

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

REGULAR Meeting #1775 – February 25, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

********Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting********

The Regular Meeting #1775 of the Planning and Zoning Commission held on February 25, 2020 was called to order in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT. at 6:33 P. M. by Chairman Ouellette.

PRESENT: **Regular Members:** Joe Ouellette (Chairman), Michael Kowalski, Tim Moore, and Jim Thurz.

Alternate Members: Frank Gowdy, and Marti Zhigailo.

ABSENT: **Regular Members:** Dick Sullivan

Alternate Members: Anne Gobin

Also present was Town Planner Ruben Flores-Marzan.

GUESTS: **Connecticut Water Company:** Adam Wing, P.E., Project Engineer for the Connecticut Water Company, **LADA, P.C., Land Planners:** Terri Hahn.

Public: Dick Pippin, Kathy Pippin.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as four Regular Members and two Alternate Members were present at the Call to Order. Chairman Ouellette noted all Regular Members would sit in, and vote, on all Items of Business this evening. Following in accordance with the service rotation schedule Chairman Ouellette requested Alternate Member Gowdy to join the Board regarding discussion and action on all Items of Business this evening as well.

LEGAL NOTICE: None.

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS: None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Chairman Ouellette queried the audience for comments regarding items/issues not posted on the Agenda. No one requested to speak.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES/February 11, 2020:

MOTION: To ACCEPT the Minutes of Special Meeting #1774 dated February 11, 2020 as written.

Moore moved/Kowalski seconded/**DISCUSSION:** None.

VOTE: In Favor: Ouellette/Kowalski/Moore/

Opposed: No one

Abstained: Thurz/Gowdy

RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS/A. CT Water Company, Hunt Water Treatment (PZ-2020-01) for special use permit and site plan review, warehousing and distribution of hazardous materials and associated site improvements at 41 Mahoney Road: MBL 086 -30-07 (*Public Hearing date: 3/10/2020*)(*Legal ad dates: 2/27/2020 and 3/5/2020*):

Chairman Ouellette noted receipt of the following application:

1. CT Water Company, Hunt Water Treatment (PZ-2020-01) for special use permit and site plan review, warehousing and distribution of hazardous materials and associated site improvements at 41 Mahoney Road: MBL 086 -30-07

Mr. Adam, P.E. for the Connecticut Water Company, attended the meeting to answer any questions the Commission may have. Chairman Ouellette thanked Mr. Wing; he indicated the Commission will hear the application at the next meeting.

PERFORMANCE BONDS – ACTIONS; PERMIT EXTENSIONS; ROAD ACCEPTANCE

No requests presented under this Item of Business this evening.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS/A. Site Visits:

Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported he made various site visits today; he'll report on them at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS/B. Continued discussion regarding Warehouse Point Planning Study to include Terri Hahn of LADA P.C., Land Planners:

Mrs. Hahn joined the Board for continued discussion and updates on the Warehouse Point Village Study.

Mrs. Hahn began discussion by returning to the discussion of draft configurations of the *intersection of Bridge Street and North and South Water Street*. Previously Mrs. Hahn had proposed redevelopment within the front lots on the north side of Bridge Street; the proposed development under this configuration follows existing property lines. Parking was to be provided to the rear of the multiple parcels; access to the new parking was to be provided via North Water Street, and two driveways along Bridge Street. The Commission had asked if access to the rear parking areas could be lined up with Dean Avenue. To address that issue, Mrs. Hahn has provided the Commission with an alternate concept plan. In doing so, the development has been reconfigured on the north side of Bridge Street.

Mrs. Hahn noted the Commission had intended the inclusion of a bike lane to accommodate growing trends for optional methods of transportation. She suggested if the bike lane comes over from Windsor Locks what will happen to it in Warehouse Point? Mrs. Hahn referenced the alternate concept plan. She noted DOT has a large right-of-way at this intersection; she has recommended moving the curb back 3 feet. That configuration would stop at Dean Avenue; then people would be sharing the road. She suggested there's enough room to run a green lane along the south side of Bridge Street; movement across the intersection of Main and Bridge Streets is difficult but keeping the bike lane on the south side allows for redevelopment on the north side of Bridge Street.

Returning to the redevelopment on the north side of Bridge Street across from Dean Avenue, Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the house to the rear has a right-of-way? Mrs. Hahn suggested that property creates a problem with development along the property lines, as it really doesn't have a driveway access. Commissioner Kowalski referenced Google Earth, which suggests that property shares driveway access with the auto shop.

Chairman Ouellette questioned how the shared parking in the rear would work under the redevelopment? Mrs. Hahn suggested the Commission could create a regulation that calls for shared parking but not a specific number. The parking would be non-public; spots would be available for each tenant. Chairman Ouellette questioned how "nuisance" parking would be handled? Mrs. Hahn noted that currently people dining at Maine Fish park at Geissler's Plaza or other adjacent plazas. In such situations the Town might require those other businesses to share the maintenance of the parking lots; some towns create parking authorities where the Town polices the parking. Mrs. Hahn suggested she is aiming for one parking space for 200 square feet of first floor retail space; second and

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third floors would be residential tenants. Mrs. Hahn noted something similar to this was done in Hebron. The Town purchased the property for the parking lot, and built it as public parking. She indicated that project is working nicely.

Chairman Ouellette questioned if Mrs. Hahn envisioned other scenarios? Mrs. Hahn indicated she's gone with smaller buildings as that was the architecture preferred by the public when the Commission previously held public workshops. Although she doesn't see this happening at present if a developer purchased the entire block it could become a residential tower, with parking underneath. The development could still look like individual buildings but the space could be connected on the inside.

Commissioner Moore questioned if someone could build a hotel, or a CVS in the village area? Chairman Ouellette suggested that type of development would require a Text Amendment for something that's not currently a permitted use.

Mrs. Hahn referenced the alternate concept plan, which allows for the bike lane. Chairman Ouellette noted the standard bike lane is 5 feet; he questioned if there's enough room to accommodate that width? Should the bike lane end at the intersection rather than continuing up the hill towards the Route 5 intersection? He questioned if the bike path continues up the hill would it be a marked path along the existing road, or a shared lane off the road? He noted the minimum width for travel is 11 feet. Mrs. Hahn indicated the area runs out of room at Dean Avenue to accommodate the designated bike and travel lanes.

Commissioner Thurz questioned why the Commission is pushing the bike lane? Discussion continued regarding the changing trends of younger residents. Town Planner Flores-Marzan suggested younger people are buying smaller, existing homes they can retrofit to their needs with place-making amenities. They're more likely to use Uber than own cars. Commissioner Gowdy questioned who would use the bike paths? Chairman Ouellette cited Rails to Trails in Windsor Locks along the canal; maybe people would bike to restaurants in Warehouse Point instead of using their cars.

Mrs. Hahn suggested she'll work on these designs and bring revisions back to the Commission for the next meeting.

Mrs. Hahn then presented the Commission with an alternative plan for *the School Street/Town Hall Annex/Main Street area*. Mrs. Hahn noted previous discussion of demolishing the Annex and constructing a new building didn't go over well with the public. Under this concept plan, a portion of the existing building, or a new building, could be constructed facing Main Street. The building could include new storefronts to interact with Main Street; the rear of the building creates an area to renovate into smaller residential units. The public indicated they didn't want to have street parking during the previous public workshop. Since this concept reduces the curb cuts on School Street Mrs. Hahn is creating other parking in the rear of the residential building which would be

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shared public parking. The residents of Dean Avenue need an area for their overflow parking; she's also trying to clean up the parking problems for the adjacent nursing home. Chairman Ouellette questioned the distance from the middle of this configuration to Main and Bridge Street; would it be a stretch to ask people to walk that distance to a restaurant on Bridge Street? Mrs. Hahn suggested it's basically a one block area; someone could walk that distance in 10 minutes. She noted additional parking is also available at Geissler's Plaza. Mrs. Hahn noted this configuration is based on the assumption that the Town would construct a new Police facility. Discussion continued regarding utilizing the existing structure; Mrs. Hahn suggested it would be difficult to retro-fit the existing building but the Town has invested a significant sum in the current renovations. Mrs. Hahn suggested this configuration allows for the nursing home adding another wing and sharing this parking. Commissioner Moore questioned if the Commission should consider a parking garage? Mrs. Hahn suggested if the Town can't envision the need for another 100 parking spaces then it's not ready for a parking garage.

Commissioner Moore questioned if the current residential uses would remain? Mrs. Hahn replied affirmatively, noting it's a nice residential neighborhood. Commissioner Moore questioned if mixed use development could be considered in the area; could someone turn their first floor into a coffee shop? Mrs. Hahn suggested this area is currently residential; she'd rather see the coffee shops on Bridge Street. Mrs. Hahn suggested she doesn't want to lose the residential base in the Warehouse Point Village; they support the local businesses. Chairman Ouellette questioned if Mrs. Hahn thought this concept would add value to the residential properties in the neighborhood? Mrs. Hahn felt the added value would be on Bridge Street; she felt this proposal would be neutral. She suggested that once you move past the box factory across from the nursing home on Main Street you begin to lose the village concept.

Mrs. Hahn's next area of potential development is what she refers to as ***Bridge Street East*** – the area previously approved for a Lowe's store. Mrs. Hahn noted she wants to maintain the farmhouse style dwellings which front on Bridge Street; she suggested at 2,000 to 3,000 square feet they have their own attractive rhythm and style. Her first consideration for this parcel was multi-level residential development – maybe townhouses - as you enter the site. Access to the site needs to come in opposite Gardner Street. Mrs. Hahn indicated she's provided the Commission with two alternative styles. In one concept she's added larger commercial square footage in the middle, behind the farmhouses, and then adding more residential at the back of the site. She noted the area to the rear is nice for walking. Commissioner Kowalski suggested this concept almost drives the dwellings in the front to become commercial; Mrs. Hahn felt they would probably be repurposed as commercial.

Mrs. Hahn indicated the alternative design would be to add another Dean Avenue neighborhood as the buildings in the back.

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Commissioner Kowalski questioned why she hasn't provided access directly off of Bridge Street? Mrs. Hahn noted she's taken wetlands into consideration with both designs. Commissioner Kowalski questioned if residents would want to come in past the parking lots for the commercial buildings to get to their residential neighborhood. Commissioner Thurz indicated he wouldn't put any residential units in that area; Commissioner Kowalski suggested they could consider mixed use with residential above. Commissioner Gowdy questioned what the zone would be; Mrs. Hahn indicated the Commission would be creating a new zone. Chairman Ouellette questioned the percentage of impervious coverage encompassed in these designs? Mrs. Hahn felt it was perhaps 40% at present.

The consensus of the Commission was preference for Mrs. Hahn's first design for this parcel. Mrs. Hahn felt the development of this parcel sets the tone for the village area. Mrs. Hahn felt any big box development should be on Route 5. Chairman Ouellette questioned if this site would be considered for another hotel? Mrs. Hahn noted it's adjacent to the site of the Roadway Inn; Commissioner Gowdy recalled a hotel had been proposed for the Crossroads Church site across from Walmart. The Commission discussed the size of various restaurant chains.

Mrs. Hahn reported she's continuing to work on redevelopment of the Geissler's Plaza area.

The Commission discussed when to hold the public forum. Mrs. Hahn reported she'll be going to the Board of Selectmen to give them an update shortly.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

BUSINESS MEETING/A. General Zoning Issues:

- **Meadow Farms Update:**

Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported the legal review of the Meadow Farms issue has been completed. They found that in 2013 the PZC agreed to call the bond for Phase 1 and Phase 2, but only called the bond on Phase 1. He'll bring a memo to the Commission at the next meeting, the Commission can take action on the recommendation in the memo, Mr. Ziegler will get notice of what he needs to complete by a specific date. If Mr. Ziegler fails to comply the Town will exercise its options.

- **Rewrite of Zoning Regulations:**

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Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported he feels the Zoning Regulations need to be revised/overhauled. He's been instructed to begin work on those revisions. Chairman Ouellette noted Town Planner Flores-Marzan had requested money in the budget to hire a consultant to work on the regulation revisions; is that still an option? Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported he did submit the budget request; if funding is approved he can give his revisions to a consultant to complete.

BUSINESS MEETING/B. Signing of Mylars/Plans, Motions:

Nothing presented for signature.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Gowdy moved/Kowalski seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission