02.09.20

Proposed distillery is a Trojan horse

What is the Silver Falls Distillery that is proposed at the Madison Food Park?

The special use permit application provided to the county gives us a few answers. Madison Food Park claims that Silver Falls Distillery will be operated “for the importation, distillation, bottling/packaging and storage of liquors/spirits.”

Closer scrutiny reveals that the business is a bottling plant for already distilled spirits. Blending of spirits may occur after three years and distillation of “certain” spirits may occur in 5-10 years. Gone are the lofty allusions to artisanal products, value-added agriculture and Montana made products; this is an importation and bottling business.

On its website, Madison Food Park claims the distilled product will be called Molly Vodka. Molly will be a product of the “Norfolk County Aquifer” and “ethanol distilled from US-Midwest corn.”

I’m assuming this is Norfolk County, Ontario, between London and Toronto and not Virginia or Massachusetts.

The Molly website claims that it “was founded in 2016 by a team of “visionaries” (emphasis theirs) and is “award-winning”. There is no description of the visionary leaders or the awards the product has won.

Why would Madison Food Park not develop a uniquely Montana brand or join one of the existing micro distilleries in Montana?

So, what is Silver Falls Distillery? It appears to be just another corporate layer of the Madison Food Park and another incremental step toward the patently offensive slaughterhouse.

One day we may wake-up to an unprecedented multispecies slaughterhouse and its corollary feedlots and CAFOs and wonder how we got here.

The answer will be that our paternalistic county officials and business cheerleaders will have cooperated with foreign flim flam men to mask a patently offensive project into these little pieces, that, bureaucratically, will be considered separately without any consideration of each-other or the whole.

We will get an “aw shucks” and “there was nothing we could do” from the county. The Madison Food Park will metastasize through the incremental banality of the obscene.

If Edward Friesen wants to make a bottling plant, he owns a nice piece of land on the Thames River in London, Ontario, that would be perfect.

This community does not want this Trojan horse project here.

*Nate Kluz is a resident of Belt. Staff Writer Phil Drake is editing the Two Cents page. He is at 406-231-9021 or pdrake@greatfallstribune.* *com.*



**Nate Kluz**