

Mmmm ... beef jerky

Store devoted to popular snack, other items get conditional use permit from village

Daily News Staff

RICHFIELD — If there is such a thing as a classy beef jerky store, the classiest one of them all will soon move to the village.

Richfield Plan Commission members voted Thursday evening to approve a conditional use permit to allow Mike Rothschadl to open the Beef Jerky Outlet in the Helsan business park on the village's north side. "It's probably going to be the highest-end store in the nation," Rothschadl told the Plan Commission.

His plan for the shop calls for not only packages of the meat-treat to be sold, but for customers to buy their jerky by the pound. And they probably will.

"It's a \$1.2 billion industry per year," Rothschadl said of beef jerky. "By the end of 2015, we're looking at hitting \$1.3 billion in sales. ... It's bigger than popcorn."

The store is for retail only, Assistant Village Administrator Jim Healy assured commission members.

"There will be no processing of any meat," he said.

But, it won't be just meat, Rothschadl said. It will also be cottage items, furniture, canoes and kayaks. There will even be photographs for sale, both landscapes and wildlife. He plans to add wilderness and nature-themed décor to the shop to provide even more of a draw for customers, and he plans to stock local craftsmen.

"I'm looking at local vendors coming into the store," Rothschadl said.

That's why Jennifer Miller, vice president of Helsan Development Co., is pleased to have the store moving into her park.

"We look forward to having the Beef Jerky Outlet in our store," she said. "It's a great fit for the area and that building."

The Plan Commission unanimously approved Rothschadl's application.