



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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**MINUTES
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
THURSDAY JUNE 15, 2023
REGULAR MEETING 7:00 p.m.**

This meeting was held remotely, solely via ZOOM

Commissioners Present: C. Andres, F. Russo, M. Palluzzi, M. Liguori, J. Chadwick, J. Vaiuso, S. Huttner,

Staff Present: H. Smith (Town Planner), E. Breining- (Asst. Town Planner), M. Martin (Clerk)

Secretary F. Russo read the public hearing notice into the record

Chairperson Andres reviewed the public hearing procedures.

E. Breining reviewed the procedures to participate in the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Joseph Tammaro – Applicant and Owner
245 (formerly lot between 233 & 249) East Main Street
Special Exception Modification - Multi-Unit Residential Building
Application #23-4.4
A/R 4/20/23 & PH opened 5/18/23 & continued to 6/15/23

The applicant has requested an extension to the July 6 meeting. They offered a time extension and the commission accepted it.

2. John & Jennifer Sullo-Applicants & Owners
117 Flax Mill Road
Special Exception- Section 6.8 Grading for a pool
Application #23-4.7
A/R 4/20/23 & PH opened 5/18/23 & continued to 7/6/23 with Time Extension

This is continued to the July 6 meeting.

3. Shirley McCarthy & Peter Hentschel - Applicants
Zoning Regulation Amendment – Add definitions to Section 2.2, extensively revise Section 6.3 (Landscaping), add new subsection to Section 6.13 regarding Fencing, and add/re-designate Appendices.
Application #23-4.5
A/R 4/20/23 & PH set for 6/15/23

Peter Hentschel spoke first with a brief history of how this was a long collaborative effort between himself, Shirley McCarthy and the Town Planner (about 3 years) with months of crafting and recrafting the wording. . He noted that many of these changes reflect the recommendations made in the POCD and how that document relates to

this application.

Shirley McCarthy spoke next and said she had reviewed the medical and scientific literature regarding the importance of the changes that are proposed because they improve human health and help the biodiversity crisis. She gave a brief history of her career. She spoke of the importance of trees and shrubs to our health. She talked of air pollution and the relation to greenery. She then spoke of wildlife and the biodiversity crisis.

Peter Hentshel noted the intention of the modified regulations were two fold. One-To stress the use of native plants in our landscaping and the preservation of any existing native plants. The other goal is to give more details in the regulations as to the use of native plants and the quantities needed and where they should be employed.

H. Smith then reviewed the summary document which reviewed the changes.

The commissioners discussed this briefly.

Chairperson Andres stated that many emails were received and that they have been distributed to the commissioners for review.

Public Input:

1. Patrick Sweeney- (Chairperson of the Forest Commission) noted he is also a botanist- He spoke of the importance of plants. There is a lot of evidence that the way we have been living is effecting the natural habitat. He noted less birds and many species.
Landscaping is important, keeping out invasive as well.
2. Marci Palluzzi commented on Patrick's remarks.

Chairperson Andres stated the public hearing will be continued. He asked the commissioners to write down their revisions and/or suggestions for the applicant to consider.

4. Anthony Capasso-Applicant
Walter Maguire Jr. - Owner
66, 76-82 Totoket Rd. & 0 Tweed Road (Pine Orchard)
Re-subdivision to create four new lots from three existing properties located at 66, 76-82 Totoket Road & 0 Tweed Road.
Application #23-4.8
A/R 4/20/23 & PH set for 6/15/23

Len Fasano (for Tim Lee) gave a brief description of the application.

Jim Galligan PE- (Nafis & Young, Northford) spoke next. He explained this application is for a 4 lot resubdivison. He will have the landscaping and lighting plan for the next meeting. They will be responding to the town engineer comments at that time as well. He noted the owner of the property wants to make 4 lots, one for himself and his 3 sons.

E. Breining reviewed the staff report and asked for some additional information. The commission then had a brief discussion.

Public Input:

1. Amy Blume: - (Atty- representing ng the abutting property owner) at 74 totoket rd. She noted that Michael Ott (their engineer) was also present.
2. Mike Ott- (PE, Summer Hill Engineers) - 60 wall St. Madison- he reviewed the plans and the engineering report. He spoke to Nafis and Young and told them that they were reviewing the plans. He then displayed the grading plan and reviewed it.
3. Attorney Blume spoke next and highlighted the plan. She explained that her client at 74 totoket rd. has had water issues in the past. They have a sump pump. She doesn't believe this land is suitable for a resubdivison. She noted there was some missing information as well.
4. William Tweed-(Abutter) next door- He has many concerns: the environment, there are many forms of wildlife there. There is a pond there and Diana Ross (IW Dept.) said they could not fill in the pond. The new property owners filled in the pond. Another concern is that one of the houses is set to be close to his home.
5. Christopher Kurl-(adjanct property owner to the north). He agrees with Mr.. Tweed- there is a drainage area there and it drains to his property. Also concerned with blasting. He is not against the development but he has concerns.
6. William Tweed- he is concerned about blasting and noise from tree clearing will increase the noise from Amtrak.

Chairperson Andres noted this application is being continued to the July 20 meeting.

H. Smith asked the applicant to submit the materials by July 6.

5. John M. Hoefflerle, PE, CFM (Town Engineer)-Applicant
Town of Branford c/o James B. Cosgrove (First Selectman)-Owner
39-49 North Main Street
Special Exception Modification – To add a municipal above ground fueling facility and Special Exceptions for associated grading changes per Section 6.8 and an oversized accessory structure per Section 3.8.B are also requested.
Application # 23-6.1
A/R 6/1/23 & PH set for 6/15/23

The Town Engineer requested that this item be opened and continued without testimony.

The Inland Wetlands Commission will meet on July 13th to review their application.

MINUTES: 6/1/23

F. Russo made a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

J. Vaiuso seconded the motion which passed. C. Andres abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

1. P & D Holding company LLC-Applicants & Owners
107-109 Montowese Street
Special Exception- Office/Retail
Application #23-5.2
To be A/R & PH to be set

This public hearing is set for the July 6 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Patricia Pearson-Applicant & Owner
10 Tyler Avenue
Special Exception – Grading (Sec. 6.8) for a Terrace
Application #23-6.1
To be A/R & PH to be set

This public hearing is set for the July 6 meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Informal Discussion-Proposed Planned Development District-49 & 81-111
Commercial Pkwy

Attorney Knuff on behalf of Branford Development Partners. He noted that they were previously before the commission at the May 4 meeting to discuss the proposal of the creation of a PDD at the Commercial Property parcel. He noted he was remiss by not explaining this application and not providing the critical foundation of project. Chris Shapiro is present as well and will speak.

Chris Schapiro gave a history of the property and what businesses were there. There were many businesses that were interested but withdrew. Many years later, the zone was changed to a new zone... bl-hybrid.

He noted that they secured amazon and it was approved, but then they backed out. He noted that they tried for years to generate interest in this property. He thinks this project may be a good fit for this site.

Mike Gollman spoke next-(Gollman & York Property Advisors, East Hartford)). He has over 40 years' experience in commercial real estate.

He has experience working with many different agencies and groups.

He reviewed a powerpoint that covered issues such as empty malls and large retail buildings as well as office space. He commented on Chris Shapiro's presentation. He talked of housing and the demand for it .He touched on the housing available in Branford and noted the decrease in schoolchildren in the town. He also noted that these developments rarely kids into the school system.

Attorney Knuff gave some additional comments.

Chairperson Andres gave his thoughts. He noted this property has been commercial for many years and this proposal is for high density multi residential. He said, maybe it

would be more suitable for a moderate income multifamily site. There is always a demand for moderate housing, maybe affordable housing on this site.

Other commissioners spoke and gave their thoughts noting that they too would like to see more affordable housing in town and some noted concerns with the density.

Attorney Knuff gave some responses to the commissions comments.

2. Bond Release - 173 Hotchkiss Grove Road

J. Chadwick made a motion to release the bond.

J. Vaiuso seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

3. Time Extension Request to file Subdivision Plan Mylars for 175 Cherry Hill Rd

H. Smith stated the applicant is requesting a 90 day extension to file the Mylar.

F. Russo made a motion to grant the time extension.

J. Chadwick seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

4. Time Extension Request- Section 6.8 Special Exception (Grading)14,16,0 Buckley Road

H. smith noted there is a one year time limit on the special exception for the grading to be completed on this project.

J. Chadwick made a motion to approve the one year time extension for grading.

J. Vaiuso seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

5. Planners Report

Nothing was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 pm