

Fate of former Foxy's tavern still undecided

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Port officials delay acting on licenses until review of reopening plans is finished

The future of the former Foxy's tavern in downtown Port Washington is on hold, at least for now, as officials ponder applications for liquor and cabaret licenses for the bar.

Troy Koput of West Bend has applied for the licenses for the tavern at 219 N. Franklin St., which would be renamed Deville's Lounge and managed by Christian Zaja, a former bartender at Foxy's.

Koput told Ozaukee Press he wants to change the image of the bar, turning it into a place where adults can relax.

"It's not Foxy's and it's not Lanza LLC (the former owner)," Koput said. "I can understand where the committee's concerns are. But I don't want any trouble. I want to do it right."

Aldermen took no action on the applications last week after City Attorney Eric Eberhardt told them that, according to city ordinances, they need to wait until after the police chief, fire chief and building inspector have conducted required inspections and issued written reports.

Only Police Chief Kevin Hingiss had conducted the required background check by Nov. 20, when the Finance and License Committee and Common Council met.

If any of the three officials recommends the city not approve the license, the applicant is required to be notified 15 days before the Common Council meets to take up the matter, Eberhardt said.

A hearing on the matter may then be held, he said. The hearing will be in closed session unless the applicant requests that it be an open meeting.

Hingiss has recommended the city not approve the license, said City Administrator Mark Grams, who concurred with that recommendation.

"I don't think the council wants another Foxy's type of bar in the downtown, especially next to a building that will be the cornerstone for future downtown development," Grams wrote in his recommendation to aldermen, referring to the former Lueptow's building that is currently being renovated.

Grams said Tuesday that the fire chief and building inspector conducted their inspections of the tavern on Monday and have said their reports would be submitted to the city by the end of the week.

That means the earliest the Common Council could consider the application would be Tuesday, Dec. 18, he said.

