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Sheila M Bailey

ENFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
LIVE REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

Thursday, January 26, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.
ENFIELD TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
820 ENFIELD STREET - ENFIELD, CT

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

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

Chairman Fiore seated Alternate Commissioners Lefakis and Grillo for Commissioners Hilinski and Alaimo.

Also present were Laurie Whitten, Director of Planning, Matt Davis, Assistant Planner, and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

Motion to move Item #11B CGS 8-24 to Item #8 Presentation made by Commission Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Motion to move Item #11C PH# 3055 – 78 Park Avenue to Item #10 Old Public Hearings made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Approval of Minutes

- a. January 12, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Motion to approve the January 12, 2023 regular meeting minutes made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by 6-0-1 vote. Commissioner Grillo abstained.

Town Attorney Report

Commissioners are in receipt of a new report as of January 25, 2023.

Public Participation

Susan Smith, 115 Brainard Road, shared her thoughts on the status of town affairs. Many residents have put their trust in town officials and have been let down. She stated Enfield was a designated tree city. She encouraged folks to get involved with the goings on of the Town.

Terri Ginsburg, Roy Street, read on Facebook about the 8-24 referral and asked for clarity regarding the process.

Chairman Fiore briefly explained to Ms. Ginsberg the process and the Commission's role in the 8-24 referral. He also explained why public participation is not allowed for this presentation.

Bond Release(s)

a. 10 Lego Way – Erosion & Sediment

Motion to approve the release of erosion & sediment bond for 10 Lego Way made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

b. 10 Lego Way – Site Restoration

Motion to approve the release of site restoration bond for 10 Lego Way made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Presentation - CGS 8-24 Referral from Town Council for the sale, transfer or lease of a portion of Brainerd Park located at 133 Brainard Rd; Town of Enfield Owner/Applicant; Map 58/Lot 88; R-33 Zone.

Chairman Fiore read a statement for the record explaining what the Commission would be acting upon. He noted that the commissioners were only allowed to speak on the Town Council's 8-24 referral and a public hearing would not be held on the matter. He recommended that concerned citizens reach out to Town of Enfield staff or Town Council members should they wish to discuss any portion of this proposal further.

Town Manager Ellen Zappo-Sassu was present for discussion. This 8-24 referral is a very initial first step in a long process and is required by the State of Connecticut. While no public hearing is required for an 8-24 referral, there will be other opportunities for public hearings through the various land use boards should this proposal go forward.

Ms. Zappo-Sassu noted that MassMutual was one of the top taxpayers and there will be a significant impact going forward. Since the shift of remote work at the onset of the pandemic, there is no market for office space. Census data showed that approximately 29% of Americans are working from home. Repurposing office parks will help stabilize tax revenues and improve quality of life issues. There is a potential for job creations and economic spillover into surrounding community businesses.

A brief history of the creation of Brainerd Park was shared. Ms. Zappo-Sassu read a portion of Mrs. Brainerd's will. She shared some of the environmental challenges and crime data that the park is faced with. She shared portions of the draft POCD, which is meant to be the guiding document for Enfield's future. A portion of the POCD was shared that focuses on the challenges of office parks. Another portion was shared that recommended assessments be done on facilities and parks and ballfields. A recent meeting with local sports leaders confirmed there is growth opportunities for each organization with nowhere to go. Ms. Zappo-Sassu reiterated that the Town of Enfield will not be giving this land away.

Chairman Fiore read the proposed 8-24 resolution for the record and noted that the Commission is acting in their capacity as the Planning Commission at this time, which is fundamentally different than the Zoning Commission. The commissioners agreed to review the 9 findings. They agreed to strike Finding No. 7, leaving 8 total findings. Chairman Fiore explained the referral process going forward.

Motion to forward an affirmative advisory report to the Town Council, eliminating Finding #7 of the Draft Motion made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Higley and approved by a 5-1-1 vote. Commissioner Lefakis abstained.

New Public Hearings

None.

Old Public Hearings

- a. **PH# 3055 -78 Park Avenue** –Application for construction of a new two-family home; Maiden Builders, LLC, Applicant; Lori + David Longhi, Owners; Map 39/Lot 4; R-33 Zone.

Applicant representatives were present for discussion. Staff comments were reviewed and responded to. Two variances were obtained and details of each were shared. Chairman Fiore asked about a condition about tying into the street sewer system. Mr. Davis stated this will be addressed post approval. Commissioner Majmudar asked for clarification about the driveway design. Commissioner D’Antonio confirmed that the trees on the property will remain and recommended that density limits be addressed going forward.

The public hearing was opened for comment. No one spoke for or against this application.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Motion to approve PH# 3055 -78 Park Avenue per the plan of record and the 25 conditions noted in the staff request made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

New Business

- a. **SPR# 1906 – 37-39 Pearl St** – Application to open a café; Dairysol Stovall, Applicant; E & D Stovall, LLC, Owners; Map 24/Lot 79; TD-5 Zone.

Applicants were present for discussion. There will be a small Puerto Rican café. Commissioner Higley confirmed liquor will not be served. Commissioner Petronella requested clarification regarding parking options.

Motion to waive Section 8.20 to waive the site plan requirements for this application made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a 7-0-0 vote.

Motion to approve waive Section 8.124 to allow for a reduction in required parking made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Higley and approved by a 7-0-0 vote.

Motion to waive Section 8.124 to reduce required onsite parking to 4 spaces made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by 7-0-0 vote.

Chairman Fiore confirmed with Ms. Whitten that there are only 20 conditions.

Motion to approve SPR 1906 – 37-39 Pearl Street with the 20 conditions included in the staff report dated January 26, 2023 made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a 7-0-0 vote.

Old Business

None.

Other Business

None.

Enforcement Reports

The update from the Zoning Enforcement Officer will be presented at the next meeting.

Correspondence

None.

Commissioner's Correspondence

Commissioner DeGray asked if there was money in the budget to attend an upcoming training offered by the Connecticut Bar Association. Commissioners shared different training opportunities that are available coming up and the continuing education requirements of the commissioners.

Director of Planning Report

Ms. Whitten shared the final grading plans for the proposed solar farm on Raffia Road. She noted that there are large terrace escarpment (TE) slopes which were not mentioned in the initial report. Town staff are concerned because grading on TE slopes is not recommended. Ms. Driver will be modifying the report to the state to include these concerns. There was discussion about requesting intervenor status on this application. Chairman Fiore requested that staff memo be prepared then forwarded to Inlands and Wetlands Commission should they want to file for intervenor status.

Ms. Whitten informed the commissioners that solar companies are entering into rental agreements with homeowners to lease their roofs. It is her belief that this is essentially a business. Homeowners are receiving payment from the producer, not getting credit on their electric bill. There has been no input from other towns. Mr. Davis noted there is no state preemption and not regulating this can become problematic. Commissioners shared their thoughts on potential regulation. Commissioner Petronella requested that the town attorney be advised on this matter. Commissioner Higley asked if the panels are considered personal property.

Opportunities/Unresolved Issues

None.

Receipt of applications

- a. **PH# 3056 – 281 Hazard Avenue** – Application to operate a retail specialty pharmacy; CSI Pharmacy, Applicant: Robie Realty, LLC, Owner; Map 83/Lot 59; HVBL Zone.
- b. **SPR 1911 - 21 Manning Road**

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Prepared by: Rebecca Jones

Respectfully Submitted,

John Petronella, Secretary