

ENFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
LIVE REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
Thursday, June 9, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
ENFIELD TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
820 ENFIELD STREET - ENFIELD, CT

RECEIVED
ENFIELD TOWN CLERK
2022 JUN 10 PM 4:18
Sharon M. Bailey

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Fiore called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Chairman Fiore seated Commissioner DeGray as Secretary of Commissioner John Petronella.

Roll Call

Commissioner DeGray took the roll and present were Commissioners Lewis Fiore, Virginia Higley, Kenneth Hilinski, Kiran Majmudar, Linda DeGray, Frank Alaimo, and Alternate Commissioners Vinnie Grillo and Nicles Lefakis. Absent was Commissioner John Petronella and Alternate Commissioner Christian D'Antonio.

Chairman Fiore seated Alternate Commissioner Grillo to site for Commissioner Petronella.

Also present were Laurie Whitten, Director of Development Services and Matt Davis, Assistant Town Planner.

Approval of Minutes

- a. May 26, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Higley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DeGray, to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2022 Regular Meeting.

The motion passed with a 6-0-2 vote with Commissioners Majmudar and Lefakis abstaining.

Votes: 6-0-2.

Public Participation

Chairman Fiore asked three times if anyone in the public would like to speak; no one came forward.

Bond Release(s)

- a. PH # 2961 – Chase Bank - 10 Hazard Ave. - Landscaping

Ms. Whitten stated that the bond release is for \$6,222 and is for the landscaping around the bank. She stated that it meets all requirements.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higley, to approve the release of the Landscaping Bond in the amount of \$6,222 for PH# 2961.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

b. PH # 2949 – Warehouse - 1559 King St. - Landscaping

Ms. Whitten stated that this is a Landscaping Bond in the amount of \$448 and Zoning Enforcement Officer Ricardo Rachele provided ample information to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hilinski, to approve the release of the Landscaping Bond in the amount of \$448 for PH# 2949.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

New Public Hearings

a. **PH# 3039 - 53 Neelans Road-** Application for a garage addition on a non-conforming lot; Peter and Karen Falk Applicants/Owners; Map 86/Lot 283; R-88 Zone.

Peter Falk, 53 Neelans Road, addressed the Commission. He stated that he has lived in town for 50 years and thanked the Commission for getting him onto the agenda so quickly and for their time. Mr. Falk stated that he would like to build a garage so he and his wife do not need to shovel the snow off of their cars in the winter. He provided an overview of the progress of his plans for the garage over the last year. Mr. Falk stated that the entire development was re-zoned R-88 so now he needs to come before the Commission.

Chairman Fiore stated that Condition #18 requires revised plans, to which Mr. Falk replied that he has a drawing he can mark up. Mr. Falk stated that he submitted a revised drawing on June 1st. Mr. Davis stated that they wanted to expedite this for the applicant, so they will take care of these minor changes post-approval.

Chairman Fiore asked if anyone in the public would like to speak in favor or against the application.

Robin Myers, 174 Post Office Road, addressed the Commission. She stated that it was difficult for her and her husband to build their garage, and she is in support of the application.

Chairman Fiore asked three times if anyone in the public would like to speak; no one came forward.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higley, to close the Public Hearing.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Alaimo, to approve PH# 3039.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

Old Public Hearings

- a. **PH# 3036 - 33 Palomba Drive-** Application for a used car dealership; Gale Toyota Inc dba Buy Center of Enfield, Applicant; Machem LLC, Owner; Map 57/ Lot 343; BR Zone

Chairman Fiore asked if there were any updates from the applicant or staff. Mr. Davis stated that Staff added all of the previously-discussed conditions and they have nothing else to add.

Commissioner Hilinski asked if anything had been done about the traffic crossing situation. Mr. Davis stated that it is on their list but it has not been done yet.

Chairman Fiore asked three times if anyone in the public would like to speak; no one came forward.

Motion: Commissioner Higley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DeGray, to close the Public Hearing.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hilinski, to approve PH# 3036.

The motion passed with a 6-0-1 vote with Commissioner Majmudar abstaining.

Votes: 6-0-1

New Business

- a. **SPR# 1893 - 1706 King Street-** Application for change of use to a self-storage warehouse facility; Josh Sullivan, Applicant; Burlington Coat Factory, Owner; Map 14/ Lot 26; I-1 Zone.

Attorney Thomas Fahey addressed the Commission as a representative for the applicant. Mr. Fahey stated that the site plan requirements were addressed in the submitted narrative.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that there are too many existing parking spaces for the proposed use. Ms. Whitten stated that they cannot require the applicant to remove the parking spaces.

Mr. Fahey stated that they will address the excess parking with the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA).

Commissioner Alaimo stated that the building itself sits within two towns, which Mr. Fahey confirmed and stated that they are working with the town of East Windsor as well.

Commissioner DeGray stated that additional fire hydrants are required, according to the Fire Department comments. Mr. Davis stated that the memo was updated late. Mr. Fahey stated that they are aware of this and will have to do it in order to obtain the CO.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hilinski, to approve SPR# 1893.

Commissioner Alaimo asked which report will be going into the record, to which Chairman Fiore replied that it is the one on their desks.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

- b. **SPR# 1894 - 20 North Street**- Application for a special event; Robin Myers, Applicant; Lutheran Church of our Redeemer, Owner; Map 83/ Lot 356; R-33 Zone.

Robin Myers, 174 Post Office Road, and Jane Murray, 51 North Street, addressed the Commission. Ms. Murray stated that their fundraiser this year is going to the Ukraine. She stated that it will be June 25th. Ms. Myers stated that it is their 4th year doing it. At the request of Commissioner DeGray, Ms. Myers explained that there will be raffles and food, and all of the funds raised will go overseas to people in need.

Ms. Murray stated that the \$220 permit fee was a big hit and more expensive than other towns.

Commissioner Grillo asked if there is a fee for the car show, to which Ms. Myers replied that it is \$10 per car and that is done right at the gate.

Commissioner Alaimo asked if there is a mechanism in place to reimburse the fee, to which Ms. Whitten replied that there is not.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higley, to approve SPR# 1894.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

- c. **SPR #1896 – 25 Hazard Ave** - Application for a special event; Colby Webb applicant; owner Paramount Commons at Enfield LLC. Map 45 Lot 8; BR Zone

Colby Webb, 25 Hazard Avenue, addressed the Commission. He stated that he is the owner/operator of Chik-Fil-A and this summer they are trying to partner with ERC to raise school supplies. Mr. Webb stated that they plan to have movie nights which are free of charge, and they will be requesting that people bring school supplies. He stated that they will face the screen away from Hazard Avenue and block off the parking lot for traffic.

Commissioner Higley stated that she thinks it is a great idea.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that the screen is big and asked how it will be held up. Mr. Webb stated that it is inflatable and is very light. He stated that they are setting it up in a natural barrier area of the drive through, and there will be no equipment in the parking lot around the guests. Mr. Webb stated that it is good sized without being too overwhelming and will not obstruct any other stores in the plaza. He stated that there is a natural retaining wall by the drive-thru as well, and a natural barrier of buildings behind.

Commissioner Alaimo stated that there are no Department comments, which Ms. Whitten confirmed.

Chairman Fiore stated that he does not see any letter of approval from Paramount. Ms. Whitten stated that they do have this letter and it was submitted with the application.

Commissioner Hilinski asked how the perimeter of the area is protected from cars driving through. Mr. Webb stated that there are currently two main entrances to the property. He stated that they are blocking the physical entry with a catering van and will be adding signage. Mr. Webb stated that they will have team members out there to make sure no one tries to drive in, and there is also natural curbing to prevent vehicles from entering the wrong way.

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higley, to approve SPR# 1896.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

Other Business

- a. Discussion on size limits for warehouse distribution centers

Chairman Fiore stated that Staff provided them with additional information, and read over some of the documents provided.

Ms. Whitten stated that she reached out to the Town Planner in Windsor to figure out where they came up with the ratios for trailer parking and loading docks. She stated that they did not get any response. Ms. Whitten stated that she reached out to Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and they do not know where Windsor came up with these. She recommended that they just go to CRCOG with a minor text amendment saying that any wholesale warehouse and distribution facility greater than 200,000 square feet (SF) will require a Special Permit. Ms. Whitten stated that this will protect them.

Chairman Fiore stated that he read through the POCD, which has not been approved yet. He read a portion in the Natural Resource Protection and Land Conservation section.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that a Special Permit gives the Commission more flexibility than a Site Plan Review, and asked if CRCOG has any authority to approve or is just advisory. Ms. Whitten stated that CRCOG just comments, and once they do the Commission still has to hold a Public Hearing to make the text change. She stated that they can always modify this, but at least for now they can get it in the books.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that he is concerned they may not attract some of the development they may want in town. Ms. Whitten stated that the citizens want the Public Hearing, and the 200,000 SF seems to be the cutoff for most other towns.

Chairman Fiore went over the definition of a Special Use Permit, stating that this would give the public a say and the Commission will be able to use resident feedback and have more influence in the development of those industrial areas.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that the size of the building is fairly small, so he is trying to figure out how many acres he would need. He stated that he does not want to discourage development. Commissioner Majmudar asked if they want a maximum size. Chairman Fiore stated that they are staying away from the maximum size as they do not want to discourage development. He stated that they were trying to be careful and allow for the Commission to have more input than they would get from a Site Plan Review.

Chairman Fiore suggested that Staff draft this up now, and they can always go back and change it. He stated that there is currently nothing in the pipeline that would fall into this.

Ms. Whitten stated that if they move forward tonight and send this to CRCOG, they can have some of the information Commissioner Majmudar is requesting for the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Hilinski stated that it is important that they reiterate that they are not trying to be prejudicial toward large buildings. He stated that they just want to have some control over where they are going and what they are doing so they do not encroach on neighborhoods.

Commissioner Alaimo stated that they had talked about 250,000 SF at the last meeting. He stated that they have to make sure they have a balance so they do not shift taxes to the homeowners.

Commissioner Majmudar stated that he understands that the Commission needs more flexibility in the approval process of the Public Hearing. He asked if the language would discourage developers who may not understand the intent of the Commission. Chairman Fiore stated that a Special Use Permit will not discourage someone who wants to put up a 200,000 SF building.

Commissioner Lefakis stated that the purpose of this is to provide transparency and offer the public an opportunity to participate, not discourage development.

Mr. Davis stated that a Special Permit is still an administrative proceeding and does not give the Commission the ability to deny things willy nilly or attach irrelevant conditions. He stated that if they can get the process started, they can get input from the public. Mr. Davis stated that Staff has no discomfort that the regulation would be abused in any way for purposes that it was not intended.

Mr. Davis stated that a 200,000 SF building is a 5 acre footprint, then the setbacks and parking get added in. He stated that they are talking about substantial parcels of land, and they also have to factor in wetlands.

Ms. Whitten stated that she would like to send the proposed changes to CRCOG. The Commission agreed that Staff should proceed with this.

Commissioner's Correspondence

Commissioner DeGray asked when the Elm Street corridor will be coming before the Commission. Mr. Davis stated that they are coming on the 30th.

Director of Planning Report

Ms. Whitten read a list from her phone of upcoming Public Hearings and Site Plan Reviews. She stated that Cheryl Eckenroth is leaving the department so they are short staffed.

Chairman Fiore asked if they have heard anything from the mall people themselves, to which Ms. Whitten replied that they might come for the public hearing. She stated that they are from out of state but they will try to get them to come. Ms. Whitten stated that there will be a public meeting at the Senior Center on June 15th so everyone can see the new master plan. Chairman Fiore asked if the Commissioners should avoid this meeting, to which Mr. Davis replied that they should not attend.

Mr. Davis stated that they have 65 days after a Public Hearing to take action after the Public Hearing closes, and that the Commission can take their time.

Commissioner Hilinski asked for an update on the request for larger zoning maps. Ms. Whitten stated that they will look into that.

Adjournment

Motion: Commissioner DeGray made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Higley, to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

The motion passed with a 7-0-0 vote.

Votes: 7-0-0

Prepared by: Elizabeth Bouley

Respectfully Submitted,

John Petronella, Secretary