

Council approves liquor license

By Randy Essex

The Lincoln City Council approved a new downtown Lincoln liquor license Monday despite criticism from Councilman Leo Scherer that the approval violates guidelines set by the council.

Frenchee's Hamburger Joynt, 1316 N St., will go before the state Liquor Control Commission with the council's blessings in its application for a license to sell liquor on the premises.

Sidney Sweet, attorney for Frenchee's, and Ray Davey, one of the owners, told the council the business has not been successful and a change is needed to save the old King's Food Host store.

According to council guidelines, in order for a new license to be issued in the downtown area the applicant must show a need for the type of operation proposed. The business is also supposed to be innovative and in an area that does not have a concentration of licenses.

Scherer complained that he could not see how Frenchee's proposed to meet any of the criteria, and voted against recommendation.

But Councilman Bob Jeambey told Scherer the policy was designed to be flexible, and argued that there is not a concentration of licenses south of O Street.

"Leo (Scherer), you can say this doesn't meet the criteria, but I don't know if you can prove it," Jeambey said. He said only two businesses in the area hold licenses; The Ming Palace, 1309 N St. and the Great Gyro Sandwich Shop in the Atrium.

Davey told the council that Frenchee's would be re-decorated inside and out, and a menu catering to both children and adults will be offered.

He said four people would be able to eat — and drink — for about \$12. Davey and Sweet argued that the business would provide a place to go without having to spend a lot of money.

"Children could have a hamburger and ice cream, and the father could have a small steak and cocktail," Davey said.

Davey and a partner recently bought 17 King's stores in Nebraska. They own five restaurants in Minnesota comparable to the business planned for the Frenchee's location.

The council recently refused to recommend a license for the owners of Spaghetti Works of Omaha. The Spaghetti Works in Omaha is located in the Old Market area. The owners wanted to operate a similar business in Lincoln.

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LES asks for more

The Lincoln City Council Monday approved Lincoln Electric System rate increases that will cost the average consumer an extra \$1.55 per month.

Councilman Leo Scherer voted against the increase after telling LES Administrator Walt Canney he probably would vote for the hikes. Scherer told Canney he wasn't very happy about them.

Councilman Bob Jeambey said he was satisfied that residential customers were not being assessed unfairly for their use, but suggested the council monitor future rate increases very closely.

Jeambey said consumers should be aware of the fact that not only were rates hiked, but the rates were recalculated.

Canney explained that the recalculations were necessary to erase inequities in the rate structure. Canney said the rates were based on the percentage of power supplied by LES used by each class of customers.

Residential rates will go up 6.7 percent.

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