be here for any questions.

Seal: Commissioners, do we have any questions for the applicant or staff? Commissioner Grace, go ahead.

Grace: I have a couple of questions and they are a little eclectic. They don't really go with each other, so --

Major: That's okay.

Grace: -- if you could just bear with me. Do you know when it's -- it's completely up and running what the occupancy limit would be?

Buzzini: Yeah. So, I did a rough occupancy count under mercantile occupancy and I have 12 people for the interior occupancy load. For the exterior backyard I have it calculated by table, with six to eight people per table. I'm calculating 25 to 30 under occupancy of assembly. And, then, for the front porch I also calculated it by assembly occupancy and I have ten to 12 per with table.

Grace: So, in total, if my math is correct, roughly 30'ish?

Buzzini: Yeah.

Grace: Or did I miss -- I might have missed -- when taking notes I might have missed --

Buzzini: Like 30 total.

Grace: Yeah.

Buzzini: Oh. It would be probably closer to 30, 50 -- 40, 50 on like a large event day.

Grace: Yeah. I must have missed something there. I apologize.

Buzzini: Oh. Sorry.

Grace: No. That's on me. In the -- Mr. Chairman, follow up. In the backyard activities, once they get up and running, do you anticipate any -- it says planned activities, events. Any like live music or anything like that?

Major: So, what we had really envisioned was more like literary readings. So, poetry readings. When we said open mic I think there was a little confusion, too, as is it an open mic music show and open mic was actually open mic for like literary events. So, authors coming and reading their work. We really do a lot of work with the younger artists and maker scene. There is a local nonprofit that focuses on that and they actually do a lot with our authors that haven't been published yet. So, that's more of what we would be envisioning. If we did do music it would be like in pairing with like a yoga class. So, like acoustic guitar is kind of more of line of thought we are thinking.

Grace: Mr. Chairman, just -- last question.

Seal: Go ahead.

Grace: Given that many people do you think, just looking at the map of Pine Street, if it's a pretty active evening, do you think that that is enough parking on Pine Street?

Major: And that's why we would be leveraging not just Pine, but the public lots across from Pine where it's about a three to four minute walk, as well as partnering with Meridian gathering and community space, which has additional spots as well.

Grace: Okay. Thank you.

Smith: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Commissioner Smith, go ahead.

Smith: I also have a couple of eclectic question. Seems like we are in an eclectic mood tonight. First questions for staff. So, for temporary use permits are those events specific? I don't know -- it's 160 days. I want to make sure it's not -- they get --

Hersh: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Smith, so, yes, it's specific for events and you get it for that total time period of that many days per year and so they are wanting to use it in the warmer months and not in the winter months.

Smith: Okay. Thank you. That is helpful. Another question. If you could go back a slide or two. I just -- yeah. The internal layout. I just want to make sure I'm getting a good understanding of this. It looks like there is a lot of seating internally. I'm just -- at full disclosure I'm a huge book lover and so I'm just curious where the books are intended to actually go in the space. It looks like there is --

Major: Yeah. So some of this design doesn't have as many bookshelves as would actually be there. I think that's part of the -- just like the design platform. But, basically,

books would align -- line up on all of the walls. So, right where you see the couch today, that would actually just be more of a window seat and, then, we would have like floating shelves next to it and above. And, then, we also do really have -- since it is an older home -- taller ceilings. I want to say they are ten foot. So, they would be floor to ceiling, too, as well. One of the interesting things when we were talking to Kenneth who lived across the street and actually mowed the lawn for Nancy Sage was that you would be surprised how many bookshelves -- she had every bookshelf on every wall. So, kind of trying to really replicate that as well. But giving a little bit of space if you are wanting to take your coffee and read a book.

Buzzini: And those little squares are bookshelves along the wall.

Smith: Yeah.

Buzzini: I don't know if --

Major: We would -- we would expand them out from what you see here.

Smith: That's helpful. Thank you. Last question. And I think it's kind of something that we are getting at is I don't -- it seems like on -- in a given day -- you know, day to day there is -- there might be some parking friction, but it seems like, obviously, this isn't a huge space and it's not concerned about necessarily massive parking issues, but it's specifically the events; right? And so if we are calculating say 50 -- 50 people or so, that's -- let's say two people a car and let's say worst case scenario no one rides a bike at 25 cars. So, that's where I get a little concerned and so my -- my main question is --especially with, you know, the downtown still kind of beginning this shift in this kind of -- kind of awkward growing phase. You know, what are the -- I guess what are the mitigation effects beyond -- obviously, there is communication in working, but are there any -- are there any plans for say an event that has significant interest? Is there opportunities to move it to a different location? I know you just --

Major: Definitely so. I know Hidden Gem Events actually recently has really started up doing a lot of other events as well and they have that full backyard space and additional area kind of closer to Carlton and Main Street. So, there is definitely opportunities to do other locations as well and I don't -- I don't think we will stop doing that. We actually really love going into other local businesses. So, I don't think that would change. I think it would just be based on the event, why we are ticketing in advance, so we get that head count so we have an idea of when do we need to plan to, when do we need to shift.

Smith: Thank you.

Wheeler: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Go right ahead.

Wheeler: Just a quick question here to -- Chelsea; right?

Major: Yes.

Wheeler: Okay. So, on the -- have you already gone to like some of these -- like the Masonic lodge, the Gathering, these other places --

Major: Yes.

Wheeler: -- you have permission to go ahead and park here and let them know your hours and all that kind of stuff.

Major: Yeah. So, we just got confirmation from the Meridian Gathering Place today. I believe the Masonic Lodge is public parking.

Buzzini: Yeah. On weekdays up to 6:00 p.m.

Wheeler: Okay. All right. So, if there was any gatherings that were after 6:00 p.m. then that parking space there -- that parking area wouldn't be there, but there will be other ones there.

Major: Correct.

Wheeler: Okay. All right. And, then, you said that you would also be able to -- or be able to somehow advertise, hey, come, park in these locations, maps and things like that for some of these other events that might be coming up in the evenings or what have you; right?

Major: Yes. Definitely. And how I think about it as well is we really want to promote people going to the other businesses, not just ours, so part of that is coming into downtown Meridian or if you are living in the downtown Meridian area, taking, you know, your bike or walking down. I mean I walked here today.

Wheeler: Yeah. Yeah. And that's where I kind of see it as like on days like this, be able to enjoy a walk through town, so -- thank you.

Seal: Anything further?

Lorcher: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Go right ahead.

Lorcher: Did -- what was the reaction to your next door neighbor to this property?

Major: There was definitely some frustration around the location of it being a bookstore and having beer and wine, as well as coffee and tea. And, then, the noise -- there was feedback around the alleyway and the alleyway people rushing down it today and that being a concern for grandchildren and -- and I do understand that, which is why we are

putting signs in the alleyway and also, you know, I try to live and walk in this area as well and be sensitive to those concerns as well.

Lorcher: Thank you.

Seal: Anything further? All right.

Hall: Mr. Chair, we can start with Tom McGoldrick. Oh, I'm sorry.

Seal: We will come back to you here in just a minute. Thank you. Good evening, sir. Need your name and address for the record and, please, speak right into one of the microphones there if you would.

McGoldrick: My name is Tom McGoldrick. 330 East State Avenue just around the corner from this -- this property. So, just dive in?

Seal: Absolutely.

McGoldrick: Okay. I'm recently retired from 30 years of business management. That's what I did. I went into businesses that were failing, turned them around. That's what I did and that's where I retired from. So, I do have a little bit of business experience and I do a little bit of research. I have done research on used bookstores. High volume. Very low profit. Bankruptcy level for one person's business is 20 customers per hour. So, that's going to kind of give you an idea of how many books that you need to sell. Approximately, you know, what, a couple thousand books a week or somewhere in that range. Now you're going to have to have parking for a truck. Uber. Amazon is not going to be able to deliver the books just for the book sales. They are talking about alcohol here. Where are you going to park the truck? You have parking for two cars out front. Are you willing to make special parking permits for alcohol, Coors Light trucks, Budweiser trucks, to deliver to stay in the middle of the road to block people's driveways, to park in the alley. What kind of concessions are we going to take about that? While we are talking about alcohol here, I challenge you to go to any bar in town and ask them what they do for security. Every single one of them know the issues, the problems when you have alcohol and public. So, they have hired people to take care of issues that may come up in case they can take care of it before the police get there. I haven't heard any provisions about this. Most of the talks about this have been somebody playing a guitar and somebody reading the book. You got ten bookshelves. They don't have enough bookshelves to even handle the sales that they are talking about. So, now we are relying on the alcohol. What are we going to do for us that are living there with alcohol, with the noise, the issues, the problems? Because this is a residential area. This is our house. I have been here over 20 years and I really hate to move to another town that's more residential friendly because somebody wants to move a -- a bar into my backyard. So, I'm sorry, I seem a little bit heated about this, but I am. I would like to ask for 150,000 dollar cash bond for a ten year term to be placed under my address for the fact that if this comes in I can no longer live here because of the noise, the alcohol or the troubles that may come around and I'm unable to sell for market value, even if it's ten dollars, whatever

the current market value is, I should be able to sell for market value and not have to go at a loss, because I'm not accepting of business here. They are accepting it. So, they should be putting up the 150,000 dollar bond. If nothing happens after ten years they can have their money back. If I have to sell at a reduced cost I should be reimbursed, because it's not my business. So, these are pretty much my -- my quick -- short quick feelings here. I know a lot of people want to speak, so --

Seal: Okay. Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

Hall: Becky Logue.

Logue: Can you hear me?

Seal: Yeah. Yeah. Speak right into the microphone. And we will take your name and address and you can adjust it if you need to there.

Logue: My name is Becky Logue and I live across the street from the proposed bookstore.

Seal: What's the address?

Logue: I don't live there. I own the property across the street. 404 East Pine Avenue.

Seal: Okay.

Logue: And I did e-mail, obviously. My main concern is parking. There is the two spots in front and one behind. That neighborhood is all the old houses where they don't have garages, so we all park on the street. That's your only spots. You know, there is -- and this is a -- it's a half of a lot of what those -- all those houses are down there. So, it's a very small postage stamp. Definitely not meant for even 20 people to be in. It's 800 square foot. It's -- it's very tiny. The backyard is very small and it also backs up to a couple empty lots that -- there is kids that play through there and I know the way people drive down those alleys and through those empty lots, it's -- it won't be pretty at all for safety wise for any of those kids. This is four blocks from downtown. It's not in downtown. This is a neighborhood and it definitely will lower the value of all of our homes. I'm just -- the safety is a big concern for me. The parking is huge, because we all need to come home and have a place to park and it's really -- it's really bothered that there is not going to be that. So, that's -- that's my main concern and I guess that's all I have to say.

Seal: Thanks very much.

Hall: We have Mr. Logue.

Seal: Good evening, sir. Just need your name and address for the record, please.

M.Logue: Merton Logue. 404 East Pine. Just across from where the proposed bookstore wine bar is at. My concern primarily is very much on the same page as everybody you

have already heard testimony from so far and I'm also in business, I can empathize with young entrepreneurs that want to, you know, do something like this, the passion and everything behind that. The issue I have is I don't think this fits the Old Town zoning deal. It's four blocks from downtown. It's surrounded by residential all around it. The parking displacement. I feel that if we have a business in play it needs to be able to support itself. It shouldn't be relying on cannibalizing other parking or the potential to cannibalize other parking or rely on parking that they have no control over. As we know this -- a lot changed in our area in the growth, things are going to change, and that parking may be here today, but it might be gone tomorrow and, then, what are we going to do? So, once we have zoned something there is no unzoning it. There is no going back. There -- there is -- there is look at this thing from the proper standpoint and view and make sure that whatever decision we are making today is not just for the people that are going to be there today. These folks might go in there with great intentions. I have to say there is no business plan that was presented. I asked how is the money going to -- you know, where is it going to come to support what you are going to do here? You got to pay people. You got to pay the rent. You got to pay the light bill. And it was, well, we are going to do books and we will sell wine and beer and -- and we think we will have an open mic and we might do some yoga and -- there was just no plan and if you don't have a plan in business you are going to fail and I get the hopes and dreams part of it, the passion, the emotion. That sounds wonderful. I also have some pictures -- and I didn't know if you guys accept that for -- with testimony support, but all those pictures we saw presented are all really nice pictures. They are beautiful. They have things taken care of. The landscape looks good. You should go drive by that property today. There is no care there. It's overgrown. The weeds have already started. If their intent is to be a good neighbor they are not demonstrating that now and if you are not demonstrating it now you are not going to demonstrate it down the future and to me personally I don't think this is about a bookstore. I think this is about getting the property rezoned and, then, once that's done then they -- then they will take the next step. So, I hope you guys take everything into consideration of what we are talking about and not just now, but what's coming down the road in the future, which is what I think is important and I didn't hear anything in -- in staff's report on the fire marshal and fire chief and his input on what this was and -- and the fire lanes and stuff to access this, because the -- the alleyway itself -- and what it has for access, we all know we can put signs up, people are always going to go the path of least resistance. I heard a comment, yeah, on a day like today it's nice to take a walk. Absolutely. But not all days are like today. We got four seasons here and we got a pretty severe winter and people aren't going to want to walk there. They are going to want to park right there. So, I just think we need to be reasonable. This -- we are trying to do the wrong -- the wrong type of business in the wrong place and that's that -- at the end of the day that's -- it's real simple here. I'm not in favor of this. It should not be approved. Thank you very much.

Seal: Thanks. Appreciate it.

Hall: Leonard Cunningham.

Seal: Good evening, sir. Need your name and address for the record and the floor is

yours.

Cunnington: My name is Leonard Cunnington. I live at 834 Northeast Fourth Street. It's kind of kitty corner across from where the bookstore is going to be and been there about 40 years and we have experienced pretty much very little theft or crime at my property, but I feel that with the increase of people and -- that things are probably going to start disappearing and -- especially when it gets close to dark. I also have a concern about -- a lot of us have grown old there and some of our wives are not in good health. We need to live in a peaceful, quiet neighborhood. I also have concerns that have already been mentioned by all of the other testimony tonight. The parking. The noise. Child safety. I have a grandchild that stays at my house. Traffic safety. When vending trucks come and go that was mentioned earlier and also delivery trucks, like UPS and FedEx and pretty much I think with the testimony that's already been given, the -- kind of painting a fairly clear picture that this area really isn't appropriate for what -- what -- what they want to do there and that's all I have to say. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

Hall: Melissa Baker.

Baker: Good evening. Can you hear me?

Seal: Yes, ma'am.

Baker: My name is Melissa Baker. I live at 225 South Linder Road, unit L-103. I wrote up a little something, but real quick before I get started, I just would like to counter some things -- some concerns that I have heard so far and hopefully alleviate some of those concerns. Not parking necessarily, but more so the noise. I understand the concern with maybe beer and wine being associated with rowdiness. I have heard wine bar. I have heard bar. I love to party and also I like to read books separately. You can't be drunk and you can't appreciate a book. It's not that kind of atmosphere. That might be what's in your head and what's making some people nervous, but it is very possible to sit quietly and enjoy a glass of wine and maybe some light music is playing, maybe it's not. It's very possible that it can be both. It can be peaceful and -- and have a small selection of beer and wine for profit purposes I would say mostly. So, for the -- turning it hopefully to a positive note. The first time I encountered Fourth Street Books it was Pearl House Collective as it still is. I was new in town and I came home from a local maker's market one weekend and I -- I remember telling my boyfriend how I met this cool, kind bookstore owner and I picked up a book from her. That was Chelsea. And I'm not saying that she should have a bookstore, because she's cool and kind, but she did make me feel welcome here and it was probably the first time that I felt part of the community. Had books. Talking about books. Having a place to enjoy and appreciate books does bring people together like that and what I bought that day was a powerful work of poetry, it's called I Am The Rage. I don't remember everywhere I took that book and I don't remember every poem, but I guarantee you some of my time was spent at a coffee shop or a brewery. I think that's why I can so vividly picture myself and others spending time and money. Drinking

a coffee while browsing the shelves, reading in this quaint, locally owned, house-shaped independent bookstore. We don't have anything like that right now and I think it would be a perfect addition to that area. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you very much.

Hall: Neily Larsen.

Larsen: My name is Neily Larsen and I live at 318 East Pine Avenue, which is basically the backyard of the Fourth Street Bookstore. My kids play in the empty lot that faces there that I imagine a lot of these people that are using this will use as an entryway to probably either try to park or use as a shortcut to drive through. My kids run and play in this alleyway and kids -- I mean people use the alleyway now as a raceway. If we add more parking to it it's only going to get worse. I also -- they play -- we park our cars along Pine. My neighbor parks their cars along Pine. The picture that was referenced -- I don't know when they took that picture, because there is cars constantly parked on Pine. The noise. I have two small children, are -- it's literally in our backyard. Our -- their bedroom is right there. I don't know if you can see this -- oh, you can't see it in this picture, but I mean there is plenty of concerns that I'm just not -- I also like to read a good book, but I don't want the noise and the extra people in my backyard. That's all I have.

Seal: Okay. Thank you very much.

Hall: Judy Larsen.

Seal: Good evening, ma'am. I just need your name and address.

Larsen: Judy Larsen. 331 East State Avenue, Meridian. We only have -- this bookstore is in the alley and we live right next to it. So, we are going to get it all. The noise, the cars and everything. We own three pieces of property around it and there just isn't any parking and there is at least 12 or more children that live in the neighborhood. I just -- it's not the right place. It's not a safe place for the kids with all the extra cars. Anything else. Plus the wine and the beer and that -- it's just -- it's our home and it's just not right. She has a place on Third. Put the bookstore there. There is plenty of room. I just don't want it in my backyard. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you, ma'am.

Hall: Shelby -- I'm going to try your last name. Ugarriza. I apologize.

Seal: We will know how close you got here in just a second.

Ugarriza: Either one?

Seal: Either one. Just step up to the microphone. Need your name and address and the floor is yours.

Ugarriza: Shelby Ugarriza. 412 East Pine. I know. She nailed it.

Seal: There you go.

Ugarriza: 412 East Pine Avenue. We live across the street and down one house. We have been there almost 30 years. Lived here 45 years. When we met with Chelsea at the meet and greet she had mentioned so many plans. She had six slashes in this plan. It was a bookshop slash coffee shop slash bar slash open mic night slash and, then, she threw yoga studio in there. The open mic night got a little on edge with that just because of the microphone out there. Noise ordinance is to 11:00. She says she will stop at 10:00. Noise ordinances is until 11:00 though. The gal on Linder that just was up, she said that it was a quaint house shaped business and we have had nothing like that in Meridian. We did. It was the library coffee shop and bookstore and it was the busiest place in Meridian and you could not find parking. So, we have had that. Only a couple of us have driveways. Everyone jockeys for the street parking. The pictures that they showed they took when everybody was gone. Those are all parking spots for the residents. Let's see. A couple of the technical things that I kind of thought of when I first heard about this was she wants to transfer it to Old Town -- or rezone it to Old Town. There are certain things that are allowed in Old Town zone under an accessory use permit. Easy peasy. Because she wants to get a conditional use permit that concerns me that this is going to be something that is so much high profile -- or so high profile that it doesn't fit under an accessory use permit. That -- that's what's scary to all of the residents. I think that somebody mentioned, you know, hijacking the parking spots of all of the other parking lots out there. I don't think that's a resolution. I think it's an act of desperation. Trees aren't going to mitigate our concerns. The concerns aren't something that a tree can mitigate. It's the parking. It's the wrong business, wrong place, wrong time. It's the alcohol in a neighborhood. We are not downtown. The closest bar is two blocks down and two blocks over, not across the street from all of us and our children and our grandchildren. They mentioned they have an occupancy of 40 to 50 is what they have been calculating. With -- she told us she had one parking space when we met with the neighborhood meeting and now that they have got two. Occupancy 50 possible. I made it just by the hair. Okay. That's all I have got. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Hall: Josh Cummings.

Seal: Good evening. Give us your address and the floor is yours.

Cummings: Great. Josh Cummings. 5945 North Senita Hills in Meridian. About three miles north of here. So, I did not walk or ride my bike. Mr. Chair and Fellow Commissioners, I would like to pose one question to you. How many applicants come to you and face zero opposition? Probably not very many; right? Ultimately it comes down to the not in my backyard crowd, which is a viable, you know, concern for a lot of people. I am a real estate broker and owner of Crossroads Realty, as well as a small business

owner. I own a carwash in town. And I would like to pose to the neighbors. Would you prefer a small bookstore or would you prefer a convicted felon sex offender moving into the house as Class C property? Because I can guarantee you highest and best use is not going to be as a rental property. It's going to be as a small, quaint neighborhood shop and if you don't like a bookstore next door, imagine what your life would look like if your meth dealing, ex-con moves in, because this is a fairly low rent district and that's potentially what could happen with this property. I would like to say that culturally Meridian needs shops like this and it will greatly enhance the downtown area. You know, I live a few miles away, but I can envision bringing my children here. You know, I have got a 15 year old and a 12 year old and I would love to drive down and park at Generations Plaza and walk over to support a local business, because I'm a small business owner myself. It's challenging. Yes, there are challenges. It's tough to make a buck. But I guarantee you the applicant is not doing this to make a quick buck. The Major family is invested in our community and that's reflected by the fact that she single handedly started the Meridian Library Alliance, which recently gathered a lot of attention based on some contentious issues and some folks that wanted to basically shut down the library district, which we all know that's probably not the best course of action for our community. So, I would just like to conclude by saying I support this rezone and I think it will add to the flavor of downtown Meridian and potentially enhance property values, as opposed to the alternative. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

Hall: Rene Yerby.

Seal: Good evening, sir.

Yerby: Rene Yerby. 404 East State Avenue. So, we are -- from our front porch we just look kitty corner and see the front of this business. So, one of our biggest concerns -- well, we have lived there for 20 years, my wife and I, and we have got grandkids that come and play. Concerned about the traffic. Getting run over. Kids. Concerned about security. We have got -- you know, right now it's a fairly safe neighborhood. A lot of the neighbors don't lock their cars. They will leave their bicycle out front. Whatever. That's -- that's gone. That's going to be gone. And, then, being realistic about this parking, I mean this is -- this is crazy. If there is 50 -- well 50 possible people, even if you say there is only 25 cars, whatever, what people do realistically is they go to the business to look for that one good parking spot. Oh, it's full. Okay. So, now they are going to take the very next empty spot. I mean they can legally take it. It's a street parking. So, everybody, starting from that house, every legal parking spot will be taken guaranteed. That's the way people are. I have dealt with customers 17 years with our -- our small business. You can make all the, you know, guidelines and please do this, but customers ultimately are going to do -- a lot of them are going to do what they are going to do and they go for convenience and they are going to fill up all those spots. So, the parking thing is totally crazy. Security is going to be bad. You know, we don't know what the noise is going to be, but it's not going to be good. It's just -- it's just a bad idea. This is -- this is crazy. I - - and I hope you guys weigh the local people's testimony more than people that live on

Linder or three miles away or wherever. I mean we have -- we have a dog in the fight. What -- what do these other people have? Well, it would be nice. That's all we got.

Seal: Thanks, sir.

Hal: Sharon Taylor.

Taylor: Good evening.

Seal: Good evening.

Taylor: Hi. I'm nervous. This is the first time I have ever done this, but I live at 930 Northeast Fourth Street. I live kitty corner across the street from this house. Like she said, you might be able to park two cars in front of her house. I can park two cars in front of my front -- you know, front of my house and my front door. My granddaughter is at my house. She's five years old. She's there four days a week. My daughter -- I live next door to my daughter on State and so she's also there. We have approximately probably 20 children in that facility, right around between Fifth and Fourth and, then, across the street and we already have the police that come and patrol our street off and on, because we have people driving so fast on that street, you know, cutting through or even people directly across the street from us. They drive really fast and my -- one of my biggest fears is a child's going to run out in the street and we do have a lady that lives down on Fourth -- on Fifth on the corner. She has five children and those children play in their front yard. There is no fence. They are out in the street sometimes and somebody's going to get hurt and like it's already been said, it's our neighborhood. And the picture of their backyard is a great picture, but I really don't think that that backyard is that big, you know, to be honest with you. It's a very small house and she says there is other parking, but on Idaho parking in front of Truffles -- you can't find a parking space during the day with the businesses that are there. So, I don't see how she thinks that people are going to be able to park in these other parking spaces and like the whole -- sorry. The whole neighborhood has -- like was told we don't have garages. We -- if we have a second person that comes and visits us we have no parking and when they have like the parade and stuff our street is packed. You know, you can't even park in front of your own house, let alone having all these people come and go. And the alcohol bothers me. I'm sorry. I don't care if you are reading a book and you are drinking and you are in a good mood, you might drink one or two many -- many drinks. And the alley itself is -- my -- my biggest concern -- oh. And one other thing I wanted to mention. She said that she was bringing outside food. But she didn't say how she's bringing outside food. If she's having trucks drop it off. Is she having -- is she having food trucks parking or -- you know, park outside for certain times that she's going to serve food, you know? And so there is so much that isn't being told of what's going to happen and if this house is rezoned and she doesn't make it, then, what other type of business can come in that's going to affect our neighborhood, you know? And the fact that, you know, a sex offender could move into -- into the -- that house. But a very nice family could move into that house also and -- you know. So, my biggest concern is we are going to end up with a dead kid. We are going to end up with theft. We are going to end up with a lot. We have a very family neighborhood right now.

Everybody's really friendly. Everybody knows every -- well, not everybody, but everybody is concerned for everybody. We watch out for our neighbors. If we see anything happen we are on top of it. I have called the police two or three times for the -- I had one guy do like 65 down in front of my house the other day and he thought it was funny, you know, and -- I don't know. I don't -- I feel like I'm just rattling on, but you guys have to realize this is our neighborhood. This is our home, you know, and the pizza parlor that is on Main Street that has the -- the upper, when they have their nights and they have their mics on and they have their music, I can hear it and I'm, what, two or three blocks away. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you.

Hall: Marshall Major.

Seal: Good evening, Marshall. Long time no see.

M.Major: Yeah. My name is Marshall Major and I live at 3107 South Tagish Place in Meridian. Chase is my son. Chelsea is my daughter-in-law. And I wanted to bring up two things. First of all, I'm a lifelong Idahoan and I get the fear of the change, but in the City of Meridian's future land use map this is Old Town and it's hard being the first and I hear the concerns, but I also know the character of Chase and Chelsea Major and I just want to speak on their behalf, because I -- I hear the concerns of the neighbors, but I know that Chelsea in her business will care about the neighborhood, will be part of the neighborhood. She is part of the neighborhood. She lives a half a block away. And it will make it a better place and a fun place to just hang out with -- but it takes a willingness to try and a willingness to trust and a willingness to step past the fear of change that is coming. So, at the end of the day I think what I want to share is that I recognize the fears and the concerns and that change is hard, but it's hard to be the first and I appreciate the willingness for everybody to listen to the story. Thanks.

Seal: Thanks a lot. Appreciate it.

Hall: Mr. Nick Grove.

Seal: I don't know if we can let him speak. He -- he deserted us. Name and address for the record and the floor is yours, sir.

Grove: All right. I have some handouts that I am going to give to you all. It's also been e-mailed to you, so it is in the public record already, but rather than trying to get this pulled up I will show it to you now. All right. So, my name is Nick Grove. My address is 1536 Northwest 1st Street. I'm here as a downtown resident, not in any of my other capacities that I hold. I have lived and worked in downtown for several years and there are a lot of what ifs being thrown out here tonight. That is not what you all are making a decision on. You are making a decision on what is in the city's code and what is in the best interest of the city long term. Looking at the documents that are the guiding principles of the city, the Comprehensive Plan that outlines what Old Town is and why it is and that is to make

a mixed use environment that is conducive to a vibrant city and has economic development and historic vitality in and of its nature and so looking at what this business will bring to downtown is a -- an important aspect of understanding what you need to be making a decision on tonight. It's not about the what ifs of what if kids are playing in the street. That is not what you are making the decision on. You are not making a decision on what if -- the home value. So, I know a lot of people here tonight are maybe new to this process, but you are not here to dictate that -- a lot of the things that are brought up tonight. What is in front of you is not the concerns that are being made. The concerns that are being made are the same on almost every single project that you will hear tonight and what you will hear two weeks from now and two weeks from then, no matter what part of the city you are in it's the exact same concerns and it comes down to -- as a few people have said -- not in my backyard. I have sat on a lot of committees that are representative of downtown from the Downtown Business Association, to the Chamber, to the comprehensive steering committee for the city and this is exactly the type of stuff that we need in downtown. Hopefully you can look at the document and it shows the parking and the idea of why it is important to have foot traffic, which is what this business will help create throughout. So, thank you all.

Seal: Thank you, sir.

Hall: Mr. Chair, that is the end of online signups now.

Seal: Okay. Anybody else in the audience that would like to come up and testify? Ma'am, go right ahead. Get you right up to the microphone and we will need your name and address for the record, please.

Miles: Nikki Miles. 505 East Pine. Corner of Fifth and Pine. Initially when we met as a neighborhood about this business endeavor it makes sense. It's a very small building bookstore. But because of the small volume of books that would be available for purchase, other than her online business, she has to make money some other way. So, beer and wine has been equated to bar, has been equated to a -- a great concern for the locals. I have only been here in -- on that home for two years. A lot of these people have lived here for decades. But I think it's being blown out of proportion as far as her -- the number. I think she's actually blown this out of proportion for the neighbors. I don't think her backyard can accommodate as many people as -- and as many tables comfortably for a venue that she's hosting. I don't think the number of people interior is what she's going to be able to achieve. I don't think your fire department would allow that. But I do think conceptually if she stays focused on books and she has her espressos and perhaps beer and wine for her guests for cultural events or literary events and not walk in off the street customers, is the -- excuse me. The walk in off the street, which is a great concern for these folks and children do play -- they don't play in -- they may play up on Idaho, but certainly not on Pine.

Seal: Please don't. Folks, please, keep it down. The person at the microphone has the microphone. Thank you.

Miles: So, now I'm going to throw a real curve before my time is up. What struck me was when I received -- I'm not against this, but she -- the individuals have to tame this in and give some level of comfort to the city and to the neighbors that this is not all doom and gloom, but what concerned me was when I received the postcard and I turned it over and I started asking my neighbors what does planned commercial arterial mean and -- and what little time I gave myself to try to figure this out, I'm more concerned about that and I'm concerned that while they are trying to preserve their investment and trying to preserve their quality of life -- or we all are. I will speak for myself as well. That Harbor Freight at 8:45 p.m. hauling three trailers and other commercial companies hauling two trailers is not going to be unusual in the future. That Pine Avenue with those pretty little lanterns for night lighting is connecting Emerald with Cherry. It's commercial. It's no longer residential. The Mayor, the Transportation Department and other stakeholders at the city, in cooperation with ACHD, is turning Pine into an Emerald and a Cherry for cross -- cross-town traffic taking an easier route for commercial trucking and commercial businesses. It's just an easier route, rather than going up to Franklin or Overland. So, their quality of life is -- I'm selling. I can't handle the traffic as it is. I -- it's too emotional for me to watch children trying to cross, people running buses -- and this isn't -- this isn't their problem, but the quality of life for residents in this area is already disrupted and has come from very unconscionable decisions made at ACHD in Meridian's level. But I do believe that a bookstore and a nice little entertainment venue for literary projects I think is very appropriate.

Seal: Thank you much. Anybody else? Ma'am. Good evening.

Marino: Good evening. My name is Anna Marino. I'm at 6700 West Ustick. I had the thought of in Boise there is Hyde Park. I'm sure -- have you guys all been over to Hyde Park? It is in the middle of a residential area and I think if you use that as a model you have to look at our kids getting run over on 13th Street. I believe it's 13th Street. Is parking -- is it tight? Yeah. Is that part of the experience of going down there to the businesses? Yeah. It's part of it, but it -- because it's great you find a parking spot. I would also say these businesses in Hyde Park, they also sell beer and wine and the last time I was down there I didn't see people starving on the streets. The types of people that a bookstore is going to bring in, they are not hardcore partiers and, again, they are not coming to party at a bookstore. The parking I can understand for the residents. So, I would -- I don't know -- a thought I had. Is it possible to put no parking signs within a one or two block vicinity for residents that want that? I don't know. I don't know the city code if that's possible. But if there is a way to protect their parking spaces and add to the richness of Meridian -- and, by the way, I'm -- I'm a native Idahoan. My grandma lived on Pine. I'm very familiar with the area. And part of -- part of making Meridian great is growth and growth is hard, but it's necessary. So, that's all I want to say.

Seal: Okay. Thank you. Ma'am, if you want to come up.

Black: Lisa Black. I live at 1867 Charolais Drive in Meridian, but I also own Truffles Etc. in downtown Boise on Idaho Avenue and I just -- I'm here on behalf of Chelsea and her character and just what she would bring to the downtown area. I'm excited about having

the foot traffic that -- you know, you have got the parking garage that's coming in. I know it's kind of at a standstill right now, but we are going to have that additional parking, which will help, that will regenerate people walking in downtown Meridian. We would love the - more traffic, more customers to bring that down and I think that's a great idea. We have collaborated together over the last year on her bookstore and she's a woman of character, she does what she says. She gets the job done. She does it well. And I just hope you guys decide that this is a great fit for downtown Meridian and it is great to not have another bar or another vape shop or things along that area. We need some more culture in downtown Meridian. Thank you.

Seal: Thank you. Anybody else? Go ahead and come up.

Yerby: Hello. My name is Vonda Yerby. I live at 404 East State Avenue, right on the corner of State and Fourth. So, I look out my front door and I see this property and I want to start with saying I have nothing against them personally. I think they are nice people. I hope that, you know, they can do all the things that they want to do to make themselves happy, but at the same time I have lived in that neighborhood over 20 years and I would like to be happy where I live, where I invested my money in my home, that I want to stay at, you know, until I'm no longer alive and I don't want to have to look out my door and see a bar and I know she said it's a bookstore and -- and that's wonderful. I love to read and I have nothing against a bookstore. But reality is I don't think she's going to be able to sell enough books to keep the lights on, you know. How are you going to sell enough books -- you have got to have something else there and so she's going to bring in food. She's not going to cook it there. Well, she's going to bring it in. Food trucks or, you know, catering or whatever, you know, that takes a lot of traffic. Then she's, you know, going to have to have the beer and wine to help supplement things. You know, I -- I understand that she doesn't want it to be a bar, she wants it to be a bookstore. However, if you are not making money selling books and you are making money selling beer and wine, let's sell some beer and wine and 10:00 o'clock is when she wants to close. Well, that's good for right now, but what if in a few months she decides she wants to be open later, beer and wine you can be open until 2:00, you know, and that -- we live there. That's our home. And I know it's -- there is change and everything, but, you know, what, everybody that's spoke for this doesn't live there. Those of us who live there that are going to have to deal with the traffic, a lot of elderly people that live there that can't walk for very far to carry their groceries in, because they don't have a parking spot in front of their house anymore. You know, that -- those are problems that when you go into trying to open a business you are so excited about your business that you don't necessarily see the effect of the neighborhood and who lives there and, you know, we have got several friends that are elderly on oxygen that live right there that can't even hardly make it to their car that's parked in front of their house. What are they going to do when all the parking right in front of their house is gone? How are they going to get where they need to go, you know, and, yeah, there is a lot of little kids in the neighborhood and, no, they shouldn't be playing in the road, but, you know what, kids are kids and they play on the road. They play on the sidewalk. They -- you know, they run around, they ride their bikes and, no, we don't want anybody to hurt them, but, you know, if you have got somebody in their drinking, whether they were -- started out reading a book or not, if they have had a few too many drinks and

they take off and not -- don't pay attention, you know, we got kids hurt and it's -- it's very concerning.

Seal: Thank you. Anybody else? Good evening.

Klaner: Hi. My name is Sarah Klaner. 418 East Pine Avenue. I have three things that are concerns of ours at our property. We are directly impacted by the proposed parking areas along Pine. We don't have -- as some of our neighbors have said, we don't have a garage. We park one vehicle in our small driveway and one on the street. Most of our neighbors do park at least one vehicle on the street as well and so that is a concern that when we come home we are not going to have anywhere to park. When we come home are we going to have to park by the Masonic Lodge and walk home for one. For two, was the other concern -- I have heard as well about once we change the zoning, if this isn't a bookstore what comes next in our neighborhood with our children and our families. The other concern that I haven't heard quite yet is how many restrooms does this property have. If we are going to be having say 50 people and events, what are we doing for -- to accommodate restrooms? Are we bringing in a bunch of porta potties and putting them in an alley or putting them in the backyard? You know that was another concern is, you know, how are we mitigating the possibility of people being on the alleyway peeing because of a line of ten, 15 people to use the restroom. So, those were just some of our concerns.

Seal: Thank you. Anyone else like to come up? No one? All right. Would the applicant like to come back up?

Major: All right. Nothing like civil dialogue, eh? So, again, thank you for taking the time to hear us today. I did want to call out just a couple clarifications. In terms of trucks, for example, the volume of beer and wine that we would actually be expected to have would not be large trucks, like not an 18 wheeler. While not big trucks it would be really getting them from the local breweries directly and bringing them over, which can be done with a truck, like a normal -- we have a truck. A Jeep. And, then, in terms of food being brought in, I just wanted to clarify that would not be food trucks, that would be potentially some local baked goods. Bread to go with the beer or to go with their croissant; right? So, I'm going to come in the morning, get food from a local bakery, have that brought in, but that wouldn't be a delivery truck size. And then -- I mean I just wanted to say again, you know, I do live in the area. I live off of Third. I am right by Cole Valley today and I have people who park near me, park on my street. I have only had once or twice where someone's accidentally parked in front of my driveway, but it does happen and so I think, you know, part of that is understanding where downtown Meridian is growing. But, hopefully, we are looking forward to what we want downtown Meridian to be and what we want to bring to our community. So, I thank you for your time and I don't know if Ashley wanted to add any additional comment.

Buzzini: Yes. I just want to address the restroom comment. I will -- we will work with the building department if it gets there, but in the 2018 IBC under the mercantile occupancies there is an exception that if there is under a hundred occupants that one single restroom facility, ADA, could be an option as well.

Major: And one -- one other just comment in terms of the business details around this. I have spent a decade in corporate finance. I left corporate finance because I really wanted to pursue something that I thought was meaningful for our community. I still do part-time consulting. That's how I'm actually funding this bookstore. It's not something that's going to be making a ton of profit, which we generally don't. The margins are very small. I'm not ignorant or unaware of those things. That's why I still do part-time consulting. But I do understand that in order to bring a community together we have to have things that are challenging and we have to do things that are tough and I generally thrive on both of these things. So, thank you.

Seal: Okay. Commissioners, do we have questions for the applicant or staff?

Lorcher: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Commissioner Lorcher, go right ahead.

Lorcher: Chelsea, I'm just curious on how you acquired or decided on this location for your concept.

Major: Yeah. Definitely. So, part of this comes from inspiration in, you know, Hyde Park as well as other bookstores you have seen across the U.S., really building on the concept of a bookstore, but I did not want it to just feel like a cold leased space, I wanted it to be a space that people could sit and enjoy and really thrive in. So, we did look for, basically, under 1500 square feet. That was part of the actual requirement when we did our analysis and we were looking at properties nearby. So, that was part of the decision making process.

Seal: I got a quick question for staff. On the -- the operating hours as far as code in this district. What -- what -- what's the code around that?

Hersh: Mr. Chair, so code -- when a business is next to residential is 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Seal: Okay.

Hersh: It's restricted.

Seal: Okay.

Hersh: And conditions are in the staff report that state such.

Seal: Okay. Then on the delivery truck portion of it, is there a possibility that you can -- and I don't even know how this would work in this area. I apologize for not knowing this. But is there a way to have an area designated for deliveries? And I'm thinking more along the lines of Amazon, UPS and things like that, because they ignore all rules all the time

everywhere. So, I just -- if there was some -- someplace that was designated for deliveries that would probably help for sure and I can't see a large beverage truck pulling up and, you know, taking up space and things like that, so I can definitely see that it would be something -- you know, Amazon delivery truck or smaller.

Major: So, today, Amazon, I order quarterly, because of the smaller volume of events that I do in terms of bringing my books to venues that exist and I get Amazon shipments probably every quarter. Comes in a normal Amazon truck. It comes to my house on Third. I could continue doing that and haul them over to Fourth Street. I'm actually okay with that. It's not that far. Of course, then, I would have to probably drive or get some sort of vehicle, because I cannot crate that many books over by myself. In addition to that, I would look to more likely ordering on a monthly basis. So, it would be a once-a-month delivery. It would probably be set, you know, today, my -- my deliveries are all Monday through Friday just based on the distributor and that's how that works.

Seal: Okay.

Wheeler: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Go right ahead.

Wheeler: Chelsea, just a couple of questions here. One is do you have a liquor license?

Major: No. So, we would not be getting a liquor license. We would just be going for a beer and wine license and we won't kick off that process until the rezone is approved.

Wheeler: Okay. So, you are not a bar?

Major: No.

Wheeler: Okay. Secondly, are you -- or do you have any sort of, you know, safety plan or anything like that, like some of the customers -- or customers. Sorry. Some of the citizens here went ahead and talked about, like, you know, sometimes people do take one to many or sometimes, you know, you get a lot of people that's there, you know, some sort of emergency happens. Do you have any sort of mitigating factors on that?

Major: Yeah. So, I know some businesses offer options as well. If -- if someone needs a ride home or it needs a carpool option, so those can be incorporated into our plan as well. In addition to that, you know, I know a lot of the venues today have like the -- I clearly don't drink enough, but the little drinking tests. It's called --

Wheeler: Oh, yeah. Breathalyzer?

Major: Yeah. Thank you. Breathalyzers. And we could have something like that, but, again, that's also why we are not planning to serve liquor. We really want to just keep it to beer and wine and canned beers and wine. I don't want to have tap lines. I don't want

to have large volumes of alcohol. I want it to just be supplementary.

Wheeler: Perfect. Okay. And the books -- okay. Yeah. That's it. Thank you.

Major: Thank you very much.

Smith: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Commissioner Smith, go ahead.

Smith: Thank you. Just a little bit more detail on some logistic stuff, especially around books, is most of the volume that the books get there -- Amazon deliveries, is that, you know, I guess what share of that is you kind of just -- as you come to work that day, you know, ferrying some books with you that you picked up somewhere else. How much of it is Amazon deliveries kind of the cadence and --

Major: Yeah. So, today I'm close to a 70-30 split probably will stay close to that in terms of new versus used. I know used bookstores actually struggle a little bit more. So, used bookstores -- I acquire those books by hand going to thrift stores and -- I can't tell you all of my sources. And, then, new books we do get through the distributor, which would be sent primarily through Amazon. So, that would be the -- the breakdown today.

Smith: Thank you.

Seal: Commissioner Grace, go ahead.

Grace: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Chelsea, I appreciate your background and your business background you mentioned and so this question comes sort of from that perspective. Would you say that the -- you're a bookstore that's augmented by some beer and wine or would you say that your business primarily will be -- financially your business will primarily be the service of the food and -- and drinks, but with a little bit of ability to read books?

Major: So, I would say the goal is to make it a bookstore in terms of what we are focusing on, what we are staffing, what we are promoting. We would have a financial component from the micro cafe as we are calling it, which would really just be beverage. Like I mentioned there would be some baked goods, but I would say it's probably more of a 60-40 split. Hopefully moving more books are on top of that. The piece that I actually didn't call out in the neighborhood meeting and I thought about later -- we covered a lot about parking -- is that I also have an online model. So, I do get online revenue, both from audiobook sales, as well as digital purchases, both within people buying locally and across the U.S. So, that would continue to factor into our -- our business plan.

Grace: Thanks.

Seal: So, will this have a digital component to it? Technology wise. I mean instead of coming in and grabbing a paperback book, people have the opportunity to digitally download that content from -- right from the store; correct?

Major: So, those are different things. So, there is digital content, which is more like e-reader content. I don't actually dabble in that today. It's primarily managed by Amazon. So, what I'm talking about is actually ordering books -- physical books digitally. So, you can go to my online site and order any book that I don't have on my shelves, as well as anything I do carry and that would be sent directly from our distributor. That doesn't even come out of my door, so I'm not warehousing it. There is really great and independent organizations that partner with independent bookstores, including Libro FM for audiobooks and bookshop.org to support any bookstore. So, I basically get commission from those platforms.

Seal: As far as the -- kind of a community gathering place is there going to be opportunity for kind of community games, game night type things? I -- in -- in my mind I have seen a lot of places that are starting to pop up that literally are just -- you just go there to play games. So, is that something that would be part of this? And just trying to think of the community involvement and, you know, how to get more of that.

Major: I mean I like -- what's the one with the -- cornhole. Cornhole, something like that. I don't think we have a lot of space to do much more complex games, if you will.

Seal: Okay. It's more like Monopoly, card games --

Major: Oh, yeah. Card games.

Seal: Okay.

Major: Yeah. Old fashion board games. Yeah.

Seal: Okay. Any other questions? Anything else for the -- for staff? No. All right. Do you have anything further for us or -- no?

Major: Thank you so much for your time.

Seal: Thank you. Appreciate it. With that I will take a motion to close the public hearing for file H-2023-0010, Fourth Street Books-Pearl House Collective.

Grace: So moved.

Smith: Second.

Seal: It's been moved and seconded to close the public hearing for File No. H-2023-0010. All in favor say aye. Opposed? Public hearing is closed.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. TWO ABSENT.

Seal: Who would like to go first?

Wheeler: I will, Mr. -- Mr. Chair, if you will still allow me.

Seal: I will -- I will allow it this time.

Wheeler: Just one time. Okay. So, I think it's really a neat idea to see this and put in a vision of just a gathering place where people can come, enjoy, look, read a book, have a little glass of wine or beer and just be there socially as a place of escape from -- whether it be their house, which maybe is not as organized and so here is a little respite or to come and travel and meet up with friends in a central location like this. I see this -- this vision and that's why I think it's not as defined as -- yeah, sure, maybe cornhole. Yeah, sure, maybe yoga. It's this idea of let's just make this a place where people can come and meet and I just so happen to have it and that's what I see here. So, it's kind of like a lot of heart lead -- you know, as a Commission we don't validate business plans, insurance, equity portions, stakeholders, shareholders. We are looking at a rezone. That's something that's already marked on the FLUM. So, those kinds of things are not our risk on those things with the business plans and there is many business plans that were looked at lock solid that next thing you know they are foreclosed. So, those aren't our ideas to look through. I have been in bars before. I have never seen shelves for books. So, I don't -- I don't think this is the avenue or the direction it is trying to go. I'm kind of interested to see how this will play out. I know that there are definitely parking and traffic issues that's there. That's not unique to Pine Street. To State. It's not unique to anywhere here. But the mitigation of that and the protection of that and how to look at it is something that needs to be factored in and one of the things that struck me as we listened to the -- to our citizens talk and this vision that the applicant brought forward, is that what was laid out also are all the obstacles why this should fail. All the problems why it shouldn't succeed. And those issues of the noisy -- of the neighbors and the kids and the night time and the troubles to parking and everything like that could be all the reasons why she could also say, yeah, let's not do it. But she wants to move forward and try to bring something nice into the community and there is a -- there is a risk-reward with that, too, and someone that actually lives close in proximity. So, to me that I see this, I see it as someone that just kind of has a heart for the downtown Meridian and a different avenue than Josh Evarts, but still have somebody that has a heart for it and wants to do something that can bring it up, so --

Seal: Thank you. Commissioner Lorcher?

Lorcher: Mr. Chair.

Seal: Go right ahead.

Lorcher: Just so everybody knows that when we vote on this tonight it is a recommendation to City Council. We are not the deciding body here tonight. We weigh in based on what is in the best interest of the city and what is in the best interest of our community and our long-term growth that fits into our Comprehensive Plan. A precedent has been set on that side of the community. There have been antique stores, hair salons, real estate offices. A law office that's at Carleton and 2nd used to be a convenience store

and my husband said that, you know, when he was younger that the kids that were -- used to be at the middle -- the mid high, which is now Cole Christian, you know, would go over there during the day to be able to get little things. If you are anywhere between 2nd and Carlton or 3rd and State, the parking between the post office and the school is just crazy already. I go to the post office daily for my business and I have given up on trying to pull into the parking lot. You know, I will park on Main Street and it's the effect of people who love Meridian and want to live here. We are over, what, 110,000 in our community and Old Town is definitely taking some of those effects. With that in mind, to be able to diversify and offer different types of Independent businesses, not corporate box stores, is something that rarely happens in our community. We continue to get big box stores and chains that are put all over our community and the opportunity for independent people to have a business are far and few between and if using the example of Hyde Park as a vision of what Old Town could look like to become a vibrant, walkable, independent place to be able to live and work and not everything be on Eagle Road or everything on Overland Road, so that we see Old Town vibrant, I would be in favor of this. Understanding that the community and the people who live there and the open lots that are there belong to someone else and that can become someone else's house, it could become someone else's business. So, unless you own it we -- you don't have control of it. It just happens to be there. Working with the fire department and the police department to make sure that people are following the speed limits will continue to be important. I don't -- I drive that area daily. I'm very thoughtful, because it's small side streets and small homes and I don't see the people racing, but I only come, you know, maybe a half hour each day and that's probably not the time that that happens. But, you know, she -- she seems to be a good -- wants to be a good neighbor and wants to be part of your community and support your community and I can't think of a better business for small children than a bookstore.

Smith: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Commissioner Smith.

Smith: Thank you. I think -- you know, I'm going to have a lot of thoughts. I'm going to try to keep in mind that -- you know, try and -- try not to go too long. I just want to read really quickly from the staff report -- and I assume this comes from the Comprehensive Plan, but feel free to correct me if I'm wrong. The property is designated Old Town on the future land use map designation. I'm going to skip a couple lines. But sample uses include offices, retail, lodging, theaters, restaurants and service retail for surrounding residents and visitors. A variety of residential uses are also envisioned and could include reuse of existing buildings, new construction of multi-family residential, over ground floor retail or office uses. So, that pretty much seems -- this seems to fit that definition to a tee and this -- I know there is concern about a rezone. It's not currently Old Town, but in the future land use map it is Old Town. It's designed to be part of -- it's meant to be part of this downtown Meridian and -- and I get it, it's really tough sometimes with change and I know there is a lot of what ifs, but those what ifs go both ways. I know there has been talk of what if -- what if it stays residential and, you know, some unsavory character moves in. What if a really nice family moves in? Also heard what if this fails and it gets replaced

by something else? Or what if someone is drunk driving in this area? What if it becomes a really nice area for the community to get together? What if it becomes not a risk for children in the area, but their favorite place to read a book? So, I think -- we can't dabble in what ifs. Those are all theoretically possible. But we have to understand the intention for this area being part of the Old Town part of -- just downtown Meridian and understand the reality that there is a lot of discussion around transportation in this area, public transit, parking, growth, businesses and there is kind of this cold start problem where, well, people aren't going to use public transit unless they have places to go and they are not going to have places to go unless there is people to -- you know, there is not going to be places to go unless there is adequate foot traffic and we have someone who, based on their involvement in the community, clearly cares about the area and is willing to -- you know, willing to be a first mover in this area and willing to help support this vision for a walkable Old Town and I think it's commendable. Yes, it's tough. It's -- this growth is -- it's like walking in a busy crowd. There is -- there is sometimes -- there is jostling and sometimes there is discomfort and overwhelmed, but a city that does not change over time dies. So, with that I understand the concerns. I'm empathetic. I have had similar things in areas where I have lived where there is concerns over growth and how that impacts me as a resident. I get it. But I think this is the right fit for this community, for this area of Meridian and what it's intended to be for the long run growth of the city and I really commend the applicant. I commend also the residents for speaking up. It is great that you are here. This is valuable and commendable. But I -- in the end I do think this is a really valuable asset for this community.

Seal: Yeah. I will -- yeah. And I think -- I mean, you know, it's kind of been laid out that this is going to be -- if any of you remember, if it's even still there, the -- like the Busted Shovel downtown where, you know, people are going to go and hoot and holler and drink it up all night and there is going to be, you know, issues with alcohol and things like that. I just -- I don't get the sense that that's what this is. I think it's more designed to be something like Hyde Park, you know, and I -- I like Hyde Park, so -- my grandchildren come to town, we go down there and we get ice cream, we ride bikes, we do all that stuff. So, I -- you know, because it is Old Town feel, it's -- you know, even in a place like Hyde Park it's -- it's a little bit concerning sometimes to ride around down there, but it -- it is done safely by a lot of people and, you know, that's actually brought in a lot more. Basically you see the opposite down there where -- I mean if -- I wish I could afford to live in the Hyde Park District, so -- because I mean it's -- the value of housing down there has gone nothing but up, so -- you know, I don't have any fears as far as what something like this could do for property values. So, it's a risk. And as far as -- if this business fails -- and I'm sorry, you know, my -- what I was told by a mentor early on in technology is you always know the pioneers. They are the ones with the arrows in their back. So, you know, a lot of them fail. That's the -- that's kind of the -- the truth behind some of these endeavors. So, I don't hope that on any business. I hope to see, you know, that it is successful in some way. But that's -- if another bid -- if this business does fail and another business wants to come in there, it will have to go through the same process. So, I can guarantee you as somebody on this Commission where we are not -- we are just a recommending body. The City Council will decide this. But I mean I wouldn't recommend -- if I thought this was going to be something that was going to be, you know, loud music

and people partying and things like that, I definitely wouldn't want to have this. I more equate this to -- like we have large gatherings in our backyard. I have a son that plays music. Our neighbors come over and enjoy it. So, hopefully, it's something more along those lines. Hopefully it becomes a gathering place. That's why I asked the question about the games and things like that. I mean is it a place where people are going to have to be careful that children are running around? Yes. I don't think there is anybody here that lives in a neighborhood -- I know I don't -- where people don't speed. People are not paying attention and there is just more and more and more of us. So, it becomes more frequent. It's a problem with growth. It's not necessarily a problem with the business, so -- as far as parking, I sympathize for you. I really do. I wish there was a solution to this, but they have a right to operate this business, you know, within our city code, within our future land use map. They are not doing anything outside of that. They are not asking for any special conditions to do so and they are public streets. You know, when we buy homes and we move into them we have to be aware. So, I was aware that I live next to a public golf course. I wasn't aware of all the traffic that would be generated by it. So, you know, I mean you want to talk about people that drink too much and drive -- drive home, live next to a golf course. You will see it. So, I mean -- I mean outside of the parking issues that this has the possibility to -- to make -- you know, I think that it's a good fit for the community. I mean -- I know there are people in my family that will flock to this. This is exactly what they are looking for, because they have lost their bookstores. You know, if you can't buy it online you can't get it anymore. There is places where -- places like this where you can go and have an experience like you used to have are something that I think we need in our community, so -- sorry. And I think I have rambled on long enough. So, if anybody else would like to comment. Commissioner Grace.

Grace: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I do applaud the small business effort. I think that's always a good thing and I want to support that and stand behind that. It seems like when I first read through the material, a quieter activity, it's certainly a positive activity; right? Reading in a bookstore. And it's consistent with what the downtown area is being designed to do, increase the foot traffic. With that said, though, I think Mr. Major said it the best when he said that the first one in is always the hardest and I know there is probably some other type of -- of activities there that are -- that are not just residential and so it is difficult to take -- you know, to see what this is going to become. I have no doubt Chelsea and -- and Ashley, you are people of character and quality people and you care about your neighbors. I'm just concerned it's a coffee, beer, wine bar masquerading as a bookstore and it's easy for me to say, living up in the north part of -- of Meridian that I would -- you know, that I would vote for this. I would -- I think it's a great activity. I would love to patronize it myself -- myself. But it seems like it's still just a resident -- has a residential flavor to it still. It hasn't quite turned the corner into that Old Town. I know what it's -- I know what the FLUM says. I know what it's -- what it's zoned as. But it doesn't seem like it's there yet. The parking, the noise, the -- the security issues, I guess, and the fact that -- that residents don't have garages is a big concern for me. I would say this. I can't disagree with what my -- my fellow Commissioners have said. I can't. I -- no one said anything I disagreed with. But there is something about this that just doesn't sit right with me and I do think it's worth considering for all the neighbors. It's coming. It is coming. And if it's -- this is probably the least intrusive type of activity that might fill a spot

like that. So, if it seems like that I have been a little bit back and forth on this, I really have. I have gone back and forth about twice in the course of this meeting alone, so -- but I have to -- I have to consider that if I was a resident there I probably would feel the same way and I would say, Nick, I -- I respectfully -- I respect the heck out of Nick. We were colleagues at one time. But I do think this is exactly the kind of thing this Commission is meant to consider, these concerns from the citizens, and so not that it appears it would make much difference, but I probably will be voting against this.

Seal: Thank you.

Wheeler: Mr. Chair?

Seal: Go ahead.

Wheeler: One of the things, too, I just realized we didn't talk about either, just real quickly, was the reason why they are asking for a -- let me see if I can find it here real quickly. A permit. And it's just because it's an outdoor activity, just like anytime there is a drive up they have to get a conditional use permit no matter what. So, this permit is because it's an outdoor activity. Is that -- staff, am I correct on that? Is that the reason why they have to ask for it, because there will be outdoor activities held?

Seal: But the CUP's actually been pulled from it. So, that -- so, they are not going to be doing that at all, then, is that what you are saying? Is that what I'm understanding?

Hersh: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Wheeler, so the CUP is pulled, because staff can't support approving an outdoor entertainment next to residential. It's not allowed within 50 feet. However, they are allowed to pull a temporary use permit through the clerk's office for events for 160 days a year and, then, that's all they get.

Wheeler: Right. And that's what I was referencing.

Hersh: And we have limited the time for that, too, so --

Wheeler: Okay. So, that's what I was referencing. I was saying the permit.

Hersh: Oh. So, it's -- it's the temporary use permit.

Wheeler: Temporary use permit, not the conditional use permit.

Hersh: Correct.

Wheeler: Right? Okay. So, I was saying the same thing.

Hersh: Oh. Okay.

Wheeler: We are just getting crossed in the way that that was said then. And that's just because it's an outdoor activity; correct?

Hersh: That is correct.

Wheeler: Okay. All right. Okay. I just wanted to make sure, then, on that, so -- well, I'm ready to make a motion.

Parsons: Mr. Chair, if I can just elaborate on a couple things that I heard.

Seal: Absolutely.

Parsons: And I have to say I applaud the neighborhood for coming out, because that's what this process is about. It's good to see you guys here and caring about your neighborhood and the community, because that's how all of us feel about Meridian as well. So, we take your -- your comments very seriously as we deliberate and we work on these projects. But there are a couple things that I want to clear up. One, I'm glad you touched on the permit, because one of the residents had brought up that conditional use permit and there is still some miscommunication behind that. So, essentially, we need you to acknowledge the withdrawal of the conditional use permit tonight. So, as it transitions from you to City Council, Council -- the agenda will be amended to exclude the CUP and only include the rezone. So, please, include that in your motion tonight. The other thing is to -- some of the testimony you heard tonight is, yes, there is a Comprehensive Plan and there is a FLUM designation and you rezone, then, the plan supports what the applicant wants to do with the rezone. But there is also other companion documents that go along with that and one of those documents is what we call Destination Downtown and the only reason why I'm bringing this up is because this neighborhood is part of the neighborhood preservation area as part of that plan and so the idea behind that designation was to preserve neighborhoods and keep that identity. So, although this may seem like it's added character, the plan still does support neighborhood retail and when you look at the size of this building, the size of the lot and what she's actually going to do with the property, she's going to rehabilitate it, make it better and make it neighborhood serving. I think we can get to the -- at least let the neighbors know that, yes, we hear you, we understand, but it's still fitting in not only with the Comprehensive Plan, but also the vision in the Destination Downtown plan. I have sat through a lot of these hearings and parking and traffic continue to be topics of discussion at almost every hearing and because this is a rezone and staff is not recommending a development agreement as part of that rezone, there really are no conditions for you to take under consideration tonight. We are not recommending a development agreement to go along with such a small property. So, really, we are talking tonight about whether or not rezoning this from a residential district to a commercial zone -- or a mixed use zone works for this business owner and we find it does and we have heard a lot of terms like eclectic. Well, Old Town is an eclectic zoning district. It allows a mix of residential, it allows a mix of commercial uses. So, that's the vision for this area. So, anyways, I just wanted to go on the record just to clarify some of those points that, again, we want to preserve the neighborhood. I want the neighbors to know that, that is part of the plan, the vision, is to preserve your area, but we also recognize that the area is transitioning and one of those -- the first step in that transition is this first property owner.

The other step was when we improved Pine and added on-street parking and put in the bulb outs and made that investment to improve that transportation corridor, so that we could have a nice entry into downtown and help spur some of this redevelopment in our downtown area, because to your point a vibrant downtown is an important downtown for our city.

Seal: Thank you, Bill. Appreciate it. Anything else, Commissioners? So, you heard Bill's instruction if you are going to make a motion.

Wheeler: Yes.

Seal: Okay,

Wheeler: Yes. I would like to go ahead and make a motion here then. After considering all staff, applicant, and public testimony, I move to recommend approval to the City Council File No. H-2023-0010 as presented in the staff report for the hearing date of May 18th, 2023, with the following modification: That the CUP for outdoor events will be withdrawn.

Smith: Second.

Seal: It's been moved and seconded to approve File No. H-2023-0010 with the aforementioned modifications. All in favor, please, say aye. Opposed?

Grace: Nay.

Seal: Madam Clerk, do you have that?

Hall: Yes.

Seal: All right.

MOTION CARRIED: FOUR AYES. ONE NAY. TWO ABSENT.

Seal: Thank you all. We really do appreciate the feedback and I know it doesn't always go one -- it always goes one way or another and some will be happy and some won't, but you also have to go through City Council. So, part two. And with that we will take a five minute bio break. Thanks, everyone.

(Recess: 8:09 p.m. to 8:19 p.m.)